

Message

From: Bennett, Tate [/O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=1FA92542F7CA4D01973B18B2F11B9141-BENNETT, EL]
Sent: 12/7/2017 6:25:27 PM
To: Bennett, Tate [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=1fa92542f7ca4d01973b18b2f11b9141-Bennett, E]
Subject: President Trump Appoints EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt as Chair of the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council

Just wanted to flag the below good news/press release that went out last night. Let us know if you have any questions. -
Tate



U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
NEWS RELEASE
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President Trump Appoints EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt as Chair of the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council

WASHINGTON - (December 6, 2017) - Today, President Donald Trump appointed U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt as the new chairperson of the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (Council).

"I am honored to be selected by the states and look forward to working with the governors to continue the excellent work of this Council to further the critical mission of restoring the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem," **said EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt.**

Administrator Pruitt was appointed, following his unanimous selection by the five states on the council: Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas. The Council is responsible for helping to restore the ecosystems and economies of the Gulf Coast region from the *Deepwater Horizon oil spill*.

EPA Administrator Pruitt succeeds the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, who began serving as the Council's Chair in March 2016. Administrator Pruitt has designated Kenneth Wagner, senior advisor to the administrator for regional and state affairs, to serve as his designee on the Council.

"We thank USDA for its leadership," **said Ben Scaggs, Acting Executive Director of the Council.** "The Council is poised to build on our foundation of collaboration among Council members over the past five years and we are delighted to welcome Administrator Pruitt as our new Chair. Along with our restoration partners, the Council is ready to advance our efforts to restore the Gulf ecosystem and economy from the worst environmental disaster in the nation's history."

"The State of Alabama welcomes EPA as the new Chairperson of the RESTORE Council" **said Chris Blankenship, Commissioner, Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.** "Alabama

strongly supports the collaborative nature of the RESTORE Council between the five Gulf States and our federal partners which is so foundational to restoration of the Alabama coast resulting from the impacts of the Deepwater Horizon oil disaster, as well as the cumulative effects of hurricanes on the sustainability of our important coastal resources and the people that rely on them."

"I very much appreciate the President appointing EPA as the Chair of the RESTORE Council, following the recommendation of myself and the other state members of the Council, **said Herschel Vinyard, Representative of the State of Florida on the RESTORE Council and current co-Chair.** "We are looking forward to working with the new Chair toward addressing ecosystem restoration of watersheds and critical coastal resources along the coast of Florida."

"I look forward to working with EPA as the new Chairperson of the RESTORE Council in support of large-scale ecosystem restoration in Louisiana," **said Johnny Bradberry, Governor John Bel Edwards' Executive Assistant for Coastal Activities and Chairman, Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority Board.** "Louisiana, through its Master Plan, has long recognized the need for restoration on a scale that actually impacts the health and resiliency of our critical coastal ecosystem."

"I look forward to working with Mr. Pruitt and Mr. Wagner toward comprehensive restoration of the Gulf Coast," **said Gary Rikard, Executive Director of the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality.** "Their focus on cooperative federalism resonates strongly with the spirit under which the state members of the RESTORE Council seek to operate."

"I am excited to have a chairperson of the RESTORE Council that understands the importance of state-federal agencies working together toward a common goal of restoring the Gulf of Mexico," **said Toby Baker, Commissioner of the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.**

"Administrator Pruitt's commitment to cooperative federalism and streamlining processes to ensure positive environmental outcomes makes him a perfect choice for this important role," **said Kenneth Wagner, Senior Advisor to the Administrator for Regional and State Affairs.** "I look forward to working with the states and Administrator Pruitt on continued restoration of the Gulf region."

Background

The Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast Act of 2012 (RESTORE Act) established the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (Council) and the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund (Trust Fund), and dedicates 80 percent of Clean Water Act penalties resulting from the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill to the Trust Fund, for restoration projects in the Gulf Coast region.

The Council is responsible for administering 60 percent of the total funding allocated from the Trust Fund: 30 percent (plus interest) under the Council-Selected Restoration Component and 30 percent under the Spill Impact Component. The Council is chaired by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and members include the governors of: Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas, as well as the secretaries of the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Homeland Security, the Army and the Interior.

The Council is responsible for helping to restore the ecosystems and economies of the Gulf Coast region by developing and overseeing implementation of a Comprehensive Plan and carrying out other responsibilities.

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