

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT



Group 1 (Blue)

Question 1: How can we best keep everyone informed & ensure good two-way communication?

Commenter's Affiliation	Comment
Non-governmental Organization	Public needs to know exactly where the Task Force is and what it is doing, so that the public has something to respond to. Good communications from where you are. We work a lot with the Gulf of Mexico management. They have a meeting every other month, moving from state to state. If there can be a layout of a series of meetings, and where they are located. There needs to be some type of general public advisory board and there needs to be a seat on the Task Force of that representative.
Non-governmental Organization	Needs to be a citizen input. We know that was helpful in Alaska. There needs to be some input from each of the 5 states that is citizen input, not just state officials. A group that can speak down to the non-governmental organizations in the state.
Non-governmental Organization	We have 130 representatives across the Gulf that endorse that as a recommendation. Those representatives would have to be accountable to those that they are representing. This needs to be an accountable process.
General Public	Is there a central location where the staff is operating from? Part of what is coming out of this process is an understanding of what's needed.
General Public	It might be helpful to set up a website that your staff keeps updated on a daily basis, and have a mechanism where the public can comment on the plan. It would be nice to be able to follow that on a daily basis, and a place where you can put comments and other people can see those comments. There are a lot of people spread over a large area.



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General Public	Some of the points we heard when LA has their meetings. There are a lot of communities that don't have connectivity through the internet. There needs to be some connectivity through local officials and through their representatives.
General Public	I worked in the emergency response – the media was presenting biased [information] and things that they had picked up on their own. They were looking for input on how to get the word out with people who don't have internet. If there could be some official communication with the media to reach those people. The media would all show the exact same thing. Channel 3, and Channel 5. Something that people could relate to.
Academia	I would echo the part of having the info on the website, so that after this type of report goes out they can see exactly what is going on – the background information, meetings.
Non-governmental Organization	Developing partnership with areas commands. On the front end, identifying non-profits who work with communities that can't get to those meetings. Have some satellite meetings and partnering with non-governmental organizations that could make sure there are good representatives.
General Public	Once you get your website up you should be able to sign up for this type of information.
Non-governmental Organization	Email subscribe list, the other thing is that we need to be able to communicate back up [to the Task Force].



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General Public	<p>Maybe we can opt in on bringing information back up -- for those of us who would be willing to participate. I don't know how often the Task Force is planning to meet in person – I think that it would be good in addition to the website to have a broad range of agencies and levels of government represented on the Task Force, and I guess over time different ones would be prominent in different aspects. Members of the Task Force should be accessible in additional meetings for people that get more involved in the communities. I'm saying they need to be approached for them or their designee – to be available for people to have move sit down discussions.</p>
Non-governmental Organization	<p>More of a deliberate effort to cross over meetings. Every state has leagues of cities and counties – if someone from the Task Force staff could come to a large meeting like that and communicate that first time through how you can communicate with the Task Force. What would demonstrate to you that your input was heard and considered. The website should be interactive, and have someone get back to that person. An email back saying that this should be considered. When BP was taking ideas. Similar to that.</p>
General Public	<p>I think that it could be demonstrated by – if we know what issue you are working on. And then when you get comments and we see the course changed.</p>



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Non-governmental Organization	I think the BP thing broke down – it was not communicated back (well, why aren't you doing this). We need to see the actual deliberation. I'd love to see the comments from local folks in Task Force reports. One of the most powerful things in the previous reports were those snippets. I think it would be really important to have one or more people accessible by telephone. I would be requesting research information and data. If there is a specific product that people are requesting from you, it should be available. There should be someone whose job it is to respond. It was frustrating for a lot of people early on, that they could not get answers very easily. I was finally able to access someone in the governors office who would go track down the answers and get back to me.
General Public	I think the other thing to was that during the crisis part – a lot of the frustration locally was that it was going to someone in Houston. The person that answered the phone didn't know where we were. I realize that it is important to have people based in DC. The people of the gulf coast need to feel that the Task Force is with us. I know that there will be a lot more trust if there is a presence along the gulf coast.
Non-governmental Organization	People that are really wired in – if we have 2 minute videos of what you are really doing – making it user friendly. This is a huge topic- but as you are soliciting comments from folks. You need to narrow your focus as much as you can, and use the information you get. As much as you can crystallize questions. During Earth Day – there should be some tools that organizations can use to communicate the Task Force agenda and objectives. The idea of citizen's component to the Task Force. Your timeline is 11 months, and you may have junctures in there that are really crucial in getting to where you need to be.



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Academia	[Other than the internet,] I would argue that there is a low population that read the newspapers. Use the Radio – use the post office. That is where it is important to have non-governmental organizations involved. You have indigenous populations with community gathering places.
General Public	It's very hard to get a direct connection with the Asian American population, with those people who have a language barrier, and have no way to get to the internet. I was thinking schools and sending home multilingual fliers home from school.
General Public	In terms of accountability – Coastal EJ community ambassador program. These guys know the groups to reach out to. They did it after the oil spill and could do it again.



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General Public	One of the most important things – Governors commission in AL. Problem is choosing which type of project is going to make the most impact. Having some sort of matrix that would show which would show us things that are the most beneficial. Transportation projects, sewage upgrades – these could create some sort of a problem. But if we had some sort of decision factor so that all of us don't get off track. I have been working with GRG in AL. We are putting emphasis are evaluation criteria. There will be more projects and more ideas. There needs to be a balances score card of criteria that is public and transparent that we can use as we move along.
General Public	Thinking Big – part of the health of the Gulf of Mexico is derived from the health of the rivers that flow into it. It will make it easier to restore the gulf when you protect the in stream river flows. You need to think about what these rivers contribute the health of the Gulf.
General Public	Environmental restoration is the key to economic recovery.
General Public	Evaluation criteria – South Florida Ecosystem Task Force. It's a big matrix of what all the projects are and what were their benefits.
Non-governmental Organization	We hope folks look at the impact from the spill in the deep blue water, and it is the hardest area to access the impact on. The blue water bore the brunt of this. We need to have greater understanding of what the impacts have been. South Florida Ecosystem restoration Task Force – we can't just evaluate the projects just on what they do – we need to focus on what they do together. We need to look at what order to do them in and in what combination they need to be done.



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General Public	Work in tandem with jobs and ecosystem restoration. Make sure that there is another level of work besides just big contract coming on.
Academia	I want to comment on blue water being affected, but what is happening now is our shore line being affected. We have seen a loss of commitment to restore the plants along the shore line during the clean up. These projects have to have some component of research and what we are doing is right and what will be the next step.
General Public	Personally, I think the most important thing this Task Force can do is to be sure that everything that you do release to the public is factual. When this whole thing was happening and right up until recent history. We got a lot of information that those of us who live on the Gulf of Mexico know is flat out not true. It's hard to work with your agencies when you are lying to us. Senator Nelson's office, he was the only federal contact throughout the whole thing who I felt I could rely on and who was out there looking for factual information and getting that information to you people.
General Public	The access and the credibility – I want to bring us back to the questions – which gets into the rest of the hands I think there are a couple of questions. We don't know the actually impacts about what they were, how the coral reefs existing below the surface. We are really going to have a hard time with this. I ping off of the goals and the performance. What is unsustainable. We talk about those sustainable restoration. How do we set those goals of sustainability?



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General Public	One of the things -- and I have been part of EPA on other issues -- I would encourage us to recognize and accept that we are never going to be comfortable in moment that we know everything. But I don't think that we can afford to wait until we know everything. We are always going to be struggling with how we are going to communicate how we get the information back and forth. All of us recognize how much we are loosing on a daily basis. I would encourage the Task Force to accept.
General Public	I think the Task Force needs to think about national perceptions about the Gulf. The nation needs to see the Gulf as a national asset. Establishing and securing funding for habitat restoration and utilizing local labor. We should have a whole lot of little cells all over the place that are doing local restoration.
Non-governmental Organization	What is sustainability? You've got an opportunity to define what is sustainable in the Gulf of Mexico. Where is it there we need to utilize small business and people that are out of work? Where do we want to build that sustainability? Congressman -- Our Gulf fisherman really do value the resource and if they can be trained on how to restore that resource, they will do it. Interpreting the science that you have and moving that to the decision process you are going to need some sort of body to tell you where to go with that science.
General Public	We need to talk about education -- teaching students how important this is. How will the Task Force use this criteria.
General Public	We would hope that the hypoxic zone that is such a tremendous loss of habitat. That is an upstream issue, but it has to be addressed as an important issue.



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General Public	To question number 2 -- this was a blue water disaster. We need to look at shore line protection. 100, 1000. We need to promote oyster and wetland grasses. We feel that it important not to wait until the NRDA process finishes up. Building oyster beds creates nursery habitat. It also does some shoreline protection. The projects that the nature conservancy has done – behind the oyster. These kind of projects that can be done now.
General Public	To put this in a context. I think the first project that needs to be funded is using formal analysis tools to figure out what the fundamental projects need to be done, what the community wants to have achieved. And it allows people to add in and recommend.
General Public	It is good to let the Nation know how important it is to restore the Gulf. Its going to be a balance of that kind of advertising. I heard the term "shovel ready project" – there were some projects that came out of this region for stimulus funding. There is not budget for your Task Force. Is there a possibility that this is going to happen with out money?
General Public	I don't know what the initial project is, but we need to have strong language in there to encourage the use of existing job training programs. But still connecting the dots to get actual jobs. Not good when companies come in to do the work.
General Public	Proper identification of, and knowledge of environmentally sensitive areas. There was not a good knowledge of these areas in the project. Local knowledge has to be integrated into the process.



Group 2 (Yellow)

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General Public	A very interactive listserv would give all the states access every day. NOAA has an active list serve in place already, look to them for advice on how to do it. The Gulf of Mexico Alliance has a very good one. Still also need face-to-face settings such as this, both venues are important. - Gulf Restoration Network has done a good job at bringing together local and national non-governmental organizations, their list serve may be good to use. Also EPA dial in conference calls are very easy and informative also.
General Public	Need to have this Task Force to somehow have a formal way for locals to input their ideas. Maybe have each county along Gulf come up with list of their priorities, this way they can get it to EPA and get action plan developed. It would be terrible not to learn from the challenges of how we dealt with response. Engaging each individual county to see what the local interests and ideas and bring them together would be a good idea.
Local Government	The people here were all brought by the local government and governor. We need to involve everyone. Even during the spill they wouldn't listen to my mayor at that point.
General Public	There are a lot of interactive websites here. Gulf Restoration Network could be our voice, we have talked about our organizations going up under their umbrella because they already have that.
Non-governmental Organization	We use media to get information out and news, I think what would be great is that there is not one sure thing that works, not just internet or town hall meetings. When you use Town Hall meetings, you let people know exactly what is going on and how they can help. It would be great to have a grassroots community to be involved with that, a unified presence where you explain what is going on and how to take part.



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General Public	I heard about this meeting on Facebook, it's great to continue using that.
General Public	As a resident of the fifth state that isn't on many of these listservs, I would request that Florida be included. I think it would be better if you had a website with links to local's pages, with a Facebook address, etc.
General Public	If you do have listserv, could you please have a daily digest, or weekly?
General Public	If you had a website with an inventory and many other links, that be useful because then we could interact well.
General Public	I want to emphasize what he said, that interrelationship is very important, making it easier to know who we are and communicate independent of your effort.
Non-governmental Organization	Thanks for having us - this is the first step in the right direction. Fishermen don't play with computers and all in all that's the first hit, so for the line of communication, we have to find an avenue to ensure a level of certainty. We haven't even finished the clean-up so we need a way to convey the message to people who don't use internet/email.
General Public	[The best way of informing all, especially those without web capabilities] would be a town hall. Sometimes I don't even get an email until the day before or even day of the town hall, so we need to give a better time frame and heads up.
General Public	You can't forget the newspaper and flyers.



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General Public	[Recommend] a dedicated outreach staff person that can work in each state or a number of counties. If each area knew of one dedicated person they could go to, to get the word out, that may be a great way to get the information. Either for one state, or one person has x number of counties, but conceptually, people could see that there is a contact person that they can send information to or get information from. Not just website addresses but make it more personal.
General Public	How about a list of those people who came today? If we are here, it's important to our community.
General Public	It would seem to me that you need a director of communications that listens to what the community needs and takes ideas from the Task Force to apply it to the community itself.
General Public	A very untapped group is the 20s and 30s, they want to do something and getting them organized to go door to door or be organized is important.
General Public	We as citizens have a lot of trouble getting out questions answered. I would like to ask Ms. Jackson about fish for instance, there are so many questions that are unanswered because there are different answers from EPA, Coast Guard, etc, there is no credibility. We need our questions answered, one on one, town hall, question and answer sessions.
General Public	If there is one face between certain communities and the Task Force, I don't know if they need to be part of the community, but that one person who is the conduit, to the Task Force.



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General Public	It should be someone from the community because we do not trust anyone outside. People are sick and have been proved to be sick from the spill, we feel like different things are being said to push the seafood issue so it is important.
Academia	Connected to colleges and universities, many of whom come from the affected communities.
General Public	What is one issue of the Task Force, economic development? Does it go beyond the Gulf and the coast? I am concerned about diversity and am concerned about representing different sectors from the community.
General Public	Where are the other Task Forces? How can we communicate with them, all these issues are the same, we can't be healthy with out a healthy environment. If they have to be separate, we have to have access and knowledge about all of them.
General Public	My biggest concern is that I am in Venice right now, when is the Task Force going to take over? We have to complete the cleanup before we start a restoration. There is heavy oil all over our marsh, bad. When are you guys taking over the cleanup and when will this all start?
General Public	I would like to second the statement about town hall meetings. Can we have access to the list of people who were in attendance today to be able to stay in touch?



Group 2 (Yellow)

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Commenter's Affiliation	Comment
General Public	Like you said, there's oil everywhere. Even like you said, a thousand barrels a day went to 100,000, how do we know when BP is telling the truth? You're letting a foreign company, BP, close our beaches to begin with. What's most important to the administration, is it the money or the health of the people here?
General Public	Somehow in the last decade or two the ecosystem has become something absent of human beings, but that is not so, so please don't leave human beings out of your ecosystem. [Reads part of orange paper and resilience.] Has to do with humans as well.
General Public	When we talk about ecosystems we talk about services. What are the benefits that come from ecosystem services? It's partly about the natural environment, both economic and non-economic.
General Public	The first critical issues is with the human health and the ecological system, is to prevent dispersants and others that are toxic. Lisa Jackson said dispersants are less toxic than oil, but have found out what the toxicity is of the water that we have been in. You can't tell us it is less toxic, but you have added many different chemicals and it is everywhere, everywhere are the coast. There are 20 countries that have banned dispersants, corexic (sic). So the US is right, but everyone else is wrong? Everyone in my family has been sick, I invite all of you to come see it, where I am you will get the hoarse voice, the difficulty breathing and everything.
General Public	When I was in the coast for three weeks, I had chemical luminitus (sic) as well. It has got to be cleaned up; I don't know how you restore anything unless it is cleaned up. If you talk to anyone that is down there it goes below three feet. If you talk to anyone down there, cleaning it up is the main issue.



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Non-governmental Organization	Before we can clean it up, we have to find out where the oil is, there are thousands of gallons unaccounted for, we can't begin the restoration process until we find out where it is.
General Public	I think to tie up what the last people just said, I think it is important to find out where the oil is, I just counted 10 people who said they were sick, I got my blood tested. I'm 22 years old and the doctors told me I looked like someone who had worked on an oil rig for 30 years. Maybe there needs to be more testing before restoration, you bring a dead flower back to life.
General Public	From an environmental prospective, they need to have scientists out there testing the ecosystem, because what happens to every organism at every level is what will happen to us. This is a big experiment and has never been done before; we need to know what is happening at the ecological level. We need to be allowed to test and have everyone involved.
General Public	I woke up one morning with knots/lesions all over my legs, every day there are more. My husband had brown liquid coming out of his ears for a month. I have been toe to toe with HHS, they are unconcerned. We need medical monitoring and care to take care of what BP has done. We have a level on each side and we were sprayed constantly, I removed my children and thank god I did, we need to get out of there. I understand the fishing element, I have four boats that's how I make my living, I understand that, you are going to make the entire country sick, we cannot fish this stuff until we clean it up. The proper testing needs to be done, whatever we need to do.
Non-governmental Organization	I can see the ulcerations in all the plants that I've seen in six states. I have not heard anything about testing done in our crops. We are still selling this crop; you want to talk about ecosystems.



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Non-governmental Organization	<p>Founded a few months after Katrina, because we were being neglected. It's hard for me to not to comment, but clean it up. I want to move forward to other issues. We had 2 days of the NPR coming to Coden. A member from Thailand just started to catch crabs, so she caught 1,600 lbs worth and she goes to the processing port, went to a fourth processing port because all others were closed down. She sold them finally at \$.50 a lb instead of \$1.10 lb. If we can have price supports for farmers, why not some kind of price supports here? How about BP or having the government buy them? She also had some turned down because of spots, we want testing done as well. Transparency is important. We had to hand deliver a letter to Obama because BP wouldn't listen, so transparency.</p>
General Public	<p>We live a community of tourists, there won't be any businesses left in my town, there needs to be more focus on the gulf claims – we need to focus on industries so that if something happens again my whole town's not shut down.</p>
General Public	<p>I think this Task Force is great, but there needs to be a Task Force to make sure that this Task Force is reliable. Other people need to have independent commission, there is someone responsible for this and they need to be fired, we need credible workers here. We need prevention to make sure this won't happen again, and to make sure that there are no more leaks occurring.</p>
General Public	<p>Clean Energy: Call BP and tell them to bring all the money they got and bring windmills to the gulf coast. It's going to be a snowball effect.</p>
General Public	<p>One other thing, say all the food is safe and everything is cleaned up, we need to know that our fisheries won't collapse because of all the dispersants; this will have an effect on future generations. We don't want to collapse ten years from now.</p>



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Commenter's Affiliation	Comment
General Public	I know you are trying to get some specific ideas, but the critical issue is trust, before we can get down to what we need to do as far as restoration, the restoration of trust as far as the response, we need to tell the truth and get it right.
Non-governmental Organization	One oyster filters 50 gallons an hour, so obviously this population is extremely diminished. We have to think about what is coming into the Gulf from the land, there are other issues beside BP, we have to look at what else is coming as well.
General Public	I would like to make a point, we don't know the long term affects and \$500 million from BP really isn't that much for research, need more money for research to answer these question.
General Public	I agree, research is needed from everywhere, I know there is already funding, but we need more funding out there to start working on restoration projects.
Non-governmental Organization	Specific suggestion that a description of the different science studies that are underway, it is very hard to evaluate the adequacy of what is already underway. That could be done without concerns of litigation, some type of summary of what is being done, I worked on the Exxon Valdez oil spill and we did a study that was very helpful to the public.
General Public	I have heard about the need for green jobs, and I think looking at the long picture, finding a way to bring restoration into an industry, start paying people instead of volunteers to clean up the wetland would be beneficial.
General Public	They should start farming oysters and shrimp inland.



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General Public	There are miles of sediment inches thick, the same day someone from NOAA said that is was clean. Trust and working with trustworthy people.
General Public	We have to be careful with farming in land; need to be extremely careful of restocking estuaries.



Group 3 (Green)

Question 1: How can we best keep everyone informed & ensure good two-way communication?

Commenter's Affiliation	Comment
Business & Industry	Another key concern ensuring participation, it seems Louisiana was left out of the Task Force, there is a serious need for “full time” staffers from Region 6. Garrett has other duties wont be enough. Distressed about actually working from the “bottom up”, when members of the Task Force mostly have 202 area codes.
Business & Industry	Not everyone trusts the trustees, moving forward projects have to be from the view point of community not the viewpoint of local officials.
Non-governmental Organization	We operate statewide, regional 4,000 members, working since day 1. Community and local involvement means that this effort need people who know what happens on a high tide, a low tide. The local perspective was and is still missing from the Incident Command structure. Local community participation is not in the Task Force.
Non-governmental Organization	Create some plan where each state has some group -- local Non-governmental Organizations, community participation, a group elected from that group also on the Task Force. Some examples, the Governors Commission too giant, but it’s a good moving system, all inclusive. MS not inclusive, FL doesn’t have one... having each state put a coalition together. Similar to the Gulf of Mexico’s existing structure/ program. Gulf of Mexico alliance also great but no appointed representation of leaders. Local perspective = where they really know how the ecosystems work.
Non-governmental Organization	Ensuring participation – has to be a creation of local Task Forces, advisory councils who will know the impacts, know the solutions. Specific issues, specific outcomes, top down not effective without direct on the ground input. State, but even more local, each area needs an advisory council that has direct input to the Task Force. Inclusion of diversity.



Group 3 (Green)

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Non-governmental Organization	Sounds like the meeting that was lead by Secretary Mabus, with a community advisory council in St Petersburg: hearing a lot of good recognition for the need for community input, but without the mechanism, it won't work. Primary to this process going forward is community insight and participation, there's a lot of fear. Secretary Mabus heard this, it did not emerge as part of the plan, needs to be addressed.
General Public	We'll be getting a new Governor in the midst of all this, which poses another issue. Where is this concept of 'community input' if you're not living here? With all my respect and appreciation for you all, you just don't have the same passion that we do. I can't drive home enough how important it is, to set up communication, it's abysmal from the ground up so far. If we really are going to change something we need the community involved. It's us. It's the people that take the time to come to these meetings to express themselves, we want a piece of the action.
Non-governmental Organization	In terms of citizen participation, we formally support citizen advisory committee, advisory and review role in the plan development. The structure of committee and the balance, balance of competing interests: economic development & environmental. Also that the membership not be determined by political leaders in each state, that balance is unlikely to be achieved.



Group 3 (Green)

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Business & Industry	The Citizens Advisory Subcommittee of NEJAC committee, as part of the ambassadors program as GoMA but that should be added too. But understanding that any restoration of the Gulf Coast, it's a regional EJ community, not a fence line, but areas rich in natural resources, but the local people have ineffective political voice, cannot compete with tourism, major industries, traditionally have no effective political voice. The Citizens Advisory Committee would be a vehicle for some citizen input. Not decided on their behalf. We have to assume that there local or state leaders do not represent a large part of the population. Legally yes, when it comes to majority of the people, has to be more recourse.
General Public	November 20, 2010 we're having a rally. We're always spending our money to come to you! Come to us! We're not against government, but stand with us. Will help with transparency.
Non-governmental Organization	Following on advisory committee there is an example, Exxon Valdez oil spill public advisory committee, created with State of Alaska, Attorney General, community, been in business for many years, balanced representation, go to website, how its formed how it stays in place. For restoration. There are trustees, DOI, not to say it couldn't be improved upon, but great starting place, Salazar's office one of the concerns we have in MI, we're not in line with our governor, concerned about his position on this. States yes seat at table, communities whether it's port, commercial subsistence fisherman they're represented.
Business & Industry	Hope you invite the oil companies to the table, local expertise, lot to offer, we need to continue to develop energy resources, in the Gulf Coast.



Group 3 (Green)

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Commenter's Affiliation	Comment
Business & Industry	We want land, we want it before 11 months, losing land every 36 minutes, time to act way past due.
Non-governmental Organization	Key issues – In FL, we need for FL not to be looked at as a state as a whole, but instead the three major counties that were impacted. A State driven area, State driven process means that resources are taken and allocated across the entire state. Allocated funds given to the state are funneled through the entire state, not to the most impacted counties. Attention needs to be driven into these three counties.
Local Government	Key Issue – Data and data protocol. The same testing is not occurring, between the government and independent organizations. Example: I took a sample of a product, sent it to three different labs, some were government agencies, some independent, and I received three different results. When I have to look at data to see if there's a problem, when data doesn't match it's very hard to determine if there is a problem.
Local Government	Since 2005 DOI, EPA, NPAA have been on Gulf of Mexico Alliance, a lot of these issues have been on this table for a while, how will this integrate into the work ongoing?
Business & Industry	If you believe you BP oil, saying "it's capped, no problem" and oil is on beaches... People don't know about the dispersant, I'm not finding a lot of information on the dispersant. I was in the water the other day, it dried and there was a yellow ring around the collar on my t-shirt, what's that from? It could be from me, but who knows? There's confusion on the beaches when you see men in haz mat suits and surfers in the same vicinity.



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Commenter's Affiliation	Comment
Business & Industry	Health issues big, because of water quality, study done before the oil spill, non –EPA regulated constituents in the water, we don't have a good filtration system, water goes through the sand into the water table can we drink the water, safety of seafood, our organization odes micro-lending, tourist industries, restaurants, fisherman, default rates so high.
Business & Industry	People want to know all the oil is going to be removed from the coast, Restore the wetland to protect the land, you cannot buy land along the great lakes, still lots available along the gulf in terms of ecological issues, we do need to protect the wetlands, fits into land use, zoning issues protect from development, all built up in some areas can see it happening everywhere given projected growth.
General Public	I live on Pensacola Beach, I've been documenting since the first tar ball landed on the sand here. Photos, videos all at www.shrewreporting.com . My biggest issue that I've seen is that I interact with the workers, and the biggest thing out there is mass confusion. Every other day there seems to be a different rule in how they're allowed to work. Out in Ft Picken Park, they collected 5,000 lbs of oil with their hands and kitty litter scoopers.
General Public	Big issue: transparency. I was there when it was black, the sand would be black with oil one day, and then I'd come down there the next and it would be gone in the next morning. How do you believe it's from tidal activity, when all that big equipment is parked nearby? It's not from tides or natural action I'll tell you that. 6 inch rule in parks? Covered... [confused - sand sharks 18 inches,] dug holes 3' oil was 25 – 30" down. What are we going to do to ensure they can dig as deep as they need to in order to recover the oil under the sand? Digging trenches 3' deep, then they can't anymore, the workers are confused the instructions change day by day.



Group 3 (Green)

Question 2: Which of the many critical issues about restoration should the Task Force focus on first?

Commenter's Affiliation	Comment
Local Government	That's a regulation issue, on how deep to dig, just because there's a limit know doesn't mean it can't change. It's about permitting regulation, not about enforcement, it's about allowance.
General Public	When 'they' say beaches are cleaner than they've ever been, that's a lie. There's a duty to the people not to lie, but to be transparent. Yes, we were impacted by the oil spill, and yes, there is still oil on the beach. You know as well as I do, you spent x amount, if your 3 year old dug up oil on vacation... you can't sell out everybody from the oil, you can't be the Mayor in Jaws saying "It's fine to go in the water!"
General Public	Restore visitor confidence.
General Public	Then there's the health issues – I tested positive for 6 of the 9 VOCs just a guy that walks the beach... not a worker!
General Public	[Someone] was able to identify the organisms that could break the oil down. The oil companies didn't like that, so what? Say ever since it started, what's wrong is there's no money. The American public, a non profit org pilot project should be driven by individual funding, from individual people that have an interest to improve it. "Government doesn't have the money." How will you cleanup the oil that sunk? BP is not interested in recovering the oil, remediating, want to get back to business as usual. Never seen such crimes, not bought off or paid off by anyone. It is time that people put it in their own hands. Government employees don't have the money, I spent my money. The Task Force isn't funded. We've got people testing the hydrocarbon breakdown. My son came to orange beach – standing next to guys in ridiculous suits. The problem is us, we want a pilot project with small businesses.



Group 3 (Green)

Question 2: Which of the many critical issues about restoration should the Task Force focus on first?

Commenter's Affiliation	Comment
Local Government	I had an opportunity to talk to Secretary Mabus about how we take our economies in a different direction, heavily impacted by tourism, what is our reason for being tasked. There are 3 or 4 areas are you looking to parallel those sections in his report, as you look forward to what the Task Force will do with a 40% increase in population, importance of ports as far as fishing is concerned, how the ecology needs to be balanced with the development. Trying to hear ... for our region where we go next after this disaster, appears to be an opportunity to leverage this.
Local Government	It appears you all have not thought about the economic tie ins, not in terms of restoration projects matching up with local businesses, how do we move our economies forward how can we relay that information – one example, marine highway system, president says double exports in the next 5 years, but take trucks off the road lessen the carbon footprint, increase barge traffic, looking at Houston, Tampa, Ft Lauderdale, Miami, deep water ports, Pensacola, Biloxi reposition themselves as smaller vessels looking for ports. Read between the lines, heard Florida had done a great job implementing projects, restoration is concerned, our importance of a clean economy. Concern for us in the panhandle, if you can appreciate, FL put a lot of its own money in the restoration, we'd like to talk about wetlands Louisiana, be mindful of the panhandle we are not the everglades, if we're not thinking about it now, we will have missed the opportunity to change dynamic of your region.



Group 3 (Green)

Question 2: Which of the many critical issues about restoration should the Task Force focus on first?

Commenter's Affiliation	Comment
Non-governmental Organization	In Mobile, mobile baykeeper created a matrix for how to pick a project, there are 106 in just Alabama, so you need to think big. Need to make sure how we move forward on restoration process, what you do and why needs to be clear. Resilient restoration – long term sustainably Alabama 100/ 1000.org should be done gulf wide putting folks to work, making a long term sustainability harvest, habitat, coastal resiliency from hurricanes, flood protection from sea level rise. www.crcalabama.org
General Public	When we hear “Think big” as one speaker said from the Interior Dept, and “Clean up on the oil,” it’s a fantasy, a delusion, a mistaken notion that we can proceed in the same manner. “Resilient ecosystem and economy” as if these massive damages can be done and we can bounce back, whereas the truth might be those interests can’t really be balanced. When talking about restoration about the previous economic and environmental conditions, do you mean the day before the oil leaked? A system that already had been damaged from decades of abuse, or back sometime further, something more sustainable?
Academia	If I can say one thing, monitoring is critical, not going to know if we’re successful unless we have monitoring, upgraded drawing on local expertise, local state to national.
Local Government	Scientific key issues – seasonal upwelling, bioremediation limits, artificial reefs to promote fish population, plan restoration around the seasons. Restoration will not work.



Group 4 (Red)

Question 1: How can we best keep everyone informed & ensure good two-way communication?

Commenter's Affiliation	Comment
General Public	Provide a list of attendees of Task Force.
General Public	Use Facebook as a tool for comment.
General Public	Look for the widest participation.
General Public	Bring estuary programs in from the Gulf Coast and use them as a resource.
General Public	Utilize groups that already exist like the Gulf of Mexico Alliance.
General Public	Utilize all forms of communication – newspaper, Snail Mail, Website, use the attendees that come as resources, Facebook, blogging, webinars.
General Public	Make sure there are deadlines and point of contacts.
General Public	Use South Florida EcoSystem Task Force Model (it pulls everyone together and multiple Task Forces).
General Public	Longer lead time on meetings announcements and agendas.
General Public	Give local governments a voice/ use local governments to reach out to communities.
General Public	Use established resources/ electric companies/ listservs.
General Public	Identify who are the stakeholders/ community groups/ decision makers and gap between decision makers and those who are affected.
General Public	Provide background on what is driving the issues and where different things come into play.
General Public	Give people a space to vent in.



Group 4 (Red)

Question 1: How can we best keep everyone informed & ensure good two-way communication?

Commenter's Affiliation	Comment
General Public	Once critical issues are identified break them up into working groups.
General Public	Create a space for General Public engagement and EJ communities- give them a seat at the table.
General Public	Coastal EJ ambassadors program that EPA already has (started in Mississippi).
General Public	Create advisory council.
General Public	How will the Task Force use the public comment?
General Public	Add to frequently asked questions what the Task Force will NOT be covering.
General Public	There is still a lot of response to do.
General Public	The Task Force should focus on the integrity of the info we are sending to the American people.
General Public	Identify what the decision making architecture is going to be and then communicate it to the public.



Group 4 (Red)

Question 2: Which of the many critical issues about restoration should the Task Force focus on first?

Commenter's Affiliation	Comment
General Public	There are areas where there is a lot of oil on the beach.
General Public	Define your eco system.
General Public	Where do we fit in- are we the restoration arm of things that are already in place.
General Public	We must look at what is already going on.
General Public	Jump start large scale restoration- how do we fund other projects?
General Public	Go after Clean Water Act funds and Penalties.
General Public	Other projects- LACR?
General Public	Fresh water flows.
General Public	Hypoxia.
General Public	Sediment management.
General Public	Gulf marine ecosystem.
General Public	We are going to need more than the 5 states on board- we need all 50 states in order to affect legislation. We need to make sure everyone understands how they are affected to the Gulf states.
General Public	We cannot allow time to lapse between now and the time the Task Force plan comes out- people need to understand the Gulf is still hurting. The problem didn't go away when the oil spill stopped.
General Public	This is not just the oil spill- the Gulf has been hurting for a long time.
General Public	Add a time line to the Task Force.



Group 4 (Red)

Question 2: Which of the many critical issues about restoration should the Task Force focus on first?

Commenter's Affiliation	Comment
General Public	The challenge is having someone else tell you what is clean (the community knows what is clean).
General Public	Have a strategy for handling disputes.