

## CPS Collaboration Summaries

**Steering Committee Member:** Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR)

**Purpose:** Identify and develop restoration partnerships that will result in a comprehensive long-term approach to addressing restoration needs in coastal Alabama, with a specific emphasis on identifying "best fit," collaborative projects for consideration for the Council-Selected Restoration Component. These efforts will contextualize proposals within the broader framework of restoration efforts in coastal Alabama, potentially leveraging restoration efforts across funding streams, where appropriate, while also leveraging technical expertise both within and outside of the RESTORE Council. Activities will also increase public engagement and transparency in the decision-making process and utilize existing partnerships, including but not limited to the Management Conference of the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program (MBNEP).

### **Mechanism for Implementation:**

1. Conduct planning and collaboration activities to meet the near-term need to develop strong proposals for future FPLs in a manner designed to enhance long-term restoration success while allowing the flexibility needed to adapt to changing conditions over time.
2. Convene a "Coastal Alabama Restoration Summit" in the fall of 2018 to review current restoration work from all Deepwater Horizon funding streams (NRDA, NFWF, RESTORE), increase understanding of potential types of projects that can be funded through - and potentially across – the various funding sources, and solicit input from the public regarding restoration priorities for future FPLs.
3. Develop "Alabama's Bucket 2 Project Development Strategy" in the context of work currently underway, such as:
  - a. Coordination between the MBNEP and The Nature Conservancy in Alabama (TNC) to develop a Habitat Restoration Plan (HRP) to consider types of restoration activities in priority habitats expected to more likely succeed based on proximate stressors and ongoing activities to reduce those stressors.
  - b. The MBNEP's efforts to finalize Watershed Management Plans (WMPs) in priority watersheds as well as the anticipated 5-year update of the MBNEP's Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP).
4. Attend and/or host up to ten (10) focus group and/or collaboration meetings with potential Federal and State project partners and technical experts to identify potentially successful FPL project submissions.
5. Update and enhance the Alabama Coastal Restoration website which serves as the State's primary source for DWH restoration information and houses Alabama's project submission portal.

### **Notable Activities:**

1. Design an evaluation structure and process to support efforts to establish potential indicators/measures of Bucket 2 project/program impacts;
2. Develop a framework for project and program level adaptive management recommendations;
3. Consider potential mechanisms to support learning and subsequent transfer of knowledge gained (and lessons learned) to future project design and implementation. To the extent possible, this work will consider similar approaches developed to track NRDA project/program success in Alabama.

**Steering Committee Member:** Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP)

**Purpose:** Identify and develop restoration partnerships, in consultation with the public that will result in a comprehensive long-term vision for its coastal habitats, communities, and economy to support more effective submissions for Council-Selected Restoration Component funding. Specifically, this work will contextualize the proposals for Bucket 2 funding within the broader vision for Florida, leveraging not only restoration dollars across funding streams but also expertise both within and outside of the RESTORE Council. Activities will also increase public engagement and transparency in the decision-making process.

**Mechanism for Implementation:** State of Florida will take a long-term approach toward building and sustaining restoration partnerships, including expanding investment in public engagement and best available science endeavors. Specific activities include:

1. A stepwise approach to conducting planning and collaboration activities will be taken over the 5-year period of this award to meet the near-term need to develop the strongest proposals as possible for the next FPL while setting the foundation for long-term restoration success, allowing for flexibility as needed as the planning process proceeds.
2. Workplans will be developed with activities that contribute to achieving input from and buy-in of the public, stakeholders, and experts to support the long-term vision for coastal Florida that incorporates existing relevant regional plans, using the best available science, and includes goals and, to the extent possible, quantifiable objectives.
  - a. Cultivation of new/reaffirmation of current restoration funding partners to leverage Bucket 2 funds to their greatest benefit in contributing to the long-term vision for Florida;
  - b. Enter into technical and funding partnerships for projects development and implementation; and
  - c. Development of a monitoring and evaluation approach for adapting the long-term vision and restoration priorities over time based upon new information
3. Collaboration activities will be focused on
  - a. Conducting planning and collaboration meetings to develop conceptual, presubmission project/program priorities for the next FPL. These activities will include stakeholder and public engagement as part of the planning needed to place proposals within a broader context of long-term ecological goals and leveraging with other relevant funding streams;
  - b. Identifying those project/program concepts (including technical and funding partners) for which proposals will be developed for consideration in the next FPL;
  - c. Initiating development of proposals in conjunction with partners; and
  - d. Engaged participation in the RESTORE Council Monitoring and Assessment Workgroup.

**Notable Activities:** The State of Florida anticipates utilizing the following methods:

1. Achieve broad-based public support and increased leveraging of projects, programs, and activities for the next FPL through public outreach and stakeholder engagement efforts.
2. FPL proposals include monitoring and adaptive management plans using monitoring standards and protocols developed by the RESTORE Council Monitoring and Assessment Workgroup
3. Complete an inventory of relevant data, reports, plans, and models and conduct an analysis of critical information gaps

**Steering Committee Member:** Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA)

**Purpose:** Planning and collaboration with local, State, Federal, and other leaders and experts to achieve commitments of the Comprehensive Plan by meeting and coordinating with technical points of contact (including state and federal), other funding entities, and academics across the Gulf of Mexico utilizing BAS to highlight the location and severity of known or emerging stressors both in Louisiana and Gulf-wide. This information will be synthesized to inform Louisiana's position on future FPL investments intended to mitigate those stressors or restore impacted resources, leverage funding from other sources, identify measures/metrics/indicators for success of actions in Gulf priority watersheds, and inform adaptive management for future FPLs.

**Mechanism for Implementation:**

1. CPRA anticipates working with the Water Institute of the Gulf.
2. Engagement, meetings, and discussions with relevant technical partners across the Gulf, monthly webinars or in person meetings with the RESTORE Council Staff, and compiling the information from the collaborative process into a digestible format to inform future FPL investments and long-term planning maximizing co-benefits across funding streams.
3. Through Council staff engagement, Council staff may be able to identify opportunities to utilize the information for future proposal evaluation based on BAS or to support other staff activities which in turn support the Council.
4. Through regular meetings with the Council Staff Science Advisor, as well as through CPRA's POC on CMAWG, as these proposed engagement activities on stressors moves forward, strategic points of connection with CMAWG may be identified and coordinated on.
5. Development of concepts that could be pursued for future FPL funding through discussions and meetings will be both deliberative and opportunistic, based upon participation in regional, state, or national meetings with relevant partners and stakeholders.

**Notable Activities:**

1. The Water Institute of the Gulf will meet and coordinate with technical points of contact (both state and federal), other funding entities, and academics across the Gulf of Mexico utilizing BAS to highlight the location and severity of known or emerging stressors.
2. Information will be compiled from the collaborative process into a digestible format to inform future FPL investments and long-term planning maximizing co-benefits across funding streams.
3. The synthesized information will be used to inform the State of Louisiana's position on future FPL investments and proposals the State wants to prioritize which best support projects intended to mitigate those stressors or restore impacted resources, leverage funding from other sources, identify measures/metrics/indicators for success of actions in Gulf priority watersheds, and inform adaptive management for future FPLs.
4. Development of concepts that could be pursued for future FPL funding and how projects and programs in watersheds and estuaries facing similar stress could be aligned to leverage other investments to increase ecological services. For example, meetings with the Centers of Excellences (COEs) and other funders will provide opportunities for leveraging of investments based on BAS.

**Steering Committee Member:** Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ)

**Purpose:** Identify and develop new restoration partnerships and maintain existing partnerships, in consultation with the public, which will result in a comprehensive long-term vision for its coastal habitats, communities, and economy by leveraging not only restoration dollars across funding streams but also expertise both within and outside of the RESTORE Council.

**Mechanism for Implementation:** Mississippi will take a long-term, step-wise approach toward building and sustaining restoration partnerships, including investments in public engagement and best available science endeavors. Activities will build upon existing partnerships and collaboration pathways to maximize restoration efforts and outcomes, and to develop the strongest proposals as possible for the next FPL while setting the foundation for long-term restoration success.

Activities in year 1 (2018) will be focused on: identifying those project/program concepts (including technical and funding partners) for which proposals will be developed for consideration in the next FPL, and then initiating development of those proposals in conjunction with those partners. The State of Mississippi will conduct planning and collaboration to develop conceptual, pre-submission project/program ideas for the next FPL. These activities may include stakeholder and public engagement as part of the planning needed to place proposals within a broader context of long-term ecological goals and leveraging with other relevant funding streams. MDEQ will also participate in any Council-wide workgroups needed to support development of FPL 3/10-Year Strategy.

Activities in year 2 (2019) will be focused on: finalizing and submitting proposals. In addition to continuing all collaboration activities needed to maintain the foundation built in year 1, CPS activities in the remainder of 2019 and early 2020 will focus on participating in Council-level activities to develop and finalize the next FPL 3/10-Year Funding Strategy. Activities in year 2 (2019) will be further focused on finalizing and submitting proposals. In addition to continuing all collaboration activities needed to maintain the foundation built in year 1, CPS activities in the remainder of 2019 and early 2020 will focus on participating in Council-level activities to develop and finalize the next FPL 3/10-Year Funding Strategy. Activities in years 3-5 (2020-2022) will build upon those outlined for years 1-2. Upon finalization of FPL 3/10-Year Strategy in 2020, the State of Mississippi will turn its attention to finalizing the awards for projects and initiating planning for the FPL 3/10-Year Strategy.

**Notable Activities:** The State of Mississippi will continue investments in its monitoring and adaptive management tools by adding evaluation criteria that are directly related to Council-Selected Restoration Component (Bucket 2) planning and adaptive management. As part of this effort, the State of Mississippi will conduct periodic evaluations of overall Bucket 2 project/program impact at scales of the watersheds within Mississippi in order to develop and implement adaptive management strategies. Further, the State of Mississippi will interact with the Council Monitoring and Assessment Workgroup to aid in the development of procedures, standards, and plans that could be used to inform any FPL related projects, proposals, and/or activities. An outcome of this work will be the inclusion of monitoring and adaptive management information in the respective developed FPL proposals.

**Steering Committee Member:** Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TECQ)

**Purpose:** Work in coordination with a team of Texas coastal experts, elected officials, representatives for Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), the four other Gulf states, federal entities and the public, using the best available science, in meeting the requirements of the RESTORE Act Council-Selected Restoration Component and the commitments of the Comprehensive Plan update in 2016.

**Mechanism for Implementation:** The State will hire a contractor to:

1. Identify and enhance partnerships through the consultation with technical coastal experts, elected officials, Deepwater Horizon funding partners, federal entities and the public along the Texas and Gulf coast.
2. Build on existing plans already developed for the Texas coastal areas to identify priorities, reaffirm or cultivate new restoration funding partners and contribute to the long-term vision for addressing coastal habitats and vitalize the Texas coastal economy.
  - a. First year activities will focus on identifying priorities, partners and pre-submission program/project ideas that are within the broad vision for Texas and Gulf coast areas.
  - b. Include workshops/meetings with technical coastal experts to present a summary of plans, partnerships and priorities that have been implemented and to introduce any missing Bucket 2 objective area plans.
3. Work with local elected officials and the public regarding the identification of priorities and to introduce the thought process for large-scale partnerships and leveraged funding for future FPLs to approach the Deepwater Horizon (NRDA and NFWF) programs to identify similar priorities, and restoration needs on the Texas and Gulf coast.
4. Year two will include best available science endeavors with on-going engagement with technical experts and Gulf state partners to identify additional activities for the developing of the 10-year funding strategy (long-term vision). Proposed work in year two will also include discussions on evaluation and adaptive management tools

**Notable Activities:**

1. TCEQ and its contractor, with the input of the technical coastal experts, local elected officials and the public, will develop decision-support tools and evaluation criteria that support Council-Selected Restoration Component planning requirements.
2. Development of adaptive management strategies for incorporation into FPLs will be completed.
3. Activities that will be conducted in year one of the CPS award include completing an inventory of reports, compiling relevant data, plans, and models and conducting analyses to identify information gaps.

**Steering Committee Member:** Homeland Security, U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)

**Purpose:** Strengthen Gulf of Mexico restoration by determining the need/ability to incorporate spill resiliency and spill response readiness into selected RESTORE restoration activities.

**Mechanism for Implementation:** Collaborative meetings with the restoration and response offices within each of the Council member agencies, as well as Council members, will be held to determine the need/ability to integrate spill resilience into restoration planning both conceptually and in the design and development of FPL projects.

1. Coast Guard will lead an interagency developed process to develop a proposal to assess the risk of spills in areas where Bucket 2 funded and/or proposed restoration projects are located
2. Use an iterative process to develop a Risk Matrix which could be used by Council members to facilitate right-sizing contingency planning relative to risk.
  - a. Identify existing processes and tools for assessing threat of spills, vulnerability of resources, and risk measures.
  - b. The risk scoring matrix will be used to evaluate proposed restoration project locations to allow for the appropriate level of planning to be incorporated into the relevant FPL project proposal
3. An interagency team will write a proposal to fund development of a matrix to establish contingency planning targets based on risk level.
4. Public engagement is anticipated to occur through public collaboration meetings in each state and through regular updates and discussions at standing response community public meetings and conferences.

**Notable Activities:**

1. Identification of available threat assessment tools and vulnerability assessment tools, including inventory of relevant data, reports, plans, and models and conducting an analysis of critical information gaps.
2. Design a risk assessment matrix to categorize restored areas according to their risk of impact from acute pollution events. For areas categorized as high risk, recommendations will be made for modifications in response strategies to be incorporated into future FPL proposals and/or recommendations for project design modifications to improve resiliency.

**Steering Committee Member:** United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

**Purpose:** Identify and develop restoration partnerships, in consultation with the public that result in a comprehensive long-term vision for coastal habitats, communities, and economies. This will support more effective proposal submissions for Council-Selected Restoration Component (bucket 2) funding. It will also contextualize them within the broader vision for the Gulf Coast region, leveraging restoration dollars across funding streams as well as expertise both within and outside of the RESTORE Council. These activities will also increase public engagement and transparency in the decision-making process.

**Mechanism for Implementation:** USDA, in partnership with other Council members, will conduct planning and collaboration activities over the 5-year period of this award to meet the need to develop the strongest proposals possible for the next FPL while setting the foundation for long-term restoration success. These CPS funds will be administered in a way that allows the flexibility needed as the planning process proceeds. Activities supported by this award will lay the foundation to build upon existing partnerships and collaboration pathways that will continue at least through the life of this award to produce the greatest on-the-ground restoration results possible.

Each year, work plans will be developed/revised that describe that year's activities and contribute to achieving input from and buy-in of the public, stakeholders, and experts to support the long-term vision that incorporates existing relevant regional plans, using the best available science. These work plans will include goals and, to the extent possible, quantifiable objectives, and will reflect restoration priorities and priority activities for bucket 2 funding. The work plans will also address the goals of cultivation of new/reaffirmation of current restoration funding partners to leverage bucket 2 funds to their greatest ecological benefit. These work plans will be submitted as part of each annual progress summary report.

Early activities will focus on working with other Council members to identify priority projects and partners that fit within the broader vision for coastal watersheds. Assuming that the next FPL and 10-year funding strategy (FPL 3/10-year strategy) will be finalized in spring 2020, proposals will likely need to be developed in early 2019. With that in mind, activities in year 1 (2018) will be focused on identifying those project/program concepts (including technical and funding partners) for which proposals will be developed for consideration in the next FPL, and then initiating development of those proposals in conjunction with those partners. This will be done in collaboration with the State and Federal Council members and include stakeholder and public engagement to place proposals within a broader context of long-term ecological goals and leverage other relevant funding streams.

USDA staff will be substantially involved with planning, collaboration, and project concept development (inclusive of all activities associated with the CPS); however, USDA will use all the CPS funds to support a personal services contract that will cover the activities described above. USDA staff will work directly with the contracted personnel to accomplish the goals and objectives of the CPS.

**Notable Activities:** USDA will continue to develop and assess evaluation criteria that are directly related to USDA Bucket 2 projects as it relates to monitoring and adaptive management. As part of this effort, USDA will contract with an entity (TBD) to conduct periodic evaluations of USDA-funded projects impacts at the HUC 12 watershed scale to develop and implement adaptive management strategies. These activities will be initiated in year 1 of this CPS award by completing an inventory of relevant data, reports, plans, and models and conducting an analysis of critical information gaps. An outcome of this work will be to develop specific tasks and strategies related to evaluation and adaptive management within USDA that will be outlined in work plans for the coming years of this award.

**Steering Committee Member:** Department of Interior (DOI)

**Purpose:** Identify and develop restoration partnerships, in consultation with other Council members and the public that will result in a comprehensive long-term vision for Gulf of Mexico restoration. Contribute to this vision by incorporating existing relevant plans, using the best available science, including goals and, to the extent possible, quantifiable objectives; and restoration priorities and priority activities for Bucket 2 funding.

**Mechanism for Implementation:** The DOI will initially focus its efforts on three major components:

1. Work with RESTORE Council staff and the CMAWG to develop a shared stakeholder plan that will support monitoring, analysis, and implementation of adaptive management elements to inform future FPLs (i.e., determine the objectives, uncertainties, and indicators to evaluate progress towards achieving objectives and making informed decisions on future FPL projects.) Additional activities include initial drafting of programmatic objectives and identification of key restoration uncertainties to help demonstrate the success of restoration actions as well as provide recommendations for future monitoring, data analysis, and reporting proposals for the Council Steering Committee.
2. Work with State Council members to develop an inventory of existing data for offshore sand resources to inform availability of material for future coastal projects (e.g., restoration barrier islands and wetlands, beach nourishment and shore protection along the coast, identifying data gaps and determining priority areas for new geologic and geophysical data collection for 2020.)
3. Support the RESTORE Council's commitment to increase engagement of the Council's partners, stakeholders and the public in developing improved and more broadly supported projects on the FPL This will include outreach and collaboration with other Council members, Council staff, DOI bureaus, and would place specific targeted attention on engaging the public-at-large.

**Notable Activities:**

1. Work with the RESTORE Council staff and the CMAWG to initially draft measurable program objectives that reflect Council member priorities, against which restoration actions or projects can be evaluated; and begin identification of key uncertainties that could affect the ability of the Council to achieve their objectives.
2. implementation of the Monitoring and Adaptive Management effort
  - a. Conduct a review of existing management plans developed within the RESTORE Council's geographic domain to identify and catalog existing mission statements, goals or objectives that articulate what each Council member or stakeholder identifies as important or valuable. T
3. DOI will work with Council staff and the CMAWG to identify the most efficient ways to communicate and solicit input on key uncertainties with Gulf partners (e.g., joint workshops or individual meetings; use of habitat and resource subject matter expert teams), and the risk to effective restoration associated with those uncertainties.
4. Support various bureau staff working on activities related to public engagement, adaptive management, outreach, planning and collaboration activities to develop conceptual, pre-submission project/program ideas for the next FPL.
5. Provide funding to each Gulf state to support them in working with DOI to develop an inventory of existing data for offshore sand resources to inform availability of material for future coastal projects.

**Steering Committee Member:** Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

**Purpose:** EPA will build upon existing partnerships and collaboration pathways with the RESTORE Council member designees and alternates in the Gulf Coast States and the six Federal agencies; NGOs in the Gulf Coast region; and estuary programs in the Gulf Coast region.

**Mechanism for Implementation:** The EPA will utilize CPS funds to provide technical support to Council staff and Council members to help improve the efficiency, effectiveness and transparency of environmental compliance for Council-Selected Restoration Component (Bucket 2) projects and programs. Specific activities include:

1. The EPA will take a stepwise approach to planning and collaboration activities over the 5-year period of this award to meet the near-term need to collaborate and support each state in developing the strongest proposals as possible for the next FPL while setting the foundation for long-term restoration success.
2. EPA staff will work collaboratively with all member agencies, particularly agencies with purview over environmental laws applicable to Bucket 2 activities. EPA staff will also seek to develop collaborative partnerships with member agencies to provide technical support on environmental compliance for specific Bucket 2 projects and program, from the pre-submission stage and into the post-FPL implementation phase.
3. The EPA will utilize a portion of CPS funds to support a program manager, environmental engineer, and staff support from the EPA's Gulf of Mexico Program Office, Region 4, Region 6 and Headquarters for participation and engagement on Council Monitoring and Assessment Working Group, Public Engagement Work Group, Gulf Coast Interagency Environmental Restoration Working Group, pre-submission NEPA and 404 assistance to Council staff and Council members.

**Notable Activities:** The EPA anticipates undertaking the following activities:

1. Early activities will focus on identifying priority projects and partners that fit within the broader vision for each of the Gulf Coast States in order to collaboratively develop proposals for the next FPL;
2. Work with members to provide technical support for environmental compliance during the FPL 3 development process;
3. Participation in the FPL/10-year funding strategy collaboration process to find opportunities to employ environmental compliance tools on specific submissions, including:
  - a. Inventory and assessment of existing environmental compliance efficiency tools (in collaboration with the existing interagency Gulf environmental compliance workgroup), as needed;
  - b. Modification and refinement of existing tools to make them applicable to Bucket 2 projects and programs, as needed;
  - c. Development of additional programmatic tools to meet Bucket 2 needs; and
  - d. Assisting member agencies in the use of these tools, as applicable, for specific Bucket 2 projects and programs (at both pre-submission and post-FPL stages);