

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## Oyster Shell-A-Bration heads on down to the Audubon Zoo

*Party at Cajun Ballroom raises money for and promotes CRCL's Oyster Shell Recycling Program*

The Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana is planning a party, and you're invited. The nonprofit's annual Shell-A-Bration will be March 31 at the Audubon Zoo's Cajun Ballroom in New Orleans. The event benefits CRCL's Oyster Shell Recycling Program, through which nearly 13 million pounds of shell have been diverted from landfills and instead returned to the water along Louisiana's coast, where they become reefs that slow erosion. This marks the first time Shell-A-Bration has been held at the zoo.

The family-friendly Shell-A-Bration will start at 7 p.m. It will include live music by Sweet Crude, local foods including Louisiana oysters, local brews, door prizes and a silent auction. There will also be children's activities. Sponsors are PosiGen, EMR, Ryan Gootee General Contractors, Jacobs, Stag Liuzza, River Parish Disposal and Where Y'at. Oysters are provided by Louisiana Seafood, Robin's Oysters and Bayou Rosa Oyster Farm. Abita is donating beer, and many individuals and businesses have donated auction items.

"We're thrilled to bring our Shell-A-Bration to Audubon Zoo," said CRCL Development Director Donna Betzer. "This event doesn't just support our work to restore and protect Louisiana's coast. It's also just plain fun, and it gives people an easy way to play a role in the restoration of our coastal wetlands."

Tickets, which cover the cost of admission and food and drinks, are \$75 per person; for children 2 to 12 years old, the cost is \$25.

Shell-A-Bration celebrates and raises money for the Oyster Shell Recycling Program, one of the largest shell recycling programs in the nation. Through the program, New Orleans-area restaurants and two shell drop-off sites collect shell that otherwise would be sent to a landfill. The shell cures in the sun for several months, then is returned to the water by volunteers and community partners.

CRCL began the program in 2014, using the shell to build five reefs so far. Oyster reefs significantly slow the rate of coastal erosion, and they also create habitat for new oysters to grow, as well as habitat for other wildlife. Reefs also minimize storm surge during hurricanes.

About 2,000 square miles of Louisiana's coastal wetlands have vanished in less than a century, threatening the state's culture, communities and economy. CRCL became the first statewide nonprofit dedicated to restoring Louisiana's coast when it incorporated in 1988. The group, which is a member of the Restore the Mississippi River Delta campaign, holds volunteer events throughout the year.

To learn more about the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana, visit the organization's [website](#).

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*[The Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana](#) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to unite people in action to achieve a thriving, sustainable Louisiana coast for all.*