

Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council Draft Comprehensive Plan Update

September 8, 2016



Agenda

Overview

- RESTORE Act and Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council
- Initial Comprehensive Plan
- Initial Funded Priorities List

Plan Update Description

Gather Input



Barbara Ambrose, HDR



April 20, 2010



U.S. Coast Guard



RESTORE Act - 2012

Subtitle F—Gulf Coast Restoration

SEC. 1601. SHORT TITLE.

This subtitle may be cited as the “Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act of 2012”.



USFWS- Ryan Hagerty



Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council

Council Composition

- Governors of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas
- Secretaries of Agriculture, Army, Commerce, Homeland Security, Interior, Administrator of the EPA
- Chair: Agriculture



Catherine Hibbard, USFWS



DWH Funding Streams for Restoration

Civil Settlements: ~\$6.7 billion

80% to RESTORE Act: ~\$5.3 billion

Criminal Penalties: ~\$2.5 billion

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

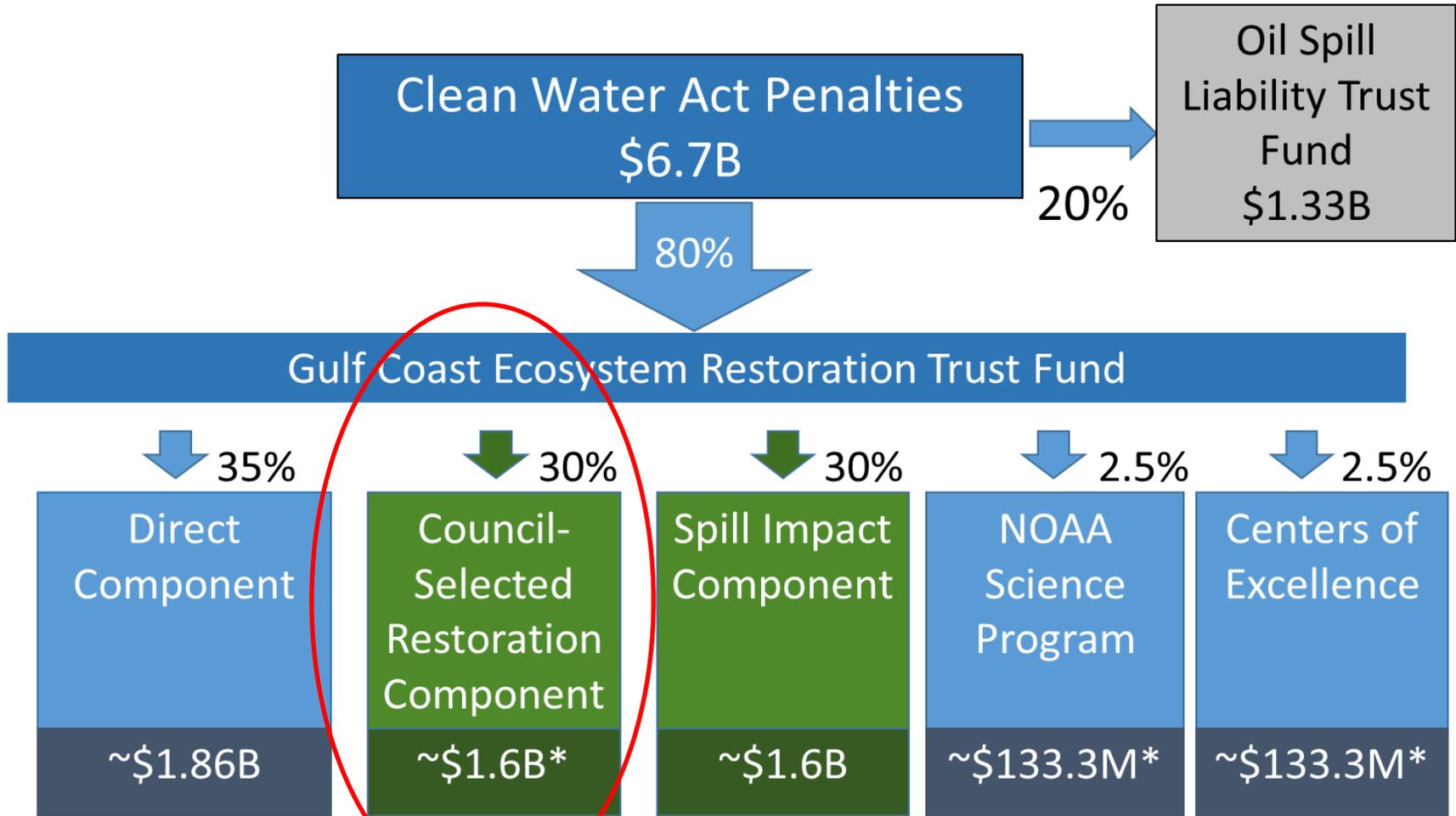
Natural Resource Damages: ~\$8.1 billion

Trustee Council

Total: up to ~\$16 billion available for restoration



Allocation of RESTORE Act Funds

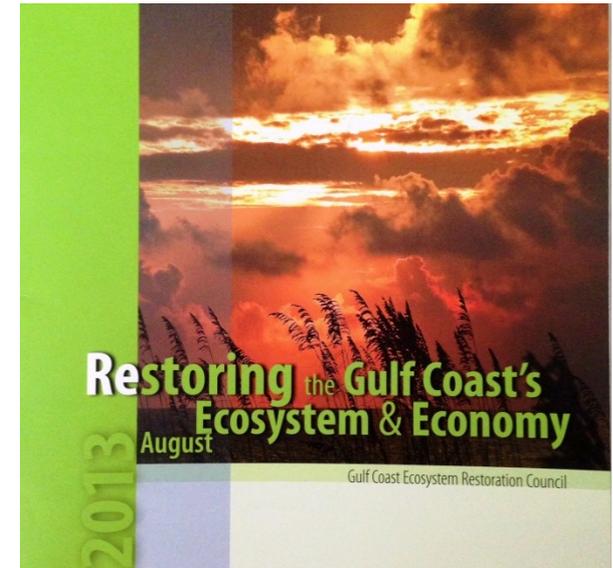


*Supplemented by interest generated by the Trust fund (50% RESTORE Council, 25% Science Program, 25% COE)



Initial Comprehensive Plan - 2013

1. Restore and Conserve Habitat
2. Restore Water Quality
3. Replenish and Protect Living Coastal and Marine Resources
4. Enhance Community Resilience
5. Restore and Revitalize the Gulf Economy





Council-Selected Restoration Component (Bucket 2)

4 Priority Criteria from the Act for Selecting Projects and Programs

1. Greatest contribution to restoring & protecting natural resources
2. Large-scale
3. Contained in existing restoration plans or programs
4. Restore long-term resilience to areas most impacted by DWH oil spill

***Council is to restore the Gulf
“without regard to geographic location”***



Initial Funded Priorities List

December 9, 2015 – Council approved Initial Funded Priorities List (FPL)

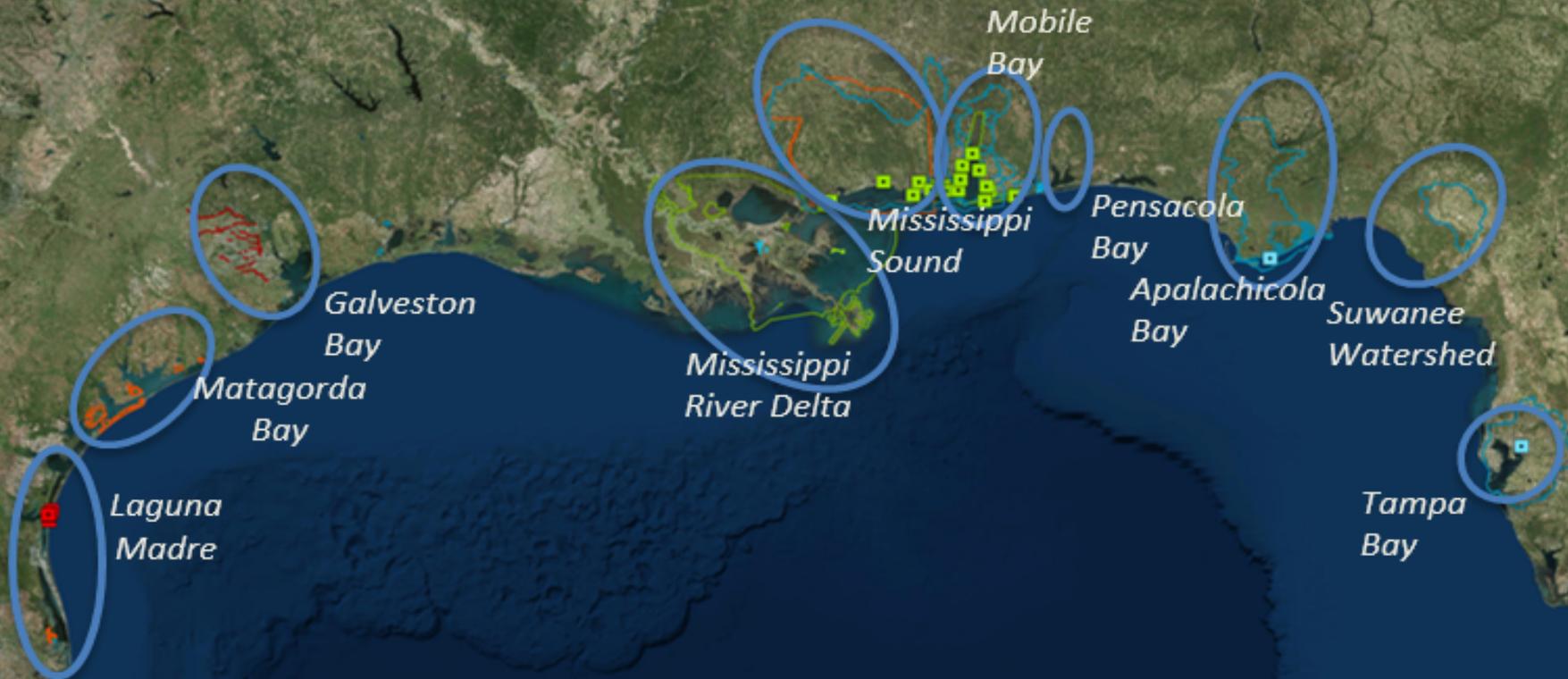
- \$156.6 million in restoration activities
 - 10 key watersheds
 - Gulf-wide programs
- Prioritized 12 activities for possible future funding



Gulf Coast
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Projects on the FPL:

Restore, Protect, and Rebuild Projects in Key Watersheds across the Gulf Coast





Lessons Learned

Retrospective review

- Extensive, valuable public comments
- Feedback from Council members
- Public webinars



USFWS- Ryan Hagerty



Lessons Learned from FPL Process

- Support for Goals and Objectives
- Enhance Council member collaboration
- Enhance coordination with other funding sources
- Retain the watershed/estuary approach
- Improve application of best available science
- Improve measurements of success
- Enhance public engagement and transparency



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Vision

A healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem achieved through collaboration on strategic restoration projects and programs.

- Council-sponsored collaboration meetings and workshops:
 - Produce more effective projects and programs
 - Leverage resources
 - Coordinate with other funding streams



Proposal Development and Goals

- Enhancements to proposal development process
 - Emphasis on collaboration
 - Use of collaboration meetings / workshops
 - Improve submission guidelines
- Clarified Goal 2: Restore Water Quality and ***Quantity***



10-Year Funding Strategy

- Includes a Vision Statement to direct and shape future funding decisions
- Discusses Funded Priorities List frequency
- Seeks to optimize ecosystem restoration benefits through large-scale projects and programs



Building on Council Commitments

Regional Ecosystem-based Restoration

- Adopt the Watershed/Estuary Approach
- Address Risk, Sustainability and Resilience

Leverage Resources and Partnerships

- Explore Opportunities for Creative Conservation Funding





Building on Council Commitments

Engagement, Inclusion and Transparency

- Improve engagement with under-represented communities
- Efficient, effective & transparent environmental compliance

Science-based Decision-Making

- Best available science in selecting projects & programs
 - External review process
 - Interconnection between projects

Deliver Results and Measuring Impacts

- Establish common monitoring protocols



Summary

- Builds on successes and lessons
- Provides strategic guidance
- Promotes collaboration
- Enhances science process
- Positions Council for effective use of future funds
- Coordinates holistic, large-scale restoration
- Improves efficiency, effectiveness and transparency





Next Steps

Draft update issued on August 23, 2016

- 45-day comment period closes on October 7, 2016

Consider and respond to all public comments

- Modify draft, as appropriate

Finalize in 2016

- Set stage for effective collaboration in developing future FPLs



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Thank you!

Please provide feedback