

Meeting Summary

Mississippi Environmental Focus Group

Tuesday October 8th 2019

USM Gulfport Harbor Ocean Sciences Building

Attended by:

Howard Page, Alisha Renfro, Ray Herndon, Audubon (Mike Muraco, Jill Mastrototaro) Staff of Environmental Law Institute (Lavinia, Stephanie, Amy) MDEQ Restoration Staff Sarah Tracy, Chris Wells, Ray Eaton, Melanie Green, TNC (Justin Brooks, Tom Mohrman) Covington Engineering (Robbie Kroger), Gulf Coast Land Conservation Partnership (Julia Weaver), Land Trust for the Ms Coastal Plain (Judy Steckler), Gulf Islands Conservancy (Terese Collins), NWF (Johnny Marquez), Kara Fox

Review of RESTORE Pot 3 Projects

New Project \$4.2 Million – Beachfront Resilience, build dunes, stop sand drift onto highways

Amendments to 2019 State Exp. Plan – 5-7 million each

Water Quality Improvement plan, bacterial source tracking in stormwater

Beneficial Use of Dredge spoil to create marshes, Jackson County.

NRDA – in planning process for the Mississippi Trustee Implementation Group (TIG)

Publish Supplement to Plan 1 – added Grand Bay land acquisition funding.

New Focus on Plan 2 Screening process

Screen projects for two restoration types: Oysters cultch placement in Ms. Sound

Wetland Nearshore Coastal Habitat: management on Coastal Preserves.

NFWF New Projects

Reef Fish Assessment

Pilot oyster cultch placement to create high relief reefs in modeled areas near Pearl mouth

Hydrodynamic modeling: calibration of models continues.

Miss. Offshore artificial reef habitat enhancement

Expand TNC oyster reef project inside Biloxi Bay.

Bonnet Carre Spillway opening has not changed oyster restoration as a priority, but will change location and how oyster restoration is approached.

Paul Mickle gave summary of evaluated damage to fisheries from Spillway fresh water event as assessed by MDMR.

Years to recover from losses:

Crabs 3-4 years

Oysters 5-10 years

Finfish – still being determined.

Congress has begun process of getting disaster relief money for fishermen from US Dept. of Commerce