

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Strategy Development

**Angela Bandemehr
Gulf Task Force Tribal Coordinator**

**USET Semi-Annual Meeting
May 18, 2011**



Background

- Focus on Gulf due to Deepwater Horizon spill
- Executive Order 13554, October 5, 2010:
 - “To effectively address the damage caused by the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, address the longstanding ecological decline, and begin moving toward a more resilient Gulf Coast ecosystem, **ecosystem restoration is needed.**”
 - Establishes Task Force to develop a Restoration Strategy
- DWH NRDA independent but informed by TF

About the Task Force



- To deliver a restoration strategy for the Gulf Coast by October 4, 2011
- Made up of 11 Federal Agencies, White House offices and five Gulf States
- Chair: Lisa P. Jackson
EPA Administrator
- Vice-Chair: Garret Graves
State of Louisiana



About the Task Force



- The task force is directed to:
 - Communication and engage with federal, tribal and local governments and stakeholders;
 - Define ecosystem restoration goals and describe milestones towards reaching those goals;
 - Consider existing research and ecosystem restoration planning efforts;
 - Identify major policy areas where coordinated actions between government agencies is needed;
 - Evaluate existing research and monitoring programs and gaps in data collection.

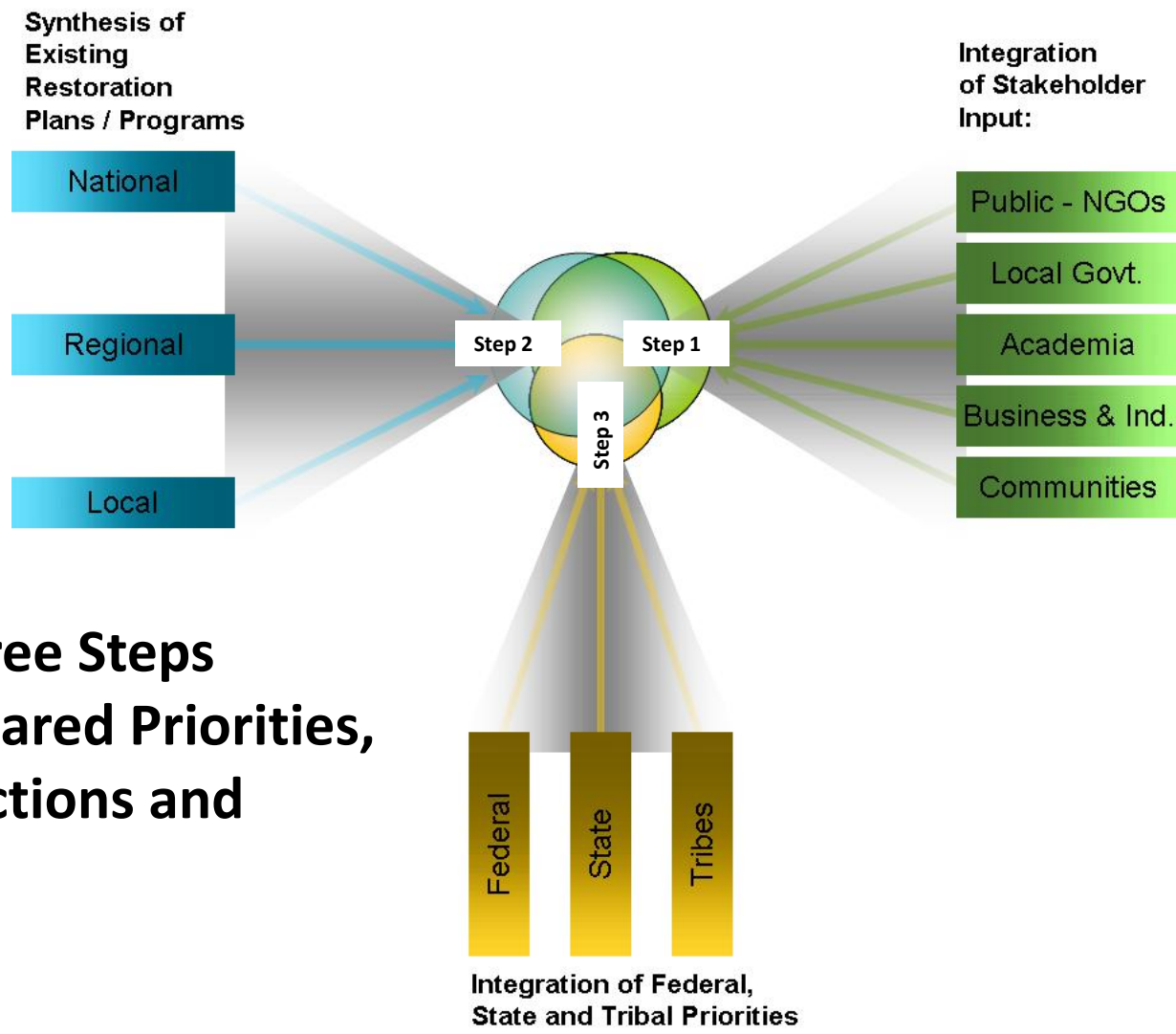


Tribal Engagement



- The task force is directed to:
 - “Communicat[e] and engag[e] with States, tribes, local governments, other stakeholders in the Gulf Coast region, and the public on ecosystem restoration, as well as other aspects of Gulf recovery, including economic recovery and public health efforts;”
 - “Communicate with affected tribes in a manner consistent with Executive Order 13175;”
 - Task Force and technical working groups may include tribal representatives.

Strategy Development Steps



**Merger of Three Steps
will Reveal Shared Priorities,
Supporting Actions and
Capacities**

Strategy Development Schedule:

Week Beginning:	February				March				April				May				June				July				August				September				October															
	1st	7th	14th	21st	28th	7th	14th	21st	28th	4th	11th	18th	25th	1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th	6th	13th	20th	27th	4th	11th	18th	25th	1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th	6th	12th	19th	26th	3rd	10th	17th	24th									
					TF Mtg. New Orleans								TF Mtg. Mobile								TF Mtg. Houston / Galveston								TF Mtg. Biloxi												Strategy to the President							



GOALS ESTABLISHED

- Enhance Community Resilience
- Restore and Conserve Habitat
- Restore Water Quality
- Replenish and Protect Living Coastal and Marine Resources





Gulf Strategy Proposed Restoration Goals and Primary Focus

- **Enhance Community Resilience**
 - science-based decision tools and supporting techniques
 - effectively support communities and connect them with other programs, such as health and economic recovery services
- **Restore and Conserve Habitat**
 - improve the effectiveness of state and federal conservation and navigation management, develop habitat conservation and restoration strategies, and take actions that consider the varying, and sometimes competing, needs
- **Restore Water Quality**
 - use careful science-based review and innovative approaches to enhance water quality
- **Replenish and Protect Living Coastal and Marine Resources**
 - promote resource management that focuses on the needs and functions of the ecosystem as a whole

Gulf Strategy

Foundational Elements



- Science-Based Adaptive Management
- Community Engagement, Outreach and Education
- Regional, State and Local Implementation Efforts
- International Collaboration
- Consultation and Coordination with Tribes

Gulf Strategy

Next Steps



- Seek input from federal, tribal, state, local governments and the public
- Five key questions
 - Are these the right goals?
 - What are the critical actions/major outcomes needed?
 - What new programs/actions are needed?
 - What key policy changes will improve the process to support restoration?
 - What would success look like, and how should it be measured and reported?

Tribal Consultation and Coordination Process



- Process follows EPA's Tribal Consultation Policy
 - Identification
 - Notification
 - Input
 - Follow-up
- Mechanisms include:
 - EPA Tribal Portal:
www.epa.gov/tribal
 - Background information
 - Gulf Strategy Background and Draft Strategy (when available)
 - Submit comments (web, email, post)
 - Face-to-face meetings
 - Webinars



Tribal Consultation: Key Suggested Areas for Input




- 5 Key questions
- Comments on documents:
 - Strategy Background Document – released May 2011
 - Draft Strategy – release date TBD
- Additional areas to think about:
 - Suggestions for follow-up with tribes
 - Ideas about long-term engagement of tribes in Gulf Strategy implementation



Tips

- Check the EPA Tribal Portal periodically for updates
- Get engaged early on
- Help us help you keep in touch
- **Provide comments on Strategy as early as possible**





Angela Bandemehr

Gulf Task Force Tribal
Coordinator

202-564-1427

bandemehr.angela@epa.gov

www.epa.gov/tribal

Thank You!

Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force

The goals of the Task Force are:

- Enhance Community Resilience
- Restore and Conserve Habitat
- Restore Water Quality
- Replenish and Protect Living Coastal and Marine Resources

Process

- Gulf-wide ecosystem restoration strategy (broad in scope)
- Established by Executive Order (E.O. 13554; 10/05/2010)
- No designated funding; facilitate existing funding toward priority restoration actions
- Enhance alignment of Federal, Tribal, State and Local policy to facilitate restoration actions
- Potential future establishment of Gulf Coast Council as long-term coordinating body
- Public engagement
- Requires scientific, legal, and economic support

Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration

The goals of NRDAR are:

- Restore the habitats and resources to the condition they would have been had the oil or hazardous substances not been released
- Compensate the public for the loss of their use or enjoyment of natural resources

Process

- Site specific (nexus to injured resources)
- Authorized under Federal law (OPA, CERCLA, CWA)
- Responsible party pays restoration costs
- Trustee Council oversight
- Public engagement
- Requires scientific, legal, and economic support

The NRDA actions are independent of the Task Force; however, the restoration strategy developed by the TF will help inform restoration planning and implementation by the Trustee Council and other entities working to restore the health and resiliency of the Gulf.

Ecosystem Restoration



Per Executive Order- "Ecosystem restoration" means:

- All activities, projects, methods, and procedures appropriate to enhance the health and resilience of the Gulf Coast ecosystem, as measured in terms of the physical, biological, or chemical properties of the ecosystem, or the services it provides, and to strengthen its ability to support the diverse economies, communities, and cultures of the region.
- Includes activities that initiate or accelerate the recovery of an ecosystem with respect to its health, integrity, and sustainability.
- Includes protecting and conserving ecosystems so they can continue to reduce impacts from tropical storms and other disasters, support robust economies, and assist in mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

Tribal Consultation Process Timeline for Strategy and Beyond:



April			May			June				July					August				September			October					
11th	18th	25th	6th	9th	16th	23rd	30th	6th	13th	20th	27th	4th	11th	18th	25th	1st	8th	15th	22nd	29th	5th	12th	19th	26th	4th	10th	17th
			TF Mtg. Mobile								TF Mtg. Houston / Galveson										TF Mtg. Biloxi				Strategy to the President		

