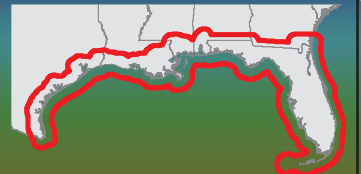




Gulf Coast
Ecosystem
Restoration
Council

Gulf-wide Foundational Investment

Council Monitoring and Assessment Program Development
(DOC_RESTORE_002_001_Cat1)



Project Name: Council Monitoring & Assessment Program Development – Planning

Cost: Category 1: \$2,500,000

Responsible Council Member: Department of Commerce/National Oceanographic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA); and Department of the Interior/U.S. Geological Survey

Partnering Council Members: All, as part of Council Monitoring & Assessment Work Group

Project Details: The monitoring and assessment program, administered jointly by NOAA and the U.S. Geological Survey, will fund the development of basic, foundational components for Gulf region-wide monitoring to measure beneficial impacts of investments in Gulf restoration by the RESTORE Council. The program, in coordination with the Gulf of Mexico Alliance (GOMA) and through collaboration with the Gulf States, Federal and local partners, academia, non-governmental organizations, and business and industry, will leverage existing resources, capacities, and expertise and build on existing monitoring data and programs. The program will also utilize a Community of Practice (CoP) in coordination with GOMA (funded through AL_RESTORE_002_001_Cat1) to gain substantial input from partners.

Activities: The Council Monitoring and Assessment Program will conduct an inventory and gap analysis of existing data and monitoring systems; develop and provide recommendations to the Council for common standards and protocols for monitoring; establish metrics needed to measure the influence of water quality and habitat restoration; establish baseline habitat and water quality conditions; and provide recommendations to supplement and refine existing monitoring programs to address information gaps and future needs.

The minimum monitoring and assessment standards will be used to efficiently evaluate and report on the effectiveness of Council-selected restoration projects and programs, and assess progress towards reaching the Council's comprehensive ecosystem restoration goals and objectives.

The program will also support the Council in its yearly reporting requirements to Congress.

Environmental Benefits: The program will enable the Council to achieve its mission of science-based comprehensive Gulf ecosystem restoration. This includes providing a program that supports the Council's decision-making process and assists in prioritizing management needs, selecting and implementing restoration actions, and measuring the results of individual projects to determine progress and adjust course as needed. The program will be developed to provide information pertinent to individual projects as well as regional information for use in evaluating progress toward the Council's goal of comprehensive, Gulf-wide restoration.

Duration: Completion of the Category 1 activities will take three years.

More information on this activity can be found in Appendix K. Gulf-wide; Unique Identifier:
DOC RESTORE 002 001 Cat1.DOC RESTORE 002 001 Cat1.