



Parish of Ascension

OFFICE of COMMUNICATIONS

CLINT COINTMENT
Parish President

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AFTER A SLOW START ASCENSION VEGETATION CREWS GOING FULL SPEED AHEAD

When President Clint Cointment hired Todd Elisar to run the Parish's Vegetation Management Department, he gave him one order: get the job done.

But no one counted on mother nature interfering in the process. In addition to their grass cutting duties, Vegetation Management crews are also responsible for maintaining the inventory of sandbags, operating tractor pumps located throughout the parish, and litter control.

Since late May these crews have been focused on maintaining the pumping stations along Alligator Bayou Road, so they already started out a little behind. In June they were occupied filling 40,000+ sandbags preparing for Tropical Storm Claudette and to make it even harder the constant rain events have continued to keep them behind.

"But, I'm excited to say they are certainly making up for lost time!" said President Cointment. "This week, grass cutting crews were out in full force and managed to complete 211 miles of roadside ditches."

The weather has still hampered them somewhat; because of wet grounds, 90% of the work was done along roadside ditches. Once they feel they can get off road to lateral ditches and major canals without rutting up properties, they will backtrack to catch up on those areas.

Todd Elisar and his staff have divided the parish into zones, which they then schedule for regular maintenance. Currently this work schedule involves every cutting tractor that is operating- 9 to 11 depending on manpower- two hand crews, and two road sprayers. They are also manning two cutting tractors and a chainsaw crew with a bucket truck for priority work throughout the parish, for obstruction of view, or vegetation that is considered a possible

danger. Finally, there are two additional road sprayers working ahead of the teams in zones to be serviced in the following weeks.

Beginning July 20, a labor contract with Life House goes into effect, which will provide an extra crew to assist with grass cutting, freeing up parish employees for filling sandbags. With current equipment, crews can fill 8,000 sandbags in a 24-hour period. It takes 160,000 sandbags to fill all of the containers that are placed throughout the parish. And it takes only a few hours to use them all.

“To further my commitment to providing transparency in all areas of this Parish, every Friday we will post where our vegetation crews have been and where they are going the following week,” said President Cointment. “I look forward to expanding this throughout all of the services the Parish provides to help keep our residents better informed.”