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Louisiana and Dutch water institutes join forces to confront water issues globally

BATON ROUGE, La. (July 10, 2017) – Leaders of The Water Institute of the Gulf and Deltares were joined by Governor John Bel Edwards in announcing an agreement today to leverage their tools and applied research capabilities to create a powerful scientific collaboration that readily competes in the growing global market for managing water resources and adapting to rising seas and eroding coasts.

Deltares and The Water Institute have been working under more limited agreements since The Water Institute was created in 2011. Based in Baton Rouge, the Institute was established by leaders in Louisiana to inform and support the state’s \$50 billion Coastal Master Plan, and to use its science to benefit imperiled coasts across the country and around the world. Meanwhile, Deltares has provided water management solutions for decades in the Netherlands, and is recognized as the premier scientific institution in adapting to the challenges and opportunities of living with water all over the world.

A signed agreement between the two nonprofit knowledge institutions creates a powerful collaboration that will provide integrated, cutting-edge solutions to coastal and water challenges around the world. In the agreement, Deltares and The Water Institute identified areas where their scientists will work together. These include integrated strategic water resources planning, coastal dynamics, nature-based solutions to coastal challenges, research for managing watersheds, improved predictive tools and training for modeling across many water issues, and real-time monitoring of levees and control structures.

“Monumental efforts by our Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority recently led to the Legislature’s approval of our 2017 Coastal Master Plan,” Gov. Edwards said. “We’ve reached a critical crossroads for preserving Louisiana’s coastline and our very way of life there. By combining forces with private research institutions, such as The Water Institute of the Gulf and Deltares, this MOU will help us establish a beachhead for mission success. As we work to save hundreds of square miles of Louisiana’s coast, we will attract thousands of jobs across the state and build the Water Campus as a global leader in the water management sector.”

“Because of our unique geography and challenges in Louisiana, we have been forced to learn quickly about adaptation for the sake of survival. We have relied for years on the experience of and partnership with our colleagues at Deltares,” said Justin Ehrenwerth, President and CEO of The Water Institute. “The Institute has established itself at the forefront of applied research on coastal and deltaic issues through our work in Louisiana and beyond, and we’re thrilled to deepen our relationship with Deltares in the pursuit of opportunities to help communities worldwide.”

“We have operated in this field for decades,” said Maarten Smits, Managing Director of Deltares. “There is an acceleration of need for global expertise and innovations on water and subsoil. We are pleased to partner with The Water Institute, our peer organization that has done critically important work in a state

where we see many parallels, and an organization with which we have already partnered to do great work.”

“We are proud to call The Water Institute our trusted partner and we are excited about this new partnership between The Water Institute and Deltares. Their collaboration will support our commitment to expedite project implementation to protect and restore our coast. said Johnny Bradberry, Executive Assistant to the Governor for Coastal Activities. “The knowledge transfer between these two world-class organizations will leverage expertise in water management, ecosystem restoration, storm protection and community resilience, and is a classic win-win for this important, growing sector of Louisiana’s economy and the pressing need for this expertise worldwide.”

“This association with Deltares, a globally renowned organization, enhances the model for excellence that we’re establishing at the Water Campus and across Louisiana,” LED Secretary Don Pierson said. “Bringing the best scientists and engineers in the world together in Louisiana will prioritize coastal research while producing a notable benefit for our state’s economy. For these reasons, this is an exciting milestone for The Water Institute of the Gulf and the State of Louisiana.”

About Deltares: Deltares is an independent institute for applied research in the field of water and subsurface. Throughout the world, Deltares works on smart solutions, innovations and applications for people, environment and society. The main focus is on deltas, coastal regions and river basins. Managing these densely populated and vulnerable areas is complex, which is why Deltares works closely with governments, businesses, other research institutes and universities at home and abroad. For more information, visit www.deltares.nl/en.

About The Water Institute of the Gulf: The Water Institute of the Gulf is a not-for-profit, independent research institute dedicated to advancing the understanding of coastal, deltaic, river and water resource systems, both within the Gulf Coast and around the world. This mission supports the practical application of innovative science and engineering, providing solutions that benefit society. For more information, visit www.thewaterinstitute.org.

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