

Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Performance Plan

February 2023

This report is available on the internet at [RESTORE Council Website](#).

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Preface

Established by the Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act of 2012, or the [RESTORE Act](#), codified at 33 U.S.C. § 1321 (t), the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (RESTORE Council or Council) is comprised of five Governors from the Gulf Coast States of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas (States), the Secretaries from the U.S. Departments of the Interior, Army, Commerce, Agriculture, and Homeland Security, and the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency currently serves as the Council's Chairperson.

The RESTORE Act dedicated 80% of all Clean Water Act administrative and civil penalties arising from the *Deepwater Horizon* (DWH) oil spill to the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund (Trust Fund) and established the Council as an independent entity within the Federal government. The Council administers the expenditure of 60% of the funds deposited in the Trust Fund. The majority of the Trust Fund's receipts are from BP Exploration & Production Inc. ("BP") over a 15-year period ending in 2031. The Council was formally established in 2012 with the mission of implementing a long-term comprehensive plan for the ecological and economic recovery of the Gulf Coast region.

Funding for RESTORE projects is limited to amounts available in the Trust Fund. Under the Council-Selected Restoration Component of the Act, 30 percent of available funding is administered for Gulf-wide ecosystem restoration and protection. The Council-Selected Restoration Component funding decisions are guided by criteria set forth in the RESTORE Act and the [2022 Comprehensive Plan Update: Restoring the Gulf Coast's Ecosystem and Economy](#) ([2022 Comprehensive Plan Update](#)). This is the second update to the *2013 Initial Comprehensive Plan: Restoring the Gulf Coast's Ecosystem and Economy* ([2013 Initial Comprehensive Plan](#)). The 2022 Comprehensive Plan Update provides the public with updates to the strategic guidance that the Council established to effectively administer its roles and responsibilities, and other policies, including the Council's [2019 Planning Framework](#). The remaining 30 percent is allocated to the states under the Spill Impact Component of the Act, according to a formula and regulation approved by the Council in December 2015. Spill Impact Component funds are spent according to individual State Expenditure Plans (SEPs), developed by each state Council member, that contribute to the overall economic and ecological recovery of the Gulf. The SEPs must adhere to criteria set forth in the Act and are subject to approval by the Council chair in accordance with those criteria.

In cooperation with our restoration partners, the Council is striving to establish a benchmark for collaborative work while facilitating efficient and responsible implementation of large-scale restoration projects across the Gulf. The Council recognizes its unique and unprecedented opportunity to implement a restoration effort in a way that restores and protects the Gulf Coast environment, reinvigorates local economies and creates jobs in the region. Further, the Council is committed to working with Gulf communities and partners to invest in actions, projects, and programs that will ensure the long-term environmental health and economic prosperity of the Gulf Coast region. In FY 2022, the Council awarded more than \$147M through completion of 69 award actions (41 amendments and 23 new awards) to carry out projects and programs under the RESTORE Act, bringing the total amount awarded to \$657.7M: \$271.1M from the Council-Selected Restoration Component, and \$386.7M from the Spill Impact Component.

This report is available on the internet at the [RESTORE Council Website](#).

Introduction

This document provides the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council's Annual Performance Plan for FY2025 which is used to communicate the agency's strategic objectives and performance goals with other elements of the agency budget request. The plan describes how the goals will be achieved, identifies priorities among the goals and explains how the agency will monitor progress.

The Gulf Coast region is vital to our Nation and our economy, providing valuable energy resources, abundant seafood, extraordinary beaches and recreational activities, and a rich cultural heritage. Its waters and coasts are home to one of the most diverse environments in the world—including over 15,000 species of sea life. More than 22 million Americans live in Gulf coastal counties and parishes, working in crucial U.S. industries like commercial seafood, recreational fishing, tourism, and oil and gas production. The region also boasts of a significant shipping industry with 10 of America's 15 largest ports accounting for nearly a trillion dollars in trade each year.

Despite the tremendous economic, social and ecological importance of the Gulf Coast region, the health of the region's ecosystem has been significantly impacted, most recently by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, as well as by chronic and acute harm caused by other past and ongoing human actions. Restoring an area as large and complex as the Gulf Coast region is a costly and multi-generational undertaking. Over the past several decades, the Gulf Coast region has experienced loss of critical wetlands, erosion of barrier islands, imperiled fisheries, water quality degradation leading to, among many other impacts, one of the world's largest hypoxic zones every year, alteration of hydrology, and other cumulative environmental impacts (e.g., an area the size of a football field are lost every hour in coastal Louisiana). While hurricanes (such as Ida, Michael, Katrina, Rita, Gustav and Ike), subsidence and other natural forces are also key factors in land loss, this may be exacerbated by human actions which have greatly reduced ecosystem resilience and thus made coastal wetlands more vulnerable to these natural stressors.

The Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council is playing a key role in helping to ensure that the Gulf's natural resources are sustainable and available for future generations. Use of the Gulf restoration funds represent a great responsibility. The ongoing involvement of the people who live, work and play in the Gulf region is critical to ensuring that these monies are used wisely and effectively.

Scope of Responsibilities

The Council was formally established in 2015 as a new, independent Federal Agency with a clear mission to implement a long-term, comprehensive plan for the ecological and economic recovery of the Gulf Coast region. Unlike most federal agencies, the Council does not receive funds through the annual federal appropriations process (all funds are received through the Trust Fund (Trust Fund)); however, the Council does appear in the Appendix to the President's Budget.

The RESTORE Act and Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund

Signed into law in July 2012 the [RESTORE Act](#) (33 U.S.C §1321(t) and *note*) enacted as an amendment to the federal *Clean Water Act* (or *Federal Water Pollution Control Act*), created the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund (Trust Fund) in the U.S. Department of the Treasury. The Act established the Council and the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund (Trust Fund); the latter receives 80 percent of the civil and

administrative penalties assessed under the Clean Water Act (CWA) resulting from the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill.

On January 3, 2013, the United States announced that Transocean Deepwater Inc. and related entities had agreed to pay \$1 billion (plus interest) in civil penalties for violating the Clean Water Act in relation to their conduct in the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill. In accordance with the Consent Decree, Transocean has paid all three of its installments of civil penalties plus interest to the U.S. Department of Justice. The U.S. Department of Justice has transferred 80% of these funds to the Treasury Department for deposit into the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund, totaling \$816M. On November 20, 2015, the federal court for the Eastern District Court of Louisiana ordered Anadarko Petroleum Corp. to pay a \$159.5M civil fine; of this amount, \$128M, including interest, has been deposited in the Trust Fund. Anadarko was the last defendant in the *Deepwater Horizon* spill Clean Water Act litigation.

On April 4, 2016, a federal court in New Orleans entered a Consent Decree resolving civil claims against BP arising from the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill ([United States vs. BPXP et al.](#)). The resolution of civil claim totals for entities held responsible for the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill will yield more than \$20 billion, the largest civil penalties ever awarded under any environmental statute, and the largest recovery of damages for injuries to natural resources of The United States. Of these penalties, the RESTORE Act will provide \$5.33 billion (80% of \$6.659 billion) to the Trust Fund, based on the following: \$1 billion (plus interest) in civil penalties from Transocean Deepwater Inc. and related entities for violating the Clean Water Act in relation to their conduct in the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill; \$159.5M from a civil fine paid by Anadarko Petroleum Corporation; and \$5.5 billion (plus interest) from BP Exploration and Production, Inc. (BP) for a Clean Water Act civil penalty under the April 4, 2016 Consent Decree, payable over a fifteen-year period at approximately \$91M per year through 2031.

In FY2022, the Council approved the [2022 Comprehensive Plan Update: Restoring the Gulf Coast's Ecosystem and Economy](#) (2022 Comprehensive Plan Update). This is the second update to the *2013 Initial Comprehensive Plan: Restoring the Gulf Coast's Ecosystem and Economy* ([2013 Initial Comprehensive Plan](#)). This 2022 Comprehensive Plan Update provides the public with updates to the strategic guidance that the Council established to effectively administer its roles and responsibilities. Additionally, it provides summary information regarding progress the Council has made to date on its goals, objectives, and commitments as outlined in the first update, *2016 Comprehensive Plan Update: Restoring the Gulf Coast's Ecosystem & Economy* ([2016 Comprehensive Plan Update](#)), including the effectiveness of its use of general planning funds provided in the 2017 Commitment and Planning Support (CPS) FPL in meeting those commitments. In the 2022 Comprehensive Plan Update, the Council describes its progress toward its commitments thus far, and establishes a baseline that the Council will build upon. Further, the Council builds upon these commitments in this 2022 Comprehensive Plan Update by highlighting the importance of efficient, effective, and transparent environmental compliance. While language regarding environmental compliance was included in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update, the Council is now elevating this to a stand-alone commitment.

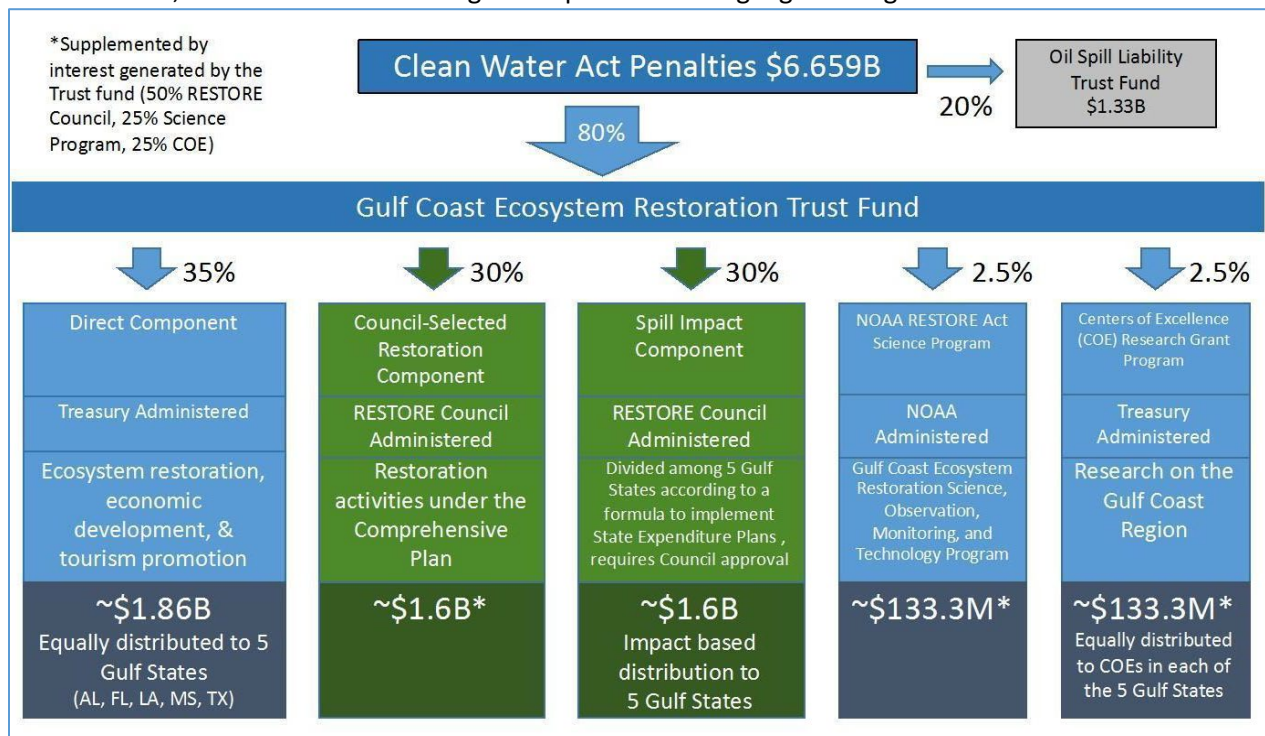
The Council's six updated commitments are:

- Taking a regional ecosystem-based approach to restoration;
- Leveraging resources and partnerships;

- Maintaining and enhancing public engagement, inclusion, and transparency;
- Providing efficient, effective, and transparent environmental compliance;
- Applying science-based decision-making; and
- Delivering results and measuring impacts.

Pursuant to the RESTORE Act, the Council is responsible for administering a portion of the funds associated with settlement of civil penalties against parties responsible for the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill. Specifically, the Council is responsible for administering two funding sources: The Council-Selected Restoration Component and the Spill Impact Component. Both components for which the Council is responsible each receive 30% of the funds allocated under the RESTORE Act (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Allocation of the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund based on settlements with BP, Transocean and Anadarko; RESTORE Council oversight components are highlighted in green.



Council-Selected Restoration Component

2015 Initial Funded Priority List

In 2015, the Council approved the [2015 Initial Funded Priority List \(2015 Initial FPL\)](#) for approximately \$156.6M in restoration activities such as hydrologic restoration, land conservation, and planning for large-scale restoration projects. The funding for the 2015 Initial FPL came from the settlement of CWA civil penalties against Transocean Deepwater Inc. and related entities. When it approved the 2015 Initial FPL, the Council did not know the amount and timing of additional funding that could be obtained from the then-ongoing litigation with British Petroleum (BP). The 2015 Initial FPL was organized around ten watersheds/estuaries across the Gulf to concentrate and leverage available funds to address critical ecosystem needs in high priority locations. The Council's decisions were informed by stakeholder input and the best available science associated with a variety of factors, including widely-recognized ecological

stressors, foundational investment needed to respond to those stressors, building on other funded conservation actions, and socioeconomic and cultural considerations. Activities were selected to provide near-term ecological results while also completing planning and science decision-support tools that may provide for future success.

Infusing Collaboration into the Process

Building on the strong foundation established in the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force¹ Gulf of Mexico Regional Ecosystem Restoration Strategy and other local, regional, state, and federal plans, the Council is taking an integrated and coordinated approach to Gulf Coast restoration. This approach strives to both restore the Gulf Coast region's environment and, at the same time, revitalize the region's economy because the Council recognizes that ecosystem restoration investments may also improve economic prosperity and quality of life. In addition, this approach acknowledges that coordinated action with other partners is crucial to successfully restore and sustain the health of the Gulf Coast region.

The RESTORE Council is using a collaborative process to help ensure that Council-Selected Restoration Component funded projects and programs complement restoration being accomplished through other funding streams. The funding available through the Council, as well as the other DWH-related funding sources (including other components of the RESTORE Act, Natural Resource and Damage Assessment (DWH NRDA), and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund (NFWF GEBF)) presents an unprecedented opportunity to restore Gulf ecosystem conditions and functions, representing one of the most substantial investments in landscape-level restoration in U.S. history. However, these funds will not fully address all the ecosystem restoration needs of the Gulf given the multiple stressors impacting the region, ranging from man-made sources like the DWH oil spill disaster, water quality/quantity issues and the annual offshore hypoxic zone, as well as naturally-occurring impacts including hurricanes. Because of these large-scale stressors and ever-changing conditions of these coastal environments, it is infeasible to restore the Gulf to conditions that were present at a specific time in the past. By working collaboratively among the Council members and with other DWH-related funding sources, as well as working with other federal, state, and philanthropic funds, great strides can be achieved to increase the resiliency of the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem against these stressors.

A review of the process used to develop the 2015 Initial FPL was conducted that included input from both Council members and the public. Following completion of this review, the Council developed the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update ([2016 Comprehensive Plan Update](#)) which further emphasized the Council's commitments to collaborate among members, potential funding partners, and the public; increase public engagement and transparency; and refine its best available science (BAS) practices.

2017 Commitment and Planning Support (2017 CPS FPL)

To advance these commitments, the Council approved a second FPL in January 2018, referred to as the *2017 Commitment and Planning Support FPL* ([2017 CPS FPL](#)). Rather than funding specific restoration projects or programs, the 2017 CPS FPL dedicates funds over a five-year period to help Council members meet 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update commitments and identify potential areas for future FPL proposal development. Council members have used 2017 CPS FPL funds to pay for travel to

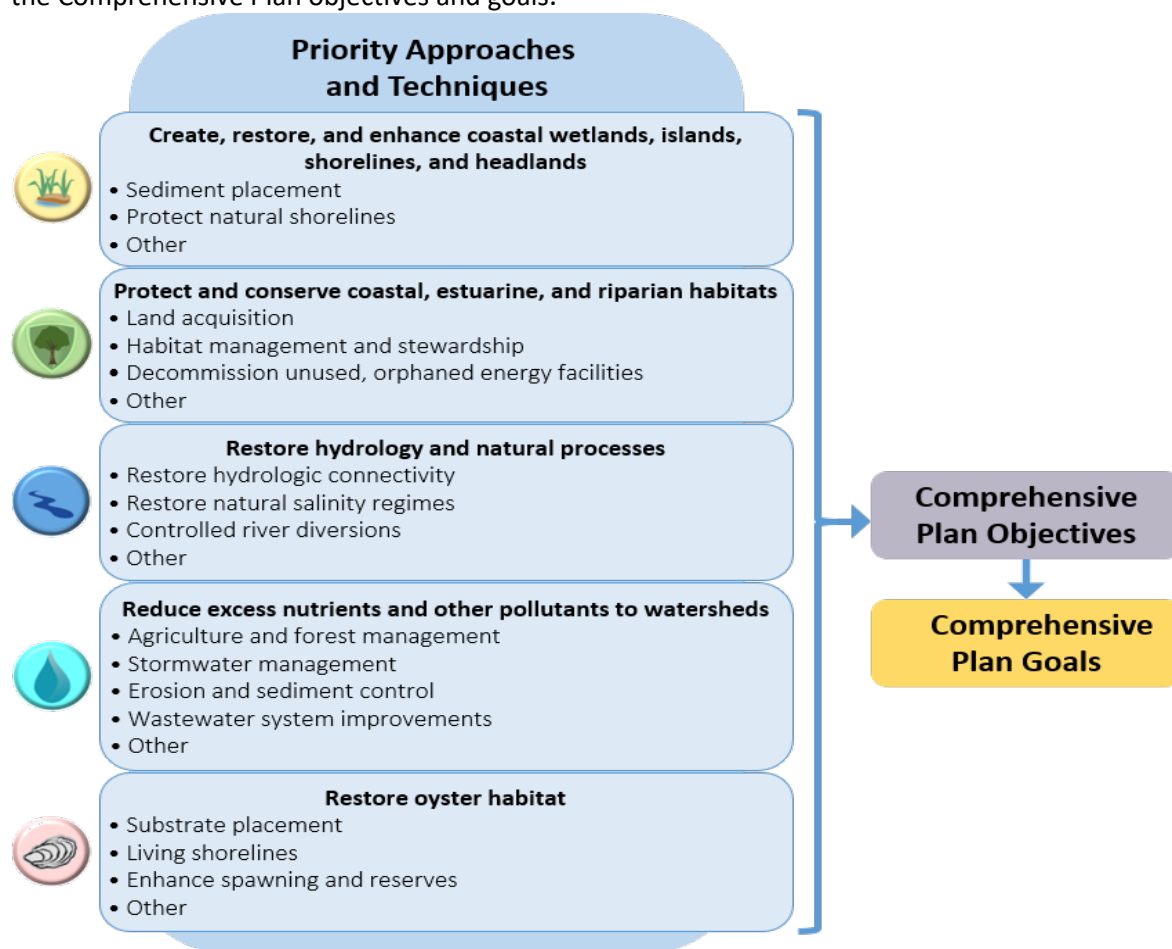
¹ The Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force was created by President Obama through an Executive Order on October 5, 2010, and was the result of a recommendation made in [Secretary Mabus' report](#) on long term recovery following the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill..

meetings and to develop and implement processes for working with potential funding partners (including other *Deepwater Horizon* funding sources), stakeholders, and the public to generate project ideas. Council members held meetings throughout the Gulf to discuss ecosystem restoration concepts and potential techniques to address environmental challenges and stressors throughout the Gulf.

Planning Framework

One of the most significant actions the Council has taken to improve performance was the development of the Council's [2019 Planning Framework](#) which strategically links past and future restoration funding decisions to the overarching goals and objectives outlined in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update. The Planning Framework indicates priorities designed to continue building on previous investments, while expanding opportunities to meet all Comprehensive Plan goals and objectives in the future. The Planning Framework lists priority restoration approaches and techniques (Figure 2) their relationship to the Comprehensive Plan goals and objectives, and associated geographic areas.

Figure 2. The 2019 Planning Framework priority approaches and techniques can be applied to support the Comprehensive Plan objectives and goals.



Funded Priorities List 3 (FPL 3a-2020; FPL 3b-2021)

It was through the collaborative process supported by FPL 2 that the Council recognized that developing FPL 3 in two phases would enable the Council to fund projects requiring near-term attention and take advantage of important partnership opportunities to advance large-scale ecosystem restoration, as well

as identifying programs that seek watershed-level benefits for Gulf resources, and restoration initiatives that leverage funds with other government programs for greater benefits.

Approved a little more than one year apart, 2020 FPL 3a and 2021 FPL 3b provide funding for priority ecosystem restoration activities throughout the Gulf of Mexico. The activities contained in FPL 3a and 3b reflected lessons learned from the 2015 Initial FPL process and commitments made in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update and further emphasized in the 2022 Comprehensive Plan update. This approach to identifying priority restoration activities acknowledges the interconnected nature of coastal and marine ecosystems. It also recognizes the importance of addressing system-wide stressors that reduce ecosystem health. FPLs 3a and b advanced this concept by investing in programmatic approaches to address the ecosystem needs in certain geographic areas.

2020 FPL 3a includes two large-scale ecosystem restoration projects: one in Alabama and the other in Louisiana. 2021 FPL 3b includes an additional 20 activities to address additional ecosystem needs across the Gulf coast region. The Council applied the 2019 Planning Framework, public comment, best available science determinations, and internal administrative procedures to support its funding decisions. 2021 FPL 3b contains many programs intended to address large-scale ecosystem problems that result in water quality impairment, coastal habitat loss and degradation, and coastal resilience challenges through the implementation of specific projects within those programs. For some programs, specific projects were not identified at the time 2021 FPL 3b was finalized. Rather, the FPL describes the priority issues that the programs aim to address in order to meet specified goals and objectives, the Planning Framework approaches that will be utilized, the decision processes that will be or have been followed to identify projects over time, and the metrics that will be used to determine whether the programs are meeting their stated goals and objectives. The Council believes that selecting and implementing projects within these programs will allow for a more systematic approach to addressing ecosystem-level problems within high priority watersheds. The Council also anticipates that by approving funds for these priority programs, additional partners may become interested over time.

Spill Impact Component

Under the Spill Impact Component of the Act (“Bucket 3”), the remaining 30% of amounts in the Trust Fund administered by the Council is allocated to the state Council members (except for Florida, where funds are allocated to a consortium of 23 affected Florida counties (“Consortium”). On December 9, 2015, the RESTORE Council voted to approve a [final rule](#) for allocation of the Spill Impact Component funds and disbursed to each state. The rule became effective on April 4, 2015 when the Federal court in Louisiana approved and entered the Consent Decree. Using the information set forth in the rule, the allocation of funds among the five states is:

- Alabama – 20.40%;
- Florida – 18.36%;
- Louisiana – 34.59%;
- Mississippi – 19.07%; and
- Texas – 7.58%.

Spill Impact component funds are spent according to individual State Expenditure Plans (SEPs) developed by each state member (in Florida, by the Consortium) that set forth programs contributing to the overall economic and ecological recovery of the Gulf. In 2016 the Council updated the [Guidelines](#) that describe required SEP elements, the process for submitting SEPs, and the criteria set forth in the Act under which the Council Chair must approve or disapprove SEPs.

Funds for projects in approved SEPs are disbursed to the state Council members (in Florida, to the Consortium) via grants when the requisite funds become available in the Trust Fund. As with Council-Selected Restoration, all activities for which Spill Impact component funding is sought are carefully reviewed to ensure consistency with the applicable SEP and compliance with the RESTORE Act and all other applicable requirements, including the use of BAS and compliance with all applicable federal environmental laws.

Strategic Goals

One of the Council's primary responsibilities when it was first established was to develop an Initial Comprehensive Plan to restore the ecosystem and economy of the Gulf Coast region. To provide the overarching framework for an integrated and coordinated approach for region-wide Gulf Coast restoration and help guide the collective actions at the local, state, tribal and federal levels, the Council has adopted five Strategic Goals in the [2013 Initial Comprehensive Plan](#), recommitting to them (with the addition of Water Quantity to Strategic Goal 2) in the [2016 Comprehensive Plan Update](#):

- **Strategic Goal 1:** Restore and Conserve Habitat – Restore and conserve the health, diversity, and resilience of key coastal, estuarine, and marine habitats;
- **Strategic Goal 2:** Restore Water Quality and Quantity – Restore and protect water quality of the Gulf Coast region's fresh, estuarine, and marine waters;
- **Strategic Goal 3:** Replenish and Protect Living Coastal and Marine Resources – Restore and protect healthy, diverse, and sustainable living coastal and marine resources;
- **Strategic Goal 4:** Enhance Community Resilience – Build upon and sustain communities with capacity to adapt to short- and long-term changes; and
- **Strategic Goal 5:** Restore and Revitalize the Gulf Economy – Enhance the sustainability and resiliency of the Gulf economy. The fifth goal focuses on reviving and supporting a sustainable Gulf economy to ensure that those expenditures by the Gulf Coast States authorized in the RESTORE Act under the Direct Component (administered by the Department of the Treasury) and the Spill Impact Component can be considered in the context of comprehensive restoration.

To achieve all five goals, the Council supports ecosystem restoration that can enhance local communities by giving people desirable places to live, work, and play, while creating opportunities for new and existing businesses of all sizes, especially those dependent on natural resources. In addition, the Council will support ecosystem restoration that builds local workforce capacity.

Strategic Objectives

The Council will select and fund projects and programs that restore and protect the natural resources, ecosystems, water quality, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches, and coastal wetlands of the Gulf Coast region. Projects and programs not within the scope of these Strategic Objectives for ecosystem restoration will not be funded under the Council-Selected Restoration Component. The Strategic Objectives are not listed in any particular order, and the Council does not anticipate that restoration efforts funded under the Council-Selected Restoration Component will be equally distributed among these objectives. Further, restoration projects and programs are likely to achieve multiple objectives simultaneously.

- **Strategic Objective 1:** Restore, Enhance, and Protect Habitats – Restore, enhance, and protect the extent, functionality, resiliency, and sustainability of coastal, freshwater, estuarine, wildlife, and marine habitats. These include barrier islands, beaches, dunes, coastal wetlands, coastal

forests, pine savannahs, coastal prairies, submerged aquatic vegetation, oyster reefs, and shallow and deep-water corals.

- **Strategic Objective 2:** Restore, Improve, and Protect Water Resources – Restore, improve, and protect the Gulf Coast region’s fresh, estuarine, and marine water resources by reducing or treating nutrient and pollutant loading; and improving the management of freshwater flows, discharges to and withdrawals from critical systems.
- **Strategic Objective 3:** Protect and Restore Living Coastal and Marine Resources – Restore and protect healthy, diverse, and sustainable living coastal and marine resources including finfish, shellfish, birds, mammals, reptiles, coral, and deep benthic communities.
- **Strategic Objective 4:** Restore and Enhance Natural Processes and Shorelines – Restore and enhance ecosystem resilience, sustainability, and natural defenses through the restoration of natural coastal, estuarine, and riverine processes, and/or the restoration of natural shorelines.
- **Strategic Objective 5:** Promote Community Resilience – Build and sustain Gulf Coast communities’ capacity to adapt to short- and long-term natural and man-made hazards, particularly increased flood risks associated with sea-level rise and environmental stressors. Promote ecosystem restoration that enhances community resilience through the re-establishment of non-structural, natural buffers against storms and flooding.
- **Strategic Objective 6:** Promote Natural Resource Stewardship and Environmental Education – Promote and enhance natural resource stewardship efforts that include formal and informal educational opportunities, professional development and training, communication, and actions for all ages.
- **Strategic Objective 7:** Objective Improve Science-Based Decision-Making Processes – Improve science-based decision-making processes used by the Council.
- **Management Focused Strategic Objective:** Organizational Excellence – Council staff will provide exceptional service to Council members, partner state and federal agencies, and public, private, and other stakeholders to support the Council’s efforts to achieve integrated and coordinated efforts for region-wide Gulf Coast restoration.

Performance Metrics

Over its lifetime, the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council will invest over \$3 billion dollars in Gulf Coast ecosystem and economic restoration activities. These investments will not only advance the Council’s goal of comprehensive Gulf restoration, but also result in diverse scientific and economic data observations which can be used to demonstrate the benefits of Council investments. The RESTORE Council recognizes the importance of comprehensive planning for the collection and compilation of data that can be compared across projects. Comparable data enables reporting at multiple scales, including project- and program-specific scales, as well as potential future larger-scale assessments across the Gulf. To facilitate consistent data collection and management, RESTORE Council projects/programs are required to develop an Observational Data Plan (ODP) as part of the Council’s financial award process.

In 2021 the Council updated its [ODP Guidelines](#) to provide guidance to the Council’s grant and IAA recipients on the selection of metrics, parameters and monitoring methodologies for Council funded activities. The Council has currently identified 61 [performance-level metrics that are organized by the Planning Framework restoration approaches and techniques being implemented by a project or program](#). These metrics are used to monitor and evaluate the efficacy of projects and programs in meeting the mission goals and objectives of the Council and track annual performance. Based on the 2019 Submission Guidelines and 2021 ODP Guidelines, metrics selected should be:

- Objective;
- Quantifiable;
- Accompanied by targets (success criteria);
- Consistent across program activities (e.g., water quality benefits);
- Identified in proposals with details provided in application ODPs; and
- Able to support the goals and objectives.

Performance Goals and Indicators for Fiscal Year 2025

Mission Performance Goals

The Mission Performance Goals include the core functions and activities of Federal agencies that are reflected in statutory requirements or leadership priorities and which serve to drive their efforts in addressing pressing and relevant national problems, needs, and challenges (OMB A-11, Section 240).

Performance Goal 1: Promote a Gulf-Wide Comprehensive Approach to Restoration

Effective and efficient advancement of the Council’s vision for “A healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem achieved through collaboration on strategic restoration projects and programs.”

Performance Indicator 1.1:

A Gulf-wide comprehensive restoration approach is applied to meet the Council’s Goals and Objectives through the collaborative consideration of changing policy, public input, and other planning considerations by Council members and interested stakeholders to maximize the Council’s “return on investment.”

Performance Indicator 1.2:

Application of best available science (BAS) used in the selection and execution of RESTORE projects under both the Council-Selected Restoration and State Expenditure Plan components of the RESTORE Act, and clearly documents and communicates risks and uncertainties.

Performance Goal 2: Council-Selected Restoration Component Performance Excellence

Effective and efficient implementation and administration of the Council-Selected Restoration Program to achieve the goals of the Act.

Performance Indicator 2.1:

The 2022 Comprehensive Plan Update and Planning Framework are used as a foundation in the development of ecosystem restoration strategies in support of completing the next Funded Priority List in 2026.

Performance Indicator 2.2:

Best Available Science, and adaptive and data management principles are utilized in the development of Funded Priorities Lists and evaluation of FPL amendments.

Performance Indicator 2.3:

Efficiency of the Environmental Compliance processes to support Council actions is advanced through:

- Effective processes for the determination of environmental compliance of Category 2 projects for funding consideration by the Council are developed to support the evaluation of the efficacy of*

moving Category 2 projects to Category 1.

- b) The efficiency and effectiveness of Council environmental compliance is enhanced by the Council participation in the interagency regulatory efficiency team and the sharing of efficiency tools and practices.*
- c) Achieve Gulf Coast interagency environmental regulatory efficiency by promoting coordination and collaboration with regulatory agency partners.*

Performance Indicator 2.4:

Applications under the Council-Selected Restoration Component include relevant and adequate justification for the selection of particular metrics and an adequate proposal for scientific monitoring. Reported progress towards metrics provides a useful gauge of the success of the project or program. Reports include a description of the methodology for quantifying results for each metric and monitoring the achievement of the metrics.

Performance Indicator 2.4:

Relationships significantly contribute to synergy and cooperation between the Council, other RESTORE partners, stakeholders and other external environmental entities to achieve gulf-wide goals and objectives in the development of FPLs.

Performance Goal 3: Spill Impact Component Performance Excellence

Effective and efficient implementation and administration of the Spill Impact Program achieve the goals of the Act.

Performance Indicator 3.1:

Best Available Science principles are utilized in the development of projects and programs, and evaluation of amendments.

Performance Indicator 3.2:

Applications for funding under the Spill Impact Program include relevant and adequate justification for the selection of particular metrics and an adequate proposal for scientific monitoring. Reported progress towards metrics provides a useful gauge of the success of the project or program. Reports include a description of the methodology for quantifying results for each metric and monitoring the achievement of the metrics.

Stewardship Goals

The Stewardship Goals respond to the responsibilities of Federal agencies to provide appropriate safeguards in executing mission and service-related activities effectively and efficiently, including minimizing instances of waste, fraud, and abuse (OMB A-11, Section 240).

Performance Goal 4: Operational Excellence

An administrative infrastructure that supports team work, collaboration, synergy between functional areas and overall operational excellence to provide excellent services, programs and outcomes to the Gulf Coast region is maintained.

Performance Indicator 4:1

A Council operational budget is developed using strategic direction that conserves resources, are sufficient to achieve operational stability and efficiency, and addresses emergent requirements within

approved levels.

Performance Indicator 4.2:

Effective internal controls and financial management systems that meet the objectives of the Federal Manager's Financial Integrity Act are established and maintained.

Performance Indicator 4.3:

All Council operations required by the RESTORE Act are monitored and audited by the Department of Treasury OIG, and audit recommendations are promptly implemented. OIG audit findings and recommendations are addressed in a timely manner.

Performance Indicator 4.4:

Human Capital Management: [The Government Performance and Results Act Modernization Act of 2010](#) (GPRAMA) requires agencies to indicate how human capital management will support agency strategic goals.

- a) *Human Capital Operating Plan (HCOP) – The HCOP developed during FY2022 is applied to ensure the agency's human capital strategies and actions are aligned and integrated with agency strategic plans and Governmentwide workforce priorities.*
- b) *Decisions regarding human resources and HR requirements support a steady-state operational mode recognizing that the last RESTORE funds will be received in April 2032, with continuing operations through 2042 before the agency sunsets.*

Performance Indicator 4.5:

Requisite reports including the Annual Finance Report and Annual Report to Congress are submitted in timely manner.

Performance Goal 5: Management Excellence

Council staff will provide exceptional service to the Council members and their accompanying state and federal agencies, as well to the many stakeholders associated with restoration of the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem by meeting programmatic, administrative and customer service objectives.

Performance Indicator 5.1:

Programmatic, Management and Compliance Elements of Grant and Interagency Agreements under the Council-Selected and Spill Impact Components are achieved by:

- a) *The programmatic, and grants review of grant and Interagency Agreement applications for funding under Council-Selected and Spill Impact Components meets timelines established by the RESTORE Act, 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Council Guidelines and the Notice of Funds Availability.*
- b) *Post-award management and oversight is carried out for all grants and Interagency Agreements. Pre- and post-award reviews ensure compliance with all administrative and regulatory requirements under the RESTORE Act, the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, support mitigation of applicable critical risks in the Council Risk Profile and IPERA, and meet other federal regulatory requirements.*

Performance Indicator 5.2:

Organizational Risk Assessed and Risk Mitigation Factors are Employed.

- a) *Organizational risk assessment recommendations meet all OMB Circular A-123 requirements; documentation of tactical level risk mitigation activities is complete, including Improper Payments and Elimination and Recovery Act (IPERA), the Uniform Guidance (2 CFR Part 200 - Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards), and the President's Management Agenda.*
- b) *Completion of project and program site visits serve as useful tools to provide technical assistance to our recipients while simultaneously mitigating critical risks on the Council's external risk profile.*
- c) *Comply with all requirements under FISMA including submission of timely reports.*
- d) *Organizational Risk is Assessed and Risk Mitigation Factors Employed.*

Service Goals

The Service Goals speak to the activities that reflect the interaction(s) between individual citizens or businesses and Federal agencies in providing a direct service on behalf of the Federal Government, and which is core to the mission of the agency (OMB A-11, Section 240).

Performance Goal 6: Engagement Through Inclusion and Transparency

The Council staff will provide engagement opportunities that reflect the richness and diversity of the Gulf Coast communities to ensure ongoing public participation in the Council's restoration efforts.

Performance Indicator 6.1:

Activities of the Council are effectively communicated to stakeholders to ensure the goals and objectives of the Council are broadly understood and the concerns of stakeholders are addressed. The stakeholders include, but are not limited to, RESTORE Council federal & state partners, Tribes, the diverse communities, NGOs, and other interested stakeholders.

Performance Indicator 6.2:

Development and maintenance of content for RESTORE Council's website, print and electronic publications, and the organization's visual identity are consistent with the policies of the RESTORE Council to serve to broaden public understanding of Council programs.