



Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council
New Orleans, LA 70130

April 12, 2019

Mr. Gary C. Rikard
Designated Alternate of the Governor of Mississippi
to the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council
P.O. Box 2261
Jackson, Mississippi 39225

Dear Mr. Rikard:

As the Chair of the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council, I am pleased to approve the 2018 Mississippi State Expenditure Plan Amendment submitted pursuant to the Spill Impact Component of the *Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act of 2012* (33 U.S.C. §1321(t)) (RESTORE Act).

This approval is based on the finding from the council's Executive Director, Ben Scaggs, that the SEP Amendment is complete and meets all requirements contained in the RESTORE Act, the U.S. Department of the Treasury's implementing regulations (31 C.F.R. Part 34) and the council's SEP Guidelines. On behalf of the council, I commend Mississippi for developing an SEP Amendment that will contribute substantially to the cause of Gulf Coast ecosystem restoration.

The council is committed to ensuring an efficient and effective process for funding the activities in the Mississippi SEP as amended. Approval and disbursement of funding for specific activities in the SEP will be done through the grant process and standards established in 2 C.F.R. Part 200. Please note that funds for implementation of activities in the approved SEP will be disbursed after grant approval and Mississippi's verification of compliance with all applicable federal environmental and other laws. Council staff are available to assist Mississippi with this grant process to help ensure that it proceeds as expeditiously as possible.

Once again, I applaud the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality on the development of a thoughtful and effective SEP Amendment. Our collective efforts under the RESTORE Act will help to ensure the long-term health and resilience of the Gulf Coast ecosystem.

Sincerely,

Andrew R. Wheeler
Chair