

Draft Funded Priorities List 3b

Proposal Abstract

Sponsor: Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality

Proposal: Water Quality Improvement Program for Coastal Mississippi Waters

Mississippi, through the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), is requesting \$40M in Council-Selected Restoration Component funding for the proposed Water Quality Improvement Program for Coastal Mississippi Waters. This would include \$8M in planning funds as FPL Category 1, as well as a separate \$32M implementation component as an FPL Category 2 priority for potential funding. This program would support the primary RESTORE Comprehensive Plan goal to restore water quality and quantity in the Mississippi Gulf Coast Region through the identification and implementation of water quality improvement projects. Program activities include planning, engineering and design, septic-to-sewer conversion, implementation of new stormwater and wastewater systems, and repairing/upgrading existing stormwater and wastewater systems. This program would be coordinated with water quality improvement efforts under other funding streams to maximize outcomes.

Causes of water quality degradation in coastal systems include nutrient pollution and associated hypoxia and also bacteriological sources. Water quality degradation is often attributed to urban runoff, discharge, and overflow issues associated with aging or insufficient wastewater management. The conversion of septic-to-sewer and implementation of stormwater and wastewater improvement practices under the proposed program is anticipated to reduce non-point source pollutant loads to downstream coastal receiving water bodies, resulting in an improvement in water quality of coastal waters and benefits to living coastal marine resources. Program duration is 10 years.