

DWH-Related Restoration Activities in Alabama

2014 Gulf Coastal Zone Management
and
NERR Workshop

USFWS Bayou Lacombe Center
Lacombe, LA 70445

Carl Ferraro, Biologist III
Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural
Resources, State Lands Division



Alabama Department of
Conservation and Natural Resources



DWH-Related Funding Sources

Alabama Gulf Coast
Recovery Council
“Alabama Council”



RESTORE

Gulf Coast Ecosystem
Restoration Council
“Federal Council”

NRDA

(Natural Resource
Damage Assessment)

NFWF

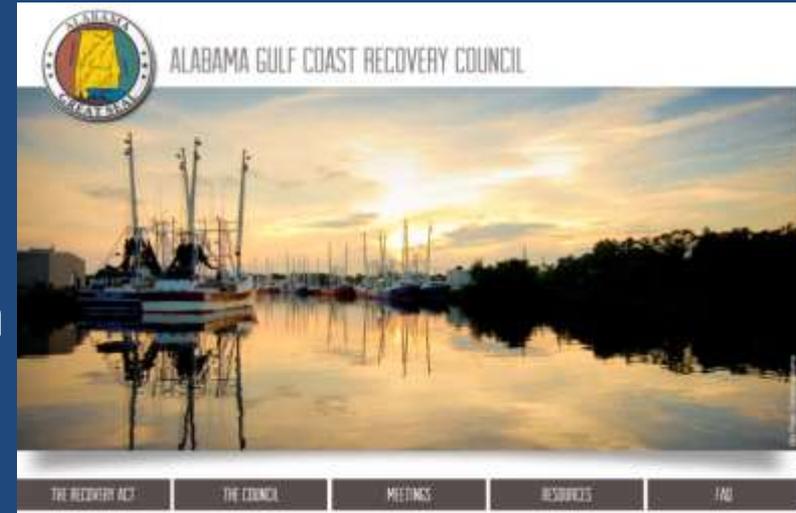
(National Fish & Wildlife
Foundation)



Alabama Gulf Coast Recovery Council



- Governor of Alabama (Chair)
- Director of the Alabama State Port Authority (Vice-Chair)
- Chairman of the Baldwin County Commission
- President of the Mobile County Commission
- Mayor of the City of Bayou La Batre
- Mayor of the Town of Dauphin Island
- Mayor of the City of Fairhope
- Mayor of the City of Gulf Shores
- Mayor of the City of Mobile
- Mayor of the City of Orange Beach





Alabama Gulf Coast Recovery Council



- Each member of Council entitled to one (1) vote.
- All decisions are made by majority vote.
- RESTORE Act states that administrative duties for the Council may only be performed by public officials and employees that are subject to the ethics laws of the State of Alabama.
- The Council designated the Alabama Department of Conservation to serve as the Administrator for RESTORE Act funds.



Alabama Gulf Coast Recovery Council



- The Council designated the ADCNR to serve as the Administrator for RESTORE Act funds.
- The Council's *Project Information Sheet* was released on October 8, 2013 for 30-day public comment period.
- Next Steps:
 - Finalize the *Project Information Sheet* and open the web portal for project suggestions.
 - Develop a project proposal review, evaluation and selection process which will be put out for public comment.
 - Also waiting on final Treasury Rules for the RESTORE Act, which have not been issued.



WEBSITES

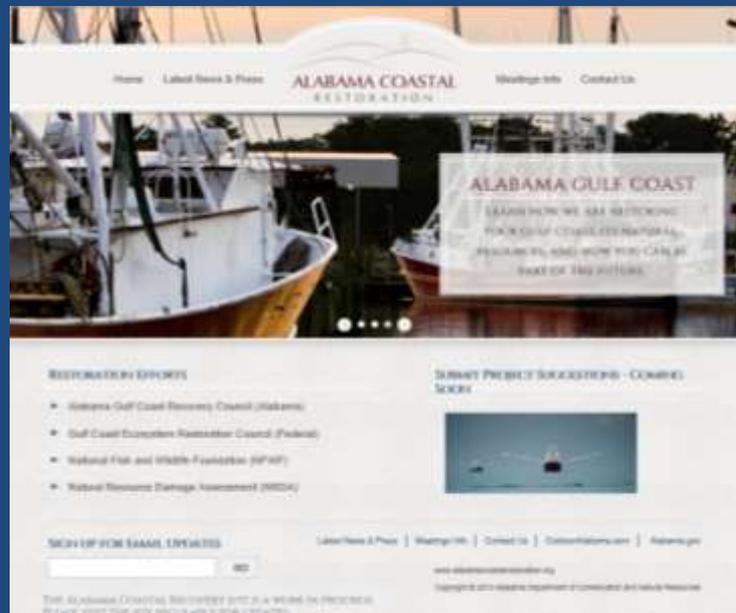
Alabama Gulf Coast Recovery Council
RestoreAlabama.org





WEBSITES

- Comprehensive State of Alabama site:
AlabamaCoastalRestoration.org



Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council

- The RESTORE ACT established a Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (the Council), which is comprised of:
 - Governors from the five (5) affected Gulf States;
 - Dept. of the Interior
 - Dept. of Commerce
 - Dept. Of Agriculture
 - Dept. of Homeland Security
 - Secretary of the Army
 - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.
- The Gulf States recommended and the President Obama appointed the Secretary of Commerce as the Council's Chair.



Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council Alabama Member

- ***State of Alabama:***
Robert Bentley, Governor
- ***Designee:***
N. Gunter Guy Jr., Commissioner, ADCNR



Website:

www.restorethegulf.gov



Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council

- The Council has published the initial comprehensive plan *Restoring the Gulf Coast's Ecosystem and Economy*.
- The Council is working on a project proposal submission and review process.
- Given that there is no settlement with the responsible parties, funding levels are uncertain.
- Council is also waiting on final Treasury Rules.



DWH Natural Resource Damage Assessment in Alabama

Four projects are being implemented under the Early Restoration Project Phases I & II.

Phase I:

- Marsh Island (Portersville Bay) Restoration Project (ADCNR)
- Alabama Dune Restoration Cooperative Project (USFWS)

Phase II:

- Enhanced Management of Avian Breeding Habitat Injuries by Response in the Florida Panhandle, Alabama and Mississippi (USFWS)
- Improving Habitat Injured by Spill Response: Restoring the Night Sky (USFWS)



DWH Natural Resource Damage Assessment in Alabama

- Phase III Draft Early Restoration Projects were announced in May 2013
- Includes 3 proposed projects in Alabama:
 - Gulf State Park Enhancement Project (ADCNR)
 - Oyster Reef Restoration in Baldwin County (ADCNR)
 - Swift Tract Living Shorelines Project (NOAA)
- A Draft Programmatic Phase III Restoration Plan and Draft Early Restoration Program Environmental Impact Statement has been prepared by the Trustees, and subjected to a public comment period which closed on February 18th, 2014.
- The NRDA, including Injury Assessment, is still ongoing.



National Fish & Wildlife Foundation

- In early 2013, a U.S. District Court entered an agreement resolving the criminal cases against BP and Transocean.
- The National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) established its ***Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund*** (GEBF) for projects benefiting natural resources that were impacted by the DWH oil spill.
- In Alabama, ADCNR is the Coordinating Agency.



Approved Alabama NFWF GBEF Pilot Projects

Three pilot projects have been approved to date:

- East Fowl River Restoration and Watershed Study (MBNEP)
- Restoration and Enhancement of Oyster Reefs (ADCNR-MRD)
- D'Olive Creek Watershed Restoration (MBNEP)



Alabama Regulatory Working Group

- Formation of state regulatory working groups was initiated at the request of the Gulf RESTORE Council members.
- Groups are intended to address anticipated regulatory workload if all potential funding sources come to fruition.
- In Alabama, the group has been formed.
- We have had one formal meeting and formed a tentative plan forward.
- Given the slow pace of funding to-date, no further activity has taken place.

Take Home Message

- RESTORE Act
 - Final Treasury Rules have not yet been issued.
 - Process for project proposal submission, review and selection is in development.
 - Funding levels for RESTORE remain unknown.
- DWH-NRDA:
 - Early Restoration Plan is moving forward and some projects are underway.
 - NRDA Injury Assessment is still ongoing.
- NFWF
 - Initial pilot projects have been approved.
 - Schedule for future project selection and funding has not been set.
- Regulatory Impacts
 - Regulatory work-load is unknown until final DWH NRDA & CWA settlements.
 - To date, there has not been the anticipated “landslide” of projects.
 - Whether its turns out to be a landslide or a trickle is unknown.
 - Regulatory Workgroup is formed and standing by.

QUESTIONS?

Carl Ferraro, Biologist III
Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural
Resources, State Lands Division
Carl.ferraro@dcnr.alabama.gov



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