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**Sent:** 12/5/2017 10:56:55 PM  
**To:** Wagner, Kenneth [/o=ExchangeLabs/ou=Exchange Administrative Group (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/cn=Recipients/cn=048236ab99bc4d5ea16c139b1b67719c-Wagner, Ken]  
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**Subject:** 2017-12-5 Draft EPA Restore Council Chair Announcement.docx  
**Attachments:** 2017-12-5 Draft EPA Restore Council Chair Announcement.docx

Hi Ken – Attached, and below, please find an updated draft of this release – which we will send, following your approval and the president’s announcement of this appointment. I also added a quote from you – so please be sure to review that. I am adding Tate/Troy for any other relevant stakeholder outreach that might need to occur tomorrow, either for quotes to add to this release - or for relevant stakeholder outreach. Thank you – Liz

### **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 look forward to working with the governors of each of these states 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.

"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.**

"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."

"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."

"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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