

Tuesday, March 12, 2013
9:27 AM

1 future, please consider attending one
2 of these monthly meetings. The meeting
3 dates for the next two months are
4 listed on the screen, and additional
5 meeting dates can be found online on
6 our website.

7 I would now like to introduce Ms.
8 Teresa Christopher, Senior Advisor for
9 Gulf Restoration, U.S. Department of
10 Commerce. Ms. Christopher will be
11 giving the third and final presentation
12 of the night on behalf of the Gulf
13 Coast Ecosystem and Restoration
14 Council.

15 (PRESENTATION NO. 3)

16 MS. CHRISTOPHER:

17 Thanks, Jenny. Thank you for
18 having me here tonight. As Jenny said,
19 I'm Teresa Christopher. I'm from the
20 Department of Commerce. I would like
21 my fellow council members to come up as
22 well so you can see them because the
23 Council is not with the Department of
24 Commerce.

25 A quick introduction here. Besides

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1 myself, who you have sitting here is
2 Linda Walker, who is Senior Advisor for
3 Gulf Restoration at the Department of
4 Interior; Ben Scaggs, who's the
5 Director of the EPA Gulf of Mexico
6 Program; Chip Klein, who is the
7 Director of Coastal Activities in the
8 Office of the Governor here in
9 Louisiana. And if I messed up, I'm
10 sorry, Chip. And at the end there, you
11 have Alton James, who's the Natural
12 Resources Specialist for the U.S.
13 Department of Agriculture.

14 So as you can see, the Council
15 really is made up of a broad group of
16 agencies and states. And I'll talk a
17 little bit more about that but wanted
18 to make sure you got to see everyone.

19 Also, for those of you standing in
20 the back, I know you've been standing
21 for a while. There are seats up here
22 if anybody wants a seat, please feel
23 free to come sit down.

24 So I am going to keep my remarks
25 brief. We wanted to make sure that we

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1 could give a baseline presentation of
2 what the Restore Council has been doing
3 and just some basic information about
4 the Restore Act.

5 But we're really here to hear from
6 you tonight. We are in the early
7 stages of planning. But the Council
8 very much recognizes this unique and
9 unprecedented opportunity to coordinate
10 a Gulf region wide restoration effort.

11 With that said, I understand that
12 some of you have questions on the
13 treasury regulations. While we're not
14 going to cover that topic tonight,
15 there will be a formal public comment
16 period once those regulations come out.

17 So with that said, I'm going to
18 touch a little bit on the Restore Act
19 itself, a little bit on who the
20 Restoration Council is, a little bit on
21 allocation of funds of the Act, and
22 then talk a little bit about the
23 timeline to develop a comprehensive
24 plan.

25 With that said, as many of you are

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1 aware, the Restore Act was passed this
2 past summer. The Council had it's
3 first meeting in December, in Mobile,
4 Alabama. And we are really in the
5 early stages of planning effort.

6 The Restore Act dedicates 80
7 percent of the civil and administrative
8 penalties from the Clean Water Act to a
9 Gulf Restoration Trust Fund. With that
10 said, there's a lot of uncertainty
11 around the timing and total amount of
12 those funds.

13 As many of you are aware, the
14 settlement with Transocean was approved
15 yesterday. So we do know that we'll
16 get 80 percent of those funds will come
17 into the Gulf Restoration Trust Fund.
18 The first amount of those funds we
19 should be seeing now that the
20 settlement has been approved at the end
21 of April. However, there is still a lot
22 of uncertainty around the total amount
23 and timing of funds.

24 With that said, the U.S. continues
25 to seek civil penalties from BP and

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1 Anadarko and will continue to do so.

2 A little bit about the Council. So
3 as you can see, we have several
4 representatives here today. But the
5 Council actually includes 11 members:
6 six federal agencies, and five Gulf
7 governors.

8 With that said, in October, the
9 Department of Commerce was selected as
10 the Chair. But while the Council is
11 chaired by a federal agency, the states
12 are very important to the decision
13 making process. To have the plan
14 approved and the state plan is
15 approved, the Council has a voting
16 requirement of the majority of the
17 state votes and the Federal Chair.

18 With that said, the Council is
19 principally responsible for a few
20 things: for developing a comprehensive
21 plan, for preparing an integrated
22 financial plan and coordinated budget
23 requests, for submitting an annual
24 report to Congress, and adapting the
25 plan every five years.

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1 With that said, while we are not
2 required to do so, we feel it's a
3 critically important to coordinate with
4 all the other large restoration
5 efforts. So we are working on that.
6 So the money that's going to National
7 Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the money
8 that's going to NRDA, we are working to
9 coordinate.

10 So how are the funds divided?
11 Let's go to the next slide. This might
12 be a little easier to see. Thirty-five
13 percent of the funds will be equally
14 divided among the states for
15 restoration, economic development, and
16 tourism promotion; 30 percent will be
17 managed by the Council for ecosystem
18 restoration under a comprehensive plan;
19 30 percent will be divided among the
20 states according to the formula set out
21 in the Restore Act for state
22 expenditures plans.

23 So while the plans will be
24 developed for states in that third
25 bucket of money, the Council still

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1 needs to approve the state expenditure
2 plan. The state expenditure plans also
3 still needs to be consistent with this
4 comprehensive plan. The remaining 5
5 percent is split in half: 2.5 percent
6 goes to science, observation, and
7 monitoring program run by NOAA and Fish
8 and Wildlife Service, and 2.5 percent
9 goes to the State Centers of
10 Excellence.

11 With that said, I believe Russ
12 Beard is in the room. I heard he was
13 here. There he is there. And we have
14 Linda Walker up here. If you have
15 specific questions on that 2.5 percent
16 that is for the science, observation,
17 and monitoring program, those are the
18 folks you want to talk to after this.

19 So while we don't know how much
20 money or the timing of that money is
21 going to come, we have important
22 deadlines to meet, and the Council is
23 moving forward.

24 So at the end of January, the
25 Council put out the Path Forward to

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1 Restoring the Gulf. This is the
2 initial step in developing a more
3 detailed comprehensive plan. It builds
4 on all of the work and all of the
5 previous comments that have been done
6 on previous planning efforts including
7 the task force, and it reflects the
8 Council's deliberations. Although the
9 path forward doesn't identify specific
10 projects and programs that potentially
11 will be in the initial comprehensive
12 plan, what it does include, and if you
13 haven't seen it, you can go to
14 restorethegulf.gov and get a copy. I
15 think we may also have copies in the
16 back here. It incorporates the
17 findings and recommendations of the
18 Gulf Task Force. It describes how the
19 Council builds on this work. It
20 describes the Council's path to
21 collaboratively developing an initial
22 comprehensive plan. And it identifies
23 five goals. These five goals will be
24 used to provide an overarching
25 framework for the comprehensive plan.

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1 .
2 So on the screen behind me we have
3 the five goals. What this initial
4 comprehensive plan really aims to do is
5 provide an integrated approach to Gulf
6 restoration. It does this by setting
7 out high-level guidance focused on
8 restoration of natural resources and
9 the jobs, communities, and economies
10 those resources will support.

11 To provide this guidance, we have
12 these five goals. The first four were
13 goals identified by the task force
14 strategy. The Council has decided to
15 adopt those four goals, as well as add
16 a fifth goal. The fifth goal is to
17 restore and revitalize the Gulf
18 economy. We've added this fifth goal
19 specifically to allow consistency
20 between the state expenditure plans and
21 the state allocation. So the first
22 bucket and the third bucket,
23 essentially. And I say that because
24 there are different criterial under
25 each of these pots of money, as you

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1 saw, the allocation of funds is
2 different. However, there are
3 requirements to be consistent. With
4 these five goals, its really allows us
5 to provide this overarching framework.

6 I flash this slide up here. It's a
7 little bit hard to read. But I flash
8 it up because the plan will include
9 these four things. We're required to
10 include these four things under the
11 Act. Provisions necessary to
12 incorporate the task force strategy,
13 list of projects and programs
14 authorized but not yet funded, three-
15 year project and program list based on
16 criterial included in the Restore Act,
17 and a description of how the funds will
18 be allocated over the next ten years.

19 With that said, while these are
20 what we have to include, we are going
21 to make sure that this plan is
22 adaptable and based on the best
23 available science. We also are
24 looking to identify investments in
25 specific actions, projects, and

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1 programs that can be carried out in the
2 near term to help ensure on the ground
3 results and help restore the overall
4 health of the Gulf.

5 So how are we going to get there?
6 Right now, in this February/March time
7 frame, we are doing these listening
8 sessions across the Gulf. We really
9 want to hear from you. We want to get
10 your input into this early stage of
11 development of the plan. We feel very
12 strongly that it's important to get the
13 best ideas from the people who work and
14 live in the Gulf. I know that you've
15 provided ideas in the past, and we are
16 building on those ideas. But what we
17 want to make sure that this plan is
18 developed with input early and often
19 and meaningful input.

20 We intend to release a draft plan
21 in the spring. In that draft plan, we
22 will have a formal public comment
23 period. We will also come back down
24 and talk to all of you again with
25 intent of releasing a final plan in

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1 July. We are trying to really push to
2 hit these dates.

3 With that said, this is a very
4 aggressive timeline. It's a timeline
5 that's laid out. The Act requires us
6 to get the plan out by July 6. And we
7 need to do so in order to get the money
8 out the door and get the money on the
9 ground. So we are really pushing to
10 hit these deadlines.

11 I hope that many of you will give
12 comments tonight. If you don't, there
13 are other opportunities. There will be
14 other opportunities. There is also
15 opportunities through the website and
16 through restorecouncil@doc.gov. Please
17 email them to us. You can also mail
18 them to us if you prefer that method.
19 But we really do want to hear your
20 thoughts.

21 So while we welcome thoughts on
22 anything, there are a few specific
23 questions we would like to hear your
24 thoughts on. And that is: What are the
25 long-term outcomes you would like to

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1 see from the work of the Council, what
2 are the types of projects the Council
3 should be considering, and the best
4 ways the Council can engage the public
5 throughout this process.

6 Simply put, we need your ideas.
7 The Council plans to develop this plan
8 in an aggressive timeline. Again, I
9 say that. We want to base them on a
10 best ideas. We want those ideas to
11 come from the people who live and work
12 in the region.

13 So with that said, I'm going to
14 conclude because we really want to hear
15 from you. And if you don't come up to
16 the mic, we will be here afterwards, if
17 you feel more comfortable coming up to
18 us on the side. We'd be happy to do
19 that. It won't be part of the formal
20 record, but we're happy to answer
21 questions as well.

22 So these are the people, the folks
23 sitting up here with me. With that
24 said, I will turn it back to Jenny.

25 (PUBLIC COMMENTS ON PRESENTATION NO. 3)

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1 MS. KURZ:

2 At this time, we'll begin the third
3 and final comment period of the evening
4 on the progress of the Gulf Coast
5 Ecosystem Restoration Council.

6 As a reminder, the panel is here to
7 receive your comments tonight on long-
8 term outcomes of the council's work,
9 type of projects the council should
10 consider, and ways the council can
11 continue to engage the public in the
12 future.

13 A couple of reminders. Please step
14 close to the microphone when I call
15 your name. Please restate your name
16 and affiliation and please try to limit
17 your comments to three minutes. We
18 have about 20 comment cards, and I'm
19 anticipating a few extra. If you did
20 not fill out a card and you anticipate
21 wanting to make a comment during this
22 portion of the meeting, if you would
23 please raise your hand, I'll have
24 someone bring a card to your seat.

25 At this time we'll get started.

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1 Our first commentor is Earl Pratz.

2 MR. EARL PRATZ:

3 My name is Earl Pratz. I'm from
4 Metairie. I have a comment I'd like to
5 make or a question I'd like to pose.
6 The task force science coordination
7 team I think is going to be really
8 important with regards to science-based
9 adaptive management, which is one of
10 the things that you're emphasizing in
11 this plan.

12 I'd like you to consider using
13 independent reviewers for these
14 science-based adaptive management
15 changes. I don't feel that people that
16 are intimately involved with the
17 program are appropriate for reviewing
18 these changes as they occur. And I
19 think you need to have an independent
20 board to review them. That's the one
21 point I have.

22 I have another point. I'm going to
23 be parochial. I feel that there was
24 major impacts on the coastline of
25 Mississippi, Louisiana, and some

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1 Florida areas. And we see that the
2 distribution of funds are equal. Of
3 course, that's fair and equitable as we
4 might think, but the impacts on these
5 shorelines weren't equal and
6 proportional. They were highly focused
7 on Louisiana, highly focused in
8 Mississippi, and probably in Florida
9 and Alabama. And yet, we're including
10 Texas and a good portion and more money
11 towards Florida. Again, like I stated,
12 I'm being parochial here. We need to
13 rethink how that money is distributed.
14 I realize there's political impacts
15 that went into that design. But I feel
16 that was the wrong way to go.

17 MS. KURZ:

18 Elizabeth Lynn.

19 MS. ELIZABETH COOK:

20 Elizabeth Cook. I'm native from
21 Louisiana. Lived here all my life. I
22 think one of the first things you're
23 going to have to focus on is restoring
24 trust in the federal government if we
25 want to talk about restoration because

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1 there's an awful lot of folks you're
2 not in touch with and aren't here
3 tonight. For example, I know a lot of
4 folks on the coast that have been
5 coming to the meetings. I don't see a
6 lot of fishermen here. There aren't
7 any fishermen on your panel. There
8 aren't any residents of the coast.
9 Well, you're from the coast on the
10 panel, other than you, maybe the others
11 are. You're from Louisiana, right?
12 Okay.

13 Folks who live on the coast and
14 make their living off the water are not
15 involved deeply into your process. So
16 restoring trust is a huge issue. Ban
17 the COREXIT. Let's get rid of the
18 dispersant. We've got to find another
19 way to get the oil out of the water.
20 When it gets in the water, you know,
21 when the oil was coming up from that
22 duct, it was dispersing itself. And
23 the study determined that recently. If
24 you had waited to see what the oil was
25 going to do, you might if figured that

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1 out before using the toxic dispersants
2 on it.

3 You talk about restoring water
4 quality. I find that very interesting
5 because the beaches are open, people
6 are fishing, boating, swimming in this
7 water whose quality you want to
8 restore. So is there something you
9 know that we don't know about the
10 quality of the water? Because I think
11 we should know that. We have a right
12 to know that.

13 And there is data that is not being
14 released that the feds have. For
15 example, there's an ongoing unusual
16 mortality event concerning dolphins and
17 whales. And it has not abated.
18 There's dolphins ill in Barataria Bay
19 that are being studied.

20 Where is the data? The people have
21 a right to know what kind of data
22 you're collecting and what are the
23 results. Because if there's something
24 we should be concerned about about this
25 water quality, we have a right to know.

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1 People became ill from exposure to the
2 COREXIT. What are we being exposed to
3 now currently? We have a right to know
4 that. And I would suspect there would
5 be a lot of people upset when that data
6 is released.

7 I think it's time to kick BP out of
8 the area. No one trusts them. They
9 have engaged in illegal acts on the
10 Gulf Coast in terms of applying the
11 dispersant illegally. And it's
12 ongoing. I talk to fishermen who come
13 across ripens of COREXIT in the water
14 to this day. We don't trust BP. The
15 government should be doing that job.
16 They can be held accountable. We can't
17 hold BP accountable. Thank you.

18 MS. KURZ:

19 Les Evenchick.

20 MR. LES EVENCHICK:

21 As I said earlier, I'm a resident
22 of the French Quarter, a 41-year
23 resident of the Gulf Coast from Texas
24 before I came to New Orleans, and I
25 also lived on the North Florida coast.

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1 So I lived a bunch of areas that's been
2 impacted. Quick thing.

3 Texas should be totally discarded.
4 The inshore currents did bring
5 dispersed oil and some other dispersed
6 oil as far as Galveston Bay. That's
7 well documented, and Texans know that,
8 and we shouldn't rule that out.
9 There's also been mass tests of
10 dolphins off the Texas coast and mass
11 fish kills which everyone wants to make
12 believe had nothing to do with the BP
13 disaster.

14 A general point. I don't like the
15 word "spill." It was a massive volcano
16 flood disaster and was a joint federal
17 government BP disaster because the
18 federal government didn't do adequate
19 inspections before the blowout. They
20 underestimated the flow rates and want
21 to keep secret almost the thousand
22 dolphins that have been in this unusual
23 mortality event that Elizabeth
24 mentioned.

25 The Department of Commerce, who

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1 NOAA works, for should demand that all
2 information on anything to do with
3 dolphins, sea turtles, or any
4 information they have on sea lions be
5 released. It's an arbitrary decision
6 to keep that information secret
7 supposedly because of the (inaudible).
8 (Inaudible) requirements to keep it
9 secret is an optional choice. And by
10 keeping it secret, we're siding with BP
11 because who knows how much fines BP
12 would be responsible for the deaths of
13 all the sea lions if it turns out that
14 the causes of deaths are the oil and
15 COREXIT. And they most certainly are
16 because many of my friends have seen
17 their dolphins when they were beached
18 and stranded covered in oil.

19 And Suzanne Smith, who works at the
20 Audubon Institute, who is the Louisiana
21 person, said that too many turtles that
22 they recovered, every single one of
23 them was covered in oil. But that's
24 totally ignored, and NOAA shoves it
25 under the table and threatens

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1 scientists affiliated with it if they
2 break silence about it. Unless they do
3 a lot of, supposedly a way to release
4 information, but I'm not aware of any
5 them giving released information at
6 all.

7 MS. KURZ:

8 Matthew Chatfield. Matthew
9 Chatfield. Jordan Mocha.

10 MR. JORDAN MOCHA:

11 Hi. My name is Jordan Mocha. I'm
12 with the Sierra Club based here in New
13 Orleans, and I'm the Gulf States
14 Representative. On behalf of the
15 Sierra Club and our 50,000 members
16 Gulf-wide, I want to appreciate the
17 council for organizing these meetings
18 across the Gulf Coast.

19 As we move forward with this
20 process of developing the initial draft
21 plan, I ask that you ensure that
22 ecosystem restoration is prioritized
23 when determining project selection.
24 Many of us tonight are wearing stickers
25 that say "Restoring our environment

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1 restores our economy." And this should
2 be a primary focus of the Council's
3 plan.

4 In addition, project selection
5 should be comprehensive across all five
6 Gulf states. The Gulf ecosystem is
7 intertwined and not slices up state by
8 state. And as the Council formulates
9 their criteria, I hope that you look at
10 these projects holistically when
11 considering restoration. While it's
12 helpful for us to let the Council know
13 what direction we believe this process
14 should move in, it's equally important
15 for us to know what you're thinking as
16 you're taking comments and develop
17 criteria for project selection.

18 A citizen advisory committee made
19 up of people who live and work on the
20 Gulf Coast would be an excellent way
21 for the public to have insight and have
22 a voice in how criteria is developed as
23 well as help ensure that science-based
24 project selection is a fundamental
25 aspect of the comprehensive plan.

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1 In closing, while we're happy that
2 these meetings are taking place
3 coastwide, more notice of scheduled
4 meetings will be appreciated. Thank
5 y'all so much.

6 MS. KURZ:

7 Rebecca Livaudais.

8 MS. REBECCA LIVAUDAIS:

9 Good evening. My name is Becky
10 Livaudais. I'm with the St. Bernard
11 Wetlands Foundation. I'm also a
12 supervisor with Crescent Soil and Water
13 Conservation District, which comprises
14 five coastal parishes.

15 I'm here actually as a coastal
16 landowners and an advocate for
17 restoration. I urge you, the Council,
18 to make the ecosystem restoration its
19 top priority in the plan for the Gulf.
20 Not only do restoration and healthy
21 wetlands support our economy, but
22 people, homes, and property need the
23 protection of healthy wetlands as well.

24 The Restore Act is our chance to
25 change the course of Coastal Louisiana

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1 land loss.

2 And I think Sean Turner has left,
3 but I really was very pleased that he
4 got up here and spoke about his
5 thoughts because you know it's really
6 not about you or me or anyone in this
7 room, it's about his generation and his
8 words "Don't mess this up."

9 MS. KURZ:

10 Matilda Tennessee.

11 MS. MATILDA TENNESSEE:

12 Good evening, everyone. My name is
13 Matilda Tennessee, and I represent BFA
14 Environmental Consulting Firm, a
15 workforce job training program that
16 trains young adults for environmental
17 and a wide industry. As someone has
18 already said, restoration projects
19 create a demand for work for a wide
20 variety of companies in engineering,
21 construction, transportation, and
22 manufacturing sectors. This is a
23 perfect time to find a way to restore
24 our coast in an innovative way, to
25 increase urban participation and

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1 competency about wetlands and create
2 new youthful and diverse environmental
3 leaders. And one way we can
4 successfully achieve this goal is by
5 including a clause and contract or
6 awarding extra points for those
7 proposals that are committed to using
8 workforce development programs from our
9 regions, especially when it pertains to
10 our most vulnerable population, our
11 young adults.

12 I ask, as you deliberate on the
13 usage of these funds, that you consider
14 using contractors who are committed or
15 will commit a partnership with local
16 DBE's and workforce development
17 programs that target our young adults.
18 Thank you very much.

19 MS. KURZ:

20 David Muth.

21 MR. DAVID MUTH:

22 Good evening. My name is David
23 Muth. I'm a resident of New Orleans.
24 I'm the Director for Mississippi River
25 Delta Restoration for the National

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1 Wildlife Federation. I appreciate the
2 opportunity to speak to representatives
3 of the Council tonight.

4 In looking at the three ideas that
5 you want to hear about, I'll make my
6 remarks very brief. The long-term
7 outcome that we all need to see if for
8 the work of the Council in coordination
9 with the other fund sources that are
10 coming that changes the trajectory of
11 ecosystem condition for the Gulf of
12 Mexico from a downward trajectory to
13 within any luck an upward trajectory.
14 And there's been a great deal of
15 planning and thought in many of the
16 systems that feed into the Gulf about
17 how to make that possible.

18 In terms of the total impact from
19 the Gulf, the most important system is
20 the Mississippi River's Delta. And in
21 that case, as you heard earlier, the
22 State of Louisiana has developed a
23 truly comprehensive and innovative
24 Master Plan. We urge the council to
25 dedicate as much as is possible toward

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1 funding the Master Plan when it does
2 projects in Louisiana, especially those
3 projects that change the fundamental
4 condition of the Delta, which means
5 restoring Delta function. It means
6 restoring the Mississippi River to its
7 Delta, building the sediment diversions
8 that are anticipated in the plan.

9 So those are the types of projects
10 here in Louisiana we'd urge you to
11 adopt. And we do urge you to have a
12 robust series of meetings with the
13 public and not just in this forum where
14 people talk to you for three minutes.
15 And I know that you understand the
16 limitations of this forum. But reach
17 out to people, talk to people and let's
18 get this thing moving. We're going to
19 have money. We have a plan. Some of
20 us have been sitting around in planning
21 meetings for 30 years. And so this is
22 exciting and let's not waste it. Thank
23 you very much.

24 MS. KURZ:

25 Bethany Kraft.

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1 MS. BETHANY KRAFT:

2 Good evening. My name is Bethany
3 Kraft. I'm the Director of the Gulf
4 Restoration Program for Ocean
5 Conservancy. Our program is based here
6 in New Orleans. And on behalf of our
7 members and supporters, I'd like to
8 thank the Council for taking the time
9 to come down or across the way to hear
10 from the public what we envision for
11 restoration in the Gulf of Mexico.

12 You know, I can't think of any
13 place in the world that provides a
14 clear example of just what's at stake
15 when it comes to protecting our natural
16 resources than Louisiana. Our very way
17 of life hangs in the balance here, and
18 it has for a long time, and we have a
19 significant opportunity to change the
20 course of our trajectory, as Mr. Muth
21 just said.

22 Because the stakes are so high and
23 because the needs are so great, not
24 just in Louisiana, but across the Gulf
25 of Mexico, I want to take just a couple

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1 of minutes to provide some
2 recommendations for the big picture
3 priorities that we hope the Council
4 will adopt to ensure that the projects
5 that are ultimately funded and the
6 priorities that the Council will take
7 as their own are the priorities and
8 projects that are really going to fully
9 restore the resources that we rely on
10 for our food and our work and the way
11 that we play. And I think clearly I
12 heard loud and clear that our natural
13 resources are truly what drives our
14 economy and our way of life here in the
15 Gulf of Mexico.

16 First, to fully restore the
17 resources that we rely on for our
18 livelihoods, we need to ensure that
19 we're taking a comprehensive approach
20 to restoration. This means focusing on
21 projects and priorities from freshwater
22 inflows to our estuaries to the
23 offshore marine environment. Only by
24 looking at the ecosystem as a complete
25 system, we're going to be able to

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1 address all of the resources that we
2 rely on for our livelihoods and our
3 economy.

4 There are a lot of really great
5 project ideas and a lot of critical
6 needs. But we still have a lot of
7 tough decisions to make when it comes
8 to choosing which projects to implement
9 when and how we're going to go about
10 funding them. Ensuring that we're
11 thinking about the ecosystem as it
12 connects to a whole will ensure that
13 we're getting projects that truly get
14 at the heart of restoration and address
15 the critical needs that we have in a
16 timely manner. It also helps ensure
17 that the projects that we do are
18 greater than the sum of their parts and
19 truly move the dial in the restoration
20 and the direction that we want to go.

21 Science is going to be a critical
22 underpinning and a critical element of
23 project planning, implementation, and a
24 way to gage our success. I think
25 Teresa, as you said, figuring out how

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1 to coordinate the science that we're
2 using for NRDA, and how we're going to
3 choose NFWF projects, and what projects
4 we're going to fund via the Restore Act
5 fund. It's critically important, and
6 science is going to be a foundation for
7 that coordination, I believe.

8 We are really excited to see
9 science and monitoring under Section
10 1604 funded via the Restore Act. We
11 think that's only a good start of the
12 science and funding that's going to be
13 needed to really underpin a restoration
14 program of such a magnitude.

15 And finally, I'll address the
16 public participation. We are really
17 excited to have the opportunity to
18 speak about what our thoughts are about
19 restoration. But we can be most
20 helpful if we know in advance when
21 these meetings are going to occur to be
22 assured that we're going to move across
23 the Gulf of Mexico so that all of our
24 citizens have a chance to participate,
25 and that we're clear about what you

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1 need to make your plan the best it can
2 be. Thank you.

3 MS. KURZ:

4 Matt Rota.

5 MR. MATT ROTA:

6 Hello again. My name is Matt Rota.
7 Thanks for the opportunity to speak. I
8 am the Science and Water Policy
9 Director for the Gulf Restoration
10 Network. I live here in New Orleans.
11 And we're the only environmental
12 advocacy organization solely focused on
13 the Gulf of Mexico, the waters that
14 flow into it, and the communities that
15 depend on it.

16 And as you can see, that everybody
17 is wearing these stickers here. And
18 thanks to folks handing them out. It
19 pretty much all can be summed up with
20 these stickers, "Environmental
21 restoration is economic restoration."
22 And I know that the fifth goal as y'all
23 mentioned, the comprehensive plan, it
24 causes us a little discomfort. I
25 understand that you're trying to make

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1 it consistent with everything else
2 within the Restore Act. But it gives
3 us some discomfort and some of my
4 colleagues discomfort. And I ask that
5 you interpret this fifth goal with the
6 comprehensive plan, if you keep it
7 there, as a way to ensure that projects
8 managed by the Council as well as those
9 proposed for the council for their
10 approval from the states, that this
11 money comes from -- since this money
12 comes from environmental fines, we need
13 to make sure it's going towards
14 environmental purposes.

15 So the way I would interpret that
16 fifth goal is that your role is to
17 ensure that anything that is coming to
18 you goes towards environmental
19 restoration, which will benefit us all
20 because we all depend on our coast.

21 Here in Louisiana, we encourage you
22 to consider the coastal restoration
23 nonstructural components of the coastal
24 Master Plan as a guide as you're going
25 forward looking at where the Restore

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1 money is going to go. There's a lot of
2 great stuff on coastal restoration.
3 You saw all that, and I know you've
4 been talking to everybody in Louisiana.
5 And we reinvented the wheel here in
6 Louisiana many times, as Mr. Muth said,
7 and we don't need to be doing that
8 again. So we need to make sure we are
9 using all of the tools that are already
10 there and especially the Master Plan.

11 In these financial times, it would
12 not be difficult to see these Restore
13 dollars going to projects that are not
14 ecological restoration and could even
15 be environmentally destructive. We've
16 heard plans about bypasses and new
17 convention centers and things like
18 that. And we would like the explicit
19 commitment from the council that the
20 money that you're in charge of
21 distributing or approving goes towards
22 restoration of the Gulf and its
23 environment. These environmental fines
24 need to go to environmental restoration
25 and protection.

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1 Finally, I do want to encourage the
2 Council to also to include sea-level
3 rise, climate change, in your list of
4 projects and make sure you're
5 incorporating those in the projects
6 you're considering. Given the rising
7 sea, the higher chance for extreme
8 rains, hurricanes, droughts, we cannot
9 afford to approve projects that cannot
10 adapt to our climate crisis.

11 So again, with the adaptive
12 management and all that, and also that
13 this is basically our chance here.
14 With this money, this is our chance for
15 coastal restoration comprehensive.
16 And like was said before, we can't
17 screw this up. So we need to be taking
18 climate change into account as we're
19 moving forward. So with that, I've got
20 the big red stop sign. So thank you
21 for your time, and we look forward to
22 continuing to give you some input.

23 MS. KURZ:

24 Doug Meffert.

25 MR. PAUL KEMP:

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1 I am not Doug Meffert, but I stayed
2 in Holiday Inn. My name is Paul Kemp,
3 and I work closely with Doug Meffert in
4 Baton Rouge. We both are vice-
5 presidents with the National Audubon
6 Society. And I have a few hats on.

7 One of them is that National
8 Audubon Society is a very large deltaic
9 wetland owner in Louisiana. We have
10 26,000 acres. Another one is that I'm
11 Commissioner on the Southeast Louisiana
12 Flood Protection Authority East.
13 That's this side of the river.

14 And then of course there are the
15 birds. And we care a lot about the
16 birds. And what we're finding is that
17 this flyway route through the delta is
18 the more ecolocators we get on the
19 birds the more we find that they're
20 really seeking that corridor as they
21 make landfall into North America.

22 I'm just going to reiterate
23 something that David Muth said, which
24 is there are some projects you can do
25 that you may do in one place but they

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1 may have influence throughout the Gulf.
2 And that is true of anything that you
3 do that concerns the Mississippi River.
4 Because the Mississippi River,
5 remember, is putting more than 85
6 percent of all the freshwater that goes
7 into the Northern Gulf. It's putting
8 over 90 percent of all the sediment
9 that goes into the Northern Gulf. And
10 it's producing the nursery grounds for
11 most of the commercially caught
12 species, shrimp, and fish throughout
13 the Gulf.

14 So whether they are fishing in
15 Pensacola or fishing in Corpus, in all
16 likelihood, there's a connection to the
17 productivity of the Delta. So anything
18 we do here gets magnified across the
19 Gulf. And I know in the first report
20 that was very clear, and I just feel
21 obligated to remind you of that. Thank
22 you.

23 MS. KURZ:

24 Scott Steckler.

25 MR. SCOTT STECKLER:

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1 Hi. I'm Scott Steckler. I live in
2 Gretna and have been a lifelong
3 resident of New Orleans area. I'm a
4 school principal. So you better
5 listen.

6 The formal remarks that I have are
7 I'm a supporter of the Ocean
8 Conservancy. So I have some formal
9 remarks that are consistent with what I
10 believe and they believe. And that is
11 that the approach you should have is a
12 comprehensive approach. You should
13 strive to develop and carry out an
14 approach that is integrated restoration
15 programs that address the restoration
16 needs in coastal and marine habitats
17 across the Gulf region, and this should
18 include a formal agreement with the BP
19 Deepwater Horizon NRDA Trustee Council
20 to link and coordinate oil spill and
21 broader ecosystem restoration efforts.

22 The other comment that I want to
23 make is about the future public
24 participation opportunities. These
25 should include meetings open to the

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1 public with plenty of advanced notice
2 and opportunities for public comment on
3 draft strategies, plans, and projects.
4 The Council meetings should be rotated
5 across the Gulf states to afford
6 maximum opportunity for public
7 participation.

8 And I'd just like to maybe make an
9 informal comment that as a young boy I
10 would go down to a camp, my
11 grandparents' camp in Shell Beach and
12 then in Hopedale for fishing and fun.
13 And then a week before the oil spill, I
14 found myself in Barataria Bay fishing
15 with some friends. And right along
16 side of us were these posts, and the
17 fish seemed to be hanging out there and
18 so consequently so were the Pelicans.

19 Two weeks later, and we caught
20 great, we had a great catch and so did
21 the Pelicans. And we challenged each
22 other, metaphysically speaking, as to
23 who could catch the most. Anyway, two
24 weeks later, there were potentially the
25 same Pelicans dripping in oil. Sean

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1 got it right and says it more
2 eloquently that I could, "You cannot
3 mess this up." Thank you.

4 MR. KURZ:

5 Michelle Erenbeurg.

6 MS. MICHELLE ERENBERG:

7 Hi. My name is Michelle Eerenberg.
8 I'm with the Gulf Restoration Network
9 as well. But tonight I'm representing
10 the Gulf Future Coalition, which is a
11 network of conservation and community
12 groups across the Gulf coordinating to
13 ensure ecosystem restoration and
14 economic recovery from the BP disaster.

15 I'd like to thank you all for being
16 here to listen to our ideas about how
17 we move forward with restoration.
18 Although we appreciate this opportunity
19 to speak here today, we are
20 disappointed in the format for public
21 participation utilized to date.
22 Allowing the public a few minutes at a
23 microphone hardly seems like the robust
24 participation which is called for in
25 the Restore Act. A well-informed and

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1 engaged public is actually the best
2 means to ensure there is a spirited and
3 democratic public debate about which
4 projects get funded. And so we need to
5 ensure that to the maximum extent
6 possible that those projects promote
7 long-term sustainability for both the
8 ecology of the Gulf and the economy of
9 the Gulf Coast communities.

10 So I ask you to remedy this in
11 three ways: Notice public meetings
12 with more time to allow the public to
13 participate and deliver thoughtful
14 comments, move quickly to establish a
15 citizens advisory committee as former
16 EPA Administrator Jackson called for
17 the meeting in Mobile in December, and
18 ensure transparency in funding
19 decisions by establishing a portal for
20 information that includes which
21 projects are under consideration and
22 also includes the criteria that you
23 will be using to make the decisions
24 about which projects to fund. Thank
25 you.

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1 MS. KURZ:

2 Karen Gautreaux.

3 MS. KAREN GAUTREAUX:

4 Hi. My name is Karen Gautreaux.
5 I'm the Director of Government
6 Relations for the Louisiana Office of
7 the Nature Conservancy. And I'll frame
8 my comments in your order of three
9 here.

10 I guess the first long-term outcome
11 I'd like to see from the work of the
12 Council is a very strong foundation
13 going to comprehensive restoration of
14 the Gulf. I think that many of us have
15 been working together on restoration
16 for years. And this potentially very
17 large sum of money represents an
18 investment we probably won't be able to
19 make for a long time. We also know
20 that this is not going to be sufficient
21 to cover all the restoration needs of
22 the Gulf. Worse-case scenario, we
23 don't mess it up. Best-case scenario,
24 we really maximize this amazing
25 opportunity through a sad circumstance.

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1 In terms of the types of projects
2 the Council should consider. Number
3 one, we hope they are very much
4 science-based, not only science-based,
5 that we recognize the importance of
6 once we not only plan to build a
7 project, that we have very good
8 monitoring systems in place so we can
9 guide future investments hopefully to
10 maximize those investments.

11 In Louisiana, we have participated
12 in the development of the Master Plan.
13 So we very much would to the degree
14 possible, especially restoration of the
15 Delta's functions implementing those
16 projects as quickly as we can.

17 We as an organization and many of
18 our partners have suggestions that can
19 contribute to a comprehensive
20 restoration of the Gulf, and I would
21 encourage you. The State of Louisiana,
22 I think, has done a good job with being
23 partners and the science being
24 developed to implement our larger scale
25 restoration projects.

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1 Lastly, I don't want to, well, two
2 things: We know that it's a challenge
3 to connect all these networks. I'm
4 really glad everyone has made a point
5 of that coordination function. I think
6 it would very much help the public if
7 you find a way to track it so everyone
8 understands how these various efforts
9 are linked together.

10 And last but not least, I would not
11 be a good member of our partnership if
12 I did not reiterate the importance of
13 the environment being such a platform
14 for our cultural, natural, or economic
15 resources. So whatever you can do to
16 prioritize restoration projects, we'd
17 be very supportive of. Thank you.

18 MS. KURZ:

19 Morgan Crutcher.

20 MS. MORGAN CRUTCHER:

21 Hi my name is Morgan Crutcher, and
22 I'm the Technical Policy Analyst with
23 the Coalition to Restore Coastal
24 Louisiana. For the past 25 years we
25 have been focused solely on restoring

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1 the coast of Louisiana. I think we're
2 the only non-profit who focuses only on
3 coastal restoration of the entire coast
4 of Louisiana.

5 On behalf of our Board of
6 Directors, our members, and our
7 supporters, I would like to thank you
8 for coming out and hearing us. I have
9 several points that I wanted to make,
10 but I'll try and frame them in terms of
11 your three questions.

12 The first is in terms of the long-
13 term outcomes that we would like to
14 see. The Coalition would really like
15 to see us reverse the trend of land
16 loss in Louisiana, which means large-
17 scale restoration. We have a way of
18 doing that. It's called the State
19 Master Plan. It can actually get us to
20 the point we're actually gaining land
21 for Louisiana, and that's incredible.

22 In terms of project types, again, I
23 want to refer to the State Master Plan.
24 The strength of the Master Plan lies in
25 fact that it uses natural processes to

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1 provide us with persistent restoration
2 over the long-term. And I think that's
3 what's going to reverse that trend of
4 land loss.

5 In terms of public participation
6 and engagement, again, I'm going to go
7 back to the Master Plan. The Master
8 Plan took into account hundreds of
9 public meetings to fund the Louisiana
10 Speaks Campaign, thousands of public
11 comments. It had unanimous approval on
12 both sides of the aisles on both of the
13 Houses. And further testimony of that,
14 if you can recall from yesterday's
15 meeting in Houma, or you can read from
16 the transcripts or even tonight,
17 there's not a lot of contention.
18 There's a lot of engagement behind
19 these projects. There's a lot of
20 public support.

21 And again, I want to quote David
22 Muth and a lot of other people here.
23 Don't reinvent the wheel. Those
24 engagement processes and pathways are
25 out there. Use them. Take advantage

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1 of what the State has been working on
2 for the past 30 years.

3 So in conclusion, I would like to
4 leave you with a sense of urgency.
5 Before the spill, we had an ever
6 narrowing window of opportunity to
7 restore our coast. And the spill is
8 currently slamming that window shut.
9 So please act with urgency and take
10 advantage of what you have here to make
11 us whole again. Thank you.

12 MS. KURZ:

13 Anne McKenzie

14 Ms. ANNE MCKENZIE:

15 I'm a teacher so maybe they'll
16 listen to me, right? Anne McKenzie.
17 You know, in May of 2011, EPA put out
18 in the Federal Register a request for
19 nominations for a citizens advisory
20 committee. That was for your
21 organization for the task force, right?
22 I applied for that. It was me in
23 contact with them 99 percent of the
24 time. And it was only because I
25 contacted them probably in November,

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1 oh, that's not going to happen. They
2 didn't contact me or any of the other
3 applicants. Oh, no, that's not going
4 to happen. That was it.

5 So there isn't a lot of trust. I
6 don't have a lot of trust. But I do
7 believe that that's what y'all should,
8 well, what EPA -- sorry to look at you,
9 Mr. Scaggs, but that's what they should
10 have done. Lisa Jackson told me to my
11 face that's what they were doing. So I
12 don't understand what happened. But I
13 do firmly believe it needs to happen.

14 But you need to make sure that you
15 do get citizen involvement. There's a
16 lot of fisherman suffering. We've
17 talked about the fishermen before and
18 what they can do to help, just where
19 they are at right now. I think that's
20 really important. And these groups
21 have done a lot, a lot of work. And
22 the State of Louisiana has done a lot
23 of work, and that's great. But I also
24 think that we need like down at the
25 bottom more citizen involvement.

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1 Again, did I mention the shrimp
2 have tumors? Make sure that the water
3 and land is clean before we got. Let's
4 restore that first. Thank you.

5 MS. KURZ:

6 Doug Daigle.

7 MR. DOUG DAIGLE:

8 Hi. My name is Doug Daigle. And
9 I'm the Coordinator for the Lower
10 Mississippi River Subbasin Committee,
11 which is the state's and the lower
12 river organized under the National Gulf
13 Hypoxia Action Plan.

14 And one of the longstanding
15 problems in the Gulf is the large
16 annual hypoxic zone that forms.
17 Restoring the health of the Gulf,
18 obviously, requires addressing that.
19 It got very prominent treatment in the
20 Gulf Ecosystem Restoration Strategy the
21 task force put out. But there wasn't
22 much in the way of specific action in
23 that. And part of the problem, a
24 reason may have been that even though
25 the problems in the Gulf, the sources

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1 are far upstream in the Mississippi
2 River Basin.

3 Since this process has started, I
4 and some other stakeholders have urged
5 that there's a way to do it some funds
6 from the BP monies be directed upstream
7 to try to alleviate this problem. The
8 concept seems sound. But how that's
9 done is something I'm not clear on,
10 whether within the framework of Restore
11 or another way, I'm not sure how that
12 happens.

13 No one is asking the Gulf states to
14 divert some of the funds they receive
15 away, although Louisiana and
16 Mississippi certainly have the option
17 of applying some of the BP funds they
18 receive to help carry out the nutrient
19 reduction strategies that they are
20 going to do under the Gulf Hypoxia
21 Action Plan. So they're in kind of a
22 unique position.

23 But obviously, to benefit the Gulf,
24 if there's a way to do this, I would
25 urge the Council to try see what can be

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1 done in the comprehensive plan because
2 it is an opportunity and some resources
3 that we won't see again. Thank you.

4 MS. KURZ:

5 Jeff Supak.

6 MR. JEFF SUPAK:

7 Good evening. I just wanted to
8 actually echo a lot of words that were
9 said earlier, especially that we
10 immediately need the creation of a
11 citizens advisory committee. It is
12 what is needed right now.

13 For instance, there's not a lot of
14 stakeholders that are represented in
15 the room.

16 We don't have oystermen here today.
17 We don't have fishermen here. We need
18 an advisory council that includes these
19 people, that includes church leaders in
20 this region, that includes about most
21 important to global green, which is we
22 need wetland owners who possess 80
23 percent of our coast of the wetlands.
24 They are the ones that have the
25 knowledge. They know what needs to be

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1 done to help restore our coast. So we
2 really need those people and their
3 voices heard to help make this an easy
4 transition or smooth process as we move
5 forward.

6 And I'm not sure about the Restore
7 Act, but in the last two presentations,
8 we saw there was money appropriated to
9 coastal education and community
10 outreach. Let's just make sure when
11 we're doing that, we're also having the
12 conversation about climate change.
13 Because a lot of times the state
14 doesn't really involve themselves in
15 that. And we really need to have that
16 true conversation about sea-level rise
17 and climate change and what it means
18 for the future of our community because
19 without that, it's an engrave injustice
20 to our community.

21 MS. KURZ:

22 Sean Turner. Jarred Zeringue.

23 MR. JARRED ZERINGUE:

24 That's Zeringue. It's French. I
25 want to thank y'all for coming. I'm a

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1 New Orleans resident. I grew up in St.
2 Bernard Parish, not too far from here.

3 We've been through a lot in the
4 last 7 1/2 years. We're still kind of
5 rebounding in a lot of ways. But I
6 think we're proud of our own progress
7 and proud of what we've done. I myself
8 am wearing my economy sticker. I'd
9 like to think that I make my living off
10 the land. But not as a fisherman. I
11 make a TV show, and I do a lot of video
12 projects out in the marsh and the
13 outdoors. So it means a lot to me that
14 I can get out there and support myself
15 by doing that.

16 So with that said, I want to say
17 that we represent a big part of that
18 economy by the money that we spend
19 getting outdoors, right? As hunters
20 and fishermen, we spend a lot of money
21 going do those things. That's
22 something you should think about is
23 that there's a lot of people that
24 actually spend money to get out there.
25 So the healthier it is, the more fun we

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1 get to have.

2 That's not the main thing. The
3 main thing is that with the long-term
4 outcomes, really, I think that we're
5 going to run into problems down the
6 road because Louisiana is so unique.
7 Our coastline is not beaches. You're
8 going to see some of the states saying
9 why are y'all making these projects way
10 up in -- if you looked at some of those
11 projects that they had across the
12 coast, some of them are way up in the
13 basin. And I'll be honest with you.
14 We didn't see any oil way up in there.
15 But it's all connected. The fish, they
16 go up in there to grow up. The ducks
17 still fly all the way down from Canada.
18 They'll hit the Gulf, but overnight
19 they will come into the marsh.

20 So I mean I think that if you're
21 going to perceive as is keeping it,
22 understanding that Louisiana is unique
23 to the rest of the Gulf, it's going to
24 have to happen that way.

25 The type of projects. I support

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1 the Louisiana State Master Plan. I
2 feel like it's all kind of outlined
3 there. There are things in there like
4 I think you got to open that river up,
5 let it go, let it start trying to build
6 land, let it bring nutrients in,
7 refresh the marsh as much as possible.
8 Any type of barrier islands you can
9 see, go ahead and start saving them
10 now.

11 But once again, people are going to
12 see that and say, well, why are you,
13 you know, you didn't get any oil in the
14 marsh up there. It's still all
15 connected. To really work on that is
16 going to help the Gulf no matter what
17 way you can.

18 For future public participation
19 opportunities, I think you got to get
20 into the communities themselves. Here
21 in New Orleans, it's a good starting
22 point. People could have driven from a
23 lot of areas, but I feel like you got
24 to get down to those communities. I
25 feel like in a lot of these things you

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1 heard a few people mention fishermen
2 tonight, commercial fishermen. It is
3 good to get their voice, but it's not
4 just them. They're out there every day
5 and that's a good thing, but even
6 people who live in those suburbs, they
7 got to get out because it really comes
8 back to all of us. We're just one big
9 coastal community here. So not just
10 the fishermen, not just people like
11 myself who get out there often. People
12 who may not even realize how important
13 it is to them. That's going to be some
14 of the challenges in your future
15 opportunities.

16 Once again, thank y'all and I
17 appreciate it.

18 MS. KURZ:

19 Grace Seire.

20 MS. GRACE SEIRE:

21 Good evening. I'm Grace Seire.
22 I'm the Gulf Coast Regional Director --
23 it's okay. Don't feel bad. I'm the
24 Gulf Coast Regional Director for Boat
25 People SOS. It's a Vietnamese

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1 organization.

2 And I want to thank you first of
3 all for having translators at your
4 meetings. And tonight, I know we
5 didn't have the translator because
6 there were no Vietnamese people here.

7 So that brings me to my first point
8 about outreach and prior notice of
9 meetings. And I know that you task us
10 Vietnamese organizations throughout the
11 Gulf Coast to do a lot of the outreach,
12 but we do need a little bit time, a
13 little bit more time, and some notice.
14 You need to send us something so that
15 we can at least translate it and get it
16 out there. And some of places like
17 Bayou La Batre, it's a small community.
18 But in a place like New Orleans or the
19 West Bank, it's a lot of driving and a
20 lot of places to go to and we can't
21 just do that in a day or so, sometimes
22 not even a week or so. So we need some
23 prior notice. And we need to get that
24 out there.

25 Which leads me also to tell you

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1 that when you have these projects,
2 whether they are environmental or the
3 economy projects that deal with the
4 economy, keep in mind that there are
5 whole populations that will need
6 special treatment in terms of
7 translations and also the people who
8 need to, as the gentlemen said, people
9 who are on the ground need to really,
10 you need to hear from them, which
11 brings me to my next point, and I'm
12 going to reiterate what Michelle
13 Erenberg said because we are also part
14 of the Gulf future, for the citizen
15 advisory committee, which was
16 recommended by the Gulf Coast Ecosystem
17 Restoration Task Force, and then of
18 course reiterated in your first meeting
19 in Mobile by Administrator Lisa
20 Jackson. You do need a citizen
21 advisory committee so that people who
22 are the everyday people, whether they
23 are from community-based organizations
24 that represent those everyday people or
25 the everyday people who are there as

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1 well. Thank you very much.

2 MS. KURZ:

3 Gary Robert.

4 MR. GARY ROBERT:

5 My name is Gary Robert, and I'm
6 just a local citizen in New Orleans. I
7 am a retired federal engineer, and I
8 worked 32 years with the Corps of
9 Engineers in the wetlands of Louisiana.
10 And the last 16 years was spent doing
11 wetlands restoration projects on an
12 interagency program, much of which is
13 now incorporated in this plan.

14 So one of the reasons I got up here
15 is because I noticed in your five goals
16 that you had that you added a fifth
17 goal of economic development or some
18 such title. And that just kind of
19 worried me that money would be steered
20 off in that that's kind of a broad
21 category that will build roads and
22 bridges and a lot of parochial projects
23 that local politicians are going to
24 want to see, which may be why it
25 already got in there as a goal.

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1 So I'm a little concerned about
2 that. You might want to consider that
3 strong because this book alone contains
4 a lot more projects than all the
5 maximum amount of fine money will
6 likely to get would even really build
7 this or close to it, the State Master
8 Plan. So that was my primary concern.
9 And I don't know who to direct the, I
10 think, it's 35 percent of money goes to
11 the states.

12 And I have the same comment to make
13 for the State of Louisiana and whoever
14 parcels that out. That in working on
15 this program that I've worked in for 16
16 years went up and down the state having
17 lots of meetings. And naturally, ever
18 local politician had his parochial
19 project, whether it was wetland
20 restoration or not that got in there or
21 trying to get in there. So I know
22 there's going to be the same push now.
23 As soon as this money comes in, local
24 guys, even things that are needed like
25 flood control, for instance, there's

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1 going to be a big push to do flood
2 control projects out of this money as
3 opposed to doing restoration.

4 And I know how hard it is to
5 justify restoration projects, both on a
6 federal level, as a federal employee,
7 or at any level. So this might be the
8 one shot we have in terms of money
9 going to a restoration project.

10 So I would just like to caution
11 y'all about seeing that money go out to
12 roads and bridges and other little
13 local development projects because
14 obviously there's going to be a big
15 push when the money comes in. That's
16 what a local politician is gong to want
17 to see. That's my comment.

18 MS. KURZ:

19 That was the last comment card that
20 I have. Is there anyone else wishing
21 to provide comments to the
22 representatives of the Gulf Coast
23 Ecosystem Restoration Council?

24 MR. EARL PRATZ:

25 Public participation. First of

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1 all, it would have been better, even
2 though it's interesting to have the
3 Restore Council meeting as a separate
4 standalone well-publicized where we
5 could have multiple rounds of
6 discussion. Because hearing the other
7 people speak gave me a lot of more
8 ideas. I worked as an engineer for
9 many years. And when we had meeting
10 and even larger meetings with staff,
11 there was just a lot of one comments
12 from a person, you know, rounds and
13 rounds of discussion within the time
14 that was available. But clearly, it
15 could have been a lot more discussion.

16 Second, a number of people referred
17 to having an advisory council. When I
18 first came up, I thought it was wrong.
19 Not that I'm against citizens being
20 involved, but I think the local
21 citizens should get to elect who they
22 want to be on the councils. In other
23 words, there should be direct elections
24 from the coastal communities who they
25 are going to put to represent them on

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1 the councils, not people selected or
2 appointed by other government appointed
3 officials. Perhaps some real
4 democracy.

5 MS. KURZ:

6 Is there anyone else wishing to
7 make a comment tonight?

8 UNKNOWN AUDIENCE MEMBER:

9 Something that I think has been
10 missing from a meeting like this is
11 education on the issue itself to begin
12 with. I do study things related to
13 this, but I don't quite understand
14 exactly what happened to our ecosystem
15 to a tee. And if we're going to
16 contribute to the idea of coming out,
17 we need to have some sort of
18 understanding about what happened to
19 our coast to begin with. And that goes
20 beyond these meetings.

21 I've been studying the Coastal
22 Master Plan. I know that's somewhat
23 related, maybe not, for over a year and
24 I can't find a paper copy of it
25 anywhere. And I'm someone who has

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1 internet access. You know what I'm
2 saying? I know that's not necessarily
3 the same thing that we're talking about
4 here but it is involved with that.

5 Another thing is community
6 involvement. I'm not with an
7 organization anymore. But when these
8 things popup on my Facebook or wherever
9 I hear about it, I'm the one that has
10 to push this out to the people in my
11 neighborhood and say, hey, y'all, come
12 out, be a citizen who speaks out for
13 coastal restoration. I see a lot of
14 the same faces here, and I appreciate
15 everything that y'all are doing and
16 everything these organizations are
17 doing. But I really would like to see
18 the people in my neighborhood have an
19 understanding of what's going on and
20 hence an interest in what happens in
21 the future. And that involves
22 education outreach as well as outreach
23 about these meetings.

24 The other thing is and I may be
25 mistaken. It seems as though there was

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1 only 2.5 percent of these funds being
2 allocated for science, research,
3 observation, and monitoring programs.
4 That does not seem like enough. If
5 we're going to make plans based upon
6 scientific observations, and you're
7 only putting 2.5 percent of the funds
8 towards that, I don't see how we can
9 make good plans then. Again, I could
10 be mistaken on that. I'm working off
11 the chart that I saw here.

12 And also, in reference to the five
13 states that are involved, Louisiana has
14 a coastal Master Plan. That's
15 wonderful. But some of the other
16 states don't. And I heard all sorts of
17 different, you know, ranging ideas
18 going on. Mississippi is going to do
19 this. Alabama is going to do that.
20 And some of them don't have to do with
21 the coast. Maybe they are rumors,
22 maybe they're not.

23 But I'd like to have some sort of
24 guarantee that since Louisiana has put
25 its time and effort into making a

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1 coastal Master Plan that these other
2 states involved are going to do
3 something similar because we need to
4 work together, and it does need to be
5 comprehensive. Thank you.

6 MS. KURZ:

7 Anyone else?

8 MS. ELIZABETH COOK:

9 Quick comment. If you're going to
10 have studies and scientists working on
11 this, the data should be made public
12 immediately and a process for that data
13 to be available to the public at all
14 times.

15 And there are already studies going
16 around that people don't know about.
17 For example, there's a study of three
18 types of fin fish. And it was
19 determined that the Mackerel have
20 skyrocketing liver functioning issues,
21 which says something about the toxicity
22 in the fish. And that was presented at
23 the Gulf Science Conference recently in
24 New Orleans. And people need to know
25 about these studies. We need a way to

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1 get this information to the public and
2 also the information you'll be
3 gathering through your scientists.

4 MS. KURZ:

5 Anyone else?

6 As a reminder, the Council will
7 provide additional opportunities for
8 public comment throughout the process
9 for developing the initial
10 comprehensive plan.

11 As additional public meetings get
12 scheduled, the meeting dates and
13 locations will be made available on
14 restorethegulf.gov. If you made a
15 comment tonight and would like to
16 submit your comments in writing or if
17 you don't make a comment tonight and
18 would like to in the future, electronic
19 comments can be submitted to
20 restorecouncil@doc.gov.

21 Before concluding tonight's meeting
22 I'd like to offer a couple of
23 reminders. If you have family,
24 friends, or colleagues who are
25 interested in participating in

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1 tonight's meeting and couldn't make it,
2 we will hold on final meeting tomorrow
3 in Lake Charles at the Civic Center.
4 It will start at 5:00 with an open
5 house, and the formal presentations
6 will start at 6:00.

7 Our information stations will
8 remain open tonight. If you have any
9 questions about anything that you heard
10 today or any questions at all, we have
11 folks available to help answer those
12 for you.

13 With that, I'll conclude our
14 meeting. On behalf of the CPRA and our
15 federal partners, I'd thank you very
16 much for attending.

17 **(MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 8:12 P.M.)**

18

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