

Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council
Draft Amendment to the
Comprehensive Plan Commitment and Planning Support Funded Priorities List

The Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (Council) is seeking public comment on a draft amendment to the 2017 Comprehensive Plan Commitment and Planning Support (CPS) Funded Priorities List (FPL). Before voting on whether to approve funding, the Council is publishing this proposed CPS FPL amendment for a 30-day public comment period beginning on July 20, 2023 and concluding at 11:59 pm (CST) on August 19, 2023. You may submit comments using one of the two methods below:

- By Email:** To restorecouncil@restorethegulf.gov
Email submission of comments ensures timely receipt.
- By U.S. Mail:** Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council
Attn: Comprehensive Plan CPS FPL Draft Amendment Comments
500 Poydras Street, Suite 1117
New Orleans, LA 70130
Mail must be postmarked no later than August 19, 2023 to be included in this public comment period.

Background

The Council's 2022 Comprehensive Plan commits to enhancing collaboration, coordination, public engagement and the use of best available science to support a holistic approach to Gulf of Mexico ecosystem restoration. This approach reflects the interconnected nature of coastal and marine ecosystems and the importance of addressing system-wide stressors to improve ecosystem function. To that end, the [Comprehensive Plan](#) sets forth a vision to guide the Council's future actions:

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

In 2017, the Council approved limited funding to allow its members to support Comprehensive Plan commitments and identify future investments that maximize achievement of Gulf-wide restoration goals. This funding, which was approved for a five-year period, is referred to as the [2017 CPS FPL](#) (or FPL 2).

In the 2017 CPS FPL, the Council stated its intention to review the effectiveness of these funds in meeting the Council's Comprehensive Plan commitments in Year 4 of the CPS awards. The Council completed its evaluation of the effectiveness of the first three years of funding in supporting the Council's commitments. The Council concluded that the use of a small portion of

its total Council-Selected Restoration Component funds to advance its Comprehensive Plan commitments has successfully met the intended purpose. This evaluation can be found in the 2022 Comprehensive Plan. Based on this review and continued member needs, the Council is proposing to amend the CPS FPL to extend funding for an additional five years. The Council is not proposing to modify the scope of allowable CPS FPL activities. The details on the scope of allowable activities are included in the [2017 CPS FPL](#).

Proposed Additional Funding Amount

In the 2017 CPS FPL, the Council allowed each of the 11 Council members to apply for up to \$500,000 per year for up to 3 years and up to \$300,000 per year for 2 years thereafter, resulting in a total of up to \$23.1 million, or 1.44% of the total Council-Selected Restoration Component (“Bucket 2”) funds available (excluding interest), as detailed in Table 1 below. Based on the analysis referenced above and continuing member needs, the Council is now proposing to extend the CPS FPL to allow Council members to apply for up to \$350,000 per year in additional funding for the next five years. It is important to note that under the RESTORE Act and the US Department of the Treasury’s implementing regulations, only Council members may apply for Bucket 2 funds.

Table 1. Funding for the Commitments and Planning Support activities

Annual per member (maximum)	Annual Total Council Cap	CPS FPL	Total 5-Year Investment Maximum based on Annual Cap	Max Percentage of Total Bucket 2 Funds*
\$500K for 3 Years	\$5.5M/year for 3 years	2017 CPS FPL	\$23.1M	1.44%
\$300k for 2 Years	\$3.3M/year for 2 years	2017 CPS FPL		
\$350k for 5 years	\$3.85M/year for 5 years	2023 Draft CPS FPL Amendment	\$19.25M	1.20%
		TOTAL	\$42.35M	2.64%*

* Calculated based upon total funds provided to the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund by BP and other responsible parties, excluding interest. The percentage will thus decrease over time as interest is accrued.

Update to Reporting Elements

As part of this proposed amendment, the Council is proposing to update its reporting requirements for members from semi-annual to annual financial and progress summaries. Council members utilizing CPS funds under this amendment will provide information on the progress of their respective efforts. A summary of the use of CPS funds can be found in the 2022 Comprehensive Plan and in the [Annual Report to Congress](#). **To learn more about the RESTORE Council visit us at www.restorethegulf.gov or send questions to restorecouncil@restorethegulf.gov.**