

## **DRAFT: CPS Collaboration Summaries**

**Steering Committee Member:** Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

**Purpose:** Identify and develop restoration partnerships that will result in a comprehensive long-term approach to addressing restoration needs in coastal Alabama, with a specific emphasis on identifying "best fit," collaborative projects for consideration for the Council-Selected Restoration Component. These efforts will contextualize proposals within the broader framework of restoration efforts in coastal Alabama, potentially leveraging restoration efforts across funding streams, where appropriate, while also leveraging technical expertise both within and outside of the RESTORE Council. Activities will also increase public engagement and transparency in the decision-making process and utilize existing partnerships, including but not limited to the Management Conference of the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program (MBNEP).

### **Mechanism for Implementation:**

1. A stepwise approach to conducting planning and collaboration activities to meet the near-term need to develop strong proposals for future FPLs while setting the foundation for long-term restoration success while allowing for the flexibility needed as planning process proceeds.
2. Convene a "Coastal Alabama Restoration Summit" in the fall of 2018 to review current restoration work and solicit input from the public regarding future restoration priorities for Bucket 2.
  - a. The restoration summit will also provide updates for NFWF, Alabama Gulf Coast Recovery Council (AGCRC), and NRDA activities,
  - b. Increasing understanding of these processes and the potential types of projects that could be funded through and potentially across the various funding sources.
3. Development of "Alabama's Bucket 2 Project Development Strategy" in the context of work currently on going, including:
  - a. Coordination between the MBNEP and the Alabama Nature Conservancy (TNC) to develop a Habitat Restoration Plan (HRP) to identify potential restoration projects located in priority habitats that could be expected to succeed based on proximate stressors and ongoing activities to reduce those stressors.
  - b. MBNEP finalizing Watershed Management Plans (WMPs) in priority watersheds as well as the anticipated 5-year update of the MBNEP's Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP).
4. Attend and/or host up to ten {10} focus group and/or collaboration meetings with potential Federal and State project partners and technical experts. The strategy document will be utilized as part of these focus group efforts.
5. With support from the MBNEP Management Conference, the State will conduct planning and collaboration to develop conceptual, pre-submission project/program ideas for future FPLs.

### **Success Evaluation Methods:**

1. Design an evaluation structure and process to support efforts to establish potential indicators/measures of Bucket 2 project/program impacts;
2. Develop a framework for project and program level adaptive management recommendations;
3. Consider potential mechanisms to support learning and subsequent transfer of knowledge gained (and lessons learned) to future project design and implementation. To the extent

possible, this work will consider similar approaches developed to track NRDA project/program success in Alabama.

**Steering Committee Member:** Florida Department of Environmental Protection

**Purpose:** Identify and develop restoration partnerships, in consultation with the public that will result in a comprehensive long-term vision for its coastal habitats, communities, and economy to support more effective submissions for Council-Selected Restoration Component funding. Specifically, this work will contextualize the proposals for Bucket 2 funding within the broader vision for Florida, leveraging not only restoration dollars across funding streams but also expertise both within and outside of the RESTORE Council. Activities will also increase public engagement and transparency in the decision-making process.

**Mechanism for Implementation:** State of Florida will take a long-term approach toward building and sustaining restoration partnerships, including expanding investment in public engagement and best available science endeavors. Specific activities include:

1. A stepwise approach to conducting planning and collaboration activities will be taken over the 5-year period of this award to meet the near-term need to develop the strongest proposals as possible for the next FPL while setting the foundation for long-term restoration success, allowing for flexibility as needed as the planning process proceeds.
2. Workplans will be developed with activities that contribute to achieving input from and buy-in of the public, stakeholders, and experts to support the long-term vision for coastal Florida that incorporates existing relevant regional plans, using the best available science, and includes goals and, to the extent possible, quantifiable objectives.
  - a. Cultivation of new/reaffirmation of current restoration funding partners to leverage Bucket 2 funds to their greatest benefit in contributing to the long-term vision for Florida;
  - b. Enter into technical and funding partnerships for projects development and implementation; and
  - c. Development of a monitoring and evaluation approach for adapting the long-term vision and restoration priorities over time based upon new information
3. Collaboration activities will be focused on
  - a. identifying those project/program concepts (including technical and funding partners) for which proposals will be developed for consideration in the next FPL, and then
  - b. Initiating development of those proposals in conjunction with those partners.
  - c. With support from a contractor, the State will conduct planning and collaboration to develop conceptual, presubmission project/program ideas for the next FPL These activities will include stakeholder and public engagement as part of the planning needed to place proposals within a broader context of long-term ecological goals and leveraging with other relevant funding streams. Contractor support may also include participation in the RESTORE Council Monitoring and Assessment Work Group (CMAWG).

**Success Evaluation Methods:** The State of Florida anticipates utilizing the following methods:

1. Developing a decision-support tool by adding evaluation criteria that are directly related to Council-Selected Restoration Component planning and adaptive management.
2. Procuring a contractor to conduct periodic evaluations of overall Bucket 2 project/program impact at scales of the watersheds within the state in order to develop and implement adaptive management strategies.
3. Complete an inventory or relevant data, reports, plans, and models and conducting an analysis of critical information gaps. An outcome of this work would be to develop specific tasks and strategies related to evaluation and adaptive management within the State.

**Steering Committee Member:** Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority

**Purpose:** Planning and collaboration with local, State, Federal, and other leaders and experts to achieve commitments of the Comprehensive Plan by meeting and coordinating with technical points of contact (including state and federal), other funding entities, and academics across the Gulf of Mexico utilizing BAS to highlight the location and severity of known or emerging stressors both in Louisiana and Gulf-wide. This information will be synthesized to inform Louisiana's position on future FPL investments intended to mitigate those stressors or restore impacted resources, leverage funding from other sources, identify measures/metrics/indicators for success of actions in Gulf priority watersheds, and inform adaptive management for future FPLs.

**Mechanism for Implementation:**

1. CPRA anticipates working with the Water Institute of the Gulf.
2. Engagement, meetings, and discussions with relevant technical partners across the Gulf, monthly webinars or in person meetings with the RESTORE Council Staff, and compiling the information from the collaborative process into a digestible format to inform future FPL investments and long-term planning maximizing co-benefits across funding streams.
3. Through Council staff engagement, Council staff may be able to identify opportunities to utilize the information for future proposal evaluation based on BAS or to support other staff activities which in turn support the Council.
4. Through regular meetings with the Council Staff Science Advisor, as well as through CPRA's POC on CMAWG, as these proposed engagement activities on stressors moves forward, strategic points of connection with CMAWG may be identified and coordinated on.
5. Development of concepts that could be pursued for future FPL funding through discussions and meetings will be both deliberative and opportunistic, based upon participation in regional, state, or national meetings with relevant partners and stakeholders.

**Success Evaluation Methods:**

1. The Water Institute of the Gulf will meet and coordinate with technical points of contact (both state and federal), other funding entities, and academics across the Gulf of Mexico utilizing BAS to highlight the location and severity of known or emerging stressors.
2. Information will be compiled from the collaborative process into a digestible format to inform future FPL investments and long-term planning maximizing co-benefits across funding streams.
3. The synthesized information will be used to inform the State of Louisiana's position on future FPL investments and proposals the State wants to prioritize which best support projects intended to mitigate those stressors or restore impacted resources, leverage funding from other sources, identify measures/metrics/indicators for success of actions in Gulf priority watersheds, and inform adaptive management for future FPLs.
4. Development of concepts that could be pursued for future FPL funding and how projects and programs in watersheds and estuaries facing similar stress could be aligned to leverage other investments to increase ecological services. For example, meetings with the Centers of Excellences (COEs) and other funders will provide opportunities for leveraging of investments based on BAS.

**Steering Committee Member:** Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality

**Purpose:** Identify and develop new restoration partnerships and maintain existing partnerships, in consultation with the public, which will result in a comprehensive long-term vision for its coastal habitats, communities, and economy by leveraging not only restoration dollars across funding streams but also expertise both within and outside of the RESTORE Council.

**Mechanism for Implementation:** Mississippi will take a long-term, step-wise approach toward building and sustaining restoration partnerships, including investments in public engagement and best available science endeavors. Activities will build upon existing partnerships and collaboration pathways to maximize restoration efforts and outcomes, and to develop the strongest proposals as possible for the next FPL while setting the foundation for long-term restoration success.

Activities in year 1 (2018) will be focused on identifying those project/program concepts (including technical and funding partners) for which proposals will be developed for consideration in the next FPL, and then initiating development of those proposals in conjunction with those partners. The State of Mississippi will conduct planning and collaboration to develop conceptual, pre-submission project/program ideas for the next FPL. These activities may include stakeholder and public engagement as part of the planning needed to place proposals within a broader context of long-term ecological goals and leveraging with other relevant funding streams. MDEQ will also participate in any Council-wide workgroups needed to support development of FPL 3/10-Year Strategy.

Activities in year 2 (2019) will be focused on finalizing and submitting proposals. In addition to continuing all collaboration activities needed to maintain the foundation built in year 1, CPS activities in the remainder of 2019 and early 2020 will focus on participating in Council-level activities to develop and finalize the next FPL 3/10-Year Funding Strategy. Activities in year 2 (2019) will be further focused on finalizing and submitting proposals. In addition to continuing all collaboration activities needed to maintain the foundation built in year 1, CPS activities in the remainder of 2019 and early 2020 will focus on participating in Council-level activities to develop and finalize the next FPL 3/10-Year Funding Strategy. Activities in years 3-5 (2020-2022) will build upon those outlined for years 1-2. Upon finalization of FPL 3/10-Year Strategy in 2020, the State of Mississippi will turn its attention to finalizing the awards for projects and initiating planning for the FPL 3/10-Year Strategy.

**Success Evaluation Methods:** The State of Mississippi will continue investments in its monitoring and adaptive management tools by adding evaluation criteria that are directly related to Council-Selected Restoration Component (Bucket 2) planning and adaptive management. As part of this effort, the State of Mississippi will conduct periodic evaluations of overall Bucket 2 project/program impact at scales of the watersheds within Mississippi in order to develop and implement adaptive management strategies. Further, the State of Mississippi will interact with the Council Monitoring and Assessment Workgroup to aid in the development of procedures, standards, and plans that could be used to inform any FPL related projects, proposals, and/or activities. An outcome of this work will be the inclusion of monitoring and adaptive management information in the respective developed FPL proposals.

**Steering Committee Member:** Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

**Purpose:** Work in coordination with a team of Texas coastal experts, elected officials, representatives for Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), the four other Gulf states, federal entities and the public, using the best available science, in meeting the requirements of the RESTORE Act Council-Selected Restoration Component and the commitments of the Comprehensive Plan update in 2016.

**Mechanism for Implementation:** The State will hire a contractor (Harte Institute) to:

1. Identify and enhance partnerships through the consultation with technical coastal experts, elected officials, Deepwater Horizon funding partners, federal entities and the public along the Texas and Gulf coast.
2. Build on existing plans already developed for the Texas coastal areas to identify priorities, reaffirm or cultivate new restoration funding partners and contribute to the long-term vision for addressing coastal habitats and vitalize the Texas coastal economy.
  - a. First year activities will focus on identifying priorities, partners and pre-submission program/project ideas that are within the broad vision for Texas and Gulf coast areas.
  - b. Include workshops/meetings with technical coastal experts to present a summary of plans, partnerships and priorities that have been implemented and to introduce any missing Bucket 2 objective area plans.
3. Work with local elected officials and the public regarding the identification of priorities and to introduce the thought process for large-scale partnerships and leveraged funding for future FPLs to approach the Deepwater Horizon (NRDA and NFWF) programs to identify similar priorities, and restoration needs on the Texas and Gulf coast.
4. Year two will include best available science endeavors with on-going engagement with technical experts and Gulf state partners to identify additional activities for the developing of the 10-year funding strategy (longterm vision). Proposed work in year two will also include discussions on evaluation and adaptive management tools

**Success Evaluation Methods:**

1. TCEQ and its contractor, with the input of the technical coastal experts, local elected officials and the public, will develop decision-support tools and evaluation criteria that support Council-Selected Restoration Component planning requirements.
2. Development of adaptive management strategies for incorporation into FPLs will also be completed.
3. Activities that will be conducted in year one of the CPS award include completing an inventory of reports, relevant data, plans, and models and conducting analyses to identify information gaps.

**Steering Committee Member:** Homeland Security, U.S. Coast Guard

**Purpose:** Strengthen Gulf of Mexico restoration by determining the need/ability to incorporate spill resiliency and spill response readiness into selected RESTORE restoration activities.

**Mechanism for Implementation:** Collaborative meetings with the restoration and response offices within each of the Council member agencies, as well as Council members, will be held to determine the need/ability to integrate spill resiliency into restoration planning both conceptually and in the design and development of FPL projects.

1. Coast Guard will lead an interagency developed process to develop a proposal to assess the risk of spills in areas where Bucket 2 funded and/or proposed restoration projects are located
2. Use an iterative process to develop a Risk Matrix which could be used by Council members to facilitate right-sizing contingency planning relative to risk.
  - a. Identify existing processes and tools for assessing threat of spills, vulnerability of resources, and risk measures.
  - b. The risk scoring matrix will be used to evaluate proposed restoration project locations to allow for the appropriate level of planning to be incorporated into the relevant FPL project proposal
3. An interagency team will write a proposal to fund development of a matrix to establish contingency planning targets based on risk level.
4. Public engagement is anticipated to occur through public collaboration meetings in each state and through regular updates and discussions at standing response community public meetings and conferences.

**Success Evaluation Methods:**

1. Identification of available threat assessment tools and vulnerability assessment tools, including inventory of relevant data, reports, plans, and models and conducting an analysis of critical information gaps.
2. Design a risk assessment matrix to categorize restored areas according to their risk of impact from acute pollution events. For areas categorized as high risk, recommendations will be made for modifications in response strategies to be incorporated into future FPL proposals and/or recommendations for project design modifications to improve resiliency.