

Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council
Summary of Council Funding Approvals
June 10, 2026

On June 10, 2026, the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (Council) voted to approve funding for two ecosystem restoration activities located in Texas. Specifically, the Council voted to amend its [2021 Funded Priorities List 3b \(FPL 3b\)](#) to approve the following:

Amendment to the [Texas Shoreline Protection Through Living Shorelines Program](#)

- Reallocation of \$5,759,851 in implementation funding for the Indian Point Causeway Shoreline Protection project. (These reallocated funds come from a cost savings of funds previously approved for the Dagger Point Stabilization project.)

Amendment to the [Texas Chenier Plain Ecosystem Restoration Program](#)

- \$6,000,000 in implementation funding for the Chenier Plains Beneficial Use of Dredge Material for Habitat Restoration Project at Bessie Heights.

Background:

Pursuant to the *Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act of 2012* (33 U.S.C. § 1321(t) and *note*) (RESTORE Act), the Council is responsible for administering portions of *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill settlement funds for the purpose of restoring the environment and economy of the Gulf coast. The Council administers two funding programs, one of which is the Council-Selected Restoration Component, or “Bucket 2.” Under Bucket 2, the Council votes to approve Gulf ecosystem restoration projects and programs proposed by the Council members. Bucket 2 projects and programs approved for funding by the Council are included in what is referred to as a Funded Priorities List.

FPLs include activities in two categories. Category 1 activities are approved for Bucket 2 funding. Such approval requires a Council vote as set forth in the RESTORE Act. To be approved in Category 1, a project or program must have documentation demonstrating that all applicable environmental laws have been addressed. For example, a construction project would need documentation demonstrating compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other applicable laws.

Category 2 activities are Council priorities for potential future funding, but are not currently approved for funding. As appropriate, the Council reviews the activities in Category 2 in order to determine whether to move the given activity to Category 1 and approve it for funding via a Council vote. Such funding approvals are done via amendments to the FPL containing the given project(s) or program(s). FPL amendments are also required for other changes to listed projects (e.g., material changes in scope or cost, transfer of sponsorship to another Council member).

Public Comments

Before voting on whether to approve funding, the Council requested stakeholder input during a public comment period which began on April 23, 2026 and concluded on May 26, 2026. The Council received one public comment on the Indian Point Causeway Shoreline Protection Project (Indian Point Project).

Comment: The commenter expressed support for the Indian Point project but cautioned that the viability of the project will ultimately be determined by the level of technical rigor applied during design and implementation. The commenter recommended the implementation be supported by site-specific wave climate evaluation and sediment transport considerations and that a defined plan for post-construction monitoring and adaptive management be incorporated to ensure functional success with respect to marsh establishment, shoreline position, and response to relative sea level variations.

Council response: The Council appreciates the commenter's support and suggestions. This restoration project has been designed to use best available science to mitigate risks and uncertainties. The predominant risks are storm surge, subsidence, compaction of soils and related factors which can lower the breakwater's relative elevation thereby reducing its potential effectiveness. To alleviate these risks, breakwater materials and height were evaluated and incorporated into the selected design. This will help ensure elevations will remain sufficient to protect the shoreline from erosive forces and to promote sediment accumulation that will in turn decrease water depths to levels that can effectively support marsh vegetation establishment.

NRDA funded a similar living shoreline restoration project referred to as the "Indian Point Shoreline Erosion Protection" that is located immediately adjacent to the Indian Point project, also demonstrating proof of concept. In July 2025, the NRDA-funded Indian Point Shoreline Erosion Protection successfully completed five years of monitoring. There are no outstanding corrective actions required. The Indian Point Shoreline Erosion Protection with NRDA utilizes a similar design as the Indian Point project under consideration.

Description of Implementation Projects

The Council approved funding for implementation activities under FPL amendments for two Texas FPL 3b restoration programs. Within these programs, there are two specific projects for which the Council approved restoration implementation funds. Project descriptions for these implementation activities and relevant supporting environmental compliance documentation are provided below.

Indian Point Causeway Shoreline Protection Project (Texas Shoreline Protection Through Living Shoreline Program)

The Council reallocated \$5,759,851 previously approved for implementation of the Dagger Point Stabilization project to the Indian Point Project. The amount of funding initially approved for the Dagger Point Stabilization Project (Dagger Point Project) has been reduced from \$12,859,851 to \$7,100,000 as the project construction bid came in under budget. The \$5,759,851 in savings

from the Dagger Point Project was reallocated to implement the Indian Point Project. Both of these projects are part of the Texas Shoreline Protection Through Living Shoreline Program. Since the publication of FPL 3b, all environmental compliance necessary for a Council vote to approve implementation funding for the Indian Point Project has been completed.

The Indian Point Project will construct approximately 1,300 linear feet of rock breakwater and place approximately 5,510 cubic yards of beach fill at the Indian Point Park, creating a living shoreline adjacent to the Highway 181 causeway in Nueces Bay, east of Corpus Christi, in San Patricio County, Texas. The design for the living shoreline protection includes rock breakwaters to stabilize the shoreline, protect existing and newly constructed emergent wetlands and submerged seagrass, and protect the shoreline and marshes from further erosion, wave action and storm surge. The Indian Point Project aims to protect marshes and shorelines, improve water quality, create habitat (including oyster reefs) and reduce the current erosion rate. The Indian Point Project will be implemented in partnership with the Texas General Land Office, the Port of Corpus Christi Authority and the City of Portland.

The Indian Point Project received authorization under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act under the Department of Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) permit SWG-2020-00839. To comply with NEPA, the Council adopted the environmental assessment included in the statement of findings for permit SWG-2020-00839 approved on August 4, 2021. The USACE also completed additional environmental compliance coordination for the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (FWCA), Endangered Species Act (ESA), the Magnuson-Stevens Act (MSA), and the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) in coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and the Texas Historical Commission. The Council has reviewed the applicable environmental compliance documentation. To ensure compliance with FWCA, ESA, MSA, NHPA, and other relevant laws, the Council will require the sponsor of the Indian Point Project to adhere to all applicable conditions in the USACE permit authorization and the associated [environmental compliance documents](#).

Chenier Plains Beneficial Use of Dredge Material for Habitat Restoration Project at Bessie Heights (Chenier Plains Program)

The Council approved \$6,000,000 in implementation funding for the Chenier Plains Beneficial Use of Dredge Material for Habitat Restoration Project at Bessie Heights (Bessie Heights Project), which is part of the Texas Chenier Plain Ecosystem Restoration Program sponsored by TCEQ. This funding was originally budgeted in Category 2 for the Chenier Plains Program of the Council's approved FPL 3b. Since the publication of FPL 3b, all environmental compliance necessary for a Council vote to approve implementation funding for the project has been completed.

The Bessie Heights Project will construct up to 1,000 acres of intertidal marsh utilizing approximately one million cubic yards of suitable hydraulically dredged material that will be

placed within levees constructed from on-site sediment to restore wetlands within subsided open water habitat. The project site is located in Bessie Heights marsh within the Nelda Stark Unit of the Lower Neches Wildlife Management Area, in Orange County, Texas. The Bessie Heights Project is expected to restore wetlands, reduce erosion, improve water quality, create habitat, provide land reclamation, and increase coastal resiliency. The dredged material will be sourced from the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway, federal ship channels, private docks and berths, and possible mining of dredged material placement areas.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department received authorization under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act under the Department of Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) permit SWG-2016-00565 to conduct the proposed wetland restoration activities. To comply with NEPA, the Council has adopted the [Texas Trustee Implementation Group Final 2017 Restoration Plan/Environmental Assessment: Restoration of Wetlands, Coastal, and Nearshore Habitats; and Oysters](#). Additional environmental compliance coordination was completed for the FWCA, ESA, MSA, and NHPA in coordination with the USFWS, NMFS, and SHPO. The Council has reviewed the applicable environmental compliance documentation. To ensure compliance with relevant environmental laws, the Council will require that the sponsor of the Bessie Heights Project adhere to all applicable conditions in the USACE permit and the associated [environmental compliance documents](#).

To learn more about the RESTORE Council visit us at www.restorethegulf.gov or send questions to restorecouncil@restorethegulf.gov.