

# Funded Priorities List 3a Overview



## Funded Priorities List 3 - A Phased Approach

The Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (Council) administers 60% of the RESTORE Trust Fund via two of the five “buckets” pursuant to Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies Act of the Gulf Coast States of 2012 (RESTORE Act). The Council approves projects and programs for Council-Selected Restoration Component or “Bucket 2” funding as set forth in Funded Priorities Lists (FPLs). Thus far, the Council has approved two FPLs.

The Council develops FPLs through collaboration among its members and with feedback from stakeholders across the Gulf. Until recently, the next FPL, referred to as FPL 3, was being developed as a single process. As a result of this collaborative process, the Council determined that developing FPL 3 in two phases would enable them to respond to ecosystem needs and take advantage of important partnership opportunities to advance large-scale ecosystem restoration in the near term. Two large-scale projects, one each in Louisiana and Alabama are proposed in the first phase of FPL 3, referred to as FPL 3a.

In the second phase, referred to as FPL 3b, the Council would consider restoration projects and programs that address additional ecosystem needs across the Gulf, considering proposals that address needs in Texas, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida, including regional and Gulf-wide needs.

## Proposed Projects

Two projects are being considered in draft FPL 3a:

- River Reintroduction into Maurepas Swamp, Louisiana
- Perdido River Land Conservation and Habitat Enhancements, Alabama

More information on these two projects is available at

<https://www.restorethegulf.gov/council-selected-restoration-component/funded-priorities-list-3a>.

## FPL 3a Public Review and Comment Period: December 9, 2019 - January 10, 2020

On December 9, 2019, the RESTORE Council began a 30-day public review and comment period on the draft FPL 3a that is scheduled to conclude at 11:59 pm MT on January 10, 2020. During this time frame, the RESTORE Council will provide an overview of the draft FPL 3a via live public webinars and public meetings. All comments received by the close of the public comment period will be carefully considered in finalizing FPL 3a. The RESTORE Council draft FPL 3a, including final proposals, reviews of those proposals, and member responses to reviews are available at <https://www.restorethegulf.gov/council-selected-restoration-component/funded-priorities-list-3a>.

If you are interested in receiving notifications of upcoming webinars, subscribe to receive the RESTORE Council’s automatic email updates at [www.restorethegulf.gov/contact-us](http://www.restorethegulf.gov/contact-us) and select the “Public Meetings and Public Comment Periods” category in addition to other categories of interest to you.

## Developing a Funded Priorities List

The Council's process for developing FPLs:

- Through the Council's collaboration process, members identify the most promising restoration concepts to consider submitting for funding.
- Council members then submit proposals for specific restoration activities, following proposal submission guidelines. The proposals are reviewed for consistency with the RESTORE Act criteria, and whether all necessary environmental compliance documentation has been obtained.
- Per the submission guidelines, proposals also need to include the identification of a primary Comprehensive Plan goal and objective, and indicate whether it is consistent with the Council's Planning Framework (approved in August 2019). Proposals are reviewed for this information and are also sent out to three external scientists to review for whether the best available science was applied to the proposals. These reviews are then discussed and summarized by an internal best available science review panel. The proposals and their reviews are made publicly available at [www.restorethegulf.gov](http://www.restorethegulf.gov).
- After reviews are completed, the Council then selects projects for inclusion in the draft FPL . That draft FPL is released for public comment.
- With consideration for comments received on the draft, the Council then votes on whether to approve the final FPL.



## Funded Priorities Lists Categories

The Council has developed two funding “categories” for projects and programs included in FPLs:

- FPL Category 1 - signals that funds are approved for the restoration activity
- FPL Category 2 - signals priorities for potential funding; restoration activities in this category have funds budgeted but they are not yet approved
  - This category is used for activities that are not yet ready for funding approval for various reasons. For example, environmental laws may need to be addressed
  - A council vote is needed to move an activity from Category 2 (funds budgeted) to Category 1 (funds approved)