

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Rougarou Fest to shift gears to Rougarou Relief.

The tenth annual Rougarou Fest will not take place as originally planned this year. Our efforts will instead be focused on helping our community to recover from the devastating impacts of Hurricane Ida through our newly developed Rougarou Relief program.

The Rougarou Fest and the South Louisiana Wetlands Discovery Center have partnered with the Helio Foundation to raise over \$500,000 to assist in recovery efforts. Our first program began just days after the storm. We have been providing \$400 mini-grants to community members most impacted by the hurricane. Thus far we have distributed over \$100,000 directly into the hands of our residents through referrals from community leaders. Many businesses and concerned citizens have been integral in our ability to raise these funds including the Greater New Orleans Foundation, Hancock Whitney Bank, Mosquito Supper Club, and Mimosa Handcrafted.

“The outpouring of support we have received from around the state, the country and the world has been uplifting, but our people are still hurting. We know we have a long journey ahead of us, and we are committed to helping our community every step of the way,” Raegan Creppell, Executive Director, Helio Foundation.

Our next efforts will be to support our independent commercial fishermen with damaged vessels and our teachers that have lost their educational materials due to damage in their classrooms. We are also working to help expedite temporary housing for those of our residents most in need through a network of concerned citizens contacting legislators and helping to organize media attention on the issue.

In late October, we will take our Rougarou Relief on the road to our bayou communities. Through the support of our sponsors like People’s Drugs, we will cook some of our most popular dishes to share for free with bayou residents to provide a little comfort during such a difficult time. That schedule with locations will be announced as soon as it is developed.

“Our bayou communities are the heartbeat of the Rougarou Fest. Our folklore, our food, our music, our family, our volunteers, our sense of community, all come from the bayou. We will do everything we can to help our people heal from the trauma caused by this storm, and that heartbeat will once again grow strong,” Jonathan Foret, Executive Director, South Louisiana Wetlands Discovery Center.