

Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force

The Gulf of Mexico is one of America's greatest and most diverse treasures uniting five states with a single coastline. It is home to extraordinary habitats and wildlife from its deep blue ocean depths to productive estuaries and magnificent beaches. It is home to more than 44 million people, many of whom depend on the Gulf for their livelihood or were drawn here by the Gulf's natural beauty and great lifestyle.

With all this beauty, the Gulf faces many challenges. The region has 30 percent, or roughly three million acres, of the Nation's coastal marsh which is disappearing at an alarming rate. Recent events such as hurricanes and the Deepwater Horizon oil spill have added to this ecological decline making communities, infrastructure, ports and other resources incredibly vulnerable.

Task Force Members

State of Alabama
State of Florida
State of Louisiana
State of Mississippi
State of Texas
Council on Environmental Quality
Department of Agriculture
Department of Commerce
Department of Defense
Department of the Interior
Department of Justice
Department of Transportation
Domestic Policy Council
Environmental Protection Agency
Office of Management and Budget
Office of Science and Technology Policy

Gulf-wide ecosystem restoration is imperative to address this longstanding ecological decline to begin moving toward a more resilient Gulf Coast ecosystem.

Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus made several recommendations in his report "America's Gulf Coast: A Long Term Recovery Plan after the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill," including the establishment of a task force to coordinate Gulf restoration activities and develop a comprehensive, Gulf-wide restoration strategy to address these issues. On October 5, 2010, President Obama created the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force through Executive Order 13554.

Task Force Responsibilities

By October 5, 2011, the task force is charged with development of a restoration strategy that proposes a Gulf Coast ecosystem restoration agenda. In order to develop an effective strategy, the task force is working to engage Gulf Coast communities, local stakeholders, local governments and tribes and to inform the development of the strategy.

Strategy Components

- Defining ecosystem restoration goals
- Considering existing research and ecosystem restoration
- Identifying policy areas where government coordination is necessary
- Proposing actions where existing authorities are not sufficient
- Identifying monitoring, research and scientific assessments and gaps needed to support decision making for restoration efforts

How to Get Involved

There are opportunities to become involved by:

- Attending task force member meetings and listening sessions being held in each of the five Gulf states to receive input that will inform the development of the strategy.
- Participating in stakeholder calls being held in advance of each task force meeting.
- Sharing your individual thoughts and comments on the strategy development process by emailing GulfCoastTaskForce@epa.gov.
- Receiving announcements and updates by joining the GulfCoastTaskForce@epa.gov listserv.

To join the listserv and find information about the task force, including a list of members and links to the Executive Order and the Mabus Report, visit www.restorethegulf.gov/task-force or call toll-free at 855-427-9263.

Task Force Member Meetings

November 8, 2010 – Pensacola, FL

February 28, 2011 – New Orleans, LA

May 6, 2011 – Mobile, AL

June 27, 2011 – Southeast Texas

August 29, 2011 – Biloxi, MS

