

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

Gulf Coast Ecosystem
Restoration Task Force

May 6, 2011

Re: Notification of Consultation and Coordination on the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Strategy Development

Dear Tribal Leader:

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is initiating consultation and coordination with federally recognized Indian tribes to seek input during the development of the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Strategy (the Strategy) being developed by a State and Federal Task Force created by President Obama. The Strategy is being developed to help address the many challenges in the Gulf, due to a wide variety of stressors, most recently the BP Oil Spill. The Strategy will inform Gulf-wide ecosystem restoration to address this longstanding ecological decline to begin moving toward a more resilient Gulf Coast ecosystem.

EPA chairs the Task Force and is spearheading the tribal consultation and coordination. This consultation and coordination process will be conducted in accordance with the *EPA Policy on Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribes*, (www.epa.gov/tribal/consultation/consult-policy.htm). EPA invites you and your designated consultation representative(s) to participate in this process.

From the date of this letter to September 30, 2011, EPA will consult and coordinate with tribes throughout the development of the Strategy. This will include posting background information and documents for review on the EPA Tribal Portal (www.epa.gov/tribal). EPA will hold two webinars and set up face-to-face meetings and/or teleconferences to coordinate and consult with tribes. Final comments on the Strategy and its development are due by September 30, 2011. Attached is a consultation and coordination plan for this action that includes more details about the action and the process, including the timeline and information on how you can provide input on this action.

Please do not hesitate to contact the official EPA contact person for this consultation and coordination process, Angela Bandemehr, Gulf Task Force Tribal Coordinator, at bandemehr.angela@epa.gov or 202-564-1427, should you have any questions.

We look forward to working with you on this important matter.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John H. Hankinson, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

John H. Hankinson, Jr.
Executive Director
Attachment