

**RESTORE Council Planning Framework Draft
Public Comment Correspondences
Comment Period: April 26 - June 19, 2019**

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1. Comments Received During Webinars

1a. Georgia Ackerman, Apalachicola Riverkeeper

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

1b. Sally Bakko, City of Galveston

- After the FP3 is finalized, can you clarify how and who will be making funding decisions?
- 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?

1c. Jessica Bibza, National Wildlife Federation

- Will there be other (in person) public meetings and when will they be announced? Apologies if you announced them and I missed them. I briefly lost my internet connection.

1d. Darryl Boudreau

- Could you please put the geographic area slide up again?

1e. Janet Bowman The Nature Conservancy

- 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?

1f. Jackie Cole, Galveston City Council

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

1g. Jim Muller, Bay County Board of County Commissioners

- What time did you say the public meetings will be held?

1h. Adrienne Ruhl

- Has the time been set for the May 7th Tallahassee meeting?

1i. Paul Sanchez-Navarro, Defenders of Wildlife

- Hello. Is there funding for species work as well, or is it habitat focused?

1j. Dan Tonsemeire, Apalachicola Riverkeeper

- I understand the planning process as described and my hat is off to those who put it together. My question is whether the finished plan could be considered a "comprehensive plan" to restore the Gulf thru 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 restoration of the Gulf long after the funding from the Council runs out?

1k. Christina Wayne The Nature Conservancy / GulfCorps

- Hello. Is there funding for species work as well, or is it habitat focused?

11. Andrew Whitehurst, Healthy Gulf (formerly Gulf Restoration Network)

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

2. Comments Received In-Person at Alabama Public Meeting

2a. Mark Berte, Executive Director, Alabama Coastal Foundation (ACF)

- We appreciate you coming to Alabama, and we will definitely share this information in our newsletter tomorrow.
- The Planning Framework is a great example of what you (the Council) are doing right. There are priorities for developing a regional ecosystem-based approach, learning from past projects and advancing science-based decision making.
- We ask that you push information from past projects to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and allow them to help educate the public.
- Interested in helping with oyster restoration - Have oyster shell recycling program; let them help with that.
- Regarding nutrient reduction, the Alabama Coastal Foundation has planned and launched Utilities United to work with all coastal utilities to reduce pollution.
- We hope you will continue to look to local efforts to help accomplish your goals.
- Berte states that he wants to help promote the public benefit of environmental conservation and restoration.
- Public education is very important.
- We want to be able to continue to enjoy the benefits of the environment in the future.

2b. Zach Hood, Director, Baldwin County Emergency Agency

- Hood recently filled the director position for the Baldwin County Emergency Agency and wanted to introduce himself.
- He stated that he is excited about the overlap of resilience with emergency management in Baldwin County.
- Hood also said he was interested in collaborating and helping promote resilience.
- Thank you and if there is anyway I can work with you, I will.

2c. Cade Kistler, Program Director, Mobile Bay Keeper

- Mobile Bay Keeper is excited that the RESTORE Council continues its commitment to rigorously select projects that fit carefully selected criteria so we do not end up with projects that may have other motives. We are very excited to continue working on projects that are designed to protect the environment.
- There are a lot of competing interests in the project selection process, so we are excited to see projects that will be generational (long term), making comprehensive change throughout Gulf.
- We are thankful to the Council for putting together this Framework to guide that process. I think this is going to be an extremely valuable tool.
- Kistler notes that there is excitement in the Mobile and Perdido Key areas to see that reduction of nutrient pollution and other pollutants is a priority that includes techniques for improving wastewater infrastructure and systems.
- These are priority needs in these areas. Mobile and Baldwin Counties experienced approximately 40,000 gallons a day in sewage overflows last year.
- Kistler encourages the Council to select projects that are synergistic throughout the area, building on each other, and not counteracting previous projects.
- Thank you for your work and your time.

2d. Johnny Marquez, Director Coastal Programs, MS Wildlife Federation

- Thank you for using the Comprehensive Plan Commitment and Planning Support funding for your collaboration efforts. It is really showing results.
- Marquez notes that he particularly likes the cross-border work in Perdido Key with Alabama and Florida.
- Marquez suggests a project to focus on Mobile Bay, recognizing the causeway and the significance of the project.

2e. Christina Wayne, Gulf Corps Program Specialist, The Nature Conservancy

- Thank you to the Council for the funding from FPL 1, and we hope to continue that partnership in FPL 3.
- Gulf Corps is a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) grant given to the Nature Conservancy, the Student Conservation Association and the Corps Network to bring restoration and conservation projects across all five states in the Gulf of Mexico.
- We are also involved in natural resources stewardship, education, and engagement.
- Since January 2018, the Gulf Corps project has surpassed all metrics for the entire three-year program, and that was only in year one.
- We have restored over hundreds of acres across the entire Gulf of Mexico.
- A few examples of the projects we have completed include: living shorelines, oyster reefs, pitcher plant bogs, hardwoods, and red-cockaded woodpeckers habitat. Over 25 interns have graduated from this program and received conservation jobs and internships across the Gulf and U.S. Wayne then named notable career paths from some The Nature Conservancy's recent graduates, including:
 - Maintenance technician in Alabama
 - Wildlife defense specialist in Montana
 - Right away company employees in Alaska
 - Education intern for a national wildlife refuge
 - Prescribed burn intern working with The Nature Conservancy and the Student Conservation Association
 - Summer internship with Senator Bill Cassidy
 - Developed a resource assistance program, with the Corps Network
- Wayne also notes that the Gulf of Mexico program is working with other Corps upstream to reduce nutrients.
- Thank you very much.

3. Comments Received In-Person at Louisiana Public Meeting

3a. Ivy Mathieu, St. John the Baptist Parish Coastal Advisory Group

- Mathieu is glad to see us looking at ways to improve processes.
- Mathieu would like a 1-pager detailing what has been accomplished thus far and what activities are still outstanding.
- We need a better way to communicate to the everyday population. A big part of that has to be education. We have to convey this information in simpler terms.
- The Maurepas diversion has been on the books for about 50 years, but people still do not know the status. We need to find a way to use technology to communicate and keep this information in the forefront.
- Mathieu would like to see an education plan that is clear to the public.
- What are the Council's priorities (in plain English), and how are they selected?
- Thank you for the opportunity.

3b. Raymond Sweet, RIVER Institute

- The RIVER Institute's mission is an initiative to increase African American businesses and African American participation in the coastal restoration economy.
- Sweet comments that the Council should not focus on projects alone, but also on the community impact, including businesses and families.
- For example, he would like a science museum focused on coastal jobs and careers (not just natural elements and restoration technologies). If we have these opportunities in urban centers across the impacted areas, we will increase people's interest in the coast, not just in an economic sense, but also in its protection.
- In Japan, Sweet observed a friend pick up and dispose of cigarette butts; whereas in the United States he noted, a person would be more likely to litter. Sweet recounted this story to make a point about the importance of messaging. It was clear from his experience in Japan that the people understood it to be everyone's job to protect the environment.
- Sweet is interested in sharing this message with the local communities, not just telling the story of restoration techniques. When we talk about impact, how do we also talk about messaging? It is not just about shovels in the ground, there is a bigger picture that needs to be considered.
- There are a limited number of dredging companies, and we would benefit from seeing more African American owned. I think this group could use some of its resources to invest in African American businesses and increase the number of dredging companies in the area.

3c. Thao Vu, Director of the Mississippi Coalition Vietnamese Fisherfolk and Families

- Vu commends the Council's efforts for providing translations, including the fact sheets, but because the Vietnamese population has limited English proficiency Gulfwide, she respectfully requests on behalf of the Vietnamese community, a 15-day extension of the public comment period (with a new deadline on June 27). The need for an extension is because there is not yet a Vietnamese translation of the Planning Framework draft. This would be very helpful for the Vietnamese fishing communities across the Gulf.
- Vu is pleased that the Council has been proactively engaging with various stakeholders across the Gulf. She asks that the Council also consider a bilingual liaison to interact with the underserved fishing communities across the Gulf.
- Vu would also like the Council to do more one-on-one, targeted outreach to understand the community's priorities and concerns, as well as what types of projects they think would benefit their livelihoods.
- The Planning Framework needs to have a monitoring plan with robust metrics and adaptive management strategies that are relevant to the restoration goals, priorities, and techniques the Council is utilizing.
- She expressed concern regarding fresh water from the Bonnet Carre Spillway opening. We have excessive freshwater inflow right now in the Mississippi Sound. How do you plan to incorporate current environmental stressors to inform your future efforts in order to mitigate that?

- Due to the repercussions of the flooding of the Mississippi River, Vu asks that the Council consider consolidating the Mississippi Sound and the Pontchartrain Basin because of their hydrological connectivity instead of considering the areas separately.
- Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

4. Comments Received In-Person at Florida Public Meeting

4a. Holden Foley, Field Supervisor, Gulf Conservation Corps of the Forgotten Emerald Coast

- Foley recounts some of his favorite projects since he began working with the Conservation Corps. We have done everything from projects planting spartina along the beaches to, prescribed fires, to herbicide work targeting U.S. forestry.
- Each crew member has specific projects that they enjoyed.

4b. Ethan Fraiser, Crew Member, Gulf Conservation Corps of the Forgotten Emerald Coast

- Fraiser stated that his favorite project has been rebuilding the 30-year-old Apalachicola boardwalk.
- We just finished one of the benches today, but we still have a long way to go.

4c. Ronald Henderson, Crew Member, Gulf Conservation Corps of the Forgotten Emerald Coast

- Henderson commented that his favorite project was restoring habitat for the Red Cockeyed Woodpeckers.

4d. Trenton Lee, Crew Member, Gulf Conservation Corps of the Forgotten Emerald Coast

- Lee's favorite project was longleaf pine restoration. (Slash pine in different state lands overshadow longleaf pine.) They send us in to cut those trees down and the longleaf now has an area to grow.

4e. Branden Osburn, Crew Leader, Gulf Conservation Corps of the Forgotten Emerald Coast

- One of my favorite projects is the living shorelines restoration project.
- In my opinion, it provides great impacts
- Over the past year we have created a living shoreline that is 500 yards long
- Probably 20 feet of shoreline has come back
- Planted grasses that has stabilized the shoreline

4f. Connor Smith, Crew Member, Gulf Conservation Corps of the Forgotten Emerald Coast

- Smith noted that he particularly enjoyed monitoring set points in the forest to create a photo time series. This allows them to see how the forest is responding to restoration.
- It's great to see how the forest is doing over time.

4g. Joe Taylor, Executive Director, Gulf Conservation Corps of the Forgotten Emerald Coast

- We are facilitators of the Conservation Corps. In 2014, our organization was selected by the Corps network and the Nature Conservancy to establish the Florida Youth Conservation Corps.
- Our group along with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention out of Biloxi served as the pilot project for the current Gulf Corps project managed by the Nature Conservancy and funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.
- Several Gulf Corps crew members present introduced Holden Foley.

- Since beginning in 2015, 134 young adults have been trained and earned 380 industry certifications, completed over 130 conservation projects and responding to 5 natural disasters.
- We are very proud to be here to represent Florida as a contingent of the Gulf Corps
- On July 3, the Conservation Corps cycle will bring 15 conservation work groups (150 young people) across the 5 state area. They will all work in unison to protect and restore vulnerable coastal resources and creates jobs for disengaged young people.
- The Conservation Corps enlists local young folks in projects with soft skills-- such as conflict resolution-- giving them marketable skills and a future in the growing environmental restoration economy of the Gulf.
- We have created partnerships to support crew members so they can earn high school diplomas, certifications in natural resource management, and move forward with post-secondary education.
- In the first cycle, Conservation Corps crews worked over 37,662 hours on projects from January-October of 2018. Twenty projects directly impacted over 580 acres of land and state water bodies.
- The crew exceeded the goal acreage by 866%, 62 acres of invasive species were removed, 24 acres of wetlands, 128 acres of uplands were restored and 367 acres of wetlands were enhanced.
- We have several of our crew members here. I am proud to introduce you to Holden Foley. He has been with us since the first day of our pilot project and he has been recognized in Washington DC for his work.
- In July, he will lead three Conservation Corps crews who will work from Pensacola to Tallahassee.

4h. Kent Wimmer, Senior Representative, Defenders of Wildlife Comment

- Wimmer has been involved in monitoring RESTORE projects at the local level.
- Wimmer added land acquisition to the suite of options for protecting habitats. Florida has tremendous opportunities to protect habitats that are still in good shape, but are not protected. We encourage you to continue this effort through fee acquisitions.
- There is a great opportunity for partnerships with all of your agencies. Wimmer explains that he is currently working with the Air Force to nominate Florida as a sentinel landscape. Through that partnership, we can protect habitat, working farms, ranches, and more.
- We hope these types of program partnerships will be coming on line later this year or the first of next year. This will give us the opportunity for partnerships down the Florida coast. This will be a great opportunity for conservation.
- Wimmer submitted a written document- Proposed Northwest Florida Sentinel Landscape

5. Comments Received In-Person at Mississippi Public Meeting

5a. Ryan Bradley, Director, Mississippi Commercial Fisheries United,

- You are doing an excellent job - a tremendous amount of work and coordination involved to advance the goals of the RESTORE Council
- Bradley states that he has one observation and one recommendation that he'd like to give to the RESTORE Council:
 - I would love to see some type of advisory panel consisting of different industries, stakeholders, and user groups where they have the opportunity to vet some of these projects in the early stages and throughout the process.
 - There are so many tradeoffs that occur with these massive projects. We need those experts from different industries to be able to identify what the tradeoff will be in one area depending on what we do in another area.
- Other than that the plan looks great. Keep up the good work

5b. Garrett Burrows, Program Associate, Corps Network

- It is an honor to see how young people can go from having no direction to a future in conservation. Gulf Corps bridges the gap between their lives before and their conservation future.
- It is amazing to see people's lives transformed through the investment and the partnership that we have with the RESTORE Council, and I would like to thank you for that.

- From year 2, we have 44 graduates and 27 have been placed in restoration or environmental positions which is about 61 percent.
- We have had an internship in Washington DC with Senator Bill Cassidy.
- We have a research technician at Cornell University.
- We have an oyster gardening technician employed with University of South Alabama
- We have a turtle crew member. It is a great job. You get paid to walk up and down the beach and look at turtles.
- But what it is really doing is changing people's outlook. You have young people who had no clue they could make money by helping the environment who now have a viable means to make money and advance their careers. It is the support of the Council that makes that possible.

5c. Lauren Kissel, Program Manager, Gulf Corps Conservation Crew: Climb CDC Gulfport

- Thank you for support for Gulf Corps and hope to continue the partnership into the future with FPL 3.
- Kissel states that she would like to reiterate how Gulf Corps fits into the new Planning Framework draft. Not only do we do all the work listed as priority strategies already, but our best fit is in priority six: Natural Resource Stewardship and Educational Engagement, since we are growing the next generation of conservation and restoration workers here in the Gulf
- Kissel gives examples of where the Gulf Corps works in Mississippi. These include Desoto National Forest, the Sandhill Crane Refuge, and the Pascagoula River
- In 2 years the Gulf Corps of Mississippi has completed 4,441 hours on invasive species control, 8,000 hours on training, 64 hours on living shorelines, and 1,636 hours or 46,490 native plants planted on New Round Island. Thank you to everyone on the Council for your support.

5d. Jill Mastrototaro, Policy Director, Audubon Mississippi

- Audubon appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the RESTORE Council's Planning Framework draft that supports the Council's commitment to transparency and collaboration as well as the advancement and use of best available science at the decision making process.
- As the Council considers the next projects for possible funding through the next FPL, Audubon believes the Council members need to ensure decisions and actions taken are strategic to maintain the ecosystem wide focus approach and intent of the RESTORE Act.
- The Council's commitment to transparency and collaboration and in particular is evident in the Planning Framework draft.
- Audubon encourages the Council to continue recent collaboration meetings that have been supported by funds allocated through the Commitment and Support FPL.
- Funding available for Gulf restoration is a great opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem that should be sustainable for the environment and the economy of Gulf communities.
- Every dollar should be strategically allocated because despite the inordinate amount of funding we have been given, it is still not enough.
- The Council should use the Planning Framework to build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects made through other restoration funding streams and make strategic investments in Gulf restoration efforts that will provide comprehensive, lasting benefits to the Gulf ecosystem.
- We wholeheartedly agree that the Council use best available science in Council's decision making process as a key to ensure the restoration process is scientifically sound, and we suggest using all the available information in making decisions on next FPL-- including Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, which we undertook rigorous modeling effort to identify highly suitable habitat for Gulf birds and other wildlife.
- We encourage the Council to utilize habitat suitability modeling for projects evaluation and selection in conjunction with other project selection tools and other approaches.
- We are confident that our modeling effort will prove useful to help select a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthier and more productive Gulf ecosystem and we look forward to providing more comments before the deadline.

5e. Stephanie Mathes, Director of Gulf Operations, The Corps Network

- The Corps Network is the national affiliate of conservation corps across the United States.

- Gulf Corps has been so tremendously successful as part of the Council's commitment to Gulf Corps. Many of you have been out the project sites and actually have seen the work that is being done.
- We are training 100 plus youth that have never worked in an environmental or conservation framework before of any kind.
- As they are working to transform the environment, they are also transforming themselves.
- Lauren Kissel mentioned that they are working in all of the priority strategies, but feel that their best work is in priority six, because that is where they are developing the next generation of conservation workers.
- At Gulf Corps we are doing certifications and training. These young people are getting employable skills that they can leave the Gulf Corps program with and be the next generation of workforce. There is going to be a silver tsunami in the next few years, and they will be able to step in and go to work.
- Gulf Corps as a whole has completed 105,000 Conservation hours that these 100 young people across the Gulf states have put into this effort.
- They have worked on over 1,100 acres and have restored over 441 acres of wetlands.
- We are extremely thankful and appreciative of the Council's investment in Gulf Corps.

5f. Howard Page, North Gulfport Community Land Trust

- Reinforcing some things I see
- Page states that he has noticed the increasing stormwater management and wastewater system improvements and hopes that these are directed toward existing problems. For example on the Pearl River there are a number of discharge permits that presently have some issues that could be improved, and the Pearl River is one place that could really see some benefit.
- We might look at the fact that there are a number of cities along there with tight budgets and difficulty making the capital investments to improve their discharges. This money could be wisely spent looking at that.
- Looking at coastal development, we could look at some landscape scale improvements of stormwater.
- We need to recognize not just what the best management practices are, but what the necessary practices are to continue to have quality stormwater management. Mississippi needs to become the leader in that.
- One question I have is I see a bit of siloization, and I am wondering how we can get the lessons learned from your work to overcome the difficulties of staying in your lanes on decisions, and comment on some bad projects that are proposed in the program or the Pascagoula.
- When we look at the Pontchartrain Basin, what we see is that the development of the Mississippi River has gotten so large that during years of large rain events we are getting such pulses of freshwater that you have to release the Bonnet Carre Spillway and we are being affected by that. The only answer is to improve stormwater runoff on a huge scale.

5g. Thao Vu, Director, Mississippi Coalition for Vietnamese American Fisherfolk

- While reviewing the Planning Framework draft, we understand the watershed geographic focus; however, we greatly think that due to the close hydrological link the Mississippi Sound and the Pontchartrain Basin should be considered one system instead of two separate geographic watersheds- particularly in light of the recent Bonnet Carre Spillway openings which introduce millions of gallons of freshwater into our Mississippi Sound
- Our most serious concerns are about the fisheries and the entire ecosystem of the Mississippi Sound.
- We also greatly support a hydrological study between Louisiana and Mississippi to have a better understanding between these two watersheds. We should get the best minds, the best scientists and natural resource managers from all of the agencies as well as the local knowledge the fisherfolk possess. That is something that has been critically missing and should be implemented as quickly as possible.
- In terms of the priority approaches for Mississippi, restoring hydrology and natural processes is not listed. We would like the State of Mississippi and the Council to provide some context for why that priority approach is not included as a potential restoration approach for the Mississippi Sound. Many fisherfolk here have seen hydrological changes for many years now.
- We also recognize Mississippi for prioritizing oyster habitat restoration; however, we need a much better understanding between water flow, water quality, particularly how salinity and the lack of salinity has affected the oyster reefs. We need a better understanding of substrate, sediment type, as well as the quality of substrate and sediment type; larval transport, and how stressors such as the BP oil spill and the Bonnet Carre Spillway openings have led to the degradation of our reefs.

- There should be a comparison study of cultch planting vs. community based restoration to see which is more outcome oriented. This is greatly needed because the restoration of our oyster reefs is critically important and there are invaluable benefits that can be provided once the oyster reefs are properly restored.

6. Comments Received In-Person at Texas Public Meeting

6a. David Garza, Cameron County Commissioner, Precinct 3

- The Planning Framework draft fits in with many priority projects Cameron County has identified.
- Recent economic development (e.g., SpaceX and multiple, liquefied natural gas terminal facilities) presents opportunities for the county to partner with industry and advance responsible development in conjunction with ecological responsibility.
- Cameron County may enter into a partnership to advance land stewardship.
- Cameron County is interested in shoreline protection and restoration. Some of the projects they would like to establish or have already begun, include:
 - Protection for Laguna Madre (only hypersaline lagoon in North America)
 - Beach and dune protection and restoration
 - Wetland mitigation banks
 - Erosion response plan (ongoing)
 - Establishment of a national estuary-like program
 - Potential rivers and estuaries observation network
- We want to help the companies that are here now to become good corporate citizens.
- Cameron County recently created a new position for a coastal natural resource coordinator.
- The people of Cameron County want to be good stewards of their natural coastal resources and make it better for the next generation.
- We understand the value of what we have here, and when we submit projects for the next FPL, we plan to include projects which address the same problems that our neighboring counties have.

6b. Aurelio Guerra, Willacy County Judge

- In 2016 Guerra read the Comprehensive Plan Update.
- It inspired him, as a judge, to educate local government entities on how big of an asset the county has on their shores.
- Despite having a small budget in his county, Guerra created a new position to help educate high school and elementary school students.
- The Comprehensive Plan Update and the community education has changed the city council's mindset on how the county plans to move forward.
- Willacy County will submit projects in tune with what is in the Planning Framework.
- Willacy County is taking a regional approach and has entered into inter-local agreements with neighboring Cameron and Hidalgo Counties.
- Guerra notes that it is this regional approach that is going to make a big difference in our coastlines.

6c. Jose Hinojosa, Santa Cruz Irrigation District, General Manager

- Hinojosa is the Chair for the lower Rio Grande Valley Texas Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Task Force (TPDES).
- TPDES deals with water quality and quantity issues.
- Hinojosa went to Texas A&M for marine biology and became certified in scuba diving. As a scuba diver, his survival came down to one element: oxygen.
- For coastal areas survival can also be reduced to one element: water.
- As part of the agricultural community, they are the biggest users and losers of water.
- There have been times of drought when water cannot be provided for agricultural needs.

- Hinojosa also recognizes the need to improve agricultural practices in order to protect and conserve water.
- There are not many mechanisms for farmers to access funds needed to pay for improvements.

6d. Dan McLendon, American Conservation Experience/AmeriCorps, Director

- McLendon is an invasive plant ecologist.
- The American Conservation Experience uses AmeriCorps to do invasive plant management.
- They received RESTORE funding via a Gulf Conservation Corps project. With those funds, they were able to hire an eight-person crew who has worked on four different parks.
- That crew has restored over 100 acres of invasive plant inundated country.
- The crew finished the season with the tools to move forward with careers in environmental work.
- All eight members were able to secure jobs in restoration after leaving the program, and one went on to receive a master's degree.

6e. Scott Moorhead, Audubon

- Moorhead appreciates the Planning Framework.
- He also appreciates the emphasis on science-based decision-making, and the emphasis on a Gulfwide approach.
- Moorhead points out that Audubon has recently completed a Gulfwide study and is developing rigorous tools to identify suitable habitat anchored in science. He looks forward to working with us.

6f. Joe Vega, Cameron County Parks, Director

- Thank you for the Planning Framework. It is important that we work on projects to protect our coast.
- Our coast is vital, not just for the local economy, but to the whole Texas economy.
- Cameron County is working on a conservation dunes project that will help to protect our infrastructure.
- Dunes are the first line of defense against storms.
- Vega is particularly interested in beach and shoreline restoration and protection.
- We are investing in \$30 million in public beach access improvements in the lower part of Cameron County.
- We are building structures more than 200 feet landward from the sea, and we are building dune conservation areas in front of those structures, so the structures can be there for generations to come.
- We are experiencing some high shoreline erosion rates.;
 - Some shorelines are eroding at a rate of up to 15 feet per year.
 - We need beach renourishment and shoreline restoration projects.
 - We have a park on the Arroyo Colorado that is eroding 1-2 feet a year.
- We have been funded to restore 2,200 feet of shoreline.
- The county is working with the Texas General Land Office (TGLO) Coastal Erosion Planning and Response Act (CEPRA) program to help address this issue.
- We also want to create nature-based solutions (e.g., living shorelines).

7. Comments Received via Digital Submission

7a. Sally Bakko on Behalf of Mayor Jim Yarbrough, City of Galveston

- Good afternoon, Please find attached written comments from Mayor Jim Yarbrough, City of Galveston, Texas regarding the Planning Framework Draft released by the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (RESTORE Council) for public review and comment on April 26, 2019. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you, Sally Bakko

Body of Attachment:

Dear Members of the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

We greatly appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council ("RESTORE Council" or "Council") Planning Framework draft released in April 2019. RESTORE Council staff provided a presentation of the Planning Framework draft ("Framework draft") during a webinar conducted on April 29, 2019.

During the presentation, RESTORE Council staff explained the Framework draft identifies priority approaches and techniques that will employ actions to address the Council's goals and objectives. Ultimately, the Framework draft will guide the Council's decision-making on development of the Funded Priority List (FPL) 3 and potential programs and projects that may be funded.

A critical step towards sustainable restoration of a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem is recognizing the importance of addressing non-point source pollution which poses as much a threat to e habitats as an oil spill. The City of Galveston ("City") applauds the RESTORE Council for identifying in the Framework draft the reduction of excess nutrients and other pollutants to watersheds as one of the five (5) priority approaches for achieving the RESTORE Council's Comprehensive Plan Update goals and objectives.

As the FPL 3 develops, we strongly encourage the RESTORE Council to prioritize investments for improving water quality and/or quantity conditions. The Planning Framework draft observes coastal, estuarine, and riparian habitat declines are exacerbated by manmade stressors including those resulting from urban expansion and associated residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural development. Aging septic systems are stressors that produce pollutants following each flood event, thus diminishing the effectiveness of habitat protection and restoration investments.

The City urges the Council to focus investments on techniques that reduce nutrients and pollutants as a first step to avoid various conditions that could impede and often reverse efforts to restore aquatic habitats or other living resources sensitive to water quality impairment. As noted in the Framework draft, septic systems used to treat residential wastewater are often point sources of locally elevated nutrient compounds due to aging infrastructure. Upgrading septic systems (e.g. septic-to-sewer programs) is identified in the Framework draft as a technique that may provide dramatic reductions to significant point sources of pollutants with cost savings generated over time.

Galveston's high water table, sandy soils, dense home concentrations, reduced leach field areas and many aging septic systems create a "perfect storm" for non-point source pollutants into the surrounding soils, groundwater and ultimately the Gulf of Mexico and West Bay. Tidal surge from hurricanes as well as continued relative sea level rise further exacerbates these conditions in Galveston subdivisions with septic systems.

The City is ready to collaborate on shared RESTORE Act goals for improving resiliency and water quality by preventing the destructive effects of non-point source pollution due to surface water contamination. In 2016, the City submitted a \$13.5 million septic-to-sewer project application to establish a collaborative approach with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) to improve water quality in waters surrounding Galveston Island by reducing nutrient loads and potential pathogens emitted from aging septic systems. To date, the City has committed \$4.1 million towards two of the five phases of this 10-year septic to sewer project.

Addressing septic system contamination advances the primary goal of restoring water quality and quantity, but also has additional cascading benefits to other goals and objectives identified in the Planning Framework draft. This effort supports healthier beachfront habitats by eliminating the leach field connectivity to the beach that improves water quality while also protecting habitats including birds and terrestrial wildlife, reptiles/amphibians, and fish and shellfish. Moreover, water quality improvements lead to improving connectivity to the Bay, replenishing strained estuarine habitats, revitalizing ecologic functions, and supporting species of economic and recreational interest.

Galveston citizens, businesses, non-profit organizations and community leaders recognize protecting healthier beach front habitat as the highest priority. With over 7 million tourists visiting Galveston Island in 2018, tourism is the lifeblood for the City and contributes significantly to the state's economy. Septic-to-sewer projects provide key protections against non-point pollution sources and vital for ensuring long-lasting sustainable beach habitats that contributes to a productive Galveston Bay.

We greatly appreciate this opportunity to submit written comments on the RESTORE Council's Planning Framework draft. As the Planning Framework is finalized and FPL 3 development efforts proceed, the City of Galveston urges the RESTORE Council to recognize septic to sewer projects for priority investment to prevent non-point source pollutant contamination of coastal and estuarine systems and lead to improved water quality and enhanced coastal habitat.

If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely, James D. Yarbroug, Mayor

7b. Alexis Baldera, Ocean Conservancy

- Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council members:

Ocean Conservancy commends the Council for taking this meaningful step toward the commitments made in the Updated Comprehensive Plan, bridging the gap between the Comprehensive Plan and the Funded Priorities List 3 (FPL 3). We appreciate the opportunity to provide input on the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council Planning Framework Draft and would like to offer our comments specifically on the following topics:

Priority geographies

We support the inclusion of shared watersheds that cross state boundaries as priority geographical areas in the Framework Draft. Ecosystems and natural resources span state boundaries, and restoration projects should too. We agree with the statement in Section 1.1 that total restoration funds "are not sufficient to adequately address all the environmental challenges that exist in in the Gulf." This is also true for the Council-Selected Restoration Component; therefore, as the Council begins developing the FPL 3 we urge the Council to further prioritize the geographic areas listed in the Framework Draft, preferably getting back to the watershed-based approach used in the first FPL.

Project selection based on stressors

Within each priority watershed, the Council should identify primary stressors that will then be used to select priority projects for inclusion in FPL 3. Section 2.3.5 on Mobile Bay and Mobile-Tensaw Delta in Alabama provides a good example of this stressors-based approach, citing the Mobile Bay Causeway as a specific example of a major impediment to the hydrologic flow of the Mobile-Tensaw Delta, which "has interrupted natural processes of the delta system and estuary for many decades."

However, we would like further clarification on the potential restoration technique of decommissioning unused, orphaned energy facilities in Texas (Section 2.3.1), specifically whether this refers to inshore (land-based) or offshore oil and gas infrastructure. We also question whether decommissioning offshore oil and gas infrastructure is an effective or strategic use of RESTORE Act funding under the Council-Selected Component, given the number of other more appropriate federal funding sources available to achieve this conservation measure.

Consistent monitoring standards

We are encouraged to see the Council highlight the Council Monitoring and Assessment Work Group (CMAWG) as an option for additional investment in Gulfwide projects and programs. However, we are concerned that the CMAWG's intended completion date of June 2020 may not occur before the release of FPL 3, and the results of the CMAWG's work are important to incorporate into the FPL 3. We encourage the Council to complete the standardized monitoring metrics for at least the restoration approaches that will be included in the FPL 3, as they are crucial for comparing the results across projects and will allow the Council to track restoration success and communicate to the public the overall outcome of various projects across the Gulf region.

As the CMAWG's final recommendations are unavailable at this time, we are unsure if they are already considering the monitoring guidance in Appendix E of the Deepwater Horizon Trustees' Monitoring and Adaptive Management (MAM) Procedures and Guidelines Manual, as it outlines the monitoring parameters needed for four of the Council's five priority restoration approaches (the exception being "restoring oyster habitat"). We recommend the Council, with guidance from the CMAWG, adopt, to the greatest extent possible, the monitoring guidelines developed in the MAM manual for efficiency and to increase coordination across restoration programs. Since the Council adapted its terminology and

classification scheme for organizing restoration techniques from that of the Deepwater Horizon Trustees, it would be appropriate and beneficial for the Council to adopt the Trustees' monitoring metrics developed for those techniques.

Adaptive management

We are pleased to see a commitment to incorporating adaptive management procedures in Section 1.4: "As part of the process of developing future FPLs, this Planning Framework will be reviewed and revised as needed to incorporate outcomes and lessons learned from previously implemented projects (including monitoring data from previously implemented projects), scientific and technical developments, changing policy, public input, and other planning considerations."

Climate change and sea level rise

We feel that Section 2.2.2, which addresses the need to acquire lands to accommodate for sea level rise, is a step in the right direction. Climate change should be a consideration for all projects selected by the Council, both how it will affect the long-term success of a project and how projects will help mitigate its effects.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and please feel free to contact us with any questions.

7c. Robert Bendick Director, The Nature Conservancy Gulf of Mexico Program

- Dear Members of the Council: We are writing to provide comments on behalf of The Nature Conservancy on the Planning Framework Draft (April 2019) of the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council. Our comments are as follows:
 1. Overall, the structure and direction of the framework are sound. The approach of defining strategies and actions and then applying them to specific geographies to address the problems in and threats to those places is logical and understandable. The categories of actions are appropriate and the specific activities listed within those categories are good, and for the most part, encompass the projects one can envision for Gulf restoration. (Specific comments are below). The geographic areas defined are in the right direction, but TNC hopes that the very large areas (Texas and Florida) can be narrowed as the process continues.
 2. On page 5, the Framework says that "the Council will consider restoration activities funded by (other agencies) as it determines future funding priorities. We consider such coordination critical to the success of the process, so please be more explicit as to how this coordination will be accomplished.
 3. On page 8, the Framework says that the "Council is committed to using a watershed/estuary-based approach to restoration in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update, and this remains a strategic planning principle for FPL development." TNC strongly endorses this approach. In the discussions later in the document, the Framework identifies specific threats to the geographic areas selected, lists actions to respond to those threats, and mentions coordination with other funding sources. TNC believes this can best be accomplished on a watershed basis as the Framework explains for the Lake Pontchartrain, Mississippi Sound, Mobile Bay and Perdido Bay examples. Creation of estuary programs where they do not now exist, such as was done for Pensacola Bay in the first round of RESTORE funding, can facilitate this kind of planning.
 4. In Figure 2.1.1 on page 10, TNC supports the idea that the promotion of natural resource stewardship and environmental education and improving science-based decision-making are objectives that cut across all strategies. Elsewhere on this chart, TNC suggests that the multiple benefits of some restoration activities are not adequately reflected in the current version of the chart because some activities have additional primary rather than just secondary benefits. Our proposed changes:
 - a. Under Restore, improve and protect water resources, add primary goals for Land acquisition, Habitat management and stewardship, and for Substrate placement and Enhance spawning and reserves under Restore oyster habitat.
 - b. Under Protect and restore living coastal marine resources, add primary goals for Land acquisition, Habitat management and stewardship in the Protect and conserve coastal, estuarine and riparian habitat category, Restore hydrologic connectivity, Restore natural salinity regimes in the Restore hydrology and natural processes category, and in Agriculture and forest management in the Reduce excess nutrients category.

c. Under Promote community resilience, add primary goals for Land acquisition in the Protect and conserve coastal, estuarine, and riparian habitats category and for Living shorelines in the Restore Oyster habitat category

5. In Figure 2.1.2. on page 11, TNC suggests that some categories of action are missing for some geographies to achieve the comprehensive plan objectives. Our proposed changes:
 - a. For Texas, add Protect and conserve coastal, estuarine and riparian habitats under Promote community resilience.
 - b. For the Chenier Plain, add Protect and conserve coastal, estuarine and riparian habitats under Restore, enhance and protect habitats and under Promote community resilience
 - c. For Pontchartrain Basin, add Protect and conserve coastal, estuarine and riparian habitats under Restore, enhance and protect habitats, add create, restore and enhance coastal wetlands, islands, shorelines and headlands under Protect and restore living coastal and marine resources, add Create, restore and enhance coastal wetlands under Restore and enhance natural processes and shorelines.
 - d. For Mobile Bay, add Create, restore, and enhance coastal wetlands...under Restore, enhance and protect habitats and under Restore and enhance natural processes and shorelines. Add Protect and conserve coastal, estuarine and riparian habitats under Promote community resilience
 - e. For Perdido River and Bay, add Protect and conserve coastal, estuarine and riparian habitats under Restore, improve and protect water resources and under Restore and enhance natural processes and shorelines. f. For Florida, add Protect and conserve coastal, estuarine and riparian habitats under Restore, improve and protect water resources.
6. On page 13, with respect to sediment placement, TNC endorses the idea of developing ways of increasing the beneficial use of dredged materials for Gulf restoration. Toward this end we urge utilization of the tool being developed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for this purpose.
7. In the description of Priority Approaches and Techniques for Restoration (pages 12-29), TNC would like to see a general statement about the use of “natural infrastructure” and the restoration of natural processes to accomplish coastal restoration and management. This idea is included in several of the approach descriptions, but as a general concept, the use of natural features and processes deliver the most multiple benefits for coastal restoration at the lowest ongoing cost. Having said this, we understand that hard or hybrid infrastructure may be the best option at some locations.
8. On page 16, under Restore and Conserve Habitat, in the description of the benefits of the Land Acquisition technique, we believe that the water quality and quantity and community resilience benefits are so clear that they should be listed as primary benefits of the Restore, Enhance and Protect habitat approach.
9. On page 17, TNC does not support using RESTORE funds for decommissioning unused, orphaned energy facilities. Other sources of revenue derived from oil and gas leasing should be used for that purpose.
10. On page 20, TNC supports investment to restore hydrologic connectivity and believes that there should be mention here of restoring anadromous fish runs in the Gulf which formerly played a more significant role in the health of the Gulf ecosystem.
11. On page 24, TNC agrees that agricultural and forest management can have important impacts on reducing nutrient runoff into adjacent waters. We suggest that, along tributary rivers to important Gulf estuaries, a combination of land acquisition in fee and easement from willing sellers and management assistance for private forest landowners can produce significant long-term benefits for both water quality and quantity in the estuaries downstream.
12. On page 27, TNC fully supports the need to restore oysters in the Gulf because oysters are important both economically as a harvestable resource as well as ecologically as an important natural habitat. Restoration of oysters can also have a very significant positive impact on water quality and clarity.
13. On page 26, under potential restoration techniques for oysters, TNC believes that cooperative estuary based oyster restoration planning can accelerate oyster restoration and help to ensure that oyster

management is sustainable. TNC supports the Council's recommendation for habitat suitability modeling, but this should be combined with working with a broad range of stakeholders in an estuary to identify goals for oyster restoration and the combination of actions needed to reach those goals over the long run. TNC's publication, "Setting Objectives for Oyster Habitat Restoration Using Ecosystem Services" can assist in this process. (TNC is underway with community-based oyster goal-setting in Calcasieu Lake and Pensacola Bay).

14. On page 29, TNC agrees that spawning reserves are needed both to ensure the production of oyster spat to maintain healthy oyster populations and to produce the habitat and water quality benefits of oyster restoration. Reserves can be created in tandem with harvestable reefs.

15. On page 39, in the Lake Pontchartrain Basin, TNC recognizes that the magnitude of the problem of altered deltaic processes and land loss requires priority attention in the next round of RESTORE funding to enable sufficiently large and complex projects to address the large scale stressors in this area.

16. On page 48, the partnership between the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program and state agencies is a good example of the estuary approach to Gulf restoration.

17. On page 48 and in the summary chart, TNC believes that the Protect and Conserve approach should be added to the Mobile Bay section to best accomplish the restoration goals for Mobile Bay.

18. On page 59, TNC agrees that a Gulfwide oyster restoration initiative, coordinated with the NRD funding sources for oysters, could be effective particularly because all priority areas appear to include oyster restoration strategies.

19. Also, on page 59, TNC supports environmental education, training, and opportunities to implement other conservation projects and strategies through the employment of young people in Gulf restoration. Our experience with GulfCorps has shown that there are multiple benefits from administering such programs on a Gulf-wide basis.

20. And, overall, as the Planning Framework is intended to build on previous investments from the 2015 Initial FPL in habitat and water quality, we hope that the next FPL includes funding for the implementation phases of projects included in the Initial FPL. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important document and for your positive ongoing efforts to restore the Gulf of Mexico.

Sincerely, Robert Bendick, Director, Gulf of Mexico Program, The Nature Conservancy

7d. Cathleen Breslin Berthelot, Environmental Defense Fund

- Dear RESTORE Council staff:
Attached please find comments on the Planning Framework draft from our coalition and partners throughout the Gulf of Mexico. We thank you for the opportunity to comment and for your continued commitment to the restoration of the Gulf.
Very Sincerely,
Cathleen

Body of Attachment:

Dear Council Members:

On behalf of our organizations across the Gulf Coast, we thank you for your ongoing efforts to restore the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem after the catastrophic Deepwater Horizon oil spill. As you know, for years our organizations have advocated for coordinated, science-based, and large-scale restoration of the Gulf of Mexico. In 2012 by passing the RESTORE Act, Congress gave the Gulf States a unique opportunity to address their most pressing ecosystem challenges through funding a comprehensive restoration plan and implementing large-scale federal and state restoration projects. We appreciate that the RESTORE Council is taking another step to implement Congress' direction with its Planning Framework. We believe that the Planning Framework can be an important tool to identify priorities and sharpen future investments.

The Council's decisions around these investments are critical to the future of the Gulf. We continue to believe that the Council should tailor its project funding to address the most pressing ecosystem stressors in a given watershed or estuary across the Gulf. This approach will ensure that restoration investments are strategic, maximizing the opportunity that the settlement affords. We offer the following thoughts regarding high-priority activities to ensure that the next Funded Priorities List (FPL) includes the best investments to advance ecosystem restoration goals.

The RESTORE Council Planning Framework demonstrates improved coordination among Council members, appropriately focuses investments in watersheds and estuaries, and identifies critical restoration strategies. We support the Council's approach in these areas. We are supportive of the Council's efforts to improve coordination in advance of the next FPL and believe that the Framework does a good job of putting different restoration activities in the context of other similar or related investments from the first FPL and from other funding streams. We are also encouraged that the Council intends to maintain the watershed/estuary or ecoregion geographic frame for the next FPL. We are supportive of the general approach of identifying restoration strategies and techniques for these different geographies. In doing this, we believe the framework will help agencies to work together in designing and advancing good projects for potential RESTORE funding.

However, we have the following specific comments:

1. We recommend that the Planning Framework further clarify the Council's geographic priorities.

The geographies identified in the framework were in some cases too broad to signal meaningfully the Council's restoration priorities. To the extent possible, we encourage the Council members to further prioritize geographies for investments in the next FPL around watersheds/estuaries or ecoregions and to explain their prioritization, in order to inform more meaningful stakeholder and public engagement in the proposal development process.

2. The Planning Framework should more clearly tie restoration approaches to known system stressors within priority geographies.

While the framework does discuss ecosystem stressors in the context of describing certain restoration approaches at a high level, it should also provide an assessment of known ecosystem stressors and solutions for each priority geography. For many watersheds around the Gulf, ecosystem stressors are known and have already been documented in state and other restoration or resource management plans. Restoration approaches and techniques should be tailored to address the most pressing stressors and threats in a given watershed. Place-based stressors assessments, will help to evaluate the wisdom of different project investments, and may inform project sequencing.

3. We recommend that the Council articulate a transparent and science-based project selection process that incorporates public input.

Despite the Council's stated commitment to use Best Available Science and to be transparent in their decision-making, the Council still has not articulated to the public a transparent and science-based project selection process. As we noted during the 360 review process following the last FPL, the project selection process should be revised to be based on the extent to which projects meet the priority criteria in the RESTORE Act. The process should take into account anticipated measurable project outcomes, and should be clearly communicated to the public in advance of proposal development. In addition, we believe the public should be able to comment on proposed projects prior to their selection for the draft FPL, and encourage the individual Council members to engage the public as they develop projects.

We are pleased that the Planning Framework draft recognizes public input as a critical part of the RESTORE Council process. However, more regular public updates, engagement opportunities, and clarity on objectives and criteria and the project selection process are needed to enable stronger, more informed public input. We would be glad to work with the Council on stakeholder engagement if helpful.

Finally, we agree that the Planning Framework should support large-scale investments, and we also note our support for continued investment in the Council Monitoring and Assessment Work Group (CMAWG). We encourage the Council to expedite this funding so that RESTORE project-level monitoring protocols,

standardized performance metrics, and standardized data collection and management protocols can be developed and in place before construction of FPL 3 projects begin.

In addition to the priorities articulated above, many of our organizations will be submitting additional comments that speak in greater detail to many of the other restoration approaches included in the Planning Framework. We thank you in advance for consideration of those comments.

In closing, on behalf of our members across the Gulf Coast and around the nation, we thank you for the work you have done so far and for your consideration of our recommendations. Our organizations have worked for years to serve as good partners to the RESTORE Council, and we are eager to continue to make progress together. We stand ready to assist the RESTORE Council members and staff as you move toward the next FPL.

Sincerely,
Alabama Coastal Foundation
America's WETLAND Foundation
Audubon Florida
Audubon Louisiana
Audubon Mississippi
Audubon Texas
Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana
Conservation Alabama Foundation
The Conservation Fund
Environmental Defense Fund
Florida Wildlife Federation
GNO, Inc.
Gulf Islands Conservancy, Inc
Healthy Gulf
Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation
Land Trust for Louisiana
Land Trust for the Mississippi Coastal Plain
Mississippi Wildlife Federation
Mobile Baykeeper
National Audubon Society
The National Wildlife Federation
The Nature Conservancy
The Nature Conservancy, Louisiana
North Gulfport Community Land Trust
Ocean Conservancy
Restore or Retreat

7e. Yolanda J. Ferguson, Joseph Trawl (PEPC 54-63, duplicate submission)

- RESTORE COUNCIL
MRS .FERGUSON manufacturingj@yahoo.com
I like to take the time to give knowledge to following MS.Ot Environmental law Institute

ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION

ECOSYSTEM..what does this mean ..

a biological community of interacting organisms and their physical environment.

(in general use) a complex network or interconnected system.

An ecosystem is a large community of living organisms (plants, animals and microbes) in a particular area. the living and physical components are linked together through nutrient cycles and energy flows.

RESTORATION

Definition of restoration

1 : an act of restoring or the condition of being restored: such as a : a bringing back to a former position or condition : REINSTATEMENT the restoration of peace b : RESTITUTION c : a restoring to an unimpaired or improved condition

The planning frame work draft to ensure restoration investments fits a broad vision for gulf of mexico. this is always what you say .

Well this frame work draft and you are focus on I think you need to look at in different view. in a more broad scope .

you are so focus on making sure restoration investment fits the board vision for gulf .is very good idea for for long term But sometimes you have to take blinder off and look around ..kind of like you have to look from a different angle and have and a seat and watch and pay attention ..

We do believe some of the deaths and sickness are experience is due to fresh water inclusion but not all of them are 261 dolphins and 149 turtle countless other wild life
<https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2019-06/documents/schedule.pdf>

I believe that enough toxic dispersant were used on deep water horizon spill that they pool in diffrent location 1.8 million gallon is alot of corexit and if the oil got in bays and bayou then dispersant did too.

Dispersants are mixtures of solvents, surfactants, and additives that are designed to break apart slicks of floating oil and facilitate formation of small droplets of oil in the water column to enhance dispersion and microbial degradation.

During the 2010 BP Deep water Horizon oil disaster response, unprecedented amounts of dispersants were used at the surface and subsurface wellhead, over an unprecedented duration of nearly three months, leading to unprecedented amounts of oil deposition on the ocean floor.

here are few links you might find of intresting ...

- o https://www.theadvocate.com/baton_rouge/news/article_85ed63d2-8d1a-11e9-a03e-9b464b8c4852.html?utm_medium=social&utm_source=facebook&utm_campaign=user-share&fbclid=IwAR2AOhLV2XjTnHdfPoqzX9XuGbjlQbn7Btq0h000ehPwJoi_mMIMJDbAs5s
- o <https://www.nola.com/environment/2019/06/stranding-of-261-dolphins-possibly-linked-to-high-mississippi-river-declared-unusual-mortality-event.html>
- o <https://undark.org/2019/06/06/deepwater-horizon-dispersants/?fbclid=IwAR0YhXSuWptPL0D2rNv9oJpH0cilo3yM1RNMPO-UW0EhjVUKbkCbexuNfiw>
- o https://www.wlox.com/2019/06/14/noaa-launches-federal-investigation-into-gulf-dolphin-deaths/?fbclid=IwAR1m6wb3G2JEofZXYld3YNNev4E9GXOuQMW_SjoeFpu8k0xvrCsRN33Mml
- o <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mdfguQxtl4w&feature=share>
- o https://bpoil.wordpress.com/2018/04/21/dispersants-can-turn-oil-spills-into-toxic-mist-research-shows/?fbclid=IwAR0jcZFlo4S1YFtnwERYVcCLprvn3ZJInx7b4MF-_MvAyh2ZseA-cRN8mME
- o https://www.nola.com/environment/2019/04/women-exposed-to-bp-spill-have-higher-levels-of-post-traumatic-stress-study-finds.html?fbclid=IwAR3E_edeMpqfMf6LPilSuV_fm90ceKplOa4VsYzAiCb2LAEaelwXAf-45Ws
- o <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/dolphins-along-gulf-coast-are-dying-triple-normal-rate-scientists-n1017966?fbclid=IwAR2AUxPp37FBoZPaq1od2qIfNRhrDdqP4HkO6lQWHu900ZDy-LVkywyverw>
- o https://kprcradio.iheart.com/featured/walton-and-johnson/content/2019-06-13-texas-man-dips-toes-in-water-catches-flesh-eating-virus/?fbclid=IwAR2bW16xx9kaCIs1-9EBHHra9fEbsAixCjM_a6yXUosQDzH0se6FW2WA6w
- o <https://www.epa.gov/emergency-response/national-oil-and-hazardous-substances-pollution-contingency-plan-ncp-overview>

Oil Removals

§300.322,

Authorizes the OSC to determine whether a release poses a substantial threat to the public health based on the size and character of the discharge, and its proximity to human populations and sensitive environments. In such cases, the OSC is authorized to direct all federal, state, or private response and recovery actions. The OSC may enlist the support of other federal agencies or special teams.

Hazardous Substance Removals §300.415(b)

Authorizes the lead agency to initiate appropriate removal action in the event of a hazardous substance release. Decisions of action will be based on: Threats to human or animal populations; Contamination of drinking water supplies or sensitive ecosystems; High levels of hazardous substances in soils; Weather conditions that may cause migration or release of hazardous substances; Threat of fire or explosion; or Other significant factors effecting public health or the environment.

MYTH 1: A listing on the NCP Product Schedule means that dispersants are "safe" for use during oil spill response.
FACT: "The listing of a product on the NCP Product Schedule does not constitute approval of the product" [§300.920(e)] and products are required be labeled with a disclaimer to that effect. Rather, the listing means only that data have been submitted to EPA as required by Subpart J of the NCP. The EPA authorizes, it does NOT approve, use of dispersants listed on the Product Schedule.

The data include a screening test for toxicity, based on short-term, 96-hour lab tests on lab-tolerant species, and meeting an efficacy test threshold, based on the average of results from two test oils. The data are used to indicate relative toxicity and efficacy of products in laboratory conditions. These laboratory tests bear little resemblance to, and are not indicative of toxicity or performance in, natural environments where products may be used.

I would think that after all of these information you would think you restore council and people who working with restore would like to do what they were called to do ..RESTORE GULF ..
I think at this point if something is not down there will be nothing left of gulf to restore it will be large dead zone .

I have heard this million times if i heard it once
people disgruntled because the people who were put in place to serve and protect us . didnt do and allowed this to happen
we had to wait a very long still no recourse .you spent all money on oyster .mnow there all died
yeah need to put together common up with a way to clean this up or dulite it .
because if dont I fear we will slowly lose them ..As they will die off
I believe you can use mammal protection act

Protection, Conservation, and Recovery of Marine Mammals

To protect all marine mammals, the MMPA prohibits the "taking" of any marine mammal species in U.S. waters where "take" means to hunt, harass, capture, or kill any marine mammal or attempting to do so. It also prohibits the import and export of marine mammals and their parts or products.

Exceptions to these prohibitions include:

- Permitted incidental take (e.g., unintentional take) in the commercial fishing industry managed through the Marine Mammal Authorization Program.
- Authorized incidental take that may occur during non-fishing activities including oil and gas development, military readiness activities, renewable energy projects, construction projects, and research.
- Permitted directed take and import for scientific research, enhancement, commercial or educational photography, and public display.
- Permitted import, export, and receipt of parts for scientific research.
- Pre-act determinations for marine mammal parts taken before December 21, 1972.
- Take by Alaska natives for subsistence use or to create and sell authentic articles of handicrafts and clothing.

In addition to managing the taking of marine mammals, NOAA Fisheries also performs the following conservation and management actions:

Development and implementation of conservation plans for species designated as depleted.
Development and implementation of take reduction plans to minimize bycatch of mammals in commercial fishing gear.

Coordinating the Marine Mammal Health and Stranding Response Program and investigating marine mammal unusual mortality events.

Partnering with other nations to ensure that international trade does not threaten species.

our major concern is that we get this mess clean up that restore gulf to better than we got it.
Investigating and prosecuting violations of the MMPA.

ALL WERE ASKING FOR YA to stop denying the fact that yall let multinational corp come use a dispersant not one but two

all asking is knowledge you did start running test figure out a way to solve and midgate this problem that our government and governmental agency cause
the dispersANT NAME 9500 , 9527

7f. Colleen Forest on Behalf of Wei Wang, Railroad Commission of Texas

- Dear Executive Director Scaggs:
The Railroad Commission of Texas (Commission) appreciates this opportunity to review and comment on the RESTORE Council's Planning Framework draft before proposals are developed for Funded Priority List (FPL) 3 funding consideration. The Commission offers this information unique to its jurisdiction and regulatory mission to help inform the Council as it evaluates approaches and geographic areas worthy of funding prioritization at this time.

One of the Commission's primary statutory responsibilities is the regulation of oil, gas, and geothermal resources, which the Commission has effectively regulated in the State of Texas since 1919. Commission authority includes conservation of the State's natural resources, prevention of waste, protection of the correlative rights of mineral interest owners, and protection of the environment from pollution associated with oil, gas, and geothermal activities.

Pursuant to Chapter 89 of the Texas Natural Resources Code, if the Commission determines that a well has not been properly plugged or needs re-plugging, the Commission, through its employees or through a person acting as agent for the Commission, may plug or re-plug the well if certain conditions are met. In accordance with this authority, the Commission is engaged in a robust well plugging program-plugging 1,364 orphaned wells throughout Texas in fiscal year 2018.

The Commission's well plugging program aligns perfectly with one of the specific priorities identified in the RESTORE Council's Planning Framework draft: the decommissioning of unused, orphaned energy facilities identified under the priority approach to protect and conserve coastal, estuarine, and riparian habitats. Specifically, the Commission has legal authority, experience, and expertise to plug orphaned wells, which eliminates the threat of a hydrocarbon release from an orphaned well into coastal and offshore waters, and the potential to adversely impact the natural resources along the Texas coast.

As of April 30, 2019, there were 63 orphaned bay and 114 orphaned offshore wells in the coastal waters of Texas. Plugging these orphaned marine wells protects the surrounding coastal habitat (coastal marsh, coastal prairie, and coastal woodlands habitat), which provide important wintering and migration stopover habitat for migratory birds including Central Flyway waterfowl, shorebirds, wading birds and marsh and waterbirds, along with protecting ecosystems that are home to rare or endangered species (Bald Eagle, Brown Pelican, and Piping Plover), and fish (southern flounder, sea trout, drum, menhaden, croaker, tarpon, shark, and mackerel and shellfish include American oyster, blue crab, brown shrimp, white shrimp) in the surrounding waters.

The Commission strongly supports and urges the RESTORE Council to maintain as a priority the decommissioning of unused, orphaned energy facilities in Texas, and specifically the use of this funding to plug orphaned wells in the coastal waters of Texas.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. The Railroad Commission appreciates the efforts of the Council and is available to answer any questions and assist as the Council deems necessary.

Sincerely, Wei Wang Executive Director

7g. Alberto Galan, Calcasieu Parish Police Jury (PEPC 51)

- Attached is a letter with public comment on the RESTORE Council's Planning Framework Draft. Representatives of Southwest Louisiana governmental entities, non-profits, chambers of commerce, ports, convention and visitor's bureau, universities and local technical college have all signed onto this letter to demonstrate the unity and importance with which this region places this critical funding and related programs.

In addition, we strongly endorse the inclusion of the Chenier Plain Texas-Louisiana region for the reasons stated in the letter. Based on the natural resources, unprecedented economic development on a national scale, energy and national security assets that can benefit and be enhanced from Chenier Plain focused

Council investments, we strongly urge the council to keep the Chenier Plain Texas-Louisiana Region in the final planning framework for RESTORE Bucket 2.

Body of Attachment:

Dear Members of the Council:

The undersigned representatives of local governmental entities, private entities, and non-profit entities appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Council's Planning Framework Draft designed to guide RESTORE Bucket 2 investments in the years ahead. The adopted Planning Framework will be critically important to the people, communities and abundant natural resources of the 6.5 million-acre Chenier Plain that includes 200 Gulf of Mexico coastal miles from Vermilion Bay in Southwest Louisiana to east Galveston Bay and Trinity Bay in Southeast Texas.

We strongly endorse the Planning Framework's inclusion of the "Chenier Plain Texas-Louisiana" region as a multi-state landscape scale focus area for Council investments and we are confident that restoration opportunities in the Chenier Plain offer the Council extraordinary "multiple benefits" per dollar invested. Those benefits include highly productive natural resources and habitats directly injured by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

This region is critically important in many areas including economic prosperity, energy and industrial productions and activities, and natural resources. In addition, the economic resiliency, energy and national security outcomes the Council helps create will sustain and improve the lives and livelihoods of the people of the Chenier Plain and the nation.

Among the natural resource, economic, energy and national security assets that can benefit from Chenier Plain focused Council investments are:

- North America's largest migratory waterfowl flyway and internationally Important bird areas
- Commercial fisheries often exceeding 600 million pounds landed annually
- 20 state and federal conservation units with nearly 700,000 acres of public use and recreation lands for hunting, fishing and nature tourism
- 1.6 million acres of coastal wetlands including 669,000 acres in Cameron Parish which is the largest amount of any Gulf Coast county or parish and the Salt Bayou Watershed which is the largest coastal marsh in Texas
- Over half the nation's Strategic Petroleum Reserve at West Hackberry in Louisiana and Big Hill in Texas with 380 million barrels stored combined
- The nation's highest volume of LNG refining and exporting facilities, vital for American jobs, energy security and the national trade balance
- The nation's largest military port in Beaumont and refineries that provide 75% of the nation's military jet fuel
- Over half of the tonnage and value shipped on the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway 66.5 million annual acre feet of freshwater discharge into the Gulf of Mexico from parts of two states which is the second highest volume to the Gulf behind the Mississippi (and Atchafalaya) which drain all or part of 31 states

It is with these natural resource, economic and national defense attributes in mind that the undersigned strongly endorse keeping the Chenier Plain Texas-Louisiana region in the final Planning Framework for RESTORE Bucket 2

Signed by representatives from:

Calcasieu Parish Police Jury

Cameron Parish Police Jury

Chenier Plain Coastal Restoration & Protection Authority

City of Lake Charles

Town of Vinton

City of Westlake

West Calcasieu Chamber of Commerce

Southwest Louisiana Economic Development Alliance

Port of Lake Charles- - Lake Charles Harbor and Terminal District

West Calcasieu Port

McNeese State University
SOWELA Technical Community College
Southwest Louisiana Convention and Visitor's Bureau
Fusion Five of Southwest Louisiana

7h. Ivy Mathieu, St. John the Baptist Parish. Coastal Advisory Group

- Thanks for the opportunity to provide feedback on the Planning Framework Draft. Since I was able to attend the public comment presentation at Xavier University of LA on May 6, 2019, here is the impression I am left with.
 - 1) My question is how was the public informed about these meetings? If I wasn't proactively engaged with coastal restoration and community resiliency efforts, the public meeting notice (via NWF organization) would have been unknown to me. Since you claim you are practicing the Lean Principles, please figure out how better to outreach to the public via multiple communication channels, if that is truly your objective. For example, have the local networks announce the meeting; put notices in the local area papers (digital and otherwise); have environmental agencies blast their contacts, etc.
 - 2) The power point presentation was too general and broad. It did not tell this Louisiana native what specifically you have teed up for 2019 -2020 for the southeast region of the state, especially St. John Parish, as one example. By sampling where the audience resides, then the time could have been adjusted to give specific actives or planned actives for the resident. Also, a simple fact sheet of what projects, status of projects, costs, and links to where one can get more details, should have been discussed instead of a very general presentation.
 - 3) Outline succinctly, truthfully, and factually, the Human impact to climate change and sea level rise to the specific areas you are addressing. In other words, tailor your message to the general population you are addressing publicly and in your written reports. The human impact needs to be clearly addressed at every juncture of a project (i.e., can the local population financially afford to temporarily relocate with little or a lot of assistance; does the impacted population have the income and financial resources to rebuild or do they rent their home, therefore, what type of housing will be needed; transportation and food requirements; relocation factors, education disruption; healthcare disruption, mental health impact, etc.). In other words, is your modeling on the human impact factor in the concrete disparity in our society, thus affecting how one can survive a disaster with the appropriate level of assistance based on true needs.

7i. David Muth, Director of Gulf Restoration, The National Wildlife Federation

- Please accept the following comments on the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council's Draft FPL Planning Framework.

Body of Attachment:

Dear RESTORE Council Members:

On behalf of our 6 million members and supporters around the country, the National Wildlife Federation thanks you for your work in service of restoration of the Gulf of Mexico. As we close in upon the ten year memorial of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill disaster, we have an opportunity to build upon the good work already done to grow the restoration legacy for the Gulf Coast region. The RESTORE Council has a critical role in this endeavor, and we appreciate the effort that has gone into the creation of this Draft FPL Planning Framework. We believe this Draft Planning Framework demonstrates the Council's stated commitment to improve coordination between Council members and across geographies, and applaud the Council for thinking beyond political and jurisdictional bounds when considering the restoration needs of the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem.

We submit the following comments as you work to finalize this framework and transition into proposal development for the next Funded Priorities List (FPL):

First, to maximize the utility of the Planning Framework as a public engagement tool, we encourage the Council to further refine the geographic priorities identified. We note in Alabama, two watersheds were specifically named, and geographically-specific priority approaches and techniques were identified. Likewise, in Mississippi and Louisiana, the Framework articulates the Council's intention to focus on

specific estuaries in those two states. We urge the Council to similarly name and identify priority areas for Florida and Texas in the next FPL.

We also encourage the Council to use the Planning Framework to more clearly tie restoration approaches to known system stressors within priority geographies. National Wildlife Federation's Gulf of Mexico Program developed a science-based and systematic approach to evaluate estuarine restoration needs in specific geographies and estuaries. This approach did not require new science, but instead drew upon existing ecosystem evaluations and plans to assess critical stressors, which led in turn to an identification of potential restoration strategies and techniques (projects). The RESTORE Council Framework is uneven in its linkage of restoration approaches and techniques to known stressors within some of the geographic areas identified in the framework. For example, within the Mobile Bay and Mobile-Tensaw Delta, the Framework identifies the stressor "disruption of natural hydrologic flows", and then identifies corresponding priority approaches and techniques to restore hydrologic connectivity. We encourage the Council to articulate these linkages between known system stressors and restoration approaches/techniques across all identified geographies - providing important context for potential restoration investments.

Additionally, we continue to encourage the Council to develop a publically-articulated, transparent, and science-based project selection process. While this process need not be spelled out in the framework document itself, we believe it should be elucidated for the public in advance of the development of project proposals for the next FPL. One of the primary pieces of feedback that NWF and many partners provided in the Council's 360 review following finalization of the first FPL was that the project evaluation and selection process (including the submission guidelines) should be revised and publically shared to be more transparent, specific, and based upon sound science. We recommend that the Council members consider the results of the 360 review that was conducted several years ago as you proceed with the next FPL. We also encourage the Council to identify methods of measuring the extent to which a project adheres to the priority criteria in the RESTORE Act, in addition to the Goals and Objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. Ideally, fulfillment of the priority criteria would not be a binary exercise, but based on relative success of a proposal in adhering to the criteria laid out by Congress.

We also submit the following comments specific to the geographic areas presented in the draft Planning Framework:

Florida

We support the Framework's proposal to build on existing restoration investments in the Florida panhandle, especially on projects identified elsewhere in the narrative (Pensacola Bay living shorelines, and Bayou Chico restoration).

Although a few stressors for the FL geographic area were highlighted in the Framework (nutrient pollution, hydrologic alternations, and habitat fragmentation), it was not always clear which stressors tied to which techniques and approaches in various geographies.

Several of the approaches and techniques in the Framework are consistent with strategies NWF recommends based on our assessment of stressors and needs; however, these techniques need to be better grounded in the frame of the watershed/estuary where they are most relevant. Examples of techniques identified in the Framework that target critical system stressors include: protect natural shorelines to create, restore, and enhance islands and shorelines; land acquisition to protect and conserve habitat; restore hydrologic connectivity to restore hydrology and natural processes; and substrate placement and living shorelines to restore oyster habitat.

Perdido River and Bay, Alabama - Florida

Land use conversion is identified as a stressor for the Perdido watershed, and we support the identification of land acquisition and habitat management and stewardship as techniques to protect and conserve habitat in this system. We note that strategic land acquisition also has benefits for reduction of excess nutrients and other pollutants. We also support the inclusion of approaches and techniques related to restoring oyster habitat, substrate placement, and living shorelines.

Mobile Bay, Alabama

As noted above, NWF applauds the association between the stressor, priority approach, and technique between altered hydrology and restoring hydrologic connections along the Mobile Bay Causeway. The identification of this stressor and approach is consistent with NWF's recommended strategy for Mobile Bay.

The Framework also identifies habitat fragmentation and land use changes as system stressors; however, it did not identify any approaches to address those stressors. As such, we encourage the Council to consider land acquisition as an effective technique for those two stressors, as well as to address excess nutrients and other pollutants.

Mississippi Sound

We encourage the Council to consider including hydrologic restoration as a potential technique to address the identified stressor of altered hydrologic regimes in Mississippi Sound. Investment in this technique would support and enhance other efforts to restore coastal wetlands, riparian habitats and marine resources including oysters.

We strongly support the technique of land acquisitions in Mississippi to protect and conserve coastal estuaries and riparian habitats. Additional acquisitions will leverage prior investments and provide scalable benefits to these productive coastal environments, particularly in areas such as Graveline Bayou, Grand Bay and Mississippi's Coastal Preserve.

While NWF also agrees with the priority approach of restoring oyster habitat in Mississippi, we urge the Council to ensure any such investments are properly sequenced and account for broader environmental factors and events, including water quality impairment which remains a concern in Mississippi Sound. Pontchartrain Basin, Louisiana-Mississippi

Within the Pontchartrain Basin, NWF supports the identified potential techniques. We encourage the Council to consider continued investments in projects that received funding for engineering and design dollars in the first FPL, including specifically the river reintroduction into the Maurepas swamp. This diversion would greatly contribute to reducing the stressors identified in this region, and exemplifies the RESTORE Act's priority criteria.

NWF supports the Louisiana Coastal Master Plan, which is a science-driven and strategic prioritization of large-scale restoration investments in the critical Mississippi River Delta Ecosystem. We encourage the Council to support advancement of Coastal Master Plan projects with Bucket 2 funds.

Chenier Plain, Texas-Louisiana

NWF agrees that a primary stressor on this system has been the disruption of natural hydrology, resulting in significant issues related to saltwater intrusion, erosion, marsh collapse, and habitat loss due to relative sea level rise. We strongly encourage focusing investments in techniques that target critical system stressors as identified in the framework, particularly protecting natural shorelines, restoring hydrologic connectivity, and restoring natural salinity regimes.

We support building on existing restoration investments in the this region, especially those projects identified in the framework, including Calcasieu Ship Channel salinity control measures (LACPRA) and the Salt Bayou Watershed Restoration Plan (TX).

Texas

NWF agrees with several of the priority issues of concern identified for Texas, particularly habitat loss, habitat fragmentation, loss of hydrologic connectivity, and reduction in freshwater inflows. However, we encourage the Council to prioritize approaches that address these stressors for specific watersheds, as stressors and restoration needs will vary between them.

We recommend that investments in techniques focused on restoring natural hydrology and freshwater inflows be prioritized, and are most appropriate from the mid- to upper- Texas coast where flows have been demonstrated as a critical stressor. For example, systems such as Matagorda and Galveston bays face threats related to the need for ensuring that adequate freshwater inflows make it to our bays, providing a foundation for future restoration investments.

We are encouraged to see references made in the framework to ecosystem restoration measures and projects included in the Coastal Texas Study and the Texas Coastal Resiliency Master Plan. We strongly encourage a high level of coordination with both of these processes to ensure efficiency in restoration planning and implementation.

We support prioritizing investments in ensuring healthy oyster reefs in Texas, particularly in the Galveston Bay system, where strategies are being developed for large-scale application of oyster restoration.

We are particularly supportive of investments in land protection in the Matagorda and Galveston bay systems, including acquisition/easements as well as shoreline protection measures that apply natural infrastructure techniques (i.e., living shorelines). These investments help support water quality, provide protection in the face of sea level rise and coastal storms, and serve as critical habitat for wildlife.

While plugging oil and gas wells was identified as a potential restoration technique which could be employed in Texas, NWF feels that it is inappropriate to conduct such projects with Pot II (Council-selected) funds.

Gulfwide

We are encouraged to see support for "investments that support science-based decision-making and/or improve our ability to plan for acute events, such as hurricanes or potential oil spills." As such we continue to support the Council in identifying monitoring, data management, and analyses necessary to track restoration success.

We agree that the Planning Framework should support large-scale investments, and we also note our support for continued investment in the Council Monitoring and Assessment Work Group (CMAWG). We encourage the Council to expedite this funding so that RESTORE project-level monitoring protocols, standardized performance metrics, and standardized data collection and management protocols can be developed and in place before construction of FPL 3 projects begin.

We urge the Council to avoid creation of general or overarching programs in the FPL, unless specific projects or groups of projects are articulated within those programs that are fully developed and held to the same standards as other project-level proposals. This is important in order to ensure that investments are transparent and strategic with the limited funds available for restoration across the Gulf.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment, and for your continued commitment to Gulf of Mexico restoration.

Sincerely,

David P. Muth Director of Gulf Restoration, The National Wildlife Federation

7j. Matt Posner, RESTORE Program Manager, Escambia County Natural Resources Management Department

- To whom it may concern,

On behalf of Escambia County, thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft Planning Framework. Escambia County is pleased to submit the following comments.

The County commends the Council for identifying the Perdido River and Bay watershed as a priority geographic area. As described in the draft planning framework, Escambia County is experiencing exponential growth in the Perdido watershed. Investments in conservation and restoration measures are necessary to address both the legacy impairments in the watershed and to protect against future degradation.

The County recommends the following priority approaches be added to the existing priority approaches for the Perdido River and Bay watershed: 1) create, restore, and enhance coastal wetlands, islands, shorelines, and headlands; 2) restore hydrology and natural processes. Projects proposed for the Perdido River and Bay watershed could include these priority approaches. The Perdido River and Bay Surface Water Improvement and Management Plan approved by the Northwest Florida Water Management District in October 2017 and funded by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund identified hydrological restoration as a need in the Perdido watershed.

The County also commends the Council for the priority approaches identified for Florida. While the County certainly supports Gulf-wide restoration, the County recommend Florida prioritize restoration in estuaries located in the eight disproportionately affected counties.

The County looks forward to partnering with the Council and its members on future restoration efforts.

Should you have any questions, please contact me at (850) 595-0820 or mjposner@myescambia.com.

Many Thanks,
Matt J. Posner, RESTORE Program Manager, Natural Resources Management Department

7k. Tim Richardson on Behalf of the Chenier Plain Alliance

- Restore Council Public Comment Reviewers, The attached Jefferson County sponsored Chenier Plain Alliance sign-on public comment adds Orange County Judge Carl Thibodeaux to the same list that was submitted to you yesterday as a public comment. Please use this updated sign-on list as the final Jefferson County sponsored Chenier Plain Alliance sign-on public comment.

Body of Attachment:

Dear Members of the Council,

The undersigned representatives of local governments, corporations, and non-profits appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Council's Planning Framework Draft designed to guide RESTORE Bucket 2 investments in the years ahead. The adopted Planning Framework will be critically important to the people, communities and abundant natural resources of the 6.5 million-acre Chenier Plain that includes 200 Gulf of Mexico coastal miles from Vermilion Bay in Southwest Louisiana to east Galveston Bay and Trinity Bay in Southeast Texas.

We strongly endorse the Planning Framework's inclusion of the "Chenier Plain Texas- Louisiana" region as a multi-state landscape scale focus area for Council investments and we are confident that restoration opportunities in the Chenier Plain offer the Council extraordinary "multiple benefits" per dollar invested. Those benefits include highly productive natural resources and habitats directly injured by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. In addition, the economic resiliency, energy and national security outcomes the Council helps create will sustain and improve the lives and livelihoods of the people of the Chenier Plain and the nation.

Among the natural resource, economic, energy and national security assets that can benefit from Chenier Plain focused Council investments are:

- North America's largest migratory waterfowl flyway and internationally Important bird areas
- Commercial fisheries often exceeding 600 million pounds landed annually
- 20 state and federal conservation units with nearly 700,000 acres of public use and recreation lands for hunting, fishing and nature tourism
- 1.6 million acres of coastal wetlands including 669,000 acres in Cameron Parish which is the largest amount of any Gulf Coast county or parish and the Salt Bayou Watershed which is the largest coastal marsh in Texas
- Over half the nation's Strategic Petroleum Reserve at West Hackberry in Louisiana and Big Hill in Texas with 380 million barrels stored combined
- The nation's highest volume of LNG refining and exporting facilities, vital for American jobs, energy security and the national trade balance
- The nation's largest military port in Beaumont and refineries that provide 75% of the nation's military jet fuel
- Over half of the tonnage and value shipped on the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway
- 66.5 million annual acre feet of freshwater discharge into the Gulf of Mexico from parts of two states which is the second highest volume to the Gulf behind the Mississippi (and Atchafalaya) which drain all or part of 31 states

It is with these natural resource, economic and national defense attributes in mind that the undersigned strongly endorse keeping the Chenier Plain Texas-Louisiana region in the final Planning Framework for RESTORE Bucket 2.

Signatories:

Bill Allen, President/CEO Greater Beaumont Chamber of Commerce

Pat Avery, President, Greater Port Arthur Chamber of Commerce

Robert J. Bilnoski VP - Human Resources/ Public Affairs, Golden Pass LNG Terminal, LLC

Mike Birkett, Director, Industry of Southeast Texas

Shanna Burke Executive Director, Southeast Texas Regional Planning Council,

Dean Conwell Executive Director, City of Beaumont Convention and Visitors Bureau

David C. Fisher, Director, Port of Beaumont

Keith Hackland, Chairman, Texas Birding

Scott Hall, General Manager, Lower Neches Valley Authority

Dennis Isaacs, Executive Director, Golden Triangle Business Roundtable

Rick Lewandowski, Director, Shangri La Botanical Gardens & Nature Center

David Richard Director Executive Vice President, Stream Wetlands Services, LLC Stream Property Management, Inc.

Honorable Carl Thibodeaux, County Judge, Orange County Texas

Bruce Walker County Judge Executive Director. Big Thicket Association

Bill Worsham Director of Coastal Engineering LJA Engineering

Please note: An attachment with 86 additional signatures was submitted with this document, for a total of 101 signatures

Note to Restore Council Public Comment reviewers: Tim Richardson, Deepwater Horizon restoration consultant to Jefferson County has an email receipt of approval from each of the above signatories.

7I. Tim Richardson on Behalf of Beaumont Mayor Becky Ames County Government

- Restore Council, Attached please find Beaumont Mayor Becky Ames' public comment on the Council's Planning Framework Draft for future RESTORE Bucket 2. Thank you, Tim Richardson on behalf of Jefferson County

Body of Attachment:

Dear Members of the Council, I am pleased to join the many representatives of Southeast Texas local governments, corporations, and non-profits appreciate the opportunity to comment on the Council's Planning Framework Draft designed to guide RESTORE Bucket 2 investments in the years ahead. The adopted Planning Framework will be critically important to the people, communities and abundant natural resources of the 6.5 million-acre Chenier Plain that includes 200 Gulf of Mexico coastal miles from Vermilion Bay in Southwest Louisiana to east Galveston Bay and Trinity Bay in Southeast Texas.

I strongly endorse the Planning Framework's inclusion of the "Chenier Plain Texas-Louisiana" region as a multi-state landscape scale focus area for Council investments and we are confident that restoration opportunities in the Chenier Plain offer the Council extraordinary "multiple benefits" per dollar invested. Those benefits include highly productive natural resources and habitats directly injured by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. In addition, the economic resiliency, energy and national security outcomes the Council helps create will sustain and improve the lives and livelihoods of the people of the Chenier Plain and the nation.

Among the natural resource, economic, energy and national security assets that can benefit from Chenier Plain focused Council investments are:

- North America's largest migratory waterfowl flyway and internationally Important bird areas
- Commercial fisheries often exceeding 600 million pounds landed annually
- 20 state and federal conservation units with nearly 700,000 acres of public use and recreation lands for hunting, fishing and nature tourism 1.6 million acres of coastal wetlands including 669,000 acres in Cameron Parish which is the largest amount of any Gulf Coast county or parish and the Salt Bayou Watershed which is the largest coastal marsh in Texas
- Over half the nation's Strategic Petroleum Reserve at West Hackberry in Louisiana and Big Hill in Texas with 380 million barrels stored combined.
- The nation's highest volume of LNG refining and exporting facilities, vital for American jobs, energy security and the national trade balance The nation's largest military port in Beaumont

and refineries that provide 75% of the nation's military jet fuel Over half of the tonnage and value shipped on the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway 66.5 million annual acre feet of freshwater discharge into the Gulf of Mexico from parts of two states which is the second highest volume to the Gulf behind the Mississippi (and Atchafalaya) which drain all or part of 31 states

It is with these natural resource, economic and national defense attributes in mind that I strongly endorse keeping the Chenier Plain Texas-Louisiana region in the final Planning Framework for RESTORE Bucket 2.

Sincerely,
Becky Ames Mayor, City of Beaumont

7m. Tim Richardson on Behalf of Mayor Jeff R. Branick, Jefferson County Judge

- Restore Council, Thank you for the public comment opportunity.

Body of Attachment:

Dear Restore Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Restore Council's Planning Framework Draft (PFD) that will guide your upcoming Funding Priorities List 3. Jefferson County Commissioners Court has been an active partner in Gulf of Mexico Deepwater Horizon restoration and we are grateful for the interaction the County has had with the Restore Council.

Jefferson County agrees with the Council that a "healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem" will be achieved "through collaboration on strategic restoration projects and programs" as stated in your PFD. And we are eager to participate with you in "some of the most substantial investments in landscape-level restoration in U.S. history." It is with that shared vision in mind that Jefferson County strongly endorses the PFD's creation of a Chenier Plain Texas-Louisiana project region. We agree with the PFD's endorsement of "broader geographic regions" that "cross geopolitical boundaries" as the proper and highly productive focus for future investments.

Jefferson County also supports the PFD's attempt to identify priorities that "purposefully and strategically link past and future restoration funding decisions."

In addition, we agree with the PFD's emphasis on projects that will "make the greatest contribution to restoring and protecting the natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches, and coastal wetlands of the Gulf Coast region."

The County endorses "large-scale projects and programs that are already part of "existing Gulf Coast state comprehensive plans" and that "restore long-term natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches, and coastal wetlands most impacted by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill." It is with this "link to injury" preference in mind that we hope the Restore Council evaluates Jefferson County and Chenier Plain candidate projects as suitable in addressing oil spill impacts.

In terms of the Council's "primary goals" Jefferson County agrees that restoring and conserving habitat, restoring water quality and quantity, enhancing community resilience, and replenishing and protecting living coastal and marine resources would be meritorious outcomes. Similarly, Jefferson County support's the Restore Council's PFD primary objectives that would fulfill the Council's primary goals.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the planning Framework Draft and to endorse your proposed emphasis on the Chenier Plain Texas - Louisiana region as a landscape-scale area in which to achieve long term restoration of Deepwater Horizon oil spill impacts.

Sincerely, Jeff R. Branick County Judge Jefferson County Commissioners Court

7n. Charlotte Runzel on behalf of Kara Lankford, National Audubon Society

- Dear Administrator Wheeler,

The National Audubon Society (Audubon) is a nonprofit conservation organization whose goal is to protect birds and the places they need throughout the Americas. Audubon has had a presence on the Gulf Coast for nearly a century and is invested thoroughly in the region; Audubon staff are working to advance restoration, conservation and stewardship with the goal of having healthy and resilient coastal and marine ecosystems that support populations of birds, fish, wildlife, and people throughout the Gulf's five coastal states. On behalf of our over 1.4 million members, Audubon appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council's (Council) Draft Planning Framework (Framework) document that supports the Council's commitment to transparency and collaboration, as well as the advancement and use of best available science in the decision-making process.

Audubon believes the Council is currently working to advance its vision - "A healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem achieved through collaboration on strategic restoration projects and programs," and encourages the Council to ensure future restoration continues to meet the Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act of 2012 (RESTORE) Act's regional approach to restoring the long-term health of the natural ecosystems and economy of the Gulf Coast region. As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL), Audubon believes the Council members need to ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The Council's commitment to transparency and collaboration is evident in the draft Framework, and the Council should continue the engagement by the Council members through the recent collaboration meetings supported by funds allocated through the Commitment and Planning Support FPL. This engagement will ensure restoration concepts identified through the meetings with other Council members, stakeholders, and the public are represented in both the final Framework, and FPL 3 in 2020. Additionally, Audubon believes it is important for the Council to continue to work closely with the other Deepwater Horizon (DWH) oil spill-related funding sources, including the DWH Natural Resource and Damage Assessment and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund to ensure the Council restoration work and future FPLs complement the work resulting from these efforts is coordinated to highest extent possible in order to achieve maximum ecosystem benefit.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for the environment, the economy, and coastal communities. Despite the large amount of funding available for restoration, there is not enough, and every dollar allocated needs to maximize restoration benefits. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate adaptive management, complement projects funded through other DWH funding streams, and are strategic investments that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem. There is a need to be deliberate and ensure that the projects selected for funding reflect the Gulf ecosystem's highest restoration priorities.

Although the Framework's priority approaches, techniques, and geographic areas are intended to provide information on project types expected to be developed for FPL 3 funding consideration, Audubon believes the information in the Framework may be too broad to ensure public understanding of Council priorities and projects to be considered for FPL 3. We encourage the Council to provide more information by identifying specific watersheds or estuaries for all states in addition to approaches and techniques to be used in the final Framework or at the very least in FPL 3.

Audubon understands the complexities associated with Gulf ecosystem restoration require some flexibility, and the draft Framework acknowledges not all project concepts may be captured in this document. For example, the document clearly states "The Council will therefore evaluate all proposals received for funding consideration and may choose to fund projects that are not captured within the restoration concepts outlined in this Planning Framework." As such, there is some concern that the Framework will not provide sufficient guidance for project selection and that any and all projects could be considered. This flexibility and lack of clear guidance minimizes the ability of the public and stakeholders to properly engage, assess, and identify restoration projects to be considered by the Council for FPL 3.

Audubon supports most of the approaches and techniques laid out in the draft framework and believes they meet the intent of the RESTORE Act. However, we think land acquisition should be added as a

technique under the priority approach reduce excess nutrients and other pollutants to watersheds. Acquiring tracts of land that provide stream buffers and/or protect wetland areas have been proven to have significant water quality benefits including nutrient reduction. Additionally, we do not support the technique to decommission unused, orphaned, energy facilities as a valid use of RESTORE Act dollars. We believe there are other revenue sources derived from oil and gas leases that are better suited to fund this type of project.

In addition to the framework document, we believe the updated submission guidelines the Council committed to revising in the Comprehensive Plan update will go a long way to improving project proposal development. Improved submission guidelines should also help illuminate how proposals meet the RESTORE Act priority criteria, fulfill Comprehensive Plan objectives, and contribute to lasting ecosystem benefits.

Audubon wholeheartedly agrees with the Council that the "...use of best available science in the Council's decision-making process..." is key to ensuring restoration efforts are scientifically sound and suggests using all available information to evaluate project proposals. This includes Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People.

Our Gulf conservation plan centers around 11 flagship birds and the habitats they depend on. These are species that benefit most from our conservation work. They are permanent residents, winter residents, or migratory visitors that call us to action, representing over 300 other species that rely on similar habitats.

As part of the Gulf conservation plan we undertook a rigorous modeling effort to identify the most important places to protect and restore for birds across the Gulf of Mexico. These habitats include barrier and bay islands, headland beaches, intertidal bars and flats, and saltwater marshes. These areas were found in south Texas, southeastern Louisiana, barrier islands off the Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida panhandle coasts, and south Florida.

To identify high-priority areas for the Gulf flagship species, we built a set of landscape-scale habitat suitability models. Habitat suitability models are built using two sets of data: bird observations gathered in the field by Audubon biologists and partners and habitat conditions measured through remote sensing. Bird occurrence and counts are linked to measures of habitat and environmental conditions in a one square kilometer area surrounding the point where the birds were observed. By relating bird counts with habitat conditions, we developed an understanding of how birds respond to their environment. Additionally, we are able to use these relationships to predict bird abundance at sites where surveys were not conducted. These models show landscape-level suitability based on habitat conditions within an area of one square kilometer. The results of this modeling effort tell us of the 67 million acres mapped there are just over 8 million acres of highly suitable habitat available across the Gulf.

We coupled the habitat suitability models with the on-the-ground knowledge of Audubon scientists in the Gulf region to develop a suite of restoration, conservation, research, and stewardship projects that will collectively address the recovery and health of Audubon's 11 flagship birds. These projects also have ancillary benefits to other wildlife, as well as people.

We are proposing 30 projects totaling over 136,000 acres of restored and/or protected habitat for birds that represent an investment of over \$1.7 billion. These investments will create a more resilient coastline as we continue to determine how sea level rise will affect the Gulf and identify ways to better support these species as their habitats migrate inland.

Audubon encourages the RESTORE Council to utilize our habitat suitability modeling effort as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This information can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Please let me know if you have any questions or would like more information regarding these comments. Thanks again for the opportunity to comment on the Framework, and we look forward to working with you on the next FPL.

Sincerely, Kara Lankford, Director, Gulf Coast Restoration, National Audubon Society

7o. Marcos Silva

- *(Portugese to English translation submitted)* Gentlemen. Good Morning. How are you. I hope you're well. I welcome this invitation to participate in the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council. In view of my savings. I do not have the financial conditions to attend this meeting in the USA. But I am forwarding some ideas that could collaborate in some way. For solution and or idea that could result in another idea better configured. For this I put myself in the mood for collaboration. Next. From 2.030 Germany will eat not to use more Camions and Cars Moved to Combustion. I believe that partri of this moment. At first in Germany and then followed by the French and British begin to be left Oil in the World. In view of the use of Electric Cars. What I believe the USA also began to use Electric Cars and in several other World Points. This will make the need for Prospecting Oil diminished in several parts of the world and consequently the Ecological accidents promoted by Petroleum Prospecting. This will allow Man to increase his work in the Recovery and Preservation of the Environment in Particular at Sea.

But in order for us to be able to restore on the part of Nature, we will need this conservation work in several Conservation Segments. Including the Matas do Brasil, especially the Amazon. and for this I believe that the International authorities should be firm and incisive with the Brazilian Authorities for the preservation of the Amazon Forest. And consequently it will reduce the incidence of Ecological accidents. In this regard, I believe that Brazil does not need to open new frontiers of agro-industry, but rather to optimize and make better use of Existing Technologies and to make better use of existing Soils and produce more in the same existing space.

1) - I believe there are several Solvents to be applied in glycerol residues.

2) - In addition to this I believe that ships and submarines collecting garbage can be built. May they move around the seas without hurrying to return home. In a lonely job In the methylculous task of picking up waste in the seas.

3) "I believe as I once mentioned. The possibility of having an air bag and plastic that can surround the points of Oil Prospecting in the bottom of the Sea. Where at the maximum point of the bag there will be a nozzle collecting oil droplets coming out of the prospecting nozzle that will be sucked in by a suction pump that will lift them to the Base Ship.

4) The curious bacteria that eats oil. Researchers at the University of Los Andes in Bogota are studying a curious bacterium capable of killing mosquitoes that transmit dengue and eat oil. The study has proven that this specific type of bacteria can eat the oil in water and soil contaminated by oil. Called Lysinibacillus sphaericus, the bacterium has been observed by the microscope by researchers at the Center for Microbiological Research (CIMIT), in partnership with some oil companies. The potential of this bacterium to eliminate pollution caused by oil makes this discovery a strong aid in combating environmental damage from oil spills in seas and other ecosystems. The bacterium has the ability to accumulate hydrocarbons and heavy metals. It is endowed with special enzymes, capable of reducing oil and cleaning up contaminated water and soil from oil exploration. The efficacy of the bacteria is 95%. The first tests with the bacterium presented surprising results in fields affected by the pollution of the petroleum industry in Colombia. The discovery of the bacterium Lysinibacillus sphaericus is also being celebrated because it produces deadly toxins for the larvae of Aedes Aegypti, a mosquito that transmits dengue. Source: <https://www.sitedecuriosidades.com/curiosidade/a-curiosa-bacteria-que-come-petroleo.html>

This being for the present moment. I ask for deference.

7p. Laura Stone, Mobile Baykeeper

- Hi, Please see attached comment letter on the Planning Framework draft submitted from Mobile Baykeeper. Let us know if you have any questions or need anything else from us.
Thank you, Laura

Body of Attachment:

Dear Gulf Coast Recovery Council Members:

We are Mobile Baykeeper, a twenty-two-year-old environmental nonprofit organization with the mission of providing citizens a means to protect the beauty, health, and heritage of the Mobile Bay Watershed and our coastal communities. We are submitting comments on behalf of our board, officers, staff, and more than 4,500 members regarding the Planning Framework Draft. We are appreciative of the Council's

commitment to remain transparent and informative throughout the decision-making process. The Planning Framework draft defines the priority approaches and techniques with geographic area and previous investments in mind. To ensure these priorities and techniques set forth translate into projects that transform our environment and make us more resilient, we need to conduct proper studies and use the best available science in evaluating each project. We have included a few examples of potential concerns if emphasis is not placed on ensuring the project does not result in environmental harm.

General Comments

The Planning Framework is a great approach to define and prioritize needs and strategies for agencies and organizations to strategize, collaborate, and advance meaningful projects. The framework identifies priority geographic areas and ecosystem stressors but at a macroscopic level that will make it challenging for application. We recommend all priority ecosystem stressors be more clearly defined using a place-based/watershed-based method. This will allow for existing Watershed Management Plans, resource management plans, and other known scientific studies can be applied.

2.2.2 Technique Sediment Placement

While we support the priority to "create, restore, and enhance coastal wetlands, islands, shorelines, and headlands", we need to ensure the prescribed technique of using dredged material to raise elevation and create habitat is carefully considered for its potential impacts to the environment. In general, any option that is selected must be thoroughly studied to ensure the best possible location, so as not to replace already productive and important habitat. Dredged material also has the potential to be contaminated with harmful substances such as heavy metals, pesticides, PCBs, oil, etc. particularly in ports and harbors. Many of these substances are historical and therefore can be buried within or locked in seabed sediments. Dredging itself can release sediment into the water column where it can cause contamination of shellfish and/or fish species as well as add to already turbid waterways. We suggest all projects must thoroughly evaluate the long-term impacts and create a monitoring plan to reduce potential for contamination and allow for adaptive management to be applied as necessary.

2.2.3 Technique Restore Hydrology

Another area that requires careful consideration for approval is the potential restoration technique of "restoring hydrologic connectivity". It is evident that many systems have been disrupted and the natural hydrology has been modified in a negative manner. Through the process of re-establishing these connections other additional environmental impacts may occur. We suggest any project with this technique be thoroughly studied to ensure efforts do not result in negative impacts to water quality or aquatic organisms.

2.2.4. Technique Stormwater Management

Mobile Baykeeper supports the use of Low Impact Development (LID) and green infrastructure methods to manage stormwater runoff. LID and green infrastructure activities are cost effective and efficient ways to better manage wet weather impacts including pollutant-ridden runoff and increased flooding. We suggest adding protection and restoration of riparian buffers to the list of potential methods within stormwater management. Riparian areas are important zones for protection because they not only improve water quality, they also provide structural integrity and reduced flooding, and benefit our aquatic resources, economy, and overall community welfare.

2.2.4. Technique Wastewater System Improvements

We also support the need for smart wastewater infrastructure improvements to address water quality issues along Coastal Alabama. These issues not only impact our ability to swim, fish, and play in area waterways but are impacting our economic prosperity. Although we support funding for these improvements, we want to underscore the importance of determining which project(s) to fund with limited dollars. We support upgrading and fixing existing problems to the extent they result in significant, long-term solutions. For example, we support creating backup systems for power outages and upgrades to technology such as SCADA that can ensure a faster response to sewer spills.

We are opposed to priority being given to encourage additional growth as it is an inappropriate use of RESTORE Act funds. Funding to expand systems should come from within existing systems, additional hook-up fees, or other structured fees. We also believe that match funding from the applicant should be required from each and every system in order to receive funding. Some systems require funding because they have not properly invested in maintaining their facility and some communities are wealthier than

others. Determining which system(s) should receive funding and which should not require more discussion and a more clearly defined path.

We request that the Council create a platform with an external facilitator to bring all utilities requesting funding together to discuss the best ways to support projects and why. This could be done at the county, state, or watershed level to be more effective, and both Mobile and Baldwin County decision-makers and stakeholders should be brought into the discussion together as both areas drain into Mobile Bay and impact our fishing, swimming and even drinking water supplies. We do not believe this request or this level of planning should hold up decision-making for the project selection, and know discussion would advance the development of transformative projects. We offer to assist in compiling a list of invitees that would create in a results-driven discussion around challenges and impacts facing our multi-jurisdiction sewer systems in Mobile and Baldwin Counties. As these facilities work together, limited funding dollars can be leveraged across the watershed to bring about greater impact to water quality and improve our water resources.

Living Shorelines

We applaud the Council for recognizing Living Shorelines as a technique for multiple priorities. Living shorelines can enhance coastlines using the best of nature's ability to abate erosion and flooding while improving habitat and water quality. We want to encourage the Council to require proposals to draw upon existing successes and lessons learned in the application of this technique to ensure we strengthen the implementation of such projects. Similarly, we suggest the Council ensure project monitoring protocols to evaluate impact, allow for adaptive management, and enhance the distribution of results for future living shoreline projects.

Selection Process

With these comments in mind, we want to emphasize the need for science-based selection process and ability for meaningful public engagement and input. The Council has identified the need for Best Available Science and we strongly encourage this commitment to remain front and center in their decision-making process. Public input is necessary to ensure the projects selected are not only science-based but are in the best interest of the community. Mobile Baykeeper suggests the Council engage the public more throughout the RESTORE process through public meetings and updates to ensure participation.

We also firmly believe in monitoring requirements to ensure projects are headed in the direction originally stated. Adaptive management must also be allowed and promoted throughout to ensure we select projects that are meaningful, effective, and a good use of these once in a lifetime funds. Adaptive management can only happy if flexibility is allowed along with thorough monitoring.

The BP/Deepwater Horizon Oil Disaster was the nation's largest environmental disaster and it requires a restorative response to match. Because we have the support of the entire United States Congress through passage of the RESTORE Act, we must be excellent stewards of these funds. Thank you in advance for your consideration and response to our comments. Please feel free to contact us with any questions at (251)-433- 4229.

Sincerely,
Casi (kc) Callaway, Executive Director & Baykeeper
Laura Stone, Program & Grants Coordinator

7q. Kenneth Teague

- Please see Appendix 2 for full comment attachment
 - Please find my comments attached. While I support the goals of the RESTORE Council, and many of the projects it has funded, I believe that more care must be taken in project selection, particularly to avoid funding:
 - Legally required compensatory wetland mitigation
 - Marsh creation via beneficial use with potentially contaminated dredged material
 - Artificial opening of naturally episodic tidal passes (Texas)
 - Actions that in some locations may not affect actual coastal ecosystems (e.g. forestry)
 - Actions that benefit selective large, wealthy landowners, with no affect on actual coastal ecosystems (e.g. rice farm incentives).
 - Actions that impound or semi-impound coastal wetlands

- Dredging to create wetlands (e.g. “dedicated dredging) without knowing the negative consequences (low DO in bottom water of borrow area, affects on geomorphology or sediment budget).
- Offshore artificial reefs, which are not natural, and change the Gulf ecosystem
- I also question the wisdom of a geographic targeting effort that determined that the entire Gulf coast was the priority, except for the Mississippi River Deltaic Plain, minus the Pontchartrain Basin.
- In addition, I strongly recommend the priority placed on oyster habitat restoration be suspended until scientific documentation of the status and trends, and causes of these, is produced. It is not reasonable to assume that oyster habitat has been destroyed everywhere equally, without scientific documentation. For an example of an excellent approach, see the GBNEP reports by Dr. Eric Powell from the mid-1990s.
- The previously-adopted RESTORE objectives are a problem, in that they are not properly formulated to extend the level of detail in the corresponding goals. Rather they are highly redundant of the goals, and curiously, simply include additional concepts, but no additional details or schedule targets. See the NEP Primer for ideas on how to do this correctly.
- Finally, some very important things are missing:
 - Any attention to restoring or protecting seagrasses
 - Any consideration of filling artificial tidal passes between estuaries and the Gulf (e.g. Rollover Pass, TX).
 - Any consideration of funding additional oil and gas canal backfilling in Louisiana and Texas.

7r. Dan Tonsmeire

- Keala, Thanks for answering my question on the webinar the other day. It would be interesting if the Council would consider making the Plan into a more long-term concept that could provide direction for restoration into the future beyond the Restore funding. Seems like it would be a practical and logical step in the future as the process progresses. This might also give a better sense for reaching the priority goals and objectives with the funding available.

7s. Thao Vu, Mississippi Coalition for Vietnamese-American Fisher Folks & Families (PEPC 64)

- Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (RESTORE Council):

On behalf of the Mississippi Coalition for Vietnamese-American Fisher Folks & Families (MSCVAFF), a community-based organization and our multi-ethnic fisher folks constituency, we submit the following public comments, concerns, and recommendations regarding the Planning Framework Draft:

Language Access for Limited English Population (LEP):

While we recognize the Council efforts to address language barriers, several fact sheets are translated inaccurately. Please work with local, engaged organizations such as MSCVAFF during the planning process to identify more qualified translators familiar with environmental, restoration, fisheries terminology, and the local dialect. Further, the interpreter at the public meeting held in Long Beach, Mississippi was unqualified and lacked knowledge of Coastal Restoration (MSCVAFF provided interpretation services for the Vietnamese-American fishers in attendance). MSCVAFF has the necessary experience and in the recent past, provided translation and interpretation services for the Natural Resource Damage Assessment Trustee (NRDA) Council.

Public Participation & Transparency:

We recommend that the Council provide advance public notice, hold open meetings, and have smaller focus group meetings to allow greater public engagement, particularly during the planning stages. Please schedule more convenient date/times for public meetings (it is very challenging for the fishing communities to engage with the Council in late spring or summer due to the demands of the shrimping season). More convenient time for public meetings is during the fall season, and from late January to early April. Additionally, please allocate sufficient/additional time for attendees to comment at public meetings (more than three minutes).

Watershed/Geographic Approach:

While we understand the separate watershed approach, please incorporate the hydrological linkages between the Pontchartrain Basin and the Mississippi (MS) Sound. Please include recent stressors such as the current, ongoing Bonnet Carre Spillway freshwater intrusion, polluted sediments, and its disastrous, devastating impacts to the MS Sound ecosystem, habitats, fisheries as well as the ecological impacts from cumulative stressors. In particular, the Western Sound oyster reefs has sustained a very high 80% - 100% mortality rate We highly recommend the Council support a cooperative research study collaboration between local universities and the fishing community to conduct an Ecosystem Assessment of the MS Sound that includes monitoring, citizen science, modeling, and data synthesis.

Combining Best Available Science & Incorporating Traditional Ecological Knowledge:

- o " Establish a Citizen Advisory Council (CAC) for the ecosystem stakeholders in the Mississippi Sound including commercial fishermen and/or their designees, to share their Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK). This would include charters and by-laws modeled after the Prince William Sound, Regional Citizens Advisory Council (RCAC) and expanded across the Gulf Region;
- o " Create an independent review panel, consisting of natural/physical scientists, social science researchers and community representatives (for example, fisher folks) and/or their designees to review projects;
- o " Uniform monitoring and appropriate restoration performance metrics (an implemented project is not a successful restoration project);
- o " Accessible, transparent, relevant data;
- o " Thorough analysis of projects (include risks, uncertainties & potential negative trade-offs). For example, projects to minimize /control flooding can affect freshwater inflow, salinity, and ability for fisheries to spawn in marshes. Further, marsh creation projects may lose its natural contour & may affect the ability of fisheries to spawn);
- o " Best practices & lessons learned and thorough evaluation of projects (success or failure);
- o " Adaptive management processes & strategies;
- o " Incorporate local, community-led restoration approaches, strategies, and techniques to oyster reef restoration;
- o " Conduct social-economic research study and incorporating social-economic benefits for local, natural resource dependent fishing communities

Enhancing Community Resilience & Revitalize the Gulf Economy Through Community-Based Restoration:

In addition to the Council's goals, which include Restore and Conserve Habitat, Restore Water Quality and Quantity, Replenish and Protect Living Coastal and Marine Resources, other critically important goals is Enhancing Community Resilience and Revitalizing the Gulf Economy. To genuinely enhance community resilience and help revitalize the local seafood economy, it is vitally important to incorporate local knowledge. In the aftermath of the Deepwater Horizon/BP oil spill, the local fishing community has been highly concerned about sustaining their livelihoods, cultural tradition and heritage, as multiple disasters and cumulative stressors has degraded the Mississippi Sound, its habitats and fisheries, particularly the oyster reefs and the ecosystem services/ benefits a healthy reef provides. We strongly recommend the Council prioritize community-led restoration projects such as a pilot demonstration study/ project comparing the fishing community TEK for oyster reef restoration (TEK restoration approaches & techniques) versus traditional cultch planting. Such investments will provide tremendous benefits, including best practices to restore oyster reefs, healthier ecosystem, workforce development, local hire and sustained livelihoods. Further, investments in infrastructure to support a dock/harbor, and seafood market/pavilion in areas lacking a working waterfront will provide multiple benefits, including a boat slip, mitigation against storms/hurricane, and would be accessible for oyster harvesters that may be contracted for the Council funded, Pascagoula Oyster Reef Complex Relay & Enhancement project.

It is critically important the RESTORE Council implement our recommendations and we look forward to further engagement with the Council to restore our Gulf, its ecosystems, habitats and fisheries.

Sincerely,

Thao Vu Director, Mississippi Coalition for Vietnamese-American Fisher Folks & Families (MSCVAFF)

7t. Julia Weaver, Partnership for Gulf Coast Land Conservation

- Dear Council Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council's (Council) Planning Framework Draft (Framework). These comments are being submitted on behalf of the Partnership for Gulf Coast Land Conservation (Gulf Partnership), a broad coalition of non-profit land conservation organizations operating in the Gulf of Mexico region. Our mission is to work together across the Gulf of Mexico coastal region and within watersheds bordering the Gulf of Mexico to increase the pace, quality, and permanence of voluntary land and water conservation.

We appreciate the hard work of the Council members and staff in developing the planning framework draft. We understand that the framework will be used by the Council to prioritize projects that will be included in the 3rd Funded Priorities List which will be announced in 2020. F

Support for Priority Approach #2: Protect and conserve coastal, estuarine, and riparian habitats:

The Gulf Partnership wishes to express strong support for Approach #2: Protect and conserve coastal, estuarine, and riparian habitats. We agree with the Council that "protecting and conserving habitat not only reduces habitat loss and degradation, it is also critical to sustaining fish, shellfish, birds, and mammals that depend on healthy habitats for their survival. Through habitat protection and management, water quality is protected and improved, and flood damage to area communities can be reduced." (Framework, p. 15.)

The Gulf Partnership is also strongly supportive of the restoration techniques that the Council describes: land acquisition, conservation easements, and habitat management and stewardship.

Recommended change: allow habitat protection and conservation projects in all priority geographic areas
The Gulf Partnership strongly recommends that the Council change the planning framework to allow Priority Approach #2: Protect and conserve coastal, estuarine and riparian habitats to be used in any of the priority geographies. Under the current framework the Chenier Plain, Pontchartrain Basin, and the Mobile-Tensaw Delta are identified as priority geographic areas, however the project types are limited to restoring hydrology and restoring water quality by reducing nutrient and pollutant loading.

The Gulf Partnership's decades of experience demonstrates that habitat protection and conservation are important strategies in restoring water quality. The RESTORE Council addresses this connection on page 23 of the Framework:

Terrestrial habitat may also be restored under this priority approach as a technique to buffer waterways affected by contaminated inflows. By managing surface flows, many techniques under this priority approach can simultaneously address aspects of flood risk, providing potential benefits to community resilience.

The Council should allow projects to protect and conserve habitat in the Chenier Plain, Pontchartrain Basin, and the Mobile-Tensaw Delta, because land ownership and long-term stewardship will affect the long-term success of hydrological and water quality improvement projects. Some areas may need to be in public ownership or protected via a permanent conservation easement to ensure that the engineering and restoration are protected over the long-term.

Comments regarding geographic areas: The Gulf Partnership is in favor of the priority watershed and estuary approach that is being pursued and applauds efforts to work across jurisdictional boundaries to protect landscapes and shared natural resources.

Suggestion for strengthening the Framework:

1. Add additional primary objectives to the section on Protect and conserve coastal, estuarine, and riparian habitats.
 - In the discussion on restoration techniques on pages 16 and 17, the Framework states that the benefits of land acquisition, conservation easements, and habitat management and stewardship may include:
 - Increased native biodiversity and ecosystem function
 - flood risk reduction

- improved water quality
- increased access for public recreation and ecotourism

The Gulf Partnership recommends including these benefits as primary objectives of protecting habitats, similar to the primary objectives listed under Restore Hydrology and natural processes:

- Restore, improve, and protect water resources
- Restore and enhance natural processes and shorelines
- Promote community resilience

General comments

Permanent land conservation as a restoration tool can be an integral component of each RESTORE goal. Protecting land through easements and fee acquisition is an effective, efficient strategy in restoring and conserving coastal habitats; also, protected areas offer multiple water quality benefits, which in turn contribute to habitat health for living resources. Protected open spaces improve coastal community resilience by providing protection from storm hazards such as flooding. Furthermore, communities with significant protected natural areas and greenspaces realize benefits such as stable property values, improved quality of life and increased opportunities for recreation and tourism.

Gulf Partnership member organizations have been leaders in ecosystem restoration in the Gulf of Mexico region for many years. The land conservation community has experience in: 1) the development of science-based, strategic conservation plans; 2) project development; 3) negotiation and implementation of land transactions; 4) long-term stewardship; 5) community education; 6) working with private landowners and public agencies; and 7) providing public access to open spaces and natural places.

Based upon our collective experience, we offer these suggestions for further improving the FPL process:

1. Consider funding the development of landscape scale land conservation projects. There are significant upfront financial costs and labor burdens including due diligence such as ecological/biological surveys, land surveys, title work, and appraisals that are needed to determine the feasibility and costs associated with real property acquisition.
2. Collaborate with the NRDA Trustees, the GEBF and the Gulf states to align project selection guidelines and funding cycles so that multiple resources can be leveraged on land conservation projects. All three funding programs include land conservation as a potential restoration strategy, but at present it is very difficult to plan and propose land conservation projects that could be leveraged by multiple sources due to differences in funding cycles and program requirements. We believe closer alignment of the cycles will allow more and better opportunities to leverage funds, and to complete projects in a timely way which is critical when working with willing sellers.
3. Include funds for ecological restoration, long-term stewardship and monitoring in land conservation projects.
4. Recognize the urgency in land conservation. Land conservation practitioners understand that ecosystem restoration is complex, and that planning takes time. However, sometimes critical habitat that should be protected is only available for purchase or easements from willing sellers for a short time. Many landowners are not able or willing to wait for several more years. The Gulf Partnership requests that the Council consider making some funding available every year for land conservation.

Thank you again for the opportunity to participate in this process. The members of the Gulf Partnership look forward to working with members of the RESTORE Council and other restoration partners to restore the Gulf Coast ecosystem, strengthen community resilience and improve the economy. For more information on the Gulf Partnership, please visit our website.

Sincerely,

Christine Johnson

Chair, Gulf Partnership Executive Committee

Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast

Staff Contacts: Elizabeth Barber (601) 957-3443 liz.barber@gulfpartnership.org

Staff Contacts: Julia Weaver (228) 219-2279 julia.weaver@gulfpartnership.org

On Behalf of:

Local, State and Regional Organizations

Alabama Coastal Heritage Trust (AL)
Alabama Forest Resources Center (AL)
Alachua Conservation Trust (GA/FL)
Artist Boat (TX)
Colorado River Land Trust (TX)
Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast (FL)
Conservation Florida (FL)
Dauphin Island Bird Sanctuaries (AL)
Florida's Nature Coast Conservancy (FL)
Galveston Bay Foundation (TX)
Katy Prairie Conservancy (TX)
Land Trust for Louisiana (LA)
Land Trust for the Mississippi Coastal Plain (MS)
North Florida Land Trust (FL)
Tall Timbers Research Station & Land Conservancy (FL)
Weeks Bay Foundation (AL)
Woodlands Conservancy (LA)
Wolf River Conservation Society (MS)

National Organizations

American Farmland Trust
National Audubon Society
The Conservation Fund
The Nature Conservancy
The Trust for Public Land

7u. Andrew Whitehurst, Water Program Director, Healthy Gulf

- Dear Council Members:
Healthy Gulf's Comment letter is attached as a word document.
Would you be kind enough to send a reply email to say you have received this?

Body of Attachment:

Dear Council Members:

On behalf of Healthy Gulf (formerly Gulf Restoration Network), we appreciate your ongoing efforts to restore the Gulf of Mexico Ecosystem. Our organization's mission is to unite and empower people and to protect and restore the natural resources of the Gulf region. We try to serve as a connection to the RESTORE Act process for our membership.

In commenting on the Planning Framework Draft for the third Funded Priorities List, it is our task to not only give the Council specific and useful comments on the Draft, but also to attempt to be a bridge between our members and supporters and the process to create the next FPL. Judging from the light attendance in Long Beach at the Council's May 22nd comment meeting, ordinary citizens are not engaging in this process three years on. It may be fatigue on their part, or it could have been timing with this meeting. If it can be avoided, agencies in Mississippi don't schedule public agency meetings on Wednesday nights due to conflicts with weekday church meetings/dinners. Or, the light attendance could have been due to the relatively pleasant day and night on which your meeting fell. Maybe people were weary of all the recent rain and went for a walk late in the day to enjoy the break. A generous estimate of attendance was 50. Many of these were agency and NGO people.

Geographic Regions

The Draft Planning Framework document itself was written to be a general, broad, flexible plan for relating restoration activities to habitats, species, ecological regions, watersheds, river systems or estuaries. As it stands, the breakdown of geographical regions seem reasonable, and the priority approaches and conservation techniques seem comprehensive and correspond to the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update. The idea that this plan should be a bridge that goes backward and forward

- from the broad goals of 2016 to future FPLs - seems to be a reasonable way to state the need for continuity. This works except in situations in which something discontinuous presents itself as a problem to be solved or a threat to the ecosystem. The framework needs to be adaptable enough able to handle surprises, and the Council members need to be open to such adaptation when the need arises.

Pontchartrain and Miss. Sound Regions Joined by Bonnet Carre Spillway Operations

One such surprise or discontinuity has presented itself this past year and it spans two of the estuary geographic areas. The Lake Pontchartrain drainage basin and the Mississippi Sound both are dealing with the Mississippi River water that is diverted by the Bonnet Carre spillway in LaPlace, Louisiana. The water that has entered the lake in 2019 and moved east into the Mississippi Sound has caused mortality of oysters, mortality of bottlenose dolphins, sea turtles, and displacement of fish and shrimp, plus the spillway opening has injected the normally brackish Pontchartrain waters with unusually large volumes of nutrient-laden fresh water and invasive species from the Mississippi River such as Asian carp. The pulses of invasive species injections to the Pontchartrain system are usually separated by several years, but between 2018 and 2019, the spillway has opened three times in back-to-back years and twice in the same year, 2019 (both of these situations are without precedent).

This year, the Pontchartrain system and the Mississippi Sound are suffering from the fresh water inputs and both have been directly connected with the larger Mississippi River watershed in ways that they usually are not. The load of dissolved nutrients and pollutants coming into the Lake and the Sound this year will be far greater in concentration than these inputs from any of the tributaries from the rivers feeding the lake from the north, or from the Pearl River which feeds the Mississippi Sound and would be the dominant fresh water contributor to it, but for the opening of the Spillway. Ecological problems from the nutrient laden water have begun. At the June 18th meeting of the Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources (MCMR), the fisheries division gave a report on the effects of the Bonnet Carre spillway opening. On June 13th, algae blooms were documented by small plane flights along the Hancock County marsh shoreline from Bayou Caddy to the Pearl River, and a hypoxia-caused fish kill happened along the U.S. Hwy 90 beach at Courthouse Road in Gulfport. These are the first of many to come this summer.

Some in their comments have stated that the geographic divisions in Planning Framework are "in some cases too broad to signal meaningfully the Council's priorities." It should also be stated that in order to respond to things like the Bonnet Carre Spillway openings, the geographic divisions can also be too narrow. In 2018 and again this year, the two basins - Lake Pontchartrain and Miss. Sound were really just extensions of one - the Mississippi River Basin. With climate patterns changing as they have, and with the Mississippi River in flood more frequently, and later into the year than normal, the Draft Planning Framework needs to be flexible enough to accommodate these realities whether or not they represent a new "normal" condition. As long as the geographical divisions don't preclude looking holistically at stressors/problem solving in conjoined adjacent regions as these two are with increasing frequency, the framework should serve adequately.

Priority Approaches joined across Geographic Regions.

Oysters

In these conjoined geographic regions (Pontchartrain, Miss. Sound) restoring oysters should now be a major priority across both estuary systems. The same disaster has affected them both in the same way. Almost all of the areas with new hard bottom cultch material placed over the last 5 years by Early NRDA funded projects are in some state of ruin in the eastern extent of the Rigolets, and Lake Borgne in Louisiana and in the Mississippi Sound south of Hancock and Harrison Counties in Mississippi. At the June 18th MCMR meeting mentioned above, the oyster mortality reported in the Western Mississippi Sound was 100% on the St. Joe and St. Stanislaus reefs for the sampling conducted on June 10th. Oyster mortality that same week was 95%, averaged across all sampled reefs in Mississippi. The biologist giving the report stated: "we weren't in a good place to start out with, and it's just going to get worse." It is good that Oyster Restoration is one of the priority approaches highlighted for FPL 3. Oyster abundance and production are at such a low point, that after the summer of 2019, the restoration effort may be starting at zero in some Southeast Louisiana and Western Mississippi coastal waters. Collaboration of Council members in Mississippi and Louisiana is essential and they need to discern the best strategies and use the best science in order to figure out what to do to help get oyster reefs re- started. It is disheartening to think that around \$100 million dollars has been spent on oyster restoration in these areas of the two states and that everything done over five years has been almost completely undone this spring and summer by fresh water from the Bonnet Carre.

Invasive species

In the "Create, restore, and enhance coastal wetlands, islands, shorelines, and headlands" Priority Approach and in the "Protect and conserve coastal, estuarine, and riparian habitats" Priority Approach, the control/management of invasive species such as Giant salvinia in freshwater (now that all of Lake Pontchartrain is fairly fresh) and Asian carp (introduced to all of Lake Pontchartrain system) are relevant in both approaches. These species cross the boundaries between the Pontchartrain Basin and the rivers feeding the Mississippi Sound and would affect both regions. A program, for instance, to monitor the extent of occurrence, and manage either of these species should necessarily include both geographic areas due to the influence of the Mississippi River floodwater releases through the Bonnet Carre spillway.

Where it makes sense to blend geographic regions to work on priority approaches, and where RESTORE Council members across pairs of states can agree to pool their votes and political power to work together, the Draft Planning Framework should be flexible enough to facilitate such collaboration.

Restore hydrology and natural processes

Excellent work is ongoing, funded by other DWH settlement sources, in the Pearl River basin and in the western Mississippi Sound to model fresh water flow, sediment, and hydrology in the Sound all in support of oyster restoration. Since the Pearl River is the dominant source of fresh water for Lake Borgne and the Biloxi Marshes of St. Bernard Parish, and for the Hancock County marshes, western Sound, Three Mile Pass and for waters down to Breton Sound, its hydrology is incredibly important. The Council should continue and amplify efforts to study the hydrology of the area influenced by the Pearl River. Some of the methods mentioned in the "restore natural salinity regimes" technique have to do with modifying management regimes on managed rivers (the Pearl), and removing artificial barriers to flow and freshwater input. The lower Pearl River has been studied by St. Tammany Parish in Louisiana, and by the Stennis Space Center scientists, but flow questions still need answering on the Pearl and many problems remain to solve so that the estuary can be physically and biologically healthier at the mouth of this important river. Please collaborate across the Pontchartrain and Mississippi Sound boundary to give the Pearl River studies and modeling all the support possible.

Ecosystem Stressors and Public Input

Solving problems

In previous comments and meetings, Healthy Gulf has made the point that problem solving with RESTORE projects should be a result of the project submission process. For instance, if an existing, widely known water quality problem on a coastal river system is identified through a portal submission, then it should follow that a project is created and approved to address it. Another commenter has stated it a different way: the Planning Framework should do a better job of tying known system stressors to the restoration approaches. If a person or NGO identifies a legitimate water quality or habitat problem, takes the time to create a profile of that problem and submit it to a project portal, it should not languish there.

An example of this problem solving is Mississippi Portal Project #5819, Red Creek Nutrient/Sediment Reduction, Stone and George Counties, Ms. Lower Pascagoula River Basin, Mississippi. This project has a problem that has been identified by Healthy Gulf through people who live along and fish in Red Creek and have taken pictures and written letters to document the problem to MDEQ. The people have met with MDEQ to explain the problem and the agency has not moved to solve it - for three years.

If I know where a covey of quail is resting and walk my pointer downwind of the birds, remove the leash, kneel down and tell the dog: "here are the quail, just relax, get a good whiff and make a nice point for me" and the bird dog ignores the quail and wanders off to smell an interesting flower, what more could I have done?

Call it "problem solving" OR "tying know system stressors to the restoration approaches" but this is something that the Council needs to do with its approaches and techniques, whether it uses portal projects, or follows some kind of master plan.

Need for transparency

At the May 22nd public meeting for comment in Long Beach, Mississippi, no mention was made of any step farther ahead than the business of the night. No hint was given (at a meeting for Mississippi resident's input) of how Mississippi portal projects, whether existing or yet to be submitted, would be considered by the Council members for inclusion in FPL 3. The Council didn't have to cover its plans for project selection in all Gulf States, but it could have at least given a preview of the next step for

Mississippi: "We're the Council, here is what you can expect from us between now and the publication of FPL 3 in 2020." Other commenters have stated this differently: the Council should articulate to the public a transparent and science-based selection process.

From this opportunity for public input until the draft FPL 3 is introduced and placed on public notice for comment in 2020, there likely won't be any information required to be made public on how the Council does its work to create FPL 3. This is a point of great curiosity with people like those who attended the May 22nd meeting, and it is a great source of frustration as well. There is a saying about the process to create Legislation: "you don't want to know how the sausage gets made". In this situation, where the public has been invited to learn about the process, give comments and create and submit projects, and would like to know their chances for success; we do want to know how the sausage gets made. Unfortunately the Council's FPL 3 process goes behind a wall at this point and most interested people are on the wrong side of that wall.

Healthy Gulf appreciates the opportunity to write comments on the Draft Planning Framework for Funded Priorities List 3 and awaits the next opportunity to learn more about it.

Sincerely,
Andrew Whitehurst, Water Program Director

8. Audubon Form Letters

8a. Master Form Letter: 2728 Signatures Total

- Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Appendix 1. Audubon Form Letters with Unique Content

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

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Millions of gallons of petroleum from this ecological disaster have settled on the bottom of the gulf. As we have learned from the Exxon Valdez disaster, the effects of this unseen pollution will be affecting entire ecosystems of the region for generations. Birds are particularly vulnerable., and as the "canaries in a coal mine " need the utmost consideration.

Sincerely,
Carol Farber
Miami, FL 33176
calgernon@aol.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

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*****Bird habitat is vital for survival, please protect lands with proper funding*****

Thank you

Sincerely,
Linda Headley
Cross City, FL 32628
parrotheadley@aol.com

Body of Letter

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ALL habitat needs to be restored. That includes what we can see, as well as what we can't! Please use the money wisely.

Sincerely,
Stephen Sleeper
Bonita Springs, FL 34135
waloug@gmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

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American Citizens deserve better and OUR voices need to be heard above the destructive nature of Greedy Corporations.

We ALL need to protect these extraordinary places, to remain connected to this earth, it is not only about the salvation of the planet but it is also about the salvation of ourselves.

Sincerely,
Tracey Bonner
Arlington, TX 76014
tlb8@yahoo.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

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And we all should adamantly oppose any continued or future oil drilling in any waters off of our country.

Sincerely,
Rhonda Hilson
Fort Pierce, FL 34979
rhonihilson@gmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

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As a birder for over 50 years, will you please do whatever it takes to restore our bird habitat so that I and other birders will be able to enjoy the sight of seeing these amazing birds over and over.

Sincerely,
Gordon Matherne
Des Allemands, LA 70030
gordonspro@cox.net

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

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As a retired ecologist and wildlife biologist I am fully aware of the damage done on shore bird and other wildlife by the Deepwater Horizon spill. The operative word here is RESTORE.

James F Traynor

Sincerely,
James Traynor
Punta Gorda, FL 33950
mcgintyx@embarqmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

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As you know (or should), everything is connected. It all works together just as we should. And just like the proverbial 'canary in the coalmine', failing or struggling birds of any species are a red flag among many telling us to fix our mess. Please support research and restoration for our avian habitats. You will be glad you did, and so will you descendants.

Sincerely,
Tina A Henize
Brooksville, FL 34601
tahrenize@aol.com

Body of Letter

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Having lived in Port Aransas on the Gulf, I have seen firsthand the necessity for this restoration funding.

Sincerely,
Ann Friedman
Taylor, TX 76574
annfriedman83@outlook.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

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I am a bird watcher and look forward to more visits to Gulf locations to enjoy our beautiful coast and wildlife.

Sincerely,
Marsha Gear
San Antonio, TX 78216
mgear@ucsd.edu

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

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I have always loved Florida but especially the west coast. The first time I saw all the natural beaches with few barriers for walkers, runners, fish or just laying around like "a lazy lima bean"! It was the first time I saw the birds in their natural environment instead in a zoo. I was from Virginia. Florida is my new place to live (33 years). The beautiful is now being "mucked-up" by algae blooms and all matter of disasters made by the state. It is a paradise and soon will be an awful place ruined by money coming in to use our resources to make money!

Sincerely,
JoeAnn Gibbs
Orlando, FL 32814
drjoeann1@aol.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

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I raised my family on the Coast, rebuilt our home and community after Katrina, then BP Disaster set us back. I and many other residents would like to see more focus on protecting the wetlands ecosystems that are nesting, breeding grounds for our diverse, unique wild and marine life. We've seen the huge increase in dead dolphins and sea turtles this year due to the Spillways opening repeatedly. The salinity tanked to 0-5ppm, killing untold fish and mammals, and new oyster reefs will suffer.

We can expect more harmful changes in the future due to sea level and climate change.

As stewards of our wondrous, abundant Life here, we are bound by our connection to the Earth and waters. They have sustained us, formed our culture, food, music, faith and storytelling. Our bays and bayous soothe and calm. They cool us, give us bounty. We feel close to God during stunning sunsets or the whisper of dawn.

I implore the Trustees, less casinos, more restoration to the priceless assets God bequeathed to US. Less pricey boutiques, more shrimpers and oystermen coming home to the marina at sunset, hot, tired and full of the Gulf's treasures.

Less fracking, more respect for us, the people that YOU represent. Our water, our town, our families. Everything you approve should benefit the lives of people or other lifeforms.

Thank you, God bless

Sincerely,
Maggie King
Bay St Louis, MS 39520
mgskng@gmail.com

Body of Letter

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IMPRISON THE LYING, ANTI-ENVIRONMENTALIST, CRIMINAL, ORANGE SHITGIBBON; AND HIS ASSWIPE
McCONNELL, NOW!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Sincerely,
Gerard F Gaudin
Metairie, LA 70004
GERARD16@JUNO.COM

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

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Many people come to Florida to enjoy the birds and wildlife, therefore the Audubon Plan is very valuable to attain the goal of providing the watchable, productive Gulf system for which they are coming.

Sincerely,
Helen Obenchain
Bridgman, MI 49106
hwoben@juno.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

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OUR GULF ECOSYSTEM SUPPORTS ALL LIFE---INCLUDING HUMANS. PLEASE BE GENEROUS IN YOUR SUPPORT. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Michael Webster
Tickfaw, LA 70466
michaelgordonw@yahoo.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

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Please help us to restore this beautiful piece of our country and our heritage. This is not only for us, our children and future generations - but it also is vital to protect the species that are impacted by our actions. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Cynthia Schmidt
Lacombe, LA 70445
cynthiapsphoto@gmail.com

Body of Letter

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Please take action to preserve our precious birds and their habitats!

Sincerely,
Ruthie Weller
Woodway, TX 76712
ruthieweller@gmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

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Protecting birds is a significant part of restoration. Please include significant bird protections in your restoration plans.

Sincerely,
Drew Martin
Lake Worth, FL 33460
dmandch@aol.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Thank you for ensuring the Gulf Coast is restored to a beautiful and 'birdiful' natural resource.

Sincerely,
Maggie Amsler
Pelham, AL 35124
mamsler@uab.edu

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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The Council has an opportunity to turn this man made tragedy into a lasting benefit for all who depend on this beautiful resource.

Sincerely,
Joni Kobrock
New Orleans, LA 70131
jonikobrock@yahoo.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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The Council must support bird habitat restoration and research, which is only possible through the funding of such efforts.

Sincerely,
Kathleen Kaminski
Monroe, LA 71203
kaminski@ulm.edu

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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The Gulf of Mexico is more important to the birds and the marine wildlife than it is for people. The animals should be the first priority in restoration of the gulf. If people can also benefit, that is a side issue.

Sincerely,
Linda Cox
Lewisville, TX 75067
lindabcox2000@yahoo.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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This area is a natural treasure that we should save for all of us on Earth.

Sincerely,
Janet Lyons-Fairbanks
Saint Augustine, FL 32086
whisper07@att.net

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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This is so necessary to restore the Gulf eco-system this area provides protection from storms, provides a livelihood for the region, encourage plant life that filters out the harmful effects of the Deepwater Horizen instance, and generally helps all of wildlife and plants that make this part of our country unique. Please support funding this action.

Sincerely,
Johnnie Allen
Cahokia, IL 62206
georgiaandjohnnie@gmail.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

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I am sending this as a personal message to do all you can to save the ecosystems in the golf regarding birds.

Sincerely,
Donald Pollock
Fernandina Beach, FL 32034
dpollock41@aol.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Please help the ecology by supporting restoration of the bird population since they, with their bountiful species, impact the areas mentioned with a more emphatic presence than other wildlife as predatory insect control and rejuvenating nesting.

Sincerely,
Rickey Watkins
Byhalia, MS 38611
puck1byhaliam@gmail.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

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Please restore the Gulf of México .

Sincerely,
Margaret O'Neal
Mckinney, TX 75071
Meroneal@gmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

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The birds need our help to survive and thrive . Please act now to safeguard them, as well as their habitat. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Wendy Prather
Jennings, LA 70546
sfcrkp@hotmail.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

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Sincerely,
Rosann Sanford
Metairie, LA 70005
rose@conradmeyerlaw.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Susan Scherkenbach
Fort Myers, FL 33912
scherk41@gmail.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Frank Laforge
Naples, FL 34110
smoothefrank@gmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

I know these are "just birds," but a lot of people care about them. Everyone should.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Kathryn Burns
Austin, TX 78727
kathrynburn@gmail.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

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Sincerely,
Richard James
Royal Palm Beach, FL 33411
rtomjames@icloud.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife, particularly sea turtles. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Craig Nazor
Austin, TX 78758
c.nazor@earthlink.net

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

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Sincerely,
William Krause
Houston, TX 77077
xkrause@hotmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem. I know that the coast line needs help due to being starved of sediment. This part of restoration could contribute to solving a lot of problems and help the communities at risk of inundation. I have visited the area and everything that can be done to restore and protect the unique environments there should be done.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Mary Orr
Espanola, NM 87533
mvorr01@gmail.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

I live near the coast and also have a fishing camp on the Gulf that I truly enjoy and value the wildlife we feel are an essential part of our lives.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Harriett Jones
Williston, FL 32696
harriettjones48@gmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

I lived through Deepwater Horizon. It was devastating to the ecosystem that hasn't been restored. Shore birds no longer appear where they did and in the numbers they did before DH. The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Maureen Fields
Gulfport, MS 39503
mefields@cablone.net

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The avian populations are a critical part of the web of life. The Gulf habitat is home to a multitude of those populations as well as many other critical populations.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Marjorie Dearmont
Bertram, TX 78605
mdearmont@aol.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy.

I encourage the Council to utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Deborah Green
Longwood, FL 32779
sabal@cfl.rr.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

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The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy.

The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Sue Batchelor
Bryan, TX 77803
juniper.green@yahoo.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
David And Judy Gold
Gainesville, FL 32609
mikasunny@hotmail.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should and must use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem. This translates to economic gains for Texas, and protection and maintenance of treasured Gulf beaches for Texans and visitors.

Sincerely,
Yvonne M Hansen
Austin, TX 78745
yvonnehanseninaustin@gmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects , funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Callie White
Labelle, FL 33935
white290@att.net

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Marion Kreuzscher
Miami, FL 33193
kreuscher3@bellsouth.net

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for the human and animal communities that use both the environment and support the economy - with their ecosystem services.

The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Barbara Albrecht
Pensacola, FL 32503
Barbara@PanhandleWatershed.org

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act. We need to stop dumping fossil fuels in the Gulf of Mexico, and put a moratorium on drilling as well

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Tammy Lettieri
Coconut Creek, FL 33066
tammylettieri@aol.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act. **BIRDS ARE AN IMPORTANT PART OF THE ECOSYSTEM, AND AS SUCH, THEY SHOULD BE PART OF THE RESTORATION EFFORTS IN THE GULF!**

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Marcia Bailey
Dunedin, FL 34698
wilmarc83@gmail.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

Above all else please support bird habitat restoration. The Council knows that restoration funding should support bird habitat restoration and research.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Paula Morgan
Hollywood, FL 33019
paulaymorgan@gmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

Any money spent on Gulf Restoration is well spent. We need pristine fisheries, rookeries, and clean environment for now and the future. Please don't kick the can down the road for some future generation, its your time to step up.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Frank Makowski
Dunedin, FL 34698
frank_makowski@yahoo.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As a citizen of New Orleans, and a birder I ask that as the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Claudia Garofalo
New Orleans, LA 70118
claudiagarofalo@gmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As a concerned citizen and resident of Alabama, I ask that as the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), that the Council please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Kate Wardell
Florence, AL 35630
brennwrite@hotmail.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As a frequent visitor to the Gulf, I have seen firsthand the decline of the waters and beaches. For over 30 years, our family has vacationed on Anna Maria... but no more. The red tide last year was the final straw. We will find another location where the environment is more important than oil.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Mindy Meadows
Clermont, FL 34711
mmeadows@sga.net

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As a lifetime resident of the Gulf coast and as an observer of our beautiful coastal birds, I have observed a big decline in the healthy population. The practical reasons should be obvious to anyone understanding nature even a little. The esthetic benefits that bring visitors from everywhere is just as obvious. We MUST give restoration priority.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Mary Christian
Humble, TX 77346
mblountchristian@embarqmail.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As a native Floridian, I have been traveling coastal areas of the State since 1955. The changes I have witnessed have been drastic and not for the better. This is our opportunity to restore vital habitat. I believe we should utilize the "Audubon's Vision" plan. It has been well thought out to benefit an entire ecosystem.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Best Wishes in your deliberations,

Joanne H Roberts
7551 SW 133 CT
Miami, FL 33183

Sincerely,
Joanne Roberts
Miami, FL 33183
miamidancingdiva@yahoo.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As a Pensacola resident during the Deepwater Horizon oil leak, I saw the images of birds covered in oil, desperately trying to survive. Their home had been taken over by thick black oil and they were drowning. It is still heartbreaking to think back on this disturbing and destructive time. Please provide restoration of the Gulf to benefit bird habitats.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Sherrie Goldsmith
Venice, FL 34293
sherriegoldsmith@att.net

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As someone who has had the opportunity to visit all five states that border the Gulf of Mexico, I am writing to ask the Council please ensure the decisions and actions taken with regards to the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3) are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Pomper
Washington, DC 20002
lizpomper@gmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As someone who holds the Gulf dear, please use Audubon's conservation plan. And I hope you see the cute bird pictures.

Thank you.
Sincerely,
Bena Currin
Oakland, CA 94602
benaspam-politics@yahoo.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As someone who lives close to the Gulf Coast, I'm very concerned about the projects approved for restoring the Gulf of Mexico after the damage done by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. The Council will be making its decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3). The extraordinary bird population that lived on the Gulf Coast was devastated by the oil spill. These birds are not only beautiful to watch and admire, but they are an integral part of the Gulf's ecosystem.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

I strongly request that the Council utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Naomi Ostfeld
Houston, TX 77071
nostfeld@comcast.net

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic in order to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be ***sustainable for both the environment and the economy.*** The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. Please check it out! When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
D S
Ocala, FL 34474
daire82@gmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ENTIRE ecosystem which was the intent of the RESTORE legislation. We can't allow avoidable man-made disasters such as the Deepwater Horizon well, which was because of gross negligence and misconduct by BP to further decimate the increasingly rare wetlands habitat which is so vital to keep the remaining species of wildlife we still have.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon fund projects, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the entire Gulf ecosystem.

Please use the Audubon Society's Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This is an opportunity to use the accumulated wisdom of the Audubon Society, an advocate for wildlife with close to a century of experience and knowledge, to design the best possible wildlife-friendly projects for the Gulf.

John B. Hemphill

Sincerely,
John B Hemphill
San Angelo, TX 76904
jhemp42@gmail.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection.

This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Love
Austin, TX 78745
eloves@gmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), you must ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When birds and wildlife thrive, people thrive. This is SCIENCE. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Tria Shaffer
Leander, TX 78641
trias54@gmail.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

Audubon has already prepared the well thought through request below, but I want to say that I completely agree with the request that the RESTORE Act funds be used to replace and repair habitat for crucial birds of the Gulf and in so doing benefit the Gulf ecosystem in general, the Gulf states' economy and additionally help protect coastal communities from Natural weather disasters.

Sincerely,
Claire Shumaker

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Claire Shumaker
Winter Springs, FL 32708
shumaker@ieee.org

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

Birds are important local and tourist business. Birdwatching brings in millions of dollars to the Gulf Coast. Millions travel to the coast for Spring and Fall migrations. Millions of birdwatchers come to the coast to observe and photograph shorebirds and waders like herons and egrets from Florida to south Texas. The birds must be saved for us and future citizens.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Hazel Shaughnessy
Weston Lakes, TX 77441
hazel.shaughnessy@yahoo.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

By protecting animal habitats, you will be protecting human "habitats", too.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Christina Kimmelman
Smithtown, NY 11787
cck369@live.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

clean the Gulf. Finding ways to get rid of red tide should be the most important item on your agenda and helping the birds and marine mammals survive the infestation and pollution of the Gulf. As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Brigitte and John wallace
Saint Petersburg, FL 33707
toawonderfullife@aol.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

DEAR COUNCIL PEOPLE, PLEASE REMEMBER THIS BEAUTIFUL WILDLIFE IS PART OR WHAT MAKES AMERICA SO BEAUTIFUL AND UNIQUE!!!! As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
April B. Denton
Coconut Creek, FL 33073
aprilbdenton1@gmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

Dear Council,

As someone who cherishes and appreciates birds, and the important part they play in our ecosystems, I urge you to consider the below requests and suggestions from Audubon.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Clark Smith
Magnolia, TX 77354
celksmith@comcast.net

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

Dear Restore Council Members,

I am the Chair of the Audubon Mississippi State Board and hope as the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Regards,
Sheryl O. Bowen, Chair
Audubon Mississippi State Board

Sincerely,
Sheryl Bowen
Holly Springs, MS 38635
bowensheryl@gmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

Do the right thing for our state. The Gulf is ecologically very important to Florida.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Tory Salmon
Debary, FL 32713
bwolf697@yahoo.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

Every species, including the human species, required a habitat for living. That includes birds and the species that are part of the habitat that maintains them.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Dr. Edwin E. Daniel
Vero Beach, FL 32963
edwinedaniel@gmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

Gulf Restoration needs to restore bird habitat & research!!! Without our Birds we are not Bay County!

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Mercedes Franklin
Lynn Haven, FL 32444
mercedesf@bellsouth.net

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

I am a resident of Florida and I care about the health of the Gulf of Mexico and the wildlife dependent on the Gulf. I especially care about our avian species. Therefore I support the use of RESTORE funds for restoration of bird habitats.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Ann O'Leary
North Port, FL 34287
annoleary9@icloud.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

I am a resident of Port Aransas, Texas, and although the Deepwater Horizon oil spill did not directly affect our area, we are a part of the Gulf of Mexico, and we share most of the same species. Audubon's 12 Flagship species have been affected not only by oil spills, but also by hurricanes, human development, and climate change. Species such as the Reddish egret, American oystercatcher, and Piping plover are important indicator species and iconic birds for coastal residents.

As Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Julie Findley
Port Aransas, TX 78373
juliefindley@utexas.edu

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

I am writing from Highlands County about the RESTORE act.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
James Upchurch
Sebring, FL 33870
jimupchurch@comcast.net

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

I am writing to you as a native Floridian & lifetime voter! As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Martha Singleton
Miami, FL 33143
masingleton@yahoo.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

I believe the funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife.

A healthy ecosystem benefits everyone!

Sincerely,
D Alford
Pompano Beach, FL 33062
virgaires@prodigy.net

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

I feel birds are overlooked. I want you, the Council, to support bird habitat restoration.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Paula Morgan
Hollywood, FL 33019
paulaymorgan@gmail.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

I grew up on the Gulf Coast and lived through many hurricanes, went fishing there and ate fresh Gulf shrimp which cost 25 cents a lb. back then. Now I am a birder and conservationist and concerned about the planet but especially the Gulf which has been raped and damaged by commercial interests and ignorance. I support the plan put forth by the Audubon Society. Dra Su

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

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Sincerely,
Susan Jones
Chireno, TX 75937
susancoferjones@yahoo.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

I hope that, as the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider funding through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), you will ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Carol Johnston
Vero Beach, FL 32967
carolhj12@gmail.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

I live on Siesta Key FLORIDA!!! RESTORE THE GULF.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Carolyn Repeta
Sarasota, FL 34231
calveg77@yahoo.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

I support Audubon's perspective. As one of the leading citizen science organizations they do incredibly good work. Their belief is do no harm. The goal is to make the Gulf better for both homo sapiens and the other creatures that depend on it.

I SUPPORT BIRD HABITAT RESTORATION AND RESEARCH. When you consider how to spend the funds, I urge you to consider these goals.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Paula Lane
Davie, FL 33328
plane@fdic.gov

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

I support using "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Gail Carmody
Panama City, FL 32411
gcarmody@att.net

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

I urge you as the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Amy Carlson
Saucier, MS 39574
hesper316@yahoo.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

I wholly support the Audbon's efforts to push foward the restoration of the Gulf coast to support bird habitat. As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

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Sincerely,
Michael Raiman
Delray Beach, FL 33445
mraiman@bellsouth.net

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

I would much rather spend money on restoring the Gulf of Mexico instead of funding three toll roads across Florida that would ruin the habitat for wildlife.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Donna Grace
Gulfport, FL 33707
donna.j.grace@gmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

I'm a fifth generation Floridian. The Deep Water Horizon spill was devastating to us. Most Floridians are concerned about Environmental impacts to our state.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Marlene Stalter
Temple Terrace, FL 33617
mjstalter@yahoo.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

I'm writing today to encourage the RESTORE council to use the Gulf Conservation Plan proposed by Audubon to ensure that not only humans will benefit from the restoration, but also the 11 flagship bird species and the more than 300 other species which use the same habitats. Please consult "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People" when deciding which restoration projects will be funded. Your diligence in selecting specific projects will determine whether the outcome will create a resilient coast, capable of protecting human properties and wildlife habitats from future storms and potential sea level rise.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,
Paula Wehr
Ormond Beach, FL 32174
paulawehr@cfl.rr.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

If it's good for birds....it's good for people.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

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Sincerely,
E. S. Ward
Austin, TX 78704
txtalk@netscape.net

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

If we don't restore balance in our fishing practices, not only do we lose food we lose species that depend upon other fish. Keeping our environment safe for all species helps us not only intrinsically but financially. As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

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Sincerely,
Marianne Amann
Port Orange, FL 32129
amannm@yahoo.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

IT IS CRITICAL THAT WE COUNTERACT GLOBAL WARMING. TAKING ACTION ON THIS ISSUE IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO ME.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Kelly Greene
Miami, FL 33168
kellygreenemiami@gmail.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

It is important that as the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3)....

please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy.

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This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

THE ECOLOGY MUST NATURALLY CONSIDER BIRDS AND WILDLIFE AS ESSENTIAL IN TRUE SUSTAINABLE RESTORATION !

Sincerely,
Suzanne Dauber
Palm City, FL 34990
ssdauber@aol.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

Living along the Gulf of Mexico in NW Florida, and having lived through the Deepwater Horizon disaster, I feel strongly that the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects must consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Laurel Johnson
Santa Rosa Beach, FL 32459
laurel@laurelabbe.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

My hope is that the best decisions are made in how to spend the available funding for the purposes of restoring the Gulf coast not only for birds and their habitats which were devastated by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill of 2010 but also to provide long-term solutions on how best to monitor the rising of the sea level and the effect on the birds that call the Gulf coast home.

When I first moved to Florida in 1996, I lived on the Gulf coast for three years and found the Gulf coast to have the most beautiful beaches I had seen. Although I now live closer to the Atlantic coast, I still prefer the pristine beaches of the Gulf coast. Please restore this coast so my grandchildren and their children and future generations can enjoy the same beauty.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

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Sincerely,
Chaya Staub-Krell
Orlando, FL 32833
Moirabubbe@gmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

My husband and I make multiple trips per year to the gulf coast and our biggest pastime there is enjoying the birding. Please consider Audubon's well researched plan. There are a lot more of us bird lovers than you think.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely
Rhonda and David Miles
Sincerely,
Rhonda Miles
Birmingham, AL 35242
rhondamiles@outlook.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

My vision of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill is the oil soaked birds and the statement I Want My Life Back. Please use RESTORE dollars for habitat restoration and research.

Sincerely,
Carole Tebay
Pensacola, FL 32507
tebay@bellsouth.net

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

Please consider the economic ramifications as the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Marcia Curl
Seffner, FL 33584
eaglesfly3@icloud.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

Please don't forget the birds.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
William Phelan
Tallahassee, FL 32309
wmjphelan@comcast.net

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

Please help these beautiful creature. As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL

3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Joanna Shows
Hattiesburg, MS 39402
joanna@florafaua.land

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

Please help to save the birds of the Gulf!

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. I am 82 and I remember the Gulf as it used to be when my father fished in Vermilion Bay and supplied me with the most delicious speckled trout ever.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Ann Nunn
Gulfport, MS 39502
gptgrannie@aol.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

Please refer to the Audubon restoration plan to guide your decision -making regarding best ways to mitigate future difficulties bird species will face due to rising sea levels and increased gulf pollution. The ecosystem of the Gulf was badly compromised during the Deepwater Horizon incident, and it has not yet fully recovered. Creating and maintaining healthy bird habitats will insure the fate of the birds and other wildlife in the Gulf.

Again, please use available RESTORE funding in accord with the Audubon Plan.

As Florida residents, Audubon members are knowledgeable and active on behalf of the ecosystem, and believe that its protection will contribute to a better future for birds, but also for eco-tourism, indeed, tourism as a whole.

Sincerely, Elizabeth Platt, Apalachee Audubon
Tallahassee

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Platt
Tallahassee, FL 32308
ejplatt@comcast.net

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

Please support habitat restoration. We have destroyed our environment and we need to restore it before it's too late for all of our sakes.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Mary Lane
Naples, FL 34112
lanedesign@aol.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

Please support restoration of our birds habitats along the gulf. As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Dowe Foreman
Mentone, AL 35984
dcforeman@yahoo.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

PROTECT OUR BEAUTIFUL BIRDS! As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Adrienne Inglis
Lago Vista, TX 78645
adrienne.inglis@gmail.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

Protect the Gulf Coast, As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Becky Wharton
Bastrop, TX 78602
earth_madre@hotmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

Regarding the RESTORE Act.

The money available for Gulf restoration should be used to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
John Buckley
Eastpoint, FL 32328
johnreb@earthlink.net

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

Remember the canaries in the coal mines! Wildlife provides a warning when our ecosystems are not healthy. We need good research to be sure that the actions we take will be effective.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Susan Field
Gainesville, FL 32606
susan.field.gator@gmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

Restoration of habitat in the Gulf of Mexico is crucial to protecting birds and communities from extreme weather destruction and ensuring the survival of the ecosystem.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Dawn Meyer
Cape Canaveral, FL 32920
dcmeyer1701@gmail.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

SUPPORT BIRD HABITAT RESTORATION! If not NOW, WHEN??

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Karen Laakaniemi
Pensacola, FL 32534
klaakan@gmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

Thanks for reading this message. I appreciate your responsiveness to constituent concerns.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act. The approach must be wide-ranging and comprehensive to be successful.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore its ecosystem to make it more sustainable for both the environment and the economy.

The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to

- a. ensure future projects build on past projects,
- b. incorporate lessons learned,
- c. complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and
- d. are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Ross McCluney
Cape Canaveral, FL 32920
rm@sunpine.us

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

The Audubon is the best resource in my mind for direction in the complex task of restoring the vast destruction caused by the Deep Horizon oil spill. As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
David Timby
Tallahassee, FL 32301
dwtimby@gmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

The Deepwater Horizon oil spill devastated millions of birds. Civil penalties associated with the spill have provided funding for ecosystem restoration in the Gulf of Mexico, but it's up to the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (RESTORE) to decide how that money should be spent. I strongly support bird habitat restoration. Restoration of habitat in the Gulf of Mexico benefits birds and protects communities from extreme weather destruction.

Restoration funding should support bird habitat restoration and research. As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Fran Field
Sparta, WI 54656
frann7@msn.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

The Deepwater Horizon oil spill devastated millions of birds. Civil penalties associated with the spill have provided funding for ecosystem restoration in the Gulf of Mexico, but it's up to the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (RESTORE) to decide how that money should be spent. I strongly support bird habitat restoration. Restoration of habitat in the Gulf of Mexico benefits birds and protects communities from extreme weather destruction.

Restoration funding should support bird habitat restoration and research. As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

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Sincerely,
James T. Field
El Paso, TX 79912
jtfld@msn.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

The Deepwater Horizon oil spill devastated millions of birds. Civil penalties associated with the spill have provided funding for ecosystem restoration in the Gulf of Mexico, but it's up to the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (RESTORE) to decide how that money should be spent. I strongly support bird habitat restoration. Restoration of habitat in the Gulf of Mexico benefits birds and protects communities from extreme weather destruction.

Restoration funding should support bird habitat restoration and research. As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Josephine Lopez
El Paso, TX 79912
jalop48@msn.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf.

As a Mississippian who cares about our environment and it's effects on birds in our ecosystem, I write to request that the RESTORE Council utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as they prepares FPL 3.

This plan can help not only to identify projects that benefit bird species, but can also benefit other wildlife. And, when coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that will move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic to maintaining the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act. To do less, is a risk we dare not take.

Thank you for taking my concerns to heart.

Sincerely,
Linda Foshee
Hattiesburg, MS 39402
lindafoshee@comcast.net

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

The Gulf has been used like a toilet by petro chem and oil. As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
T Logan
Marble Falls, TX 78654
telogan14@gmail.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

The Gulf of Mexico is as important as any ecosystem in the world, I may never see it but it affects more than just the Gulf. I am retired from the fishing industry and am a consumer of Gulf Shrimp, a healthy fishery means a healthy ecosystem.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Maxwell Klare
Condon, OR 97823
mjklare@ortelco.net

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

The Gulf of Mexico is highly significant as a source of income to many on the water and on land, and, as a source of recreation to millions of people from across the US. Key to it's sustenance is its ecosystem.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Bruce Cox
San Antonio, TX 78212
bchapul@gmail.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

The millions of birds that were lost and their habitats permanently damaged have waited long enough for their ecosystem to be restored. Man caused this horrible disaster, yet, the birds, marine life and the entire Gulf Of Mexico ecosystem has been forever altered, suffering irreparable damage.

WE HAVE GOT TO START PUTTING THE WELL BEING OF NATURE BEFORE THAT OF MANKIND. OTHERWISE, WE'LL END UP WITH A PLANET THAT LOOKS LIKE THE SURFACE OF MARS - A WASTELAND.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Joann Palladino
Saint Petersburg, FL 33710
jlpalladino@hotmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

The RESTORE Council continues to make decisions regarding the next projects to fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3). I request that the Council make strategic decisions about restoring and maintaining ecosystems damaged by the Deepwater Horizon oil disaster.

Further, I ask that the Council give additional weight to projects that benefit both bird species and other wildlife that were harmed by the Deepwater Horizon oil disaster. Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," is one tool for project selection to consider as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Marianne Korosy
Tallahassee, FL 32310
mkorosy@gmail.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

This project is very important to me both as an ecological project and for the many tourists who enjoy the birds!

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

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Sincerely,
Sue Bell
Clarksdale, MS 38614
ssuebell@yahoo.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

Vote and fund Gulf restoration to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

Utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Juanita Baker
Sebastian, FL 32958
bakerj@fit.edu

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

We lived through over a year of Red Tide on the Southwest coast of Florida. It devastated wild life, the abundance of which was one of the main reasons we decided to retire to Florida. Although Karina Brevis is naturally occurring, the duration and extent of the Red Tide was widely attributed to human-caused pollution.

The funding available for Gulf restoration in the RESTORE Act is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment, its wildlife and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Jayne Dean
Englewood, FL 34223
jaynepdean@icloud.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

We must clean up after ourselves and if possible, make things better. As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Jim Tucker
Houston, TX 77006
jtuckergeo@aol.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

We should restore the gulf and have all the animals not going extinct

Sincerely,
Marilyn Gutierrez
Miami, FL 33177
sweethotbaby30@gmail.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

Wildlife habitat in the Gulf is important to all humans. We can't survive without our non-human neighbors. None of my Gulf Coast friends and family would live there were they not surrounded by the most magical wildlife.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Molly Rouzie
Bronx, NY 10458
blanketofpeas@gmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

WITH A CATASTROPHIC OIL SPILL LIKE THE HORIZON OIL SPILL, IT CAN TAKES DECADES TO RESTORE THE AREA AFFECTED, SO ALL THE FUNDS ALLOCATED TO YOUR AGENCY NEEDS TO GO DIRECTLY TO THAT FUND, AND NOT DIVERTED ANYWHERE ELSE!!!! As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
April B. Denton
Coconut Creek, FL 33073
aprilbdenton1@gmail.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider & possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are the much-needed strategic investments in Gulf restoration efforts that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can help identify projects that benefit bird species, AND all other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem that can thrive even in the age of climate change.

Sincerely,
Ann Rainey
Holiday, FL 34691
ann.rainey6622@gmail.com

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

We The People do not always get a second chance to restore the onslaught of humanity on our God Given natural resources but this is one of those rare opportunities. As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), PLEASE ensure the decisions and actions taken are specific to maintain the ecosystem wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy.
The Council MUST use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are specific investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan:
"Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3.
This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife.
When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting an array of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Agnes Whalen
Saint Petersburg, FL 33734
agneswhalen@gmail.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

I am a teacher and volunteer at a bird rehabilitation center.

As such, I see firsthand the increasing difficulties that migratory birds face, from trauma from hitting high rises, botulism, reduction of habitat. It is very critical that we work to restore life saving bird habitats. These birds stop over in the Gulf of Mexico to replenish themselves before setting forth on their thousand of miles of journeys.

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Nancy Harrington
Miami Beach, FL 33141
nlmcland@bellsouth.net

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

PLEASE SUPPORT BIRD HABITAT RESTORATION! As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

Sincerely,
Alison Matherly
Tampa, FL 33604
awmatherly@gmail.com

Body of Letter

Dear Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council,

As the Council makes decisions regarding the next projects to consider and possibly fund through the third Funded Priorities List (FPL 3), please ensure the decisions and actions taken are strategic, to maintain the ecosystem-wide focus, approach, and intent of the RESTORE Act.

The funding available for Gulf restoration is an opportunity to restore the Gulf ecosystem in a way that should be sustainable for both the environment and the economy. The Council should use the final Framework as a guide to ensure future projects build on past projects, incorporate lessons learned, complement projects funded through other Deepwater Horizon funding streams, and are strategic investments in the Gulf restoration effort that will provide comprehensive benefits to the overall Gulf ecosystem.

The Council should utilize Audubon's recently released Gulf conservation plan, "Audubon's Vision: Restoring the Gulf of Mexico for Birds and People," as one tool for project selection as the Council prepares FPL 3. This plan can be useful to identify projects that not only benefit bird species, but also benefit other wildlife. When coupled with other project selection tools and criteria, this modeling effort will prove useful in selecting a suite of projects that move us closer to a healthy and productive Gulf ecosystem.

The fact that there has been poor preventative measures, if any, to mitigate or repair the neglect has resulted in some of the worst conditions in History, Coupled with the Current Administrations further Environmental Protections Defunding and Deregulations, Our Nation is losing its Greatest Treasures forever.
And next is Us.

Sincerely,
Dale Prillaman
Hollywood, FL 33021
dprllm@hotmail.com

Appendix 2. Kenneth Teague, Full Comment Attachment

Comments on Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council Planning Framework Draft April 2019 General Comments

My first reading of the document was very difficult, finding it nearly impossible to understand the intent of the document, and the specific lexicon that has evolved surrounding the RESTORE Act. Since then, I am beginning to understand the document a little better. I do believe that the Framework Draft is handicapped by the previously adopted goals and objectives. While the goals may be acceptable, the objectives are not consistent with long-accepted definitions of what constitutes an acceptable (and useful) environmental management goal, and objective. Goals are supposed to be rather general, but still clear enough and specific enough so that there can't be much disagreement about what it means, and so that progress towards it can be measured. These are. Objectives should support specific goals, should be more detailed and specific, and should represent steps in a process towards meeting the specific goal they support. These do not. Rather, they are for the most part, simply restatements of the goals, with additional goals added. See the NEP Guidance for a more detailed explanation of this. So, the resulting objectives of the RESTORE program are really not helpful at all.

Geographic Area- So, the RESTORE program's efforts to define priority geographic areas for FPL 3, are: The entire Gulf of Mexico, except the following Louisiana coastal basins- Atchafalaya, Terrebonne, Barataria, Mississippi River. How is that setting any priorities? How is that helpful? Why were these few geographic areas removed from consideration?

Beneficial Use of Dredged Material- While efforts to create or restore wetlands using dredged material are desirable when done correctly, I strongly recommend that this document explicitly prohibit the use of RESTORE Act funds to assist any permittee, under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, and/or Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act, to meet their legally required compensatory mitigation requirements under a permit. I believe there is a reasonable chance that RESTORE Act funds may have already been used for this purpose. In addition, I strongly recommend that this document explicitly prohibit use of RESTORE Act funds to create or restore wetlands using either known contaminated dredged material, or dredged material that is suspected of being contaminated, without demonstrating via testing as per the Inland Testing Manual, that the dredged material is suitable for disposal in the aquatic environment. In doing so, the "Reason to Believe" loophole commonly exploited by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and their clients, should not be similarly exploited by any project using RESTORE Act funds. Finally, I recommend that RESTORE explicitly acknowledge the clear difference between "Beneficial Use of Dredged Material" to create or restore wetlands, and "Dedicated Dredging" to create or restore wetlands.

I strongly recommend RESTORE cease funding marsh creation/restoration projects via "Dedicated Dredging" until it has thoroughly considered the implications of dredging large, deep holes in shallow estuaries to obtain the necessary sediment. This has implications for dissolved oxygen and potentially, geomorphology, which have never been fully acknowledged or assessed.

I recommend that RESTORE fully consider all implications of the use of hard shoreline protection structures on estuarine shorelines, before continuing to fund such efforts. More specifically, the impacts of mining rock in upland environments, and the impacts of air emissions and greenhouse gases due to transportation of rock, are typically not considered when deciding whether to use these techniques.

I also recommend that RESTORE not support projects based on hard shoreline protection structures on the Gulf of Mexico barrier island/barrier shoreline/barrier headland shorelines. Their use is very controversial, and my opinion is that scientific opinion seems to trend against their use, except in very unusual circumstances (e.g. Freeport, TX).

Decommission unused, orphaned energy facilities: To my knowledge, no scientific assessment of the environmental risks posed by unused, orphaned energy facilities exists. I am not confident that they represent a priority stressor to the coastal environment, with the exception of oil and gas canals in Louisiana. I recommend that RESTORE and the State of Texas either produce a peer reviewed assessment that supports that this is a priority for coastal environmental protection and restoration, assign an appropriate priority to such actions (again, supported by science), or cease funding these projects and devote the

funds to actions that are clearly high priority. Implementing this may be “good housekeeping”, and may reflect state agency policy, but there is little or no evidence it is actually a priority for coastal protection/restoration.

Specific Comments

- Executive Summary

- p. ii

- 1st set of bullets

- 1st bullet: Add seagrasses. This is one of my most important comments. The lack of any mention of seagrasses appears to be a major omission. Change “islands” to “barrier islands”.
 - 2nd bullet: Too general. This basically says “protect and conserve” everything. Note also that while protection and conservation are desirable, they are not restoration.
 - 3rd bullet: Change “natural processes” to “other natural processes”.
 - 4th bullet: So are nutrients the highest pollutant priority or not? I can see that as a Gulfwide priority, but it is not a priority everywhere in the Gulf. In some coastal areas bacteria are a greater concern.
 - 5th bullet: This is redundant to the 1st bullet. I recommend eliminating this bullet, and adding oyster reef habitat to bullet 1, even though it would still be redundant.

- 2nd set of bullets

- Again, the geographic priorities are “almost everything”. What’s the point?

- Introduction

- 1.2 RESTORE Act and Council Selected Restoration Component

- P. 3

- Bullet #1: I assume the term “marine...habitats” can be assumed to include water quality concerns. But what about estuarine aquatic habitats? If not, how do we ensure the RESTORE Council will give priority consideration to projects that address appropriate water quality concerns?

- 1.3 Council selected restoration component comprehensive plan and funded priorities lists

- P. 4

- 2nd paragraph: Several problems with this:

- Priority watersheds: Some projects were claimed to be located in priority watersheds, but weren't, or were only partly.
 - Capping wells: I am not aware of any scientific documentation that indicates that uncapped oil and gas wells in wetland or upland environments, constitute an actual risk to the environment. Granted, I don't know much about oil and gas wells. But I am not aware of any coastal environmental assessment that has identified this as a priority. It is probably a good idea generally, but it is not clear it is actually a priority need for the coastal environment. Provide that documentation.
 - Projects to create or restore marsh by digging holes in estuaries may cause low DO in the holes. RESTORE should not fund projects that create low DO, no matter what good they do.
 - USDA coastal conservation reserve program needs to be carefully managed to ensure that it actually benefits the coastal environment. It would be very easy for it to only benefit landowners and artificial habitat for waterfowl.
 - Note that while acquisition of habitat for preservation is a desirable component in a comprehensive coastal management program, acquisition/preservation is not restoration. If the habitat is actually under unregulated threat however, it is a necessary tool.

- Similarly, shoreline protection is not restoration either.
- Last paragraph; 3rd to last sentence: What is this and why is it helpful? I'm sorry, but it sounds like a boondoggle to me. A gift to the Water Institute of the Gulf perhaps? Just a wild guess.
- 2. Planning Framework
 - 2.1 Planning Framework Organization
 - P. 7 ◦ Development of Priority Approaches and Geographic Areas: The intent may have been admirable, but the result appears to be pretty much useless. Again, the Priority Geographic Areas are "the entire Gulf except the Atchafalaya, Terrebonne, Barataria, and Mississippi River coastal basins in Louisiana?"
 - Priority Approaches and Techniques: I realize you have struggled with this, and that you are trying to define these in order to avoid funding things that shouldn't be funded, so I support what you are trying to do with these. However, your explanations, definitions, logic, and result, all need work. More careful, detailed thought needs to go into this overall concept and the detailed conceptual "model" of how this all fits together. This problem is related to, and partly caused by, your incorrect definition of objectives. I suppose its better than leaving the field wide open for all kinds of approaches and techniques that should not be supported though.
 - P. 8 ◦ Geographic Areas: See previous comments about this.
 - P. 10; Fig. 2.1.1
 - Create, restore, and enhance coastal wetlands, islands, shorelines, and headlands
 - Protect natural shorelines: Depending on what you actually mean by this, I may have a concern. Specifically, hard shoreline protection should not be used to protect any Gulf barrier island/barrier shoreline/barrier headland shorelines, except perhaps those at Freeport, TX, where coastal geologists have said it would be acceptable due to unusual human impacts.
 - Add the following techniques for barrier islands/barrier shorelines: vegetative plantings, sand fencing.
 - Add the following for wetland restoration: vegetative plantings
 - Protect and conserve coastal, estuarine, and riparian habitats
 - Decommission unused, orphaned energy facilities
 - By this, I assume you mean plugging abandoned oil wells, as you have previously funded.
 - To my knowledge, there is no scientific evaluation or assessment of the risks posed, if any, by these to the coastal environment. I am not knowledgeable about the details of oil and gas wells, so maybe the risks are obvious to some who are. However, no coastal scientists I know have ever raised this as a priority. I am concerned it is included simply because it is a policy priority of the Texas General Land Office. It is obviously "good housekeeping", but that doesn't mean it's a coastal protection/restoration priority.
 - P. 11; Fig. 2.1.2
 - Why isn't "Restore Oyster Habitat" proposed for the Chenier Plain? There are oysters in lower Calcasieu Lake and lot of them in the estuaries of the eastern part of the Chenier Plain. The world's largest oyster reef, the Pt. Au Fer Reef, historically existed here, but was destroyed by a combination of natural deltaic switching as the Atchafalaya River became the primary distributary of the Mississippi River, and as the reef was extensively mined. While most of the reef could not be restored currently due to the effects of the Atchafalaya River, perhaps portions of its westward extent could be?

- 2.2.1 Create, restore, and enhance coastal wetlands, islands, shorelines, and headlands
 - P. 12
 - Last paragraph
 - 2nd sentence: I question whether it is true that “across the Gulf coastal landloss is occurring primarily because of increasing wave impacts”. It may be true some places, but I don’t think it is true in most places. I think relative sea level rise and reduced sediment supply are the greatest causes, at least in Louisiana and Texas.
 - P. 13
 - 1st paragraph
 - 1st sentence: While protecting estuarine shorelines from wave energy may be a reasonable action to take in some cases, the use of hard shoreline protection structures on actual Gulf barrier island, barrier shoreline, and barrier headlands, except in very rare cases (Freeport, TX), is unacceptable. RESTORE should not fund such projects. Also, note that shoreline protection is not restoration.
 - FPL 3 Potential Restoration Strategies
 - Sediment Placement
 - Last paragraph: While you discuss “beneficial use of dredged material” you fail to even mention that not all sediment placement is “beneficial use of dredged material”. The other form of sediment placement, which is done extensively in Louisiana, is “dedicated dredging”, in which a large, deep hole is dredged in a shallow estuary to obtain sediment. This can cause low dissolved oxygen in the hole, and may result in geomorphic changes. The negative effects of dedicated dredging are never mentioned. Do not fund any more dedicated dredging projects that dredge deep holes in estuaries, until you have assessed these risks.
 - P. 14;
 - Protect Natural Shorelines: Again, RESTORE should not fund any hard structures on Gulf barrier island, barrier beach, or barrier headland shorelines, with the possible exception of Freeport, TX, due to the unique situation there. Similar techniques applied on estuarine shorelines are another matter.
- 2.2.2 Protect and conserve coastal, estuarine, and riparian habitats.
 - P. 15
 - Background
 - 1st paragraph
 - 2nd to last sentence: This makes it sound as if all water quality problems were due to agriculture, transportation and energy industries. This is ridiculous. Municipal wastewater and all manner of industrial wastewater contribute very significantly to water quality problems. In addition, septic systems, urban stormwater runoff, and disposal of contaminated dredged material, all contribute to water quality problems.
 - Last paragraph: The idea that acquisition is a solution to relative sea level rise is true only under certain very specific conditions: The tract of land acquired includes the shoreline as well as uplands landward of the shoreline, with sufficient elevation to allow for “migration of wetlands inland”, but also with a slope that is not so steep that wetland migration would require a large stepwise increase in relative sea level over short times. I question whether this is even a factor in the acquisitions being made, particularly in Texas. So, I really don't see this as an actual factor in the decisions being made. It could be, but I doubt it is.
 - P. 16

- 1st paragraph

- 2nd sentence: This is fundamentally important, and somebody doesn't get it- "habitat protection and conservation" are not restoration!

- Last sentence: I wholeheartedly, and fundamentally disagree. Acquisition should be used where it really makes sense- for areas that are under intense unregulated, or loosely regulated, threat of development. And for habitats with particularly high ecological value. For example, Texas barrier islands. Or coastal cypress swamps that may not be protected under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (e.g. those that would not regenerate if logged). Another good example may be prairie potholes on the Texas coast, which are mostly unregulated currently, and which will almost certainly cease being regulated in the future. It may not make a lot of sense to acquire estuarine salt marshes (except those on barrier islands/peninsulas, which though regulated, can't afford to simply be destroyed and mitigated elsewhere), which are under strong regulatory protection. It may also not make sense to acquire wetlands that are clearly not keeping pace with relative sea level rise. Acquisition should be used strategically and sparingly. It should not be the primary tool. It is not restoration.

- FPL 3 Potential Restoration Techniques

- Land Acquisition: Again, very importantly, land acquisition is not restoration.

- In addition, acquisition should be used where it really makes sense- for areas that are under intense unregulated, or loosely regulated, threat of development. And for habitats with particularly high ecological value. For example, Texas barrier islands. Or coastal cypress swamps that may not be protected under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (e.g. those that would not regenerate if logged). Another good example may be prairie potholes on the Texas coast, which are mostly unregulated currently, and which will almost certainly cease being regulated in the future. It may not make a lot of sense to acquire estuarine salt marshes (except those on barrier islands/peninsulas, which though regulated, can't afford to simply be destroyed and mitigated elsewhere), which are under strong regulatory protection. It may also not make sense to acquire wetlands that are clearly not keeping pace with relative sea level rise. Acquisition should be used strategically and sparingly. It should not be the primary tool. It is not restoration.

- Riparian habitats should only be considered for acquisition, if they are under considerable unregulated threat. Many riparian areas outside of urban areas are not. Prioritize funds for actual restoration over acquisition of habitats that are not actually very threatened.

- p. 17

- Habitat management and stewardship

- Only fund "debris removal" if it can be demonstrated that it provides an actual coastal ecological benefit. RESTORE should not become a cash cow for "cleaning up" private or public lands, where there is no actual coastal environmental benefit.

- Great care must be taken to ensure that "habitat management and stewardship", as described here, actually provides an ecological benefit to coastal ecosystems. RESTORE should not become a cash cow for farmers or public land management agencies to do with as they please. The potential for no significant ecological benefit to coastal ecosystems under this "approach" or "technique" is considerable. However, it is possible to implement it and have a positive impact on the coastal environment- it just has to be done in a manner that provides such benefit. Not all sites will be amenable to providing a coastal benefit.

- Decommission unused, orphaned energy facilities
 - First, note that the article cited does not appear to provide any real support to the kinds of activities that are being proposed under this “approach” or “technique”.
 - Again, to my knowledge, there is no scientific evaluation or assessment of the risks posed, if any, by these to the coastal environment. I am not knowledgeable about the details of oil and gas wells, so maybe the risks are obvious to some who are. However, no coastal scientists I know have ever raised this as a priority. I am concerned it is included simply because it is a policy priority of the Texas General Land Office. It is obviously “good housekeeping”, but that doesn’t mean it’s a coastal protection/restoration priority.
 - Removal of old storage tanks and especially open pits would have an actual environmental benefit, but it is not clear that plugging wells would. Either provide solid evidence that plugging wells is an actual priority, or spend the money on something that is known to be a priority.
 - 2nd to last sentence: Barrier islands, shorelines, and other coastal areas that are denuded of vegetation due to oiling, probably got that way from either an oil spill related to a shipping accident, or due to a spill like the Deepwater Horizon. I have never heard of a barrier island, shoreline, or other coastal area being oiled by an unplugged well in either coastal uplands or coastal wetlands. Unless you can provide firm evidence that this is an actual priority risk, do not fund plugging of wells until other known high priority actions are completed.
 - Last sentence: I agree that restoration of physical impacts of oil and gas development, particularly to wetlands, such as well pads, access roads, and other transportation corridors, should probably be a priority, as long as these impacts predated regulatory requirements now in place that typically require permittees to restore such features. In other words, don’t help the oil and gas companies to meet their required mitigation. Instead, go after the companies who have not completed their required mitigation. Similarly, backfilling of oil and gas canals sounds a lot like this. It should be a priority technique for wetland restoration, where oil and gas canals exist (e.g. Louisiana and upper Texas coast primarily).
- p. 18: Are you confident that those wells actually posed a significant risk to water quality? I have not seen any scientific assessment of the risk actually posed by these. Of course, properly plugging these wells and otherwise cleaning them up is “good housekeeping”, and I would not say that it is inappropriate work to do, but is it really a priority from an ecosystem management perspective?
- p. 19
 - 2.2.3 Restore hydrology and natural processes
 - Primary Objectives: Again, as previously discussed, the objectives are mostly redundant of goals, and do not provide the additional detail that is normally expected of objectives that support specific goals (see NEP guidance).
- p. 21
 - Controlled river diversions
 - 2nd sentence: In spite of some stakeholders' arguments to the contrary in Louisiana, in many cases diversions are needed to combat elevated salinity as well (e.g. Maurepas, Nueces Delta, etc).
- p. 22
 - Restore natural salinity regimes
 - 1st paragraph
 - 1st sentence: “Coastal” and “estuaries” is redundant. There are no estuaries that are not “coastal”.
 - 2nd paragraph

- 2nd sentence
 - Backfilling canals is far superior to plugging canals
 - I cannot think of a good reason to channelize in order to restore a natural salinity regime, except in the case of a river diversion. On the other hand, I can think of many reasons not to “channelize” due to the tendency of channelization to result in saltwater intrusion, loss of habitat, etc.
 - “...other structures in navigation channels...”: It is not clear what this means, but structural marsh management has many negative impacts, so I strongly recommend that RESTORE not fund structural marsh management features, except perhaps when changes to those structures helps to reverse some of the negative effects of them.
- Last paragraph: It is not clear to me if RESTORE funded Texas to reopen the mouth of the San Bernard River to the Gulf, and to reopen tidal pass known as Cedar Bayou. And if it did so, it is not clear to me whether it was justified based on “Restore natural salinity regimes”. However, if it did:
 - Both of these passes apparently open and close naturally. There is no documentation that their closure is in response to human impacts.
 - Both of these passes have been recently opened artificially, at great expense to the taxpayers. And as I predicted, they have both closed very quickly, naturally. Also, as I predicted, there is another hue and cry for public funds to be used to open them again, at great expense, after a very short time open. If RESTORE did fund these efforts, it should not have, and it should not do so in the future. Conversely, there has been talk about closing Rollover Pass on Bolivar Peninsula, which is an excellent idea. Rollover Pass is completely artificial, has caused major damage to Bolivar Peninsula and its backbarrier marshes, and has changed the salinity regime of East Bay. However, that project has not moved forward.
 - The actual reason that a small group of wealthy homeowners continues to call for reopening the mouth of the San Bernard River, is for their access to the Gulf in boats.
 - The actual reason for the calls to reopen Cedar Bayou are based entirely on sportfishing interests.

◦ p. 23

- Comprehensive Plan Goals and Objectives
 - Primary Objective: See previous comment about this.
 - 1st complete paragraph
 - 2nd sentence: Oysters are not the best example of a coastal community that is common in many parts of the Gulf, which is sensitive to water quality impacts- seagrasses are. Seagrasses are extremely sensitive to reductions in water clarity, either by increases in suspended solids, or by increases in nutrient loading. Why aren't seagrasses mentioned at all in this document? They are extremely important in the Gulf, arguably at least as important as oysters.
- Background
 - 1st paragraph
 - last sentence
 - Harmful algal blooms are not pathogens, and they don't “generate pathogenic contamination”.
 - Fecal bacteria don't “generate pathogenic contamination”. The ARE pathogenic contamination.

- 2nd paragraph
 - 1st sentence: "...estuaries and coastal habitats...": Estuaries are coastal habitats. Change to "...estuaries and other coastal habitats...".
- p. 24
 - 1st complete paragraph
 - 1st sentence: It is not clear what this means. What do you mean by "interactions"?
 - Last sentence: I have no idea what you mean by any of this.
- p. 26
 - Wastewater system improvements
 - 1st paragraph
 - 1st sentence: What other "municipal waste systems" are there other than municipal wastewater treatment plants, that are relevant to the concerns discussed here (e.g. sewage)?
 - 2nd sentence: While one might, from a strictly scientific viewpoint, legitimately characterize septic systems as very small "point sources", that is contrary to decades of agreed-upon definitions, that considers septic systems contributors to nonpoint source pollution.
 - 4th sentence: Again, I would not refer to septic systems as "point sources".
 - Last sentence: In addition, land application of treated effluent and under certain circumstances, discharge of well-treated domestic wastewater into some natural wetlands, can help to remove nutrients.
- p. 27
 - 2.2.5 Restore oyster habitat
 - Comprehensive plan goals and objectives: See previous comments about this.
 - Background
 - 1st paragraph
 - 2nd sentence: OK, maybe so, but at least until recently, that was not the case for Galveston Bay, which had what is probably the best assessment of oyster reef status and trends completed in the mid 1990s (I was the GBNEP EPA PM; I proposed this work, encouraged its adoption, helped define project scope, and reviewed results). I suspect much more careful work is needed to confirm exactly what has happened to oyster reefs in each estuary. The Beck et al. reference is a global assessment and provides little specific info on the Gulf. It doesn't even credit the early and excellent work done in Galveston Bay to map the oyster reefs. In summary, I think you need a much more authoritative basis for the kinds of statements you are making regarding the status of oysters in the Gulf. I don't have a problem with you supporting oyster restoration without actually knowing what the status and trends are/have been, but it would be better if you actually knew that, and you certainly shouldn't be saying its true if you don't actually have evidence and can defend the assertion. Its possible the evidence exists, but has not been compiled and published. However nothing exists like what was done in Galveston Bay in the mid 1990s.
 - Last sentence: Can you provide support for this assertion? The reference provided does not simply says it is so. While I don't doubt the oil spill impacted some oyster reefs, I have no idea how many, how many acres, where, how impacted they were, etc. Your arguments would mean a lot more if you provided some evidence to support them.
- p. 28
 - 2nd paragraph

- 1st sentence: Water quality and sedimentation regime, are not “hydrologic conditions”.
- 2nd sentence: What declines following the DWH oil spill, specifically? Provide actual evidence.

◦ p. 30

- 2.3 Geographic Areas

- 2.3.1 Texas

- Comprehensive plan goals and objectives: See previous comments on this.

- Background

- 1st paragraph

- 2nd sentence: Is there another classification that would reflect the actual differences on the Texas coast as one travels south? This classification is so general that it ignores the actual, considerable variation.
 - 4th sentence: “Texas bay and estuary...”: For some reason, people in Texas like to use this terminology, but it is redundant. All the coastal water bodies in Texas landward of the barrier islands/barrier peninsulas, are estuaries, with the possible exception of the Laguna Madre, which is a hypersaline lagoon, and may not technically be an estuary, depending on the particular definition of “estuary” one uses.
 - 5th sentence: “saline flats”: I’m not sure what habitat this is intended to refer to, but most likely, it is being used to refer to what is usually known as “wind tidal flats”. Either term may be technically correct, but I recommend consulting a south Texas expert on coastal “flats” for an opinion on this.

◦ p. 31

- 1st complete sentence

- Increasing human populations are not the only, or maybe not the most important stressor on the Texas coast- rapidly increasing industrial development- unrelated to population increases- is stressing the coast via loss of wetlands and seagrasses, and mobilization of contaminated sediment via dredging.
 - Declining water quality, in some locations.

- 3rd complete sentence: “abandoned oil wells, pipelines and other manmade structures”: Again, I don’t know how significant these are as “stressors”. What evidence is there? You can’t just say it is so, without some justification. Most other “stressors”, including wetland loss, seagrass loss, barrier island degradation, water quality declines- are pretty well documented, at least in some locations. I know these have been a priority of the Texas Railroad Commission, and possibly the General Land Office, for a long time, but I know of no scientific assessment of their importance. That said, it is well documented that oil and gas canals in coastal Louisiana are important stressors, and backfilling them would be a great thing to do for restoration.

- 1st complete paragraph

- Why hasn’t there been any emphasis on restoring seagrasses in Texas?
 - 2nd sentence
 - How do “habitat management” and “stewardship” differ? What is “stewardship”?
 - “Plugging abandoned oil and gas wells”: See my previous comments about this.

- FPL 3 potential priority approaches and techniques

- Texas has not demonstrated that oyster reefs have been degraded, and if so, how and where. The information may exist, but it certainly hasn't been presented. Surveys, such as those completed for Galveston Bay in the mid 1990s, need to be done for Galveston Bay again, Matagorda Bay, Copano/Aransas Bays.
- p. 32
 - 2nd complete sentence: I think it is very important to prioritize these efforts. For example, I believe that coastal prairie preservation is a lower coastal priority, than are protection and restoration of barrier island/barrier peninsulas, restoration of salt, brackish, and freshwater tidal wetlands, restoration of seagrasses, likely (with scientific documentation of status/trends) restoration of oyster reefs, and protection/restoration of coastal riparian forests that are actually threatened by development, road projects, or logging. Preservation of coastal prairie pothole wetlands should be a higher priority than preservation or restoration of upland coastal prairie habitat. I urge caution in assigning undue priority to preservation of intertidal coastal marshes, which are normally well-protected by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Preserving these habitats may sacrifice funds that would be better use for restoration, or preservation of high value coastal habitats that may not be protected by regulation.
 - Create, restore, and enhance coastal wetlands, islands, shorelines, and headlands
 - I strongly recommend adding the following techniques for barrier islands/barrier peninsulas/barrier shorelines: sand fencing, vegetative plantings. These techniques have clearly been demonstrated in Louisiana to be critical techniques in any barrier shoreline protection/restoration effort.
 - Protect and conserve coastal, estuarine, and riparian habitats
 - Decommission unused, orphaned energy facilities: See my previous comments about this.
 - Restore hydrology and natural processes
 - Restore natural salinity regimes: This should not include “structural marsh management”, which has a number of very serious “side-effects”.
 - Reduce excess nutrients and other pollutants to watersheds
 - Forest management: I question whether “forest management” is going to affect nutrient loads, or other pollutant loads, to coastal waters throughout much of the Gulf. It may help to reduce total suspended solids loads to some parts of the Florida, Alabama, and Mississippi coast, and to Lake Pontchartrain in Louisiana. However, I do not think it will provide significant benefits to the rest of Louisiana, or the upper Texas coast. There is no doubt that this will provide no benefit at all to most of the Texas coast.
- p. 34
 - Fig. 2.3.1
 - Decommission unused, orphaned energy facilities: See my previous comments on this.
 - “Forest management” will provide very little, if any benefit to Texas coastal waters.
 - Status and trends of Texas oyster reefs need to be documented. Scientific documentation is required that supports that “enhance spawning and reserves” is needed in Texas.
- p. 35
 - 2.3.2 Chenier Plain, Texas-Louisiana
 - Primary Objectives: See my previous comments about these.
 - Background

- 2nd paragraph
 - 1st sentence: Add Rollover Pass on Bolivar Peninsula. This artificial pass has caused tremendous damage to Bolivar Peninsular barrier peninsula habitats, and has significantly changed the salinity regime and circulation of East Bay. It should be closed, in spite of strong opposition from recreational fishermen.
- Last paragraph
 - last incomplete sentence: Under no circumstance should RESTORE funds be used to support management, which fundamentally changes wetland structure and functions. Exchanges of organisms, water, sediment, nutrients, and organic matter, with the adjacent wetlands and water bodies, are significantly reduced. Marsh flooding duration and depth are significantly changed, leading to loss of marsh.

◦ p. 36

- 1st complete sentence: Some so called “hydrologic restoration” projects funded by CWPPRA, have actually been “marsh management” projects. RESTORE must not fund marsh management projects due to their negative ecological effects.
- 5th complete sentence: RESTORE must not fund:
 - marsh management (eg impoundment, semi-impoundment)
 - marsh creation using contaminated dredged material
 - legally required compensatory mitigation by private companies who “donate” dredged material
- 7th complete sentence: RESTORE must not fund, nor otherwise support in any way, efforts by USFWS and others to “restore” and “protect” coastal wetlands by creating a large, artificial clay “berm” behind the dune line, by digging large deep holes behind the dune line. This has been done in the recent past and has caused considerable environmental damage. It is not a “technique” that is worth supporting. What is worth supporting is efforts to restore the Gulf shoreline on the upper Texas coast by massive input of sand of the appropriate grain size, to restore the beach profile, dunes, and supratidal habitat. This should be combined with use of sand fencing and vegetative plantings. However, RESTORE funds should not be used to help justify efforts by other organizations to dig these large holes landward of the beach and create artificial clay “berms”, in addition to RESTORE funds not actually being used to dig the holes.
- 1st complete paragraph
 - 1st complete sentence: There are a number of very important stressors missing from this list: Increased connectivity between wetlands, estuaries, and the Gulf of Mexico (e.g. increased tidal prism, saltwater intrusion due to huge increases in the cross sections of tidal passes at Sabine Pass and Calcasieu Pass; Rollover Pass (admittedly very different problem), similar issues on a smaller scale within the marsh/estuary system (e.g. cuts in Chenier ridges, canals); impoundment (i.e. marsh management); other misguided protection/restoration efforts (i.e. giant holes landward of beach in Texas portion of Chenier Plain).
 - 1st complete sentence: Hurricanes are only a problem to the extent that they may have increased in frequency or strength, due to human impacts (e.g. climate change). Natural hurricane regimes are natural. Coastal ecosystems evolved with them. It is highly likely that Gulf coastal ecosystems are dependent on continued effects of a natural hurricane regime, although human modification of the coastal ecosystem (e.g. deep draft navigation channels) has changed the equation.
 - 1st complete sentence: “Development” is really only a problem here due to rapid redevelopment of the Bolivar Peninsula following massive hurricane destruction, and the large impacts to wetlands caused by new LNG export facilities.
- Last paragraph;

- 2nd sentence: “Restore hydrologic patterns within marsh system”: Do not fund impoundment or semi-impoundment of wetlands (e.g. marsh management).
 - “...restore a sustainable Gulf shoreline ridge...”: First, nobody has documented that the Gulf shoreline on the upper Texas coast had a “ridge”. Do not fund projects to restore a ridge that has not been demonstrated to have ever existed.
 - Further, if it is documented that a ridge existed, do not fund efforts to “restore” it by digging giant holes in supratidal habitat, or wetland habitats. USFWS did this and created a new problem. That particular approach should never be supported again.
- P. 37
 - 1st incomplete sentence: I am aware of no known water quality problems in the Chenier Plain related to nutrients, other than possible contributions to the nearshore Gulf and the large hypoxic zone that occurs there some years. However, it is not clear that local nutrient sources in the Chenier Plain actually contribute to the Gulf hypoxic zone.
 - In addition, I seriously doubt that forests contribute significant nutrient loads to any water body in the Chenier Plain. Do not fund any efforts to address this unless scientific documentaton that it is a real problem are provided.
 - Create, restore and enhance coastal wetlands, islands, shorelines, and headlands
 - Add the following techniques: sand fencing, vegetative plantings
 - Restore hydrology and natural processes
 - Restore natural salinity regimes: Do not fund wetland impoundment or semi impoundment (e.g. marsh management).
 - Reduce excess nutrients and other pollutants to watersheds
 - I am aware of no known water quality problems in the Chenier Plain related to nutrients, other than possible contributions to the nearshore Gulf and the large hypoxic zone that occurs there some years. However, it is not clear that local nutrient sources in the Chenier Plain actually contribute to the Gulf hypoxic zone.
 - In addition, I seriously doubt that forests contribute significant nutrient loads to any water body in the Chenier Plain. Do not fund any efforts to address this unless scientific documentaton that it is a real problem are provided.
- P. 38; Fig. 2.3.2: See comments above.
- p. 39
 - 2.3.3 Pontchartrain Basin, Louisiana-Mississippi
 - Primary objectives: See previous comments about problems with objectives.
 - Background
 - 2nd paragraph: This makes it sound as if the goal relative to connectivity with the Mississippi River, is some kind of human idealized, highly human managed connectivity regime. I recommend the goal be to restore a natural regime of hydrologic connectivity between the basin and the river. This may not be achievable, but it is an appropriate target.
- p. 40
 - 1st complete paragraph

- 1st sentence: This statement is misleading. It implies that RESTORE has funded ALL engineering and design for this project. As a point of fact, CWPPRA funded engineering and design of this project FOR YEARS. The State of Louisiana funded them after CWPPRA finally insisted that the project be moved to another funding source. Importantly, at a certain point in the history of the CWPPRA program, if a project was not a shoreline protection, marsh creation, or “hydrologic restoration project, they wouldn’t fund it. They particularly began opposing funding for freshwater or sediment diversion projects. No scientific basis for this policy change was ever provided by CWPPRA, nor was the policy change acknowledged by CWPPRA.
- 6th sentence: While this effort was excellent, and did advance project operations planning considerably, it is disingenuous to imply that significant work on some of these aspects had not been done previously. In addition, project managers during CWPPRA funding phase deserve credit for identifying the need for something like this effort.
 - Create, restore and enhance coastal wetlands, islands, shorelines, and headlands
 - Potential techniques
 - Wetlands can be created, restored, and enhanced in some locations using Mississippi River reintroduction
 - Hard shoreline protection techniques should not be used on barrier islands, shorelines, or headlands, on the Gulf shoreline.
 - Reduce excess nutrients and other pollutants to watersheds
 - Agriculture and forest management: I do not believe the scientific support exists for making these the priorities for nutrient reduction. More likely, urban stormwater and domestic wastewater are more important sources of nutrients in this area. Do not fund efforts to reduce nutrient loads from agriculture or forests, unless scientific documentation is produced showing they are the highest priority nutrient source in the basin.
 - Restore oyster habitat
 - Living Shorelines: This is not the only option for restoring oyster habitat in the Lake Pontchartrain Basin. Larger scale reef restoration options are probably available over a very large area.
- p. 42; Fig. 2.3.3: See comments above.
- p. 43
 - 2.3.4 Mississippi Sound Mississippi
 - Primary objectives: See previous comments regarding problems with objectives.
 - Background
 - 1st paragraph
 - last sentence: I question whether this reference actually documents this local decline. If not, I recommend that scientific efforts document the status and trends of these reefs, prior to additional RESTORE investments in restoration.
- p. 47
 - 2.3.5 Mobile Bay and Mobile-Tensaw Delta, Alabama
 - Primary Objectives: See previous comments regarding problems with objectives.
 - Background

- last paragraph
 - 4th-6th sentences: If not already completed, I recommend scientific studies be completed to document the status and trends of oyster reefs here, prior to making additional investments in oyster restoration.
- p. 49• Restore oyster habitat :If not already completed, I recommend scientific studies be completed to document the status and trends of oyster reefs here, prior to making additional investments in oyster restoration.
- p. 50; Fig. 2.3.5: See comments above.
- p. 51;
 - 2.3.6 Perdido River and Bay, Alabama-Florida
 - Primary objectives: See previous comments regarding problems with objectives.
- p. 52
 - FPL 3 Potential priority approaches and techniques
 - 1st paragraph
 - 5th sentence: If not already completed, I recommend scientific studies be completed to document the status and trends of oyster reefs here, prior to making additional investments in oyster restoration.
- p. 53
 - Restore oyster habitat: If not already completed, I recommend scientific studies be completed to document the status and trends of oyster reefs here, prior to making additional investments in oyster restoration.
- p. 54
 - Fig. 2.3.6: See above comments.
- p.55
 - 2.3.7 Florida
 - Primary objectives: See previous comments regarding problems with objectives.
 - Background
 - 2nd paragraph: While Florida has had an active environmental protection and restoration effort for some time, and has had some success with it, this glowing review seems to me to be hyperbole. In spite of the effort, the rapid population growth and development, combined with a problematic agricultural industry (e.g. south Florida's sugar industry), and historic “plumbing” problems in south Florida, have conspired to degrade south Florida's ecosystem in particular. The chronic harmful algal blooms indicate that the state's nutrient criteria, even if they are the best in the nation, are inadequate to protect water quality. Stop bragging. In spite of the effort, clearly water quality is declining at least in south Florida.
- p. 56
 - 1st complete sentence: Again, I recommend that scientific studies document the status and trends of oyster reefs here prior to additional investments in restoration, unless the studies already exist. If they do, say so, describe the findings generally, and provide a citation.

- FPL 3 potential priority approaches and techniques
 - 2nd sentence: Why are you proposing to fund work in longleaf pine ecosystems? Will that work improve coastal water quality? Is this a high priority, cost effective approach to doing so? In my opinion, RESTORE funds should not be used to address upland/inland environmental needs/wants, that have little or nothing to do with the actual coastal ecosystem. Since I am not extremely familiar with the Florida coastal ecosystems, I acknowledge that it is possible that there may be some actual coastal environmental benefit of working on longleaf pine ecosystems. However, I believe it is reasonable to request that RESTORE and its partners demonstrate that work on longleaf pine ecosystems benefits actual coastal ecosystems, and does so to an extent that makes it a priority.
- Create, restore and enhance coastal wetlands, islands, shorelines, and headlands
 - Protect natural shorelines: Do not fund hard shoreline protection on actual Gulf shorelines.
 - Restore oyster habitat: For any project that is not a living shoreline, require documentation that there has actually been habitat degradation prior to funding oyster habitat restoration. There seems to be a lot of speculation that oyster habitat is degraded, and it may be, but there is little actual scientific documentation of such degradation. Additional funds should not be spent on oyster habitat restoration until there is scientific documentation that degradation has occurred.
- p. 58
 - Fig. 2.3.7: See previous comments
- p. 59
 - 2.3.8 Gulfwide
 - Primary objectives: See previous comments about problems with objectives.
 - Background
 - last paragraph, p. 60, 1st incomplete paragraph: It seems very clear to me, that the RESTORE monitoring effort should invest in Gulfwide scientific efforts to document the current status and historic trends in significant oyster habitat, prior to investing additional funds in restoring these habitats. Relatively little of this work has been done, as far as I know. The Galveston Bay National Estuary Program funded Dr. Eric Powell in the early-mid 1990s to complete what is probably the best effort to quantify the status and trends of oyster habitat anywhere in the Gulf. See the reports that resulted. Consult with Dr. Powell regarding how to design and implement such a large scale oyster monitoring system.