

Media Advisory

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For Immediate Release
February 2, 2006

Subject: State of the Gulf of Mexico Summit Explores Vision and Vulnerabilities for Building a Sustainable Future

Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies – Texas A&M University, Corpus Christi, Hosts International Conference, March 28 – 30, 2006 in Corpus Christi, Texas

Corpus Christi, Texas.... The catastrophic storms in 2005 focused an intense spotlight on the vulnerability of the Gulf of Mexico -- it's economic, environmental, and public health susceptibilities to both natural and man-made threats. Thoughtful, well-developed strategies are necessary to ensure effective recovery from these events. As part of the *State of the Gulf of Mexico Summit 2006*, sustainability of economy, environment, and public health will be explored.

The importance and timing of the Summit are emphasized by the commitment of **Texas Governor, Rick Perry**, in extending invitations to all of the Gulf States Governors from the United States and Mexico to participate in a special "**Governor's Day**." These leaders have been invited to share their insight and vision for developing quality policies, practices and programs dedicated to ensuring a sustainable future for the Gulf of Mexico.

"When Ed Harte presented the \$46 million endowment to Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi (TAMU-CC) to establish this institute, he made clear the intent was positive change" said Dr. Flavius Killebrew, President, TAMU-CC. "The Summit represents the first step in fulfilling his dream."

Dr. Robert Furgason, Director of the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies (HRI) has engaged a diverse group of well-respected leaders in education, government, business, and NGOs to participate in the Summit. "Our participants are respected leaders," said Dr. Furgason. "Our international focus will deliver a rich perspective on past events and future needs.

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In addition to the Governors, **Dr. Sylvia Earle**, noted scientist and Chair of the HRI Advisory Board, and **Admiral James Watkins**, Chair of the US Oceans Commission report will also offer keynote addresses.

“Reaching those people who depend upon the natural resources of the Gulf of Mexico is our ultimate goal,” said Dr. Quenton Dokken, Summit Project Leader. “By educating them on the importance of sustainability, we will set the stage to ensure a healthy, productive asset for generations to come.”

The **HRI Gulf of Mexico Summit 2006** will be held March 28 - 30, 2006 at the Omni Bayfront Hotel, Corpus Christi, Texas, and is open to invited guests. For more information, visit www.stateofthegulf.org.

The Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies, Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi, was founded in 2002 with a \$46 million endowment from Mr. Ed Harte. Its mission is to support and advance the long-term sustainable use and conservation of the Gulf of Mexico.

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