

Council Monitoring and Assessment Workgroup 2022-2023 Annual Work Plan

1. Purpose

Following the RESTORE Council approved Council Monitoring and Adaptive Management Guidelines the Council Monitoring and Assessment Work Group (CMAWG) will continue to support the RESTORE Council in meeting its commitments to monitoring and adaptive management (MAM), and the use of Best Available Science. This group will continue to encourage compatibility of monitoring and data management procedures and serve as a forum for the Council to collectively address MAM topics relevant to multiple Council member agencies. The group will continue to support the individual Council member agencies, upon request, in meeting their MAM responsibilities. The CMAWG will continue to provide recommendations to the Council regarding MAM commitments, procedures, and guidelines.

This document represents the CMAWG's annual work plan for 2022-2023 and provides a description of the work group composition, priority and ongoing tasks, requested funding, and level of effort for the year.

2. Work Group Composition

The CMAWG consists of one primary and one alternate representative from each Council member (five states; six federal agencies). Council member agencies may also provide additional representatives to serve on topic-specific subgroups (restoration type monitoring standards, data management, etc.).

3. 2022-2023 Directives

3.1. Priority Tasks

The RESTORE Council will direct all activities of the CMAWG. The following activities are recommended for July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023:

- 1) Design and conduct a table-top exercise to further evaluate potential approaches for the Council to assess its activities beyond the project scale, and to identify barriers and strategies to address 'beyond project scale' monitoring/assessment. Products from this assessment could include:
 - a) Aggregating a subset of Council metrics and monitoring parameters to evaluate the Council's progress towards meeting its Comprehensive Plan goals and objectives through implementation of Planning Framework approaches and/or techniques in one or more geographic locations.
 - b) Developing one or more conceptual models to help qualitatively describe the larger-scale benefits of, or threats to, Council funded activities (e.g. how Council activities fit within a restoration "mosaic").

- c) Identifying opportunities for improved consistency across Council-funded activities (e.g. monitoring parameters/protocols). The results of this activity could be used to inform potential updates to the ODP Guidelines, such as inclusion of supplemental guidance, recommendations, or other resources.

- 2) Develop draft FY23-24 CMAWG Workplan.

3.2. Ongoing tasks

- 1) Assist Council member agencies, as requested, in meeting their MAM responsibilities.
- 2) Continue to assess Council MAM priorities and guidance and make recommendations to the Steering Committee, as needed. Assess need for database enhancements to the Gulf of Mexico Long-Term Monitoring Network Inventory database and web-services.
- 3) Continue external coordination on MAM topics, such as:
 - a) Engage with other restoration and science programs in the Gulf of Mexico (e.g., NRDA Cross-TIG MAM, GOMA).
 - b) Develop processes and mechanisms to engage with programs and/or additional subject matter experts, as needed.
- 4) Obtain feedback (and lessons learned) from Council member agencies on the use of MAM products and guidance. This includes:
 - a) Assessing the need for Observational Data Plan Guidance updates following Council staff solicitation of feedback from end users. This assessment could include:
 - i) Updating Observational Data Plan templates for improved functionality.
 - ii) Updating Observational Data Plan guidance on data management and data coordination activities.

4. Requested Funding

4.1. Total Request

Funding for CMAWG member participation and travel costs will be covered by individual Council member's Comprehensive Planning Support (CPS) funds, and covers approximately July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023. All CPS awards extend through summer of 2023 (specific end dates vary). Annual workplans for CPS awards should include funding needed to cover these activities.

4.2. Level of Effort

Per Council Monitoring and Adaptive Management Guidelines, Council staff will provide the coordination and facilitation of CMAWG activities and work products. Details regarding CMAWG member level(s) of effort are provided below.

4.2.1. All CMAWG Members

- Participation in conference calls approximately every four weeks (1.5 hours), plus time for meeting preparation, to review draft work products, provide Council feedback, and resolve comments as needed to prepare workgroup products for the RESTORE Council.
- Travel to and participation in up to two in-person meetings (in total for the year) for more detailed discussions of guidance documents, and other topics.
- Provide input on Council MAM activities such as dataset availability, data aggregation approaches, and reporting options. Review all draft CMAWG MAM products.
- External MAM coordination support.

4.2.2. Co-chairs (Federal and State)

- Participation in calls with Council staff approximately every two weeks to assist Council staff in identifying Council MAM needs and next steps, plan meetings, and establish work group processes.
- Assist Council staff as needed in producing initial drafts of documents for review by the CMAWG.
- Coordinate with Council staff, and CMAWG co-chairs to finalize meeting and call agendas, schedule of deliverables, and timing of products to be created by the CMAWG.
- (State co-chair) Represent the five Gulf states and coordinate with them to voice respective State concerns, needs, and viewpoints (including providing early State input to the development of work group interim products).
- (Federal co-chair) Represent the six federal Council member agencies and coordinate with them to voice respective Federal concerns, needs, and viewpoints (including providing early Federal input to the development of work group interim products).