



**Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council
Planning Framework Draft Public Comment Webinars
April 29, 2019
2:00 pm - 3:30 pm & 6:00 pm -7:30 pm (CDT)**

Questions and Answers

Question 1: Is there funding for species work as well, or is it habitat focused?

Answer: The Planning Framework does not represent funding approval. Future projects and programs will be approved for funding in a Funded Priorities List (FPL). The proposed Planning Framework will help guide these funding decisions. Oyster, as a species, are considered under the “Restore oyster habitat” approach, but other species may be supported by way of projects that would fall under the habitat and water quality-oriented restoration approaches.

Question 2: Will there be other (in person) public meetings and when will they be announced?

Answer: The public meetings have been announced, and are available on our website.

- April 30, 2019 - 5 Rivers Tensaw Theater, 30945 Five Rivers Blvd, Spanish Fort, AL 36527 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm (CDT)
- May 6, 2019- TBD, New Orleans, LA 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
- May 7, 2019 - Florida Department of Environmental Protection Douglas Building (Conference room A & B), 3900 Commonwealth Blvd., Tallahassee, FL 32399 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
- May 22, 2019 - University of Southern Mississippi Long Beach, Fleming Education Center Auditorium, 730 Beach Blvd E., Long Beach, MS 39560 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
- May 30, 2019 - Harte Research Institute, Texas A&M College, 6300 Ocean Dr., Corpus Christi, TX 78412 6:00 pm- 8:00 pm

Question 3: What, if any different information will be available in Spanish Fort, AL tomorrow night. Are you going to go over the same basic presentation as you did today?

Answer: The presentation tomorrow in Alabama will be similar to what I have just presented. We will be providing additional information specific to Alabama watersheds

Question 4: Has the time been set for the May 7th Tallahassee meeting?

Answer: Yes. All public meetings will be held from 6-8pm. For the Tallahassee meeting, that will be at 6-8m Eastern Time.

Question 5: My question is whether the finished plan could be considered a "comprehensive plan" to restore the Gulf through which we can begin the work on those projects that are prioritized to be the best, most beneficial or advantageous, most ready to go, etc and so that we can continue the restoration of the Gulf long after the funding from the Council runs out?

Answer: The Planning Framework is not a comprehensive plan designed to prioritize individual projects; it is also specifically not designed to address all the restoration needs of the Gulf. However, we hope that the Planning Framework can help contribute to comprehensive restoration, by (1) helping the Council strategically link funding decisions from one Funded Priorities List (FPL) to the next, and (2) by helping coordinate and leverage other restoration funding sources.

Question 6: Could you elaborate on the "other category" that is listed for each restoration type? For example, could land acquisition be a strategy for achieving the water quality goal of watershed protection?

Answer: The Council recognizes that water quality enhancement can be a secondary objective of land acquisition. The planning framework provides the flexibility for such considerations.

Question 7: How does the Council foresee education programs fitting into FPL 3 projects since it is cross-cutting across all comprehensive objectives?

Answer: The Council considers the objectives "Promote natural resource stewardship and environmental education" and "Improve science-based decision-making processes" to be relevant to all priority approaches and techniques described in the Planning Framework. Therefore, projects that support these objectives - whether it be at the scale of individual projects or at the Gulf-wide scale - will be considered for FPL 3 funding.

Question 8: Will webinar slides be made available after the webinar?

Answer: Yes, the webinar is being recorded and will be available on the www.restorethegulf.gov in approximately 3-5 days.

Question 9: Can you please show slide that was 3rd or 4th from last? It had objectives on it.

Answer: We will show that slide again, while we give participants time to consider any questions they might have.

Question 10: After the FPL 3 is finalized, can you clarify how and who will be making funding decisions?

Answer: The Planning Framework does not represent funding approval. Future projects and programs will be approved for funding in an FPL. This funding approval is done via a Council vote. The draft FPL will be available for public comment prior to the Council vote.

Question 11: Can you please review again the process? Sorry, I meant the step by step process for moving forward, including submitting proposals at some point.

The FPL development process includes the development of this Planning Framework draft, which is identifying the approaches and techniques the Council is prioritizing for FPL 3. Following the approval of the Planning Framework, the Council members will develop and submit project and program proposals that will be reviewed for consistency with the RESTORE Act, environmental compliance, and best available science. As noted earlier, after public review and comment of the draft FPL, the Council will vote to approve the final FPL 3. As a reminder, only Council members may develop and submit FPL proposals.

Question 12: Since the Council votes on funding, would you suggest those seeking to advance projects for funding should work closely with their respective Council member representing their geographic area?

Answer: We encourage all interested stakeholders to actively participate in the FPL development process, including attending public meetings and reviewing and commenting on the draft FPL. We would also encourage interested stakeholders to engage individual Council member states and agencies to discuss their project ideas. Please note that some member states have existing opportunities for stakeholders to submit project ideas.

Question 13: What time did you say the public meetings will be held?

Answer: All meetings will be held from 6-8 pm local time.