NOAA Science Advisory Board

Establishment of an
RESTORE Science Advisory Board

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Briefing Purpose

• Provide overview of NOAA’s involvement in RESTORE science
• Request establishment of a RESTORE Advisory Body as a Working Group under the NOAA SAB
• Request SAB review of the draft Terms of Reference for the Working Group
Background

**RESTORE Act Requirements**

- Legislative intent - "to carry out research, observation, and monitoring to support the long-term sustainability of the ecosystem, fish stocks, fish habitat, and the recreational, commercial, and charter fishing industry in the Gulf of Mexico”
- NOAA and USFWS shall consult with the Regional Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (GMFMC) and the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission (GSMFC) in carrying out the program.
- Priority shall be given to integrated, long-term projects that build on, or are coordinated with, related research activities and address current or anticipated marine ecosystem, fishery, or wildlife management information needs.
- Funds may not be used for any existing or planned research led by NOAA, unless agreed to in writing by the grant recipient; implement existing regulations or initiate new regulations promulgated or proposed by NOAA; or develop or approve a new limited access privilege program.
Section 1604 of the RESTORE Act

- NOAA shall develop framework to establish the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Science, Observation, Monitoring, and Technology Program (Program).

- Section 1604 to be funded by:
  - 2.5% of the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Trust Fund, established by the RESTORE Act, which comprises 80% of Clean Water Act civil penalties to be recovered from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, and
  - 25% of annual Trust Fund earned interest and investment proceeds.
  - First $1B in funds from Transocean settlement; no year money
RESTORE Funds Allocation

Distribution of Clean Water Act Penalties

Clean Water Act Penalties → 20% Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund

80% Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund

- 35% Equally distributed to 5 Gulf States (AL, FL, LA, MS, TX)
- 30%* Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council
- 30% Impact based distribution to 5 Gulf States (AL, FL, LA, MS, TX)
- 2.5%* Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Science, Observation, Monitoring, and Technology Program
- 2.5%* Centers of Excellence

*Supplemented by interest generated by the Trust Fund (50% to Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council, 25% to Science Program, 25% to Centers of Excellence)
**Purpose & Principles**

**Purpose**: Achieve an *integrative, holistic understanding of the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem* and support, to the maximum extent practicable, restoration efforts and the long-term sustainability of the ecosystem

**Principles**:  
- An ecosystem approach  
- Integrate and build on existing research, monitoring, and modeling efforts and plans  
- Leverage partnerships  
- Work within a management and policy framework developed with other entities in the Gulf  
- Design a scalable and modular approach
Focus Areas

To achieve the broad categories articulated in the RESTORE Act, research shall focus on four areas:

• “State of health” of the Gulf
• Integrated analysis and synthesis of data
• Ecosystem processes, functioning and connectivity through integrative field/laboratory efforts
• Holistic approaches to observing and monitoring
Program Development Process

- Developed by cross-NOAA Line Office team, with US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) representatives
- Initial guidance from NOAA Administrator to inform discussions
  - Emphasize importance of ecosystem services
  - Approach the Gulf of Mexico as an integrated ecosystem
- Engaged with partners and stakeholders throughout process
- Once the Clean Water Act penalties are resolved and operational funds are available, NOAA will engage with numerous Gulf partners, as well as NRDA and others, to prepare a detailed program implementation plan
Organization & Governance

- Administratively located in NOAA’s National Ocean Service but with cross-agency participation
- Small NOAA program staff within NOS to administer the science program
- Mixed funding approaches (e.g., grants, contracts, cooperative agreements)
- Executive Oversight Board of senior NOAA and USFWS science leadership
NOAA will also establish a FACA-approved Advisory Body as a standing Working Group that may include representatives from the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, and other organizations to meet regularly (2-3X/year) to provide advice and input for implementation of NOAA’s RESTORE science program.
SAB Action Item 1

Does the SAB agree to the establishment of a RESTORE Advisory Working Group under the umbrella of the SAB?
SAB Action Item 2

1) Does the SAB agree to provide comments on the draft Terms of Reference for the WG?

2) Is the SAB comfortable with the proposed approach to membership for the WG?
Questions?