

Appendix A:

Public Comments Received on the Draft RP II/EA

Correspondence ID: 1 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Unaffiliated Individual
Affiliation:
Received: Apr.05 2018 09:59:26
Correspondence Type: Web Form

Correspondence: Previously, it was stated that among the projects were connecting septic systems along Little Lagoon to city sewer and improving the hydrology of Little Lagoon at the pass. Have these projects been removed from the plan?

Correspondence ID: 2 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Unaffiliated Individual
Affiliation:
Received: Apr.18 2018 11:10:35
Correspondence Type: Web Form

Correspondence: I am writing in support of the Alabama Trustee Implementation Group (Alabama TIG) draft Restoration Plan II/Environmental Assessment (RP II/EA). As a property owner in the Weeks Bay Watershed, a boater and angler I am specifically supportive of three land acquisition projects - Magnolia River (Holmes Tract), Weeks Bay East Gateway Tract, and Weeks Bay Harrod Tract. Acquisition of these properties will serve to fulfill the goals to restore and conserve habitat, to replenish and protect living coastal and marine resources and to restore water quality. I also served on the Stake Holders committee for the Weeks Bay Watershed Management Plan. The Plan identifies land acquisition in the watershed as an important priority.

I also write in support of the Weeks Bay Nutrient Reduction project. The Weeks Bay Watershed Management Plan identified agricultural runoff as an issue and a priority. This project will help farmers with some non point source pollution problems.

Correspondence ID: 3 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Pelican Coast Conservancy Unaffiliated Individual
Affiliation: OfficialRep
Received: Apr.26 2018 14:31:20
Correspondence Type: Web Form
Correspondence: April 26, 2018

The Alabama Trustee Implementation Group
C/o U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
PO Box 49567
Atlanta, GA 30345

Re: Alabama NRDA Draft Restoration Plan II and Environmental Assessment

Dear Trustees,

Thank you for the opportunity comment on the NRDA Draft Restoration Plan II and Environmental Assessment for the Alabama Restoration Area. These comments are being submitted on behalf of the Pelican Coast Conservancy (Conservancy). The Conservancy is a land conservation organization whose mission is to provide 21st century solutions and sound scientific applications for conservation of critical natural resources in the face of a changing climate focusing on environmental restoration, preservation, and conservation efforts throughout the Gulf Coast region with specific utilization of geographic information systems applications in land conservation, ecosystem services, carbon sequestration and conservation biology.

The Conservancy works to protect properties that contain important conservation values. Perpetual land acquisition projects can serve as an important vehicle to mitigate the natural resource damages in Alabama caused by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

We would like to commend the Trustees for identifying restoration projects utilizing Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) funds that include property located in the Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve's Coastal Land Acquisition Area. The acquisition of these wetland, coastal and nearshore habitat parcels will provide an important long term resource protection benefit to restore and protect habitat.

It appears that this round of NRDA funding did not include any land acquisition projects in Mobile County. Future land conservation activities could include the purchase of property in the City of Mobile, on the barrier island of Dauphin Island, Fowl River watershed, or within the vicinity of the City of Bayou La Batre. The Conservancy would encourage the Trustees to place perpetual conservation easements on future properties acquired for conservation that utilize NRDA funds.

The placement of a perpetual conservation easement would add an additional layer of permanent conservation to the conserved property. This mechanism of additional protection would ensure the ecological integrity of the completed project.

The Pelican Coast Conservancy looks forward to the approval and implementation of the preferred restoration projects that have been identified in the Alabama NRDA Draft Restoration Plan II and Environmental Assessment. Please, feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need additional information.

Working for perpetual land conservation,

Walter

Walter C. Ernest IV
Director of Operations
Pelican Coast Conservancy

Correspondence ID: 4 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Unaffiliated Individual
Affiliation:
Received: May,01 2018 08:11:22
Correspondence Type: Web Form
Correspondence: Because the AI State parks camp on the beach program has been so successful, perhaps funding could be provided to expand the program. All the fall camp reservations are already filled.

Correspondence ID: 5 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Unaffiliated Individual
Affiliation:
Received: May,03 2018 09:08:37
Correspondence Type: Web Form
Correspondence: Draft Restoration Plan II and Environmental Assessment
Comments - George Crozier (gcrozier@disl.org)
My first comment is to point out that I had nothing to do with project 11484 and would like to ask that a correction be provided!

2.6.1 Wetlands, Coastal, and Nearshore Habitats

The habitat acquisition projects advanced appear to be appropriate but I would offer the comments below:

2.6.1.2 Perdido River Land Acquisition (Molpus Tract)

I would recommend that this request be maintained for future funding consideration. Perdido Bay is uniquely vulnerable to pollutant impacts because of poor flushing characteristics and shoreline topography that militates against aeolian re-suspension and subsequent oxygenation of sediment/benthic contaminants which occurs in Mobile Bay.

2.6.2.2 Little Lagoon Living Shoreline

All living shoreline projects should contain language and MAM plans that anticipate RSLR for the impacted region. (also typo - Spartina)

2.6.1.7 Southwestern Coffee Island Habitat Restoration Project-Phase I (E&D)

The expansion of bird nesting habitat is a crucial objective given the near-total loss of nesting habitat on Cat Island so this is a great project with appropriate funding. But, if wetland habitat is to be included, the engineering methodology is a major consideration. ADCNR's planning and construction effort on Marsh Island has been apparently abysmal and must not be duplicated on Coffee Island! ADCNR attempted marsh creation in the name of wetland restoration and may have negatively impacted nearby riparian leases and oyster farms. Restoration implies that emergent marshes have disappeared for some reason, usually anthropogenic, and the process can be reversed. The attempt to expand Marsh Island was ill-conceived at best and disastrously executed.

2.6.3 Nutrient Reduction (Nonpoint Source)

2.6.3.3 Bayou La Batre Nutrient Reduction

Non-inclusion for this project was logical based on ALTIG criteria, but the relative impacts of the (admittedly diminishing) commercial fishing industry and seafood processing on the western side of Portersville Bay might be a fruitful direction to go. The BLB proposal for waste treatment should have been directed toward the bay rather than the stream. I realize the ALTIG goals were non-point sources and carbon is not a conventional "nutrient" but in my mind, it is THE nutrient of greatest concern. It is the building block of organic matter and its oxidation is the proximal cause of most hypoxic conditions. Consequently, the treatment outfall issues from Bayou La Batre should remain on the table.

2.6.3.4 Fowl River Nutrient Reduction

The nutrient reduction projects are well done, particularly Fowl River which may be one of the last minimally impacted tidal streams. The odd configuration of simultaneous discharge into both Mobile Bay and Portersville Bay creates opposing rising tides and complicates management.

2.6.3.5 Weeks Bay Nutrient Reduction

The Weeks Bay project is overdue considering its designation as an Outstanding National Resource Waterbody. Unfortunately, ONRW addresses only point sources. There is heavy growth pressure all the way to the headwaters of the Fish River and development interests are almost certainly unaware of and unconcerned about the implications.

2.6.4 Sea Turtles

The turtle projects are well done. I do have a question/comment concerning:

2.6.4.3 CAST Triage

Are there enough turtle strandings in our area to justify the size of this program? What are the geographic boundaries to be served - will MS and west FL NRDA participate financially? I must question the cost/benefit ratio.

2.6.5 Marine Mammals

No comment other than to applaud.

2.6.6 Birds

2.6.6.2 Southwestern Coffee Island Habitat Restoration Project-Phase I (E&D)

My comments can be found above (2.6.1.7) but will enthusiastically support bird habitat (shrub/tree) restoration. With the assistance of an Auburn Landscape studio effort some years ago, bird habitat was successfully restored on nearby Cat Island by Dauphin Island Sea Lab scientists.

2.6.6.4 Colonial Nesting Wading Bird Tracking and Habitat Use Assessment-Two Species

The loss of the Cat Island Heronry has dramatically diminished available habitat so this effort should provide valuable information.

2.6.7 Oysters

2.6.7.3 Side-scan Mapping of Mobile Bay Relic Oyster Reefs (E&D)

The side scan surveying makes the most sense in some time as a mechanism for expanding shell planting areas, which have largely been limited to existing familiar areas. There are also some issues associated with the area indicated for Portersville Bay off West Fowl River where the poorly designed emergent wetland creation adjacent to Marsh Island may have buried live reef. Side scan can help establish other areas of recent burying as well as targets for shell

planting.

The earliest charts from the Coast and Geodetic Survey (19th century) indicated significant oyster reefs throughout Portersville Bay so it might be worth expanding the side scan work to include PB in the ALTIG scope. Years ago, the University of Alabama experimented with restoring appropriate substrates for cultch placement in Portersville Bay. The assumption at the time (1969-70) was that the native reefs had been buried by anthropogenic sediment deposition (channel dredging).

2.6.7.4 Oyster Hatchery at Claude Petete Mariculture High Spat Production with Study

I am quite concerned about the apparent failure to incorporate the existing Auburn University facility into this objective. I suppose that we always need more larvae but the lack of involvement with this experienced resource is surprising.

2.6.7.6 Oyster Grow-Out and Restoration Reef Placement

Really good - builds on the double-edged sword of the "oyster gardening" initiative. This educates AND produces.

16.0 Draft Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plans

Many years ago, with the advent of the Coastal Area Management Program, "Adaptive Resource Management" was a guiding principle. There has been a recognition by ALTIG of monitoring as part of the MAM efforts/requirements which are indeed laudable. But I hope some of the other "buckets" will invest more significantly in the mundane arena of ecosystem monitoring. I know that we are better informed and prepared for the "next one" but will that be an episodic catastrophe like DWH or consequences of climate change. Will any of the RESTORE investment better prepare us for dealing with the inevitable?

Correspondence ID: 6 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Pelican Coast Conservancy Unaffiliated Individual
Affiliation: OfficialRep
Received: May,04 2018 14:35:11
Correspondence Type: Web Form

Correspondence: I would like to thank the Trustees for listing the Pelican Coast Conservancy as a local land trust under section 14-4 (Resource Stewardship: Land Acquisition) of the document. The Pelican Coast Conservancy is the correct name of the organization. The description list the Pelican Point Conservancy as a land trust. I am not aware of an organization named the Pelican Point Conservancy. Could you please correct the listing of our organization. Feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Working for perpetual land conservation,

Walter C. Ernest IV
Director of Operations
Pelican Coast Conservancy

Correspondence ID: 7 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: National Wildlife Federation Unaffiliated Individual
Affiliation: OfficialRep
Received: May,07 2018 12:21:53
Correspondence Type: Web Form
Correspondence: May 7, 2018

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
P.O. Box 49567
Atlanta, Georgia 30345
Via: <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/restoralabamaP2>

Re: Comments on the Alabama Trustee Implementation Group's Draft Restoration Plan II and Environmental Assessment

Dear Trustees,

On behalf of our more than six million members and supporters across the United States, the National Wildlife Federation's (NWF) Gulf of Mexico Restoration Program appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Alabama Trustee Implementation Group's (TIG) Draft Restoration Plan II and Environmental Assessment (RP2), covering 22 projects to restore wetlands, coastal, and nearshore habitats; improve water quality by reducing non-point source pollution; and help restore sea turtles, marine mammals, birds and oysters. With staff on the ground across the Gulf states, including in Alabama, NWF is deeply committed to the restoration of the habitats and waters of the Gulf Coast Region, for the benefit of both people and wildlife.

NWF is keenly aware of the restoration opportunity that Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) dollars present across the Gulf. As part of the assessment process, the Programmatic Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan (PDARP) showed us that the injuries caused by the oil spill "affected such a wide array of linked resources over such an enormous area that the effects must be described as constituting an ecosystem-level injury." In Alabama, the \$296 million dollars' worth of NRDA allocations are incredibly important to not only remedy damage from the spill, but to also identify and address chronic underlying stressors on the Alabama coastal and estuarine environments. It is with that scale in mind that NWF offers comments on this draft RP2, and the projects proposed within.

NWF believes that a significant portion of the Deepwater Horizon restoration dollars should focus on efforts to address project-types that target known stressors: habitat protection, oyster reefs and living shorelines, coastal wetlands, and hydrologic restoration. Within the Draft RP2, NWF supports the inclusion of projects in RP2 that use science to address data gaps and also plan for and implement restoration for several of the above-mentioned project-types.

Science

NWF is pleased to see science remain at the forefront of Alabama's restoration investments. Through the inclusion of Monitoring and Adaptive Management (MAM) activities in this plan (and projects), the Trustees are ensuring future success in planning and implementation of restoration activities.

In particular, NWF supports MAM investments early in this process in order to fill data gaps necessary for future science-based decision making, especially for critical species populations such as sea turtles and marine mammals.

We are encouraged to see the Trustees focus on the "mitigation of key stressors" to support resilient habitats and wildlife populations. By addressing chronic underlying stressors within estuarine systems, you are helping to ensure future success in restoring these natural resources by meaningfully address the restoration needs.

We are very pleased to see strong alignment with existing Trustee MAM guidance, such as the Strategic Frameworks and MAM Manual. Commitment to this guidance will help to ensure projects are implemented and monitored in a way that supports coordination not only across Trust TIGs, but also across other state planning processes such as RESTORE.

While we support filling necessary data gaps, we encourage the Trustees to utilize existing body of peer-reviewed research to the maximum extent possible, including that from both within and outside of the Gulf region. Not only will this maximize the efficiency of the Alabama TIG's investments, but also reduce redundancy in research related to planning efforts. For example, much research related to oyster reef siting, placement, and design has been done around the country, and additional investments are being made in neighboring Mississippi to help guide oyster restoration activities (see notes below).

Oyster Reefs and Shorelines

Numerous oyster restoration and research efforts are underway within and beyond the Gulf Region. We encourage the Implementing Trustees to coordinate and consult with other states to better guide Alabama's oyster work and avoid "reinventing the wheel". For instance, consider similar projects being conducted by FWC (Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission), University of Florida IFAS Sea-Grant, FDACS (Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services), and MS DMR (Department of Marine Resources).

For the Oyster Hatchery Project, we support the development of a Comprehensive Oyster Restoration Plan to guide the remaining investments in the Oyster Restoration category, including living shoreline projects that include oysters. We recommend that the NGO Community and other stakeholders be added to the "oyster restoration experts" in the development of the plan.

Information from the comprehensive oyster restoration plan should be used to guide not only future investments, but also project components proposed to be included in this draft plan. For instance, a better understanding of the existing structure, spat availability, and environmental conditions might shape the future direction of projects (in particular, the hatchery), and whether those investments are necessary to successfully restore the resource. For example, the PDARP specifically points out the need to "identify suitable salinity zones" for oysters, which is not included in the monitoring work proposed in this draft plan.

We are also pleased to see investments in living shorelines, such as the Little Lagoon Living Shoreline. Such projects not only address oysters and restore and improve habitat, but also increase coastal resilience. We look forward to seeing additional living shorelines in future restoration plans.

Coastal Wetlands and Habitat Protection

NWF supports the inclusion of projects under NRDA's Wetlands, Coastal, and Nearshore Habitats category that acquire and protect important wetland and coastal properties that address a continuum of habitats, and also projects that restore coastal shorelines and tidal wetlands.

Living Coastal & Marine Resources

We support the sea turtle, bird, and dolphin projects proposed in the draft plan. As mentioned above, filling data gaps is an important step to guide future investments.

When designing and implementing research and other projects, it is important to consider that wildlife do not recognize state boundaries. Several of the proposed projects could be maximized by coordinating with neighboring states and other TIGs (including Region-wide and Open Ocean). For example, the CAST Habitat and Population Dynamics project mentions oceanic and neritic turtles, presenting a great opportunity to coordinate with Open Ocean and Region-wide TIGs. We also support including inshore sea turtles, if they are also using the estuaries.

When selecting bird species for tracking and habitat use studies, consider species that are known to span the Gulf Coast, and coordinate with the other TIGs, especially those of neighboring states. This coordinated approach to filling data gaps will maximize the TIGs' ability to address chronic and acute threats as identified in the PDARP.

Likewise, we are pleased to see the TIG recognize the need to identify key stressors (and mitigate those stressors for more resilient populations) in projects such as Assessment of Alabama Estuarine Bottlenose Dolphin Populations and Health.

Projects contained within the TIG's RP2 have the ability to make meaningful strides towards addressing chronic underlying stressors in Mobile Bay. However, in order to ensure future success in restoring the state's critical resources, continued coordination of projects across other spill and non-spill funding streams is crucial. NRDA's science-lead approach to selecting, implementing, and evaluating projects should serve as a model for comprehensive restoration, and act as a driver for other efforts to follow similarly.

Thank you very much for all of your hard work to put forward this draft restoration plan for Alabama and for considering our comments. Please do not hesitate to contact me to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Jessica Bibza
Alabama/Florida Policy Specialist

Correspondence ID:	8	Project:	65924	Document:	86431
Outside Organization:	Partnership for the Gulf Coast Land Conservation Unaffiliated Individual				
Affiliation:	OfficialRep				
Received:	May,07 2018 12:26:55				
Correspondence Type:	Web Form				

Correspondence: Partnership for Gulf Coast Land Conservation
P.O. Box 564
Biloxi, MS 39533

Alabama Trustee Implementation Group
C/o U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
PO Box 49567
Atlanta, GA 30345

May 7, 2018

Submitted electronically at
<https://parkplanning.nps.gov/restorealabamaP2>

Dear Trustees,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Restoration Plan II and Environmental Assessment for the Alabama Restoration Area. These comments are being submitted on behalf of the Partnership for Gulf Coast Land Conservation (Gulf Partnership), a coalition of non-profit land conservation organizations operating in the Gulf of Mexico region. Our mission is to work together across the Gulf of Mexico coastal region to increase the pace, quality, and permanence of voluntary land and water conservation.

We appreciate the hard work of the Trustee Implementation Group (TIG) members and staff and are pleased to see that this plan builds upon earlier restoration efforts and reflects the priorities of Alabama residents and conservation groups. In particular, the Gulf Partnership is pleased that the TIG members identified the Restoration of Wetlands, Coastal, and Nearshore Habitats as one of the priorities for this suite of proposed projects.

The Gulf Partnership commends the Trustees for investing in the land acquisition projects described in the plan:

- i,§ Magnolia River Land Acquisition (Holmes Tract) - Preferred \$4,144,162
- i,§ Weeks Bay Land Acquisition East Gateway Tract - Preferred \$4,247,000
- i,§ Weeks Bay Land Acquisition Harrod Tract - Preferred \$3,606,900

These conservation projects will help the Trustees meet their goals for the protection and restoration of wetlands, coastal, and nearshore habitats. Land acquisition and long-term stewardship will also help meet other restoration goals, including water quality, water quantity, and the restoration of birds, oysters, and fisheries.

The Strengths of Land Trusts

The Gulf Partnership is pleased to see that permanent land protection will be a priority in Alabama's restoration process and that the Trustees are working with nonprofit land conservation organizations to implement this strategy. Nonprofit land conservation organizations like land trusts have a unique set of skills to support the Trustees' restoration efforts, including:

- i,§ A shared vision for land conservation across the Gulf Coast region expressed geospatially (A Land Conservation Vision for the Gulf of Mexico Region, 2014) <http://gulfpartnership.org/index.php/site/issue/strategic-conservation>;
- i,§ Strong, long standing relationships with private property owners and local community leaders in the Gulf Coast region, including those with ranching and agricultural lands;
- i,§ Expertise in land acquisition best practices and methodologies, including procurement of federal and state lands;
- i,§ Ability to acquire land within a short time-frame;
- i,§ Experience in developing, negotiating, and managing conservation easements;
- i,§ Landscape level planning and implementation capabilities; and
- i,§ Knowledge of local communities and their conservation and community priorities.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this plan and for your leadership. The Gulf Partnership and our individual partner organizations look forward to collaborating with the Alabama TIG and its federal, state and local partners to successfully implement the projects described in the plan.

If you have any questions or need more information, please don't hesitate to contact our coordinators Julia Weaver at julia.weaver@gulfpartnership.org or Liz Barber at liz.barber@gulfpartnership.org.

Sincerely,

Ray Herndon
Director, Central Gulf & Lower Mississippi River Region, Conservation Acquisition
The Conservation Fund
Chair, Gulf Partnership Executive Committee

â€f
Partner Organizations

Alachua Conservation Trust (FL)
Alabama Coastal Heritage Trust (AL)
Alabama Forest Resources Center (AL)
The Artist Boat (TX)
Coastal Land Trust (AL)
Colorado River Land Trust (TX)
Conservation Foundation of the Gulf Coast (FL)
Conservation Trust for Florida (FL)
Dauphin Island Bird Sanctuaries (AL)
Galveston Bay Foundation (TX)
Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust (GBRT)
Land Trust for Louisiana (LA)

Land Trust for the Mississippi Coastal Plain (MS)
Tall Timbers Research Station and Land Conservancy (FL)
Tampa Bay Conservancy (FL)
Texas Agricultural Land Trust (TX)
Weeks Bay Foundation (AL)
Wolf River Conservancy (MS)
Regional and National
Land Trust Alliance
National Audubon Society
The Conservation Fund
The Nature Conservancy
The Trust for Public Land

Correspondence ID: 9 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: National Audubon Society Unaffiliated Individual
Affiliation: OfficialRep
Received: May,07 2018 13:03:36
Correspondence Type: Web Form
Correspondence: May 7, 2018

Alabama Trustee Implementation Group
â,.... U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
P.O. Box 49567
Atlanta, GA 30345

Re: Alabama Trustee Implementation Group's Draft Restoration Plan II and Environmental Assessment

Dear Alabama Trustee Implementation Group Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments on the Alabama Trustee Implementation Group's (TIG) Draft Restoration Plan II and Environmental Assessment.

Our coalition, the Alabama Renewal Group (ARG), has been working together since the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil disaster to ensure that recovery monies are used for restoration projects that support a triple bottom line benefit for coastal Alabama: a healthy environment, a strong economy, and safe, resilient communities. ARG commends the TIG members for proposing a draft plan that includes a large suite of projects that would restore a wide variety of wildlife and habitats in coastal Alabama.

We appreciate the TIG's efforts to align projects with the Region-wide TIG's Strategic Frameworks, as well as to meet the overall standards of the Deepwater Horizon NRDA Trustee Council's Monitoring and Adaptive Management (MAM) manual. Commitment to this guidance will help to ensure projects are implemented and monitored in a way that supports coordination not only across the TIGs, but potentially also across other restoration planning processes such as those funded through the RESTORE Act. The project MAM plans included helpful details, like specific monitoring parameters and how uncertainty will be addressed. We look forward to future iterations of monitoring and adaptive management plans for each of the projects.

It is encouraging to see the Trustees focus on the mitigation of key stressors to support resilient habitats and wildlife populations. By addressing chronic underlying stressors within estuarine systems, you are helping to ensure future success in restoring these natural resources by meaningfully addressing the most pressing restoration needs. Additionally, we applaud the TIG for recognizing the need to fill certain data gaps to inform and enhance future restoration activities.

As the TIG moves forward to finalize these important restoration and conservation initiatives, we offer a few things for consideration. Several of the proposed projects could be maximized by expanding them to neighboring states and/or scaling them up with the Open Ocean and Region-wide TIGs. For example, the CAST Habitat and Population Dynamics project proposes to sample sea turtles in the nearshore to fill data gaps, presenting a great opportunity to expand this project across the Gulf. Also the Colonial Nesting Wading Bird Tracking and Habitat Use Assessment could be easily replicated by other state TIGs or even the Region-wide TIG to have a better understanding of wading birds across the northern Gulf of Mexico.

For the outreach and education aspects of projects, please consider opportunities to cross-promote restoration types, as you are able, to allow people who are interested in one type of wildlife to learn about other projects to protect other wildlife in the same area. For example, the CAST Protection: Enhancement and Education project could educate citizens about sea turtles and beach nesting birds simultaneously. These species utilize the same habitats and are often impacted by human interaction in similar ways.

For projects that utilize outside knowledge from experts, we would encourage the TIG to utilize local knowledge bases for natural resources including NGOs as well as other stakeholder groups in those conversations and meetings. Targeted stakeholder engagement can increase buy-in among communities, leverage existing resources and lead to a more successful project in the end.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We appreciate the TIG's hard work and dedication to restoring coastal Alabama's ecosystem, and we look forward to seeing these projects move forward. Please feel free to contact us with questions or if we can provide more detail.

Signed,

Mark Berte, Alabama Coastal Foundation, mberte@joinacf.org
 Jessica Bibza, National Wildlife Federation, bibzaj@nwf.org
 Casi Callaway, Mobile Baykeeper, callaway@mobilebaykeeper.org
 Rachel Guillory, Ocean Conservancy, rguillory@oceanconservancy.org
 Tammy Herrington, Conservation Alabama Foundation, therrington@conservationalabama.org
 Kara Lankford, National Audubon Society, klankford@audubon.org
 Ansel Payne, Birmingham Audubon, anselpayne@birminghamaudubon.org
 Mitchell Reid, The Nature Conservancy, mitchell.reid@tnc.org
 Andrew Whitehurst, Gulf Restoration Network, andrew@healthygulf.org

Correspondence ID: 10 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Marine Mammal Commission Federal Government
Affiliation: OfficialRep
Received: May,07 2018
Correspondence Type: Other

Correspondence: The Marine Mammal Commission (the Commission), in consultation with its Committee of Scientific Advisors on Marine Mammals, has reviewed the Alabama Trustee Implementation Group's (AL TIG) Draft Restoration Plan II and Environmental Assessment: Restoration of Wetlands, Coastal, and Nearshore Habitats; Habitat Projects on Federally Managed Lands; Nutrient Reduction; Sea Turtles; Marine Mammals; Birds; and Oysters (draft RPII/EA; 83 Fed. Reg. 14623). The draft RPII/EA summarizes the AL TIG's evaluation of a suite of restoration alternatives for restoring natural resource injuries resulting from the Deepwater Horizon (DWH) oil spill.

The AL TIG evaluated a number of alternatives for restoring injured marine mammals and has proposed to advance three projects: i. Enhancing capacity for the Alabama Marine Mammal Stranding Network (ALMMSN); ii. Assessment of Alabama Estuarine Bottlenose Dolphin Populations and Health; iii. Alabama Estuarine Bottlenose Dolphin Protection: Enhancement and Education.

The proposed projects were selected based on a screening process that evaluated marine mammal projects submitted via the Trustee portal and other sources against the restoration goals identified for marine mammals in the Deepwater Horizon's Natural Resource Damage Assessment Trustees' Final Programmatic Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan and Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (DWH NRDA Trustees 2016). The selected projects reflect the priority projects submitted by the Commission in April 2013 and May 2017 to the Trustees via the NRDA portal for consideration for marine mammal restoration. As such, the Commission fully supports the restoration projects identified for marine mammals.

Enhancing capacity within the Dauphin Island Sea Lab to expand the ALMMSN would support response and recovery of bottlenose dolphins and other marine mammals that may have been affected by the DWH oil spill. It would provide for the ongoing collection of biological information and samples to determine demographics, diet, disease, contaminant load, and causes of stranding, including documentation of cases of human interactions. Enhanced capacity for the ALMMSN would ensure that data collected from stranded animals is entered in a timely manner into GulfMAP, a regional marine mammal health database hosted by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). This would ensure consistency in reporting of stranding data across the Gulf of Mexico and help identify and minimize impacts of natural and human-caused threats. Timeliness of data integration will also allow real time assessment of potential impacts of restoration activities, thus facilitating adaptive management. Increased capacity within the ALMMSN for response to live strandings, made possible through restoration funding, would facilitate rehabilitation, recovery, and release of dolphins and other marine mammals back into the wild, with follow-up monitoring, in coordination with NOAA and local rehabilitation facilities. The Commission supports the AL TIG's proposal to enhance the capacity of the ALMMSN as a priority for restoring bottlenose dolphins and other marine mammals injured by the DWH oil spill.

Assessing bottlenose dolphin populations and their health through mark-recapture, photoidentification, observations, and remote biopsy sampling would provide information on distribution, seasonal movements, habitat use, behavior, body condition, and health of individuals. Tracking this information over the proposed time frame of the current restoration plan (four years) and into the next planning period would provide metrics to assess recovery from oil spill-related injuries and also enable the Trustees to evaluate the effectiveness of restoration efforts. Integrating genetics and photo-identification data with similar studies of other Gulf of Mexico bottlenose dolphin populations (e.g., through the Gulf of Mexico Dolphin Identification System, or GoMDIS) would provide a basis for tracking movements of individual animals beyond project study sites and for detecting range shifts in response to environmental changes. The AL TIG has proposed to fund population and health assessment studies out of the state's Monitoring and Adaptive Management (MAM) allocation. The goal of MAM, as stated in the RPII/EA, is to support restoration activities by tracking and evaluating progress toward restoration goals, determining the need for corrective actions, addressing key uncertainties, developing data and other information to inform and enhance future restoration, and ensuring compliance with regulations. The Commission believes the activities identified under this project are appropriate for funding under the MAM allocation.

Enhancement of enforcement efforts and the development of public education programs would be instrumental in addressing harm caused by feeding and harassment of bottlenose dolphins. Harmful interactions between people and dolphins have been documented throughout the Gulf of Mexico, including in Alabama coastal waters (Vail et al. 2016). Such interactions can be damaging to the dolphins by altering their natural behavior, and can put both humans and dolphins at risk of illness, injury, and death. The AL TIG has indicated that the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR) would lead proposed efforts to develop enhancement and education programs, including contracting with external consultants to design and carry out surveys of fishermen and other ocean user groups to understand the factors associated with human-dolphin interactions in the Gulf and to identify measures that can effectively minimize or mitigate those interactions. The Commission agrees that such surveys would be useful in the development of effective and targeted public education programs if they are well-designed and build on results obtained from previous studies of human attitudes toward the harassment of wild dolphins (e.g., Duda et al. 2013). The draft RPII/EA states that the ADCNR would lead efforts to develop training programs for enforcement agents, conduct surveys, and develop outreach materials, in coordination with NOAA. Close coordination between ADCNR and the biologists at the Dauphin Island Sea Lab and the ALMMSN would ensure that such programs are targeted appropriately to address human activities in Alabama waters that present the greatest risk to bottlenose dolphins.

We appreciate this opportunity to provide comments, and hope they are helpful as the AL TIG moves forward with implementation of DWH restoration efforts.

Correspondence ID: 11 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Mobile Bay National Estuary Program Unaffiliated Individual

Affiliation: OfficialRep
Received: May,07 2018 14:49:53
Correspondence Type: Web Form

Correspondence: I am submitting this letter of comment on the Draft Restoration Plan II and Environmental Assessment of the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Alabama Trustee Implementation Group on behalf of the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program. The MBNEP's purpose is to facilitate a consensus-building and collaborative decision-making process to protect and restore the quality and ecological integrity of Alabama's estuarine waters. Our Management Conference consists of over 200 representatives of federal, state, and local agencies; academia; industry, and citizen groups who work together to develop and implement a Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan. This roadmap for protection, conservation, and restoration is based on local input and supports local priorities to protect water quality, sustain key populations of living resources, manage vital habitats, mitigate human impacts, and build citizen stewardship. Our Science Advisory Committee, comprising experts from various branches of science, evaluates issues to ensure management decisions are based upon consensus of the soundest science available. The CCMP includes five-year strategies for Estuarine Status and Trends (EST), Ecosystem Restoration and Protection (ERP), Technical Assistance and Capacity Building (TAC), and Education and Public Involvement (EPI), and our evaluation of preferred projects will be based upon Goals and Objectives of those strategies. The MBNEP supports the protocol by which the Alabama Trustee Implementation group screened and evaluated alternatives submitted by the public to develop a list of preferred projects for funding.

Within the Wetlands, Coastal, and Nearshore Habitats restoration types, the three acquisition projects - acquisition of the Holmes Tract (Magnolia River Land Acquisition) and East Gateway and Harrod tracts (Weeks Bay Land Acquisition) support Goal ERP-3 - Restore/Expand human connections - and Objective ERP-3.2 - Protect/conservate priority habitats for public benefit and access through acquisition and conservation easement. Both the Lower Perdido Islands Restoration Phase 1 and the Southwestern Coffee Island Habitat Restoration Project - Phase 1 support Goal ERP-2 - Improve ecosystem function and resilience through protection, restoration, and conservation of habitats including beaches, bays, backwaters, and rivers - and Objective ERP-2.5 - Restore 2,500 acres of nearshore habitat and intertidal marshes and flats.

Within the Habitat Projects on Federally-Managed Lands restoration type, two project support CCMP Goals and Objectives. The Little Lagoon Living Shoreline project, will stabilize 2,200 feet of eroded shoreline, create biologically-productive edge habitat using native emergent plants. It supports also supports Goal ERP-2 along with Objective ERP-2.1 - Install living shorelines along publically-owned bay, backwater, and intertidal waterways, where appropriate. Restoring the Night Sky-Assessment, Training, and Outreach supports Education and Public Involvement strategies. Assessing artificial lighting on Alabama's coast, developing a strategy to mitigate impacts of "light pollution," and improving local government capacity to address lighting concerns supports Goal EPI-3 - Increase citizen actions to mitigate impacts of human on the environment - as well as Goal TAC - Establish long-term capability of local governments to manage and maintain coastal environmental resources.

All three projects preferred in the Nutrient Reduction restoration type, will support Goal ERP-1 - Improve trends in water quality in priority watersheds discharging into priority nursery areas. The Toulmins Spring Branch Engineering and Design project involves developing plans for stormwater treatment recommended in the Three Mile Creek Watershed Management Plan. Both the Fowl River and Weeks Bay Nutrient Reduction projects involve implementation of land management practices to reduce nutrient loading in the Fish River and Weeks Bay systems, recommended in the Weeks Bay Watershed Management Plan.

Projects recommended in the Sea Turtle restoration type - Coastal Alabama Sea Turtle (CAST) Conservation Program, CAST Triage, CAST Habitat Usage and Population Dynamics, and CAST Protection: Enhancement and Education, support EPI-3, providing place-based grassroots groups opportunities to increase community stewardship in protection of sea turtle egg laying activities and habitat.

Similarly, projects recommended under the Marine Mammal restoration types support EPI-1 - Increase awareness of coastal resources supporting what people value about living in coastal Alabama - including Enhancing Capacity for the Alabama Marine Mammal Stranding Network. Alabama Estuarine Bottlenose Dolphin Protection: Enhancement and Education. Assessment of Alabama Estuarine Bottlenose Dolphin Populations and Health supports Goal EST-1 - Increase data related to how the estuarine ecosystem responds to anthropogenic stressors.

In the Birds restoration type, Southwestern Coffee Island Habitat Restoration Project - Phase 1 (already evaluated in the Wetlands, Coastal, and Nearshore Habitats type) supports Goal ERP-2, and Colonial Nesting Wading Bird Tracking and Habitat Use Assessment supports Goal EST-1.

Three projects falling under the Oysters restoration type support goal ERP-2: Oyster Cultch Relief and Reef Configuration, Oyster Hatchery at Claude Peteet Mariculture Center-High Spat Production with Study, and Oyster Grow-out and Restoration Reef Placement. A fourth project, Side-scan Mapping of Mobile Bay Relic Oyster Reefs, an engineering and design project, informs status and supports Goal EST-1 and Objective EST-1.1 by improving existing level of coastal monitoring.

The MBNEP supports these projects, each of which contribute to implementation of our CCMP and our charge of building wise stewardship of the water quality and living resources of Alabama's estuarine waters. I am available for further discussion at 251-380-7940 or at rswann@mobilebaynep.com.

Correspondence ID:	12	Project:	65924	Document:	86431
Outside Organization:	Operation HomeCare, Inc. Unaffiliated Individual				
Affiliation:	OfficialRep				
Received:	May,07 2018 16:44:30				
Correspondence Type:	Web Form				

Correspondence: We are committed to an equitable distribution of these limited, once in a lifetime source of funding. Further, the Gulf region at-large are in consensus that the people most affected by BP's disaster should have a meaningful role in deciding how to spend these limited restoration dollars.

The Gulf's environment is a unique treasure we depend on for our food, natural resource enjoyment, and storm protection. We live here, we work here, and we want to see the ecosystem fully restored from the damages the oil has caused.

>MAJOR (CONTINUED) CONCERNS

AL TIG Goals:

This draft RPII/EA reference goals developed by the AL TIG for this restoration plan. The existing AL TIG process continues to systematically exclude opportunities for meaningful public input and/or engagement. This process denies access and participation in project development, planning and analysis by directly impacted residents of communities closest to the nexus of injuries and resources. Many of these communities are historically underserved minority groups and other known (based on past engagement) stakeholders groups. In fact, public engagement has significantly decreased since the

establishment of TIGS with proposed project lacking sufficient detail for substantive public comment(s).

Recommended revisions:

AL TIG should develop and implement an Adaptive Management process that actively and directly engage impacted communities and provide timelines for meaningful public input to enhance this draft RPII. The revised draft RPIIa should then be vetted by the impacted communities and prioritized based on compliance with NEPA.

Restoration planning efforts:

This AL TIG draft RPII/EA reference being consistent with DWH NRDA, Final PDARP/PEIS restoration planning efforts. However, we continue to be concerned that AL TIG has not, to date, conducted comprehensive assessment and/or planning specifically for the geographic region of coastal Alabama closest to the nexus of the injured resources and services. We understand that a comprehensive Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) for the entire suite of ENRDA/NRDA restoration projects is ongoing, but this does not obviate AL TIG responsibility to comply with NEPA for this and future RP.

Recommended revisions:

AL TIG should include coastal Alabama specific information, prioritizing areas closest to the nexus of injury; conduct additional assessment and planning to allow a better assessment of the ability to achieve restoration goals, assess potential impacts and ensure the nexus to injured resources or services is clearly articulated, in accordance with the Oil Pollution Act, NRDA regulations and NEPA. We urge AL TIG to initiate activities utilizing public input to clearly articulate in writing the rationale for individual projects. This information should document a clear nexus between project intent and injury; potential benefit (short/long term) to the environment, coastal communities and public access and public enjoyment of each proposed project.

Public information efforts:

This AL TIG draft RPII/EA reference the provision of information and analyses for meaningful review and comments. However, we continue to be concerned, (as previously commented) with the lack of transparency, direct meaningful engagement of impacted citizens, community based organizations and other known stakeholders groups.

Recommended revisions:

AL TIG should defer this proposal to proceed with selection and implementation of the identified 20 preferred alternatives to be fully funded. This deferral does not put the funding at risk, but provide time for AL TIG to responsibly enable meaningful public input, engagement and additional analysis of alternatives for proposed plan.

Correspondence ID: 13 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Alabama Coastal Foundation Unaffiliated Individual
Affiliation: OfficialRep
Received: May,07 2018 19:54:33
Correspondence Type: Web Form

Correspondence: I am submitting these brief comments on behalf of the Board, staff, volunteers and members of the Alabama Coastal Foundation (ACF), which is celebrating its 25th anniversary. ACF is a statewide non-profit organization with a mission to improve and protect Alabama's coastal environment through cooperation, education, and participation. We use an inclusive environmental stewardship approach to our work and have submitted additional feedback in a joint-letter as well.

First, thank you for hosting the open house and conducting the public meeting on April 18th in addition to releasing the Draft Restoration Plan II in advance of that meeting. It was a great presentation of a very comprehensive, well-designed plan. As with many other NGOs, we applaud the use of standards from the Trustee Council's Monitoring and Adaptive Management manual.

ACF supports all 22 projects and restoration types addressed in this Plan and appreciated your including funds for land acquisition. Having launched the Alabama Oyster Shell Recycling Program in 2016 and being a partner with Birmingham Audubon to help recruit volunteers for their coastal bird stewardship program in 2017, ACF is especially supportive of the oyster and bird projects being proposed.

In particular, ACF is the most supportive of the sea turtle projects in this Plan. We are willing and able to assist with bringing those project ideas into reality.

Correspondence ID: 14 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Unaffiliated Individual
Affiliation:
Received: May,08 2018
Correspondence Type: regulations.gov

Correspondence: Agency should stop using reference to Climate, Environment in Rule making without transparent public facts, even the IPCC is confused. Earth's atmosphere is a distinctive blend of chemistry that sustains life here on the planet. So monitor the atmosphere, from the ground, in the air, and from space then publish air quality of that state or city before a rule is made. Like Micro Pulse Lidar (MPL) System. Many personal air and water quality systems are everywhere today.

Too many Alarmists have fail to adequately explain why temperatures began warming at the end of the Little Ice Age in about 1850, long before man-made CO2 emissions could have impacted the climate. Then about 1940, just as man-made CO2 emissions rose sharply, the temperatures began a decline that lasted until the 1970's, prompting the media and many scientists to fear coming ice age. temperatures got colder after CO2 emissions exploded. If CO2 is the driving force of global climate change, why so many in media ignore many skeptical scientists who cite obvious inconvenient truths?

Advocates of alarmism have grown increasingly desperate to try to convince the public that global warming is the greatest moral issue of our generation. Two periods of Globe warming occurred long before the invention of the SUV or human GHG industrial activity could have possibly impacted the Earth's climate. In fact, scientists believe the Earth was warmer than today during the Medieval Warm Period, when the Vikings grew crops in Greenland. Climate alarmists have been attempting to erase the inconvenient Medieval Warm Period from the Earth's climate history for at least a decade.

Medieval Warm Period 900 AD to 1300 AD

Little Ice Age 1500 to 1850.

Climate change used repeatedly by activists to convince the public that a climate catastrophe is looming and humanity is the cause. Neither of these fears is justified. Global climate changes occur all the time due to natural causes. Since 1895, the media has alternated between scares during four separate and sometimes overlapping time periods.

From 1895 until the 1930's the media peddled a coming ICE AGE.

From the late 1920's until the 1960's they warned of global WARMING.

From the 1950's until the 1970's they warned us of a coming ICE AGE.

This makes modern global warming the fourth estate's fourth attempt to promote opposing climate change fears during the last 100 years. The most media-HYPED environmental issue of all time, global warming. HOT AND COLD MEDIA SPIN Cycle : This seems a real Challenge to Journalists Who Cover Global Warming who cannot seem to get the story the same. American people have been served up an unprecedented parade of environmental alarmism by the media and entertainment industry, which link every possible weather event to global warming.

Global Warming - - evokes the media, Hollywood elites pop culture to nod their heads and fret about an impending climate disaster. Hollywood's involvement like Al Gore's movie "An Inconvenient Truth." Junk science. A London Society sent a chilling letter to the media encouraging them to stifle the voices of scientists skeptical of climate alarmism. Many major organs of the media dismiss any pretense of balance and objectivity on climate change coverage and instead crossed squarely into global warming advocacy. Developments in the controversy over whether or not humans have created a climate catastrophe. One of the key aspects that the United Nations, environmental groups and the media have promoted as the "smoking gun" of proof of catastrophic global warming is the so-called 'hockey stick' temperature graph by climate scientist Michael Mann and his colleagues, fueling the global warming propaganda but The "hockey stick" was completely and thoroughly broken once and for all when two Canadian researchers tore apart the statistical foundation for the hockey stick.

National Academy of Sciences and an independent researcher further refuted the foundation of the "hockey stick."

The media have missed the big pieces of the puzzle when it comes to the Earth's temperatures and mankind's carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions. It is very simplistic to feign horror and say the one degree Fahrenheit temperature increase during the 20th century means we are all doomed. First of all, the one degree Fahrenheit rise coincided with the greatest advancement of living standards, life expectancy, food production and human health in the history of our planet. So it is hard to argue that the global warming we experienced in the 20th century was somehow negative or part of a catastrophic trend.

Public needs to see : is there really a problem. without the media or billionaire hype. before we spend billions of dollars on nonsense regulations.

According to many air apps and WHO org. America has Great Water and Air Quality. so is this a waste of money.

Correspondence ID:	15	Project:	65924	Document:	86431
Outside Organization:	Unaffiliated Individual				
Affiliation:					
Received:	May,08 2018				
Correspondence Type:	regulations.gov				

Correspondence: EPA Inspector Generals highly critical report investigating EPAs review of external data for the GHGs endangerment finding. On December 15, 2009, EPA published its Endangerment and Cause or Contribute Findings for Greenhouse Gases Under Section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act. As the primary scientific basis for EPAs finding, the Agency relied upon assessments conducted. by other organizations.

Agencies reliance on the IPCC is A VIOLATION of the Data Quality Act. (The DQA directs the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to issue government-wide guidelines that provide policy and procedural guidance to Federal agencies for ensuring and maximizing the quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity of information (including statistical information) disseminated by Federal agencies. See Data Quality Act 515, 42 U.S.C. 502-504.

IPCC is an international body outside the jurisdiction and oversight of the United States Congress. Moreover, EPA is the entity of the United States government that is seeking sweeping regulations on the basis that GHGs are increasing global temperatures.

EPAs reliance on the IPCC violates the Agencys own internal policy. (see Peer Review Advisory Grp., Addendum to: Guidance for Evaluating the Quality of Scientific and Technical Information, EPAS SCI. AND TECH. POLICY COUNCIL (Dec. 2012),. IPCC relied on data from a University of East Anglia CRU , in England.

Note History : IPCC Established in 1988, IPCC stated working Group I, stated a Special Committee, Dr John Houghton prepared Scientific Assessments, First working group rely on the Carnegie Institution SCOPE 29 report of 1986 The Greenhouse Effect, Climatic Change and Ecosystems ; Scientific Assessment, Working Group I has built on this. First draft of Policy Makers in Edinburgh 1990, Meteorological office in Bracknell, England, was responsible for organizing . Members of the team included CHINA , Professor Cac Hong Xing. AND , Financial support for the Bracknell, England core team was provided by the Departments of the Environment and Energy in the UK. The Staff of University of East Anglia CRU , England had been heavily involved in the IPCC assessments, and CRUs work has been used by IPCC in construction of future climate projections.

EPAs Technical support document Peer Review Methodology DID NOT Meet OMB Requirements for Highly Influential Scientific Assessments. EPA had the TSD Technical support document reviewed by a panel of 12 federal climate change scientists.

EPAs disposition of the findings were NOT made available to the public as would be required for reviews of highly influential scientific assessments. EPA panel of scientists DID NOT fully meet the independence requirements for reviews of highly influential scientific assessments because one of the panelists was an EPA employee.

DID NOT Include language in its proposed action, final action, or internal memoranda that identified whether the Agency used influential scientific information or highly influential scientific assessments to support the action.

EPA Office of Air and Radiation also DID NOT certify that the supporting technical information was peer reviewed in accordance with EPAs peer review policy.

EPA DID NOT contemporaneously document how it applied and considered the assessment factors in determining whether the IPCC and other assessment reports were of sufficient quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity

EPA DID NOT maintain a record of its response and disposition of comments for the two Technical support document that accompanied the proposed and final rules.

EPA DID NOT discuss whether IPCC procedures required a description of the credentials and relevant experiences of each peer reviewer.

In November 2009, subsequent to publication of EPAs proposed finding, approximately 1,000 e-mails were hacked from the servers of the University of East Anglia CRU , in England, and made public. CRU is recognized for its climate change research and, since 1978, had developed and maintained a land-based temperature record widely used by climate change researchers. According to CRU, its staff have been heavily involved in the IPCC assessments, and CRUs work has been used by IPCC in construction of future climate projections. The content of the e-mails caused some to challenge the work of CRU and the conclusions of the IPCC. Since EPA relied heavily upon IPCCs AR4 in developing the TSD for its endangerment finding, concerns have been raised about EPAs acceptance and use of this information in light of federal and Agency information quality guidelines. April 2010 study, chaired by Professor Ron Oxburgh, examined; noted that there were unresolved questions relating to the availability of environmental datasets. Further, the Russell report found that both CRU scientists and the University of East Anglia failed to display the proper degree of openness regarding their research.

Correspondence ID: 16 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Unaffiliated Individual
Affiliation:
Received: May,08 2018
Correspondence Type: regulations.gov

Correspondence: April 11, 2018 , Republican Congress members from the Pacific Northwest are upset with a federal judge's order to spill water from four Snake River dams, Ice Harbor, Lower Monumental, Little Goose and Lower Granite span the Snake River between the Washington cities of Pasco and Pullman. Together they produce about 4 percent of the region's electricity. Federal agencies have estimated increasing spill until mid-June will cost electric ratepayers \$40 million in lost power revenues in 2018 alone., and could hurt transportation and barging on the rivers, flood control and irrigation systems, Republicans contend. Built in the 1960s and 1970s, provide hydropower, flood control, navigation, irrigation and recreation benefits, the water could be saved for other uses and are denouncing the spill. Dams and fish can co-exist," Reps. Cathy McMorris Rodgers and Dan Newhouse, whose Washington districts include the dam. Without Snake and Columbia river dams and the many benefits they provide, life in central Washington as we know it would be unrecognizable," Newhouse said. Hydropower is the Northwest's lifeblood, said Republican Rep. Raul Labrador of Idaho. liberal judge to ignore the broad scientific consensus of the federal government and the states of Idaho, Washington and Montana is unconscionable. Replacing that power would require the equivalent of two nuclear power plants, Labrador said. wind and solar power are too unreliable to replace the lost hydropower. And neither can flood control and irrigation systems. It's a bad plan that will cost families and businesses, do little to help, and may even harm protected salmon, and add tons of carbon to our air," Flores said of the spill. "We shouldn't throw good money at a bad plan.

Agency should step in, this is outrages to Tax payers, Farmers, Ranchers, ships, Boat owners, fisherman, wildlife, Forest timber owners, flood control , must stop the waste of water,

Correspondence ID: 17 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Unaffiliated Individual
Affiliation:
Received: May,08 2018
Correspondence Type: regulations.gov

Correspondence: America has lost more than 55,000 factories, 6,000,000 manufacturing jobs and accumulated Trade Deficits of more than 12 Trillion Dollars since Bush administration. 2017 Trade Deficit almost 800 Billion Dollars. 80 Billion spent By Obama climate Admin. .. based on dishonest reports. The problem was GHG Regulations

2009, Dec EPA published its Endangerment and Cause or Contribute Findings for Greenhouse Gases Under Section 202(a) of the Clean Air Act. As the primary scientific basis EPA relied heavily upon IPCCs AR4 ,in developing the TSD , concerns were raised about EPAs acceptance and use of this information .

IPCC suffering heavy criticism for its use of information that had not been rigorously checked. And author of Jones of CRU showed asking Some to be deleted , The administrators the Freedom of Information Act said the University of East Anglia had broken the rules in its handling of an FOI request in May 2008.

2009, in Nov. subsequent to publication of EPAs proposed finding, approximately 1,000 e-mails were hacked from the servers of the University of East Anglia CRU , in England, and made public. The content of the e-mails caused a challenge the work of CRU and the conclusions of the IPCC.

University of East Anglia CRU , in England staff have been heavily involved in the IPCC assessments, and CRUs work has been used by IPCC in construction of future climate projections.

April 2010 study, chaired by Professor Ron Oxburgh, examined; noted that there were unresolved questions relating to the availability of environmental datasets.

Russell report found that both CRU scientists and the University of East Anglia failed to display the proper degree of openness regarding their research. EPA inspector General, in 2011, Procedural Review , found Many issues EPA did not follow in EPAs Greenhouse Gases Endangerment Finding Data Quality Processes Report No. 11-P-0702 September 26, 2011

NOTE: Few realize that the IPCC does not produce its own original scientific research on global warming so EPA Relied on reports that originated form a college staff in England.

Sound national and international environmental policies must be based on a solid foundation of transparent scientific, technical, and economic understanding of the relevant facts.

Regulation with back up reports using words such as if, might, could, probably, perhaps, expected, projected or modeled - and many involve such deep dreaming, or ignorance of scientific facts and principles, that they are akin to nonsense and a manufactured consensus and engineered science.

2011 July report by Government Accountability Office (GAO) is a government agency that provides auditing, evaluation, and investigative services Fostering Quality Science at EPA: Needs Reform; and found :

EPAs laboratory activities remain fragmented and largely uncoordinated.

EPA has not undertaken an agency wide, coordinated approach to managing its scientific efforts and related facilities as part of an interrelated portfolio of facilities.

EPA had failed to implement the recommendations of five independent evaluations of EPAs scientific and laboratory management since 1992.

GAO found that

Testimony from a recent participant in CASACs particulate matter National Ambient Air Quality Standard panel stated that the CASAC process is flawed, narrow, and possibly ethically questionable.

2012 Annual Plan of the EPAs Office of Inspector General OIG raises significant concerns about science and technology activities at the Agency, stating that questions exist as to whether EPA is collecting the right data, of sufficient quality, and is making that data available.

In terms of EPAs regulatory process, the Inspector General (IG) further states that many policies are out of date or are based on outdated science and technology.

GAO found As part of the update on its High-Risk Program, highlighting concerns about EPA politicization of science, saying that in recent years, concerns have been raised regarding the perceived politicization of science in agency decisions.

In 2009, GAO added EPAs handling of toxic chemicals through the Integrated Risk Information System (IRIS) to its list of areas at high risk for waste, fraud, abuse, and mismanagement.

EPA needs to better emphasize the development and use of environmental indicators and information as a mechanism for prioritizing its allocation of limited resources, and that the lack of complete and comprehensive environmental information on air or water quality, for example, makes it difficult for EPA to evaluate the success of its policies and programs.

Several concerns have been raised about the make-up, transparency, and rigor provided by EPA advisory panels like the SAB and the Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee CASA.

GAO has found that many advisory committee members are not appropriately screened for potential conflicts of interest or points of view.

Correspondence ID: 18 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Unaffiliated Individual
Affiliation:
Received: May,08 2018
Correspondence Type: regulations.gov

Correspondence: Ban china rare earth , Just like a cow with lipstick and a bath is going to look much better than its unwashed fellow cow, but it is still a cow .

How 'GREEN' is the FOOTPRINT of a WIND TURBINE? Less clean than Gas or hydroelectric plants energy and bad for environment, bad for wildlife, bad for Humans. Uses more earth minerals than any other energy. Only works 17 to 35% of time.

NOT SAFE, Wind turbine requires an astounding amount of toxic rare earth minerals, primarily neodymium and dysprosium, which are key components of the magnets used in modern wind turbines. most common uses is in the generators . Environmental damages, consider that mining one ton of rare earth minerals produces about one ton of radioactive waste, according to the Institute for the Analysis of Global Security. 13,131 MW of wind generating capacity means that between 4.9 million pounds (using MITs estimate) and 6.1 million pounds (using the Bulletin of Atomic Sciences estimate) of rare earths were used in wind turbines installed in 2012. 2 megawatt (MW) wind turbine contains about 800 pounds of toxic rare earths called neodymium and 130 pounds of dysprosium. mined by children in Africa and Chile..

NOT SAFE, Between 4.9 million and 6.1 million pounds of radioactive waste were created to make these wind turbines. That means the U.S. wind industry may create more radioactive waste in year than our entire nuclear industry produced in spent fuel. few are paying attention to the wind industrys less efficient and less transparent use of radioactive material via rare earth mineral excavation in China.

NOT SAFE, Not only do rare earths create radioactive waste residue, but according to the Chinese Society for Rare Earths, one ton of calcined rare earth ore generates 9,600 to 12,000 cubic meters (339,021 to 423,776 cubic feet) of waste gas containing dust concentrate, hydrofluoric acid, sulfur dioxide, and sulfuric acid, [and] approximately 75 cubic meters (2,649 cubic feet) of acidic wastewater. .

The wind industry is dependent on rare earth minerals imported from China, the procurement of which results in staggering environmental damages. not one step of the rare earth mining process that is not disastrous for the environment. That the destruction is mostly unseen and far-flung does not make it any less damaging. Wind energy poses serious environmental risks availability of REEs appears to be at risk based on a number of factors. Of particular significance, one country (China) controls 98% of current supply (production). Historically, much lower levels of market concentration have harmed manufacturing firms. in 1978 Zaire controlled 48% of the cobalt supply and yet political unrest in Zaire resulted in a disruption to global supply that became known as the Cobalt Crisis REEs have come under global scrutiny due to environmental and social conditions under which they are mined, further increasing their supply risk.

Each Turbine needs 45 tons of steel rebar and 630 cubic yards of concrete, cast iron, turbine contains more than 8,000 different components , 116-ft blades atop a 212-ft tower for a total height of 328 feet. The blades sweep a vertical airspace of just under an acre. Vestas V90 from Denmark has 148-ft blades (sweeping more than 1.5 acres) on a 262-ft tower, totaling 410 feet. The tallest wind turbines in the U.S. have been installed in Texas the Vestas V90 turbines are 345 feet high, Gamesa G87 from Spain, with 143-ft blades (just under 1.5 acres) on a 256-ft tower, totaling 399 feet. steel tower is anchored in a platform of more than a thousand tons of concrete and steel rebar, 30 to 50 feet across and anywhere from 6 to 30 feet deep. Shafts are sometimes driven down farther to help anchor it. Mountain tops must be blasted to create a level area of at least 3 acres. model, the nacelle alone weighs more than 56 tons, the blade assembly weighs more than 36 tons, and the tower itself weighs about 71 tons a total weight of 164 tons. The corresponding weights for the Vestas V90 are 75, 40, and 152, total 267 tons; and for the Gamesa G87 72, 42, and 220, total 334 tons. Health Hazards of Noise and vibrations are generated by these huge monster machines and topped with flashing lights.

Wind turbines are not safe, high-voltage electrical devices with large moving parts, estimated that for every 100 turbines, one blade will break off (see Larwood, 2005). In winter, heavy sheets of ice can build up and then fall or be thrown off. Access to the land around wind turbines is usually restricted, even to the landowner.

The 5,700 turbines installed in the United States in 2009 required approximately 36,000 miles of steel rebar and 1.7 million cubic yards of concrete (enough to pave a four-foot-wide, 7,630-mile-long sidewalk).

Wind require heavy government subsidies to be competitive with normal electricity generators so a Dutch word for Greenie power seems graphic : "subsidieslurpers" (subsidy gobblers).

Correspondence ID: 19 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Unaffiliated Individual
Affiliation:
Received: May,08 2018
Correspondence Type: regulations.gov

Correspondence: This restoration draft appears to have widespread and appropriate goals for the intended purpose. The breakdown of projects addresses a variety of impacts caused by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Addressing biodiversity and habitat impacted by environmental damage is a vital part of this draft.

Specific Concerns

One concern that I have involves wetland restoration and salt marshes. According to researchers who published a study in the journal Scientific Reports, salt marshes most severely eroded and degraded may never grow back, despite restoration attempts. This study is cited in a Washington Post article titled "The Deepwater Horizon spill may have caused irreversible damage to Gulf Coast marshes" by Chelsea Harvey. Severely impacted marshes were defined as having more than 90 percent of plant stems covered in oil. This may require further research, but with chances of restoring these marshes being slim to none, I would think it would be wise to start restoration efforts on marshes and wetlands that are more easily recovered, then move onto the more damaged areas. I am by no means condemning these areas completely, I just think time and funding would be best spent working on projects that are most likely to succeed first.

I would like to stress the importance of wetlands and marshes. I think restoration of these habitats should be made a top priority. Marshes provide many services that are vital to human health and ecosystem function. They not only reduce erosion, filter out harmful pollutants, absorb nutrient runoff and sequester carbon, they also provide habitat for animals including fish that support the seafood economy. If marshes are restored successfully the benefits are expansive and will include an increase in biodiversity, local tourism and nutrient reduction.

This leads to a concern I have about nutrient reduction from nonpoint sources. Since nonpoint sources are a national issue and classically difficult to regulate, I am left wondering what these projects will involve and how they will be successful. Nutrient runoff is a large scale issue that is becoming more prevalent and serious each year. I would recommend expanding nutrient reduction as much as possible, however, if marsh restoration is highly successful as addressed in the previous paragraph, this will help address nonpoint source runoff in addition to other environmental concerns.

Correspondence ID: 20 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Unaffiliated Individual
Affiliation:
Received: May,08 2018
Correspondence Type: Transcript
Correspondence: I just want to say thank you for the projects you've chosen. I think it's a great selection, particularly - -

I just wanted to thank you guys and Director Powell and Commissioner Blankenship, Town of Magnolia Springs and the Weeks Bay Foundation for the acquisition projects. I think it's a great list. I'm a 50-year resident of Magnolia Springs.

Magnolia River is very important to me and my family. We've been there for three generations. And I think particularly the Holmes tract will do a great job in protecting water quality in Magnolia River.

Thank you.

Correspondence ID: 21 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Unaffiliated Individual
Affiliation:
Received: May,08 2018
Correspondence Type: Transcript
Correspondence: Good evening, and thanks so much for being here this evening and giving us this chance for comment. As he said, my name's Ryan Fikes. I'm a scientist with the National Wildlife Federation's Gulf of Mexico program. And, as aI wanted to just make a few comments regarding science and the inclusion in this plan.

We're very pleased to see science remain at the forefront of Alabama's restoration investments. The inclusion of monitoring and adaptive management activities in this living coastal marine resources plan and its projects very early into this process will help fill critical gaps and influence future planning and implementation.

So, as an example, much work has been done in oyster reefs, as we've seen, and it's gonna be great. We're encouraged to see trustees focus on the mitigation of key stressors to support resilient habitats and wildlife populations. By addressing these underlying stressors, the trustees are helping to ensure future success of restoring these natural resources.

Additionally, we support the continued efforts to fill those science gaps, as I mentioned, especially for critical species populations in order to guide future restoration investments. And, as you know, that's particularly important for sea turtles and marine mammals.

We're also very pleased to see a strong alignment with existing trustee monitoring, adaptive management guidance, including the four strategic frameworks, as well as the recently released monitoring adaptive manual. This guidance will help ensure projects are implemented and monitored in a way that supports coordination across the TIGs as well as other state planning processes.

And, then, just lastly, while we do support filling data gaps, we do just want to encourage the trustees to utilize the existing body of research from both inside and outside the gulf region to the maximum extent possible in order to reduce potential for redundancy in planning effort. So, with that, thank you for giving me the chance to speak.

Correspondence ID: 22 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: City of Magnolia Springs, Mayor Unaffiliated Individual
Affiliation: OfficialRep
Received: May,08 2018
Correspondence Type: Transcript
Correspondence: Thank you. My name is Bob Holk. I'm Mayor of the Town of Magnolia Springs, and I'm also a member of the Weeks Bay Foundation board. Tuesday evening, the Town of Magnolia Springs will adopt a resolution supporting the Magnolia River Preservation Project, the Holmes property. This property is located partly in the Town of Magnolia Springs and wholly in its planning jurisdiction. This particular piece of property is a big part of what makes Magnolia River the beautiful river it is today.

As a member of the Weeks Bay Foundation, there are times when I've worked on land acquisition that we've been able to conserve properties, and I've questioned myself afterwards and said, "Did we really get the most bang for our buck?" A lot of this was wetland that probably would have never been developed. The Holmes property is a totally different piece of property. It is very developable. With over a mile of waterfront and a very high center of grav- - - center elevation in the property, it has availability of water and sewer. It has no zoning. It is a developer's dream.

And, so, I think my point is that I think this is a real opportunity to really protect some of the river and its - - its beauty by not developing it. Not only will we be protecting nearly a mile of waterfront but we also - - it seems like whenever those properties are developed, that they also entail a new house, a boathouse with a 23-foot Grady White with twin outboard motors that run up and down Magnolia River, which is a very narrow river. And we have a lot of undeveloped wetlands along that river, and, believe me, we like to go out on the river. And on Friday afternoon you can go out, and the river will be crystal clear. On Sunday evening you can go back out after the traffic for the weekend and you see all the sediment floating in the river and it looks like

we've had a very hard rain.

So, as I say, Tuesday night the Town of - - because that's when our council meeting is - - will adopt that resolution, and I will send it to you, along with a letter further explaining why we think it's very important that you protect the Holmes property.

Correspondence ID: 23 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: National Wildlife Federation Conservation/Preservation
Affiliation: OfficialRep
Received: May,08 2018
Correspondence Type: Transcript
Correspondence: I'm Jessica Bibza, and I'm the Alabama and Florida policy specialist with National Wildlife Federation.

Ryan speaks to the science, and I kind of speak more to the general policy and the specific projects. Really want to applaud you and the entire crew for an apparent really thorough review of potential projects. I'm gonna speak to a couple of them in a little bit more detail, though we're going to be providing written comments as well.

Since Miss Hunter started - - did the oysters last, I'm going to do them first. With regard to all of the oyster projects, really encourage you to coordinate and consult with your neighboring states. Numerous oyster restoration and research projects are underway throughout the region. In Florida, you know, the FWC and FDACS4 and University of Florida are doing a lot of work. In Mississippi, your neighbor on the other side, DMR is putting together some science pieces. As Ryan Fikes mentioned, really encourage you to look both within the region as well as outside of the region for lessons learned and to avoid reinventing the wheel.

With regard to some of the specific projects, really encouraged to see the development of a comprehensive oyster restoration plan, including living shoreline projects with oysters. In the document, you recommend that oyster restoration experts are going to be working on that. Really encourage you to consider including the NGO community, as well as a partner in that effort, as stakeholder input can certainly be valuable.

Just a little sidebar note on the oyster grow-out and replacement project. It didn't look like the numbers and the costs added up, so just might want to double-check that. Sorry. That's a weedy comment.

As far as the comprehensive oyster restoration plan, you know, we'd like to see that guide not just future investments but even steer some of these projects that are being proposed right now. For instance, information on the existing structure, spat availability, environmental conditions, it might be great to have a better understanding of that before moving forward with projects; for example, the oyster hatchery.

As far as the other living coastal marine resources, we support the dolphin, turtle, and bird projects proposed. As Ryan mentioned, filling data gaps is a really important step to guiding future investments. When designing and implementing the research and the other projects, keep in mind that these critters, they don't know state boundaries. They don't know where the open ocean takes over and what might apply to Region-Wide. So really - -For example, the CAST habitat and population dynamics mentions Oceanic and neritic turtles. Makes this project seem like it's a great opportunity to partner with the Open-Ocean TIG or Region-Wide TIG. Maybe they could help fund some additional elements of it.

I see that I'm out of time. There was a couple other things about the birds, maybe looking at bird species that also would use the entire Gulf Coast and the living lagoon - - Little3 Lagoon living shoreline project. Really glad to see you invest not just in hotshot projects but ones that will increase the resiliency of the community and the coastline.

Correspondence ID: 24 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Town of Magnolia Springs Town or City Government
Affiliation: OfficialRep
Received: May,08 2018
Correspondence Type: Transcript
Correspondence: I was part of a core group that made application to ADEM to obtain OAW status for the river. I also serve on the Town Council and chair the Environmental Protection committee from right before when the oil spill happened through the duration of it. And really what I want to talk to you about - - with you is when we applied for the OAW status, it involved a lot of water quality testing, and our main site was actually right across the river from the - - from the Holmes tract. And I had, for about a two-and-a-half-year period, I would go down there weekly personally and water quality test. And I saw bald eagles, ospreys. There were eagles nesting somewhere on there. One year there was a bunch of fledglings around there.

Also, about a year and a half ago we had three manatees that got stuck in the cold weather up here, and we actually followed them around so that some folks from the Dauphin Island Sea Lab, as well as Orlando, could try to capture them and get them out of there. So I know personally for a fact that manatee have been all over this property.

And when I found out this was a mile of waterfront, I was like, this is a home run for that group. That's all I've got. Thanks

Correspondence ID: 25 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Citizens Climate Lobby Conservation/Preservation
Affiliation:
Received: May,08 2018
Correspondence Type: Other
Correspondence: Good afternoon. Thank you for having this wonderful opportunity to address you all. It's wonderful to have everybody here. Thank you everybody that showed up.

My name is Riva Fralick, and I'm with - - a member of the Sierra Club Mobile Bay Chapter and also the Citizens Climate Lobby, a chapter leader for the Mobile Bay Citizens Climate Lobby. The website is www.citizensclimatelobby.org.

Well, I realize this is a multi-pronged area, but, basically, I'm up here to speak about the long-term effects when after the BP money runs out and what we can do as a local area, region, state and federal - - on the federal level as far as speaking about the fisheries and the ocean management. I'll tell you a little

bit about Citizens Climate Lobby. They're trying to pass a market-based approach carbon fee and dividend, and they're trying to pass it at the national level. It's a bipartisan nonpartisan organization, and by passing it, putting a fee on fossil fuels at the source of the well or the mine starting at \$10.00 a ton, that that money would be reinvested to households and that money would, as the price of fossil fuels go up, then we would start investing in renewable energy. I realize I'm part of the problem. Every time I buy a tank of gas or buy anything that's in plastic, our oceans, everybody knows about climate change. The carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is causing global warming. And you addressed the greenhouse gas situation in a couple of the chapters, 10, 11 and 13, I believe, so you know what's going on.

As far as a funding source, if we can't - - if Citizens Climate Lobby can't pass a carbon fee and dividend on a national level, perhaps we can do it on a state level for everything that comes upriver and downstream, and with that money, or even a bottle tax and also maybe making the Five Rivers Delta National Park, there's many ways to continue the money stream.

And as far as the money stream itself, I saw that there was only \$5 million for - - I think it was ocean restoration. Maybe we could take some more money from the recreational side of it and put it on the saving our habitat. Because without oceans, all - - that really will affect our whole standard of living and our lifestyle.

And I know we all love this place, our planet, and I just thank you for the work you're doing and thank you for this opportunity.

Correspondence ID: 26 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Ocean Conservancy Conservation/Preservation
Affiliation: OfficialRep
Received: May,08 2018
Correspondence Type: Transcript

Correspondence: Hi. My name is Rachel Guillory with Ocean Conservancy. We want to commend the Alabama TIG for proposing such a large suite of projects that address a wide variety of wildlife and habitats. Our mission being what it is, we're especially grateful for the projects that restore sea turtle and marine mammal populations, and not just one or two projects but eight individual projects for this species is terrific.

We like that the projects for sea turtles and marine mammals approach those species from multiple angles, so nesting beaches, light pollution, population studies, it's - - it's really important that we take that multi-prong approach. So that's terrific.

We also appreciate the TIG's efforts to comply with the new monitoring and adaptive management manual that the Trustee Council recently put out earlier this year. The MAM plans that are included in this draft plan have a good amount of detail from monitoring parameters to how to deal with uncertainty. As you know, monitoring and adaptive management are so important to make sure that these projects are successful. And, so, we look forward to, like Amy said, future iterations of these monitoring and adaptive management plans.

So it's clear with this plan that Alabama really values its marine species, so thank you, again, for your leadership.

Correspondence ID: 27 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Weeks Bay Foundation Conservation/Preservation
Affiliation: OfficialRep
Received: May,08 2018
Correspondence Type: Transcript

Correspondence: Hi. Good evening. My name is Yael Girard, Y-A-E-L, Girard, and I'm the Executive Director of the Weeks Bay Foundation. First let me say thank you to the trustees for taking the time out of your busy schedules to be here this evening for some thoughts from the community.

In addition, I'd like to thank the amazing team that put this list of 22 projects together. I know that there were representatives at every level - - local, state, and federal - - who worked very hard to select these proposals, and the Weeks Bay Foundation sees this as a strong list of projects which tackles many of the issues affecting our coastal resources.

We're especially glad to see nutrient reduction projects for several watersheds and strategic land acquisition as priorities on this list. As Governor Ivey, Mr. Blankenship, and several others have noted, waterways are the lifeblood of coastal Alabama. Recreation, industry, and our wildlife biodiversity depend on the waters, inlets and bays that weave through our coast. With a seafood industry that brought in over \$500 million in the 2011 NOAA Gulf of Mexico report, we must protect the marsh habitats where many of these important species spend key periods of their lives.

With the Alabama SCORP, the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreational Plan, for 2018 listing, over 75 percent of the population frequenting freshwater sites for either fishing or swimming and nearly 50 percent of the population visiting saltwater fishing and swimming sites, we need these clean places for our families to play.

With the most species diversity in the entire United States for turtles, freshwater fish, snails, mussels and crawfish, we must ensure that our waterways can sustain these unique creatures. The nutrient reduction plans for Weeks Bay, Fowl River and Toulmins Creek will help address some of the root causes of water quality issues and give us a better understanding of how to tackle these problems. I applaud the USDA and NRCS for continuing to work with farmers to address the challenge of stream impairment due to agricultural runoff. The protection of undeveloped lands adjacent to our waterways is critical to the economic, recreational, and biological functions and ecosystem services we described earlier. In addition, we believe that the preservation of intact habitat is always a better option than the creation of new artificial habitat. No matter how skilled the engineers and the biologists, nature just does it better.

The three tracts selected are already home to numerous terrestrial and aquatic species, including documented cases of endangered species. They already shelter the shores of Weeks Bay, Fish River and Magnolia River from flooding and storm surge. There are already beautiful views for kayakers, anglers, and river recreationists. The Magnolia River land acquisition, Holmes Tract, the Weeks Bay land acquisition, East Gateway Tract, and the Weeks Bay land acquisition, Harrod Tract, will protect nearly 500 acres of land and over three miles of water frontage. These are some of the last large privately-owned undeveloped waterfront properties in the watershed.

In a county that is projected to grow by 65 percent between 2010 and 2040, conserving large swaths of bay and riverfront habitat is a wise investment in

our future water quality. We hope that the future projects list will continue to consider how important this is to our coastal resiliency, economy, and lifestyle. Thank you very much for your time.

Correspondence ID: 28 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Unaffiliated Individual
Affiliation:
Received: May,08 2018
Correspondence Type: Transcript
Correspondence: My name's Rick Wallace. I'm a landowner on the Fish River, and I enjoy fishing, boating, and sometimes a little swimming when it's warm enough. Right, Chris?

I also served on the Weeks Bay Management Plan on the stakeholders group, and I'm just here to say how much I support the land acquisition parts of the plan for the Weeks Bay watershed on the properties that y'all just mentioned, Magnolia River land acquisition, the East Gateway Tract and the Harrod Tract. These are really important pieces of land, and this is really wise use of the NRDA money as far as protecting our resources.

I will say that in the management plan, land acquisition was important, and so this supports that 500-page one-year management plan. Of course, another aspect of the plan was water quality. And, so, the project Weeks Bay Nutrient Reduction is an important project also that will help our farmers in the watershed reduce runoff and I think will be a great, great positive step forward.

Lastly, I just want to thank the group for considering land acquisition to the degree that it has. Land acquisition wasn't necessarily a high priority at the beginning of these processes, and we've fought for that to be included and we're very happy, and we hope you'll continue to consider land acquisition. This is really one of the best ways to use this money. Thank you for your time.

Correspondence ID: 29 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Mobile Bay Keeper Unaffiliated Individual
Affiliation: OfficialRep
Received: May,08 2018
Correspondence Type: Transcript
Correspondence: Thank you. I'm Casi Callaway, I'm the Director of Mobile Baykeeper, and I want to echo what they've said before about thank you -- thanking all of you for being here, for your leadership, for your drive, for the multiple hours you probably didn't get to spend time with your baby boys to do these critical crazy documents. It's a great -- it is a great list of projects.

I want to start by saying that because I do have a little -- few things we want to see next time, I guess is a better way to put it, we are absolutely -- Mobile Baykeeper, our 4500-plus members and our reach throughout the community strongly supports land acquisition projects. We strongly support the nutrient reduction projects. The species projects all fit the world that we need, and especially a big focus on the oyster restoration projects. I think the thing I also want to say that I think you went above and beyond on, especially with the nutrient reduction projects that are agricultural based, you've gone and chosen those projects because they have match opportunities with USFDA funding or other funding that exists. I love what you've done with selecting the mammal projects and using local Dauphin Island Sea Lab, Ruth Carmichael and her team. They've led the charge for Alabama. They've done a phenomenal job for us. So all of those pieces -- and that's where I think we really need to stick is use the resources that we have here in our community. So that's one thing I do want to comment on.

The projects all seem to have a good component of education, but it's hard to tell where that education is gonna come from. You again, to repeat what was said here earlier, you have great resources in the nonprofit organizations here, in the community organizations here, and in the people here. You also do have great resources across the state lines. So when it comes to some of these, consider whether or not ADCNR, who is wonderful, is the best organization to do an education project or if it would be better to outsource that. So I think that, again, staying local, stay within this community. We were the ones who were impacted and we're the ones who have lived with it now for -- April 20th will be eight solid years. So we're -- so we know what we need in this community.

The other thing I will say, too, is -- and this was repeated earlier, and I think Amy said it really well, is we have data gaps. And I think all of us know that we do not want to show up to the next disaster, natural or manmade, not -- knowing the same amount of information we knew on April 19th, 2010. We applaud you for putting in the monitoring, for making sure that component is healthy and hearty, science-based and comprehensive, again, keeping and making sure that you're using the existing organizations who are collecting this data. We've got to figure out how to put it all in one pile. The National Shrimp program does a phenomenal job of pulling it together. There are more of us who are collecting data, and we need to keep making sure that all of those tools and resources are connected well.

There is one -- on your map on the turtle lighting projects, you had -- sorry -- you had the -- you've done the western end of Dauphin Island, and that's not federally owned. So I want to make sure that's either something you're gonna do in the future or see how that works out. Sorry.

Correspondence ID: 30 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Alabama Coastal Foundation Conservation/Preservation
Affiliation: OfficialRep
Received: May,08 2018
Correspondence Type: Transcript
Correspondence: My name is Mark Berte, and I'm the Executive Director with the Alabama Coastal Foundation. That's the statewide nonprofit organization that we're celebrating our 25th anniversary of service. Our mission is to improve and protect Alabama's coastal environment through cooperation, education and participation. And I'll just open my remarks by thanking everybody for actually having this open house and listening, the public meeting. I know you're required to do it, but it's really important that y'all have gotten the word out. I know that there are many nonprofit organizations in here helping y'all do that, not only to get people here but also to do their comments online. And I do hope the presentation file will be put on y'all's website in the near future so we can help to continue that education.

I'll begin my feedback for this Plan II by just saying how very impressed Alabama Coastal Foundation was with this very comprehensive plan. We, too, echo the, you know, science-based nature of this development of this plan, and I know many

5 hours went into that and also using the adaptive management approach as well. We read through the 500-plus -- at least the online version. Very happy with all the 22 projects and the seven restoration types. Since I don't have, you know, 20 minutes, I'll stick with the oysters in particular.

At Coastal Foundation, we just started an Alabama oyster shell recycling program. So if your hatchery is ever needing some shells, you can let us know. We'll try to get a reduced rate for you. But, also, the bird species, we appreciate y'all doing that. We hope that that can be more in the future. We partner with Audubon Society in helping recruit volunteers for some of the coastal bird monitoring that happens, and we'd like to see that effort increased all throughout.

But, in particular, the turtles, we are the new home of the Share The Beach sea turtle program. It is 100 percent volunteers, and, so, that particular project would be very beneficial for the State of Alabama.

And my only recommendation for your consideration is that when you do the education and outreach -- you know, you have birds, you have turtles, you have mammals -- try to think holistically so that when you're educating somebody here at a dock or a -- you know, a launch, boat launch, that you're thinking about all the different species so you can really think about the comprehensive nature about what these plans really are doing and impacting for the positive impact for the environment so that people can educate themselves about not only what's happening now but for the future as well. Thank you for your time.

Correspondence ID: 31 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Pelican Coast Conservancy Conservation/Preservation
Affiliation: OfficialRep
Received: May,08 2018
Correspondence Type: Transcript
Correspondence: My name is Walter Ernest. I'm the Director of Operations for the Pelican Coast Conservancy. We're a land trust in Mobile. I want to commend you for your work on this plan, diligent work. You put a lot of effort and time and got a lot of public input. One of the things you did is you listened to the public and you each took notice.

When the oil spill first occurred, first began in the process, land conservation was not at the table. And the land conservation community and others went -- attended your meetings, and you heard it at every meeting about how important land conservation is and how it is a part of restoration. You recognize that. Thank you for that.

I also want to commend you for the project in Weeks Bay. It's one of the fastest growing watersheds in the state, brand new watershed plan just completed. And I can't think of a better place to conserve property. However, there are important properties in Mobile County as well. So I hope if you have future funding opportunities, you will look at Mobile County, whether it's south Mobile County or portions of Dauphin Island. There's some wonderful parcels that could be conserved.

I also want to reiterate the utilization of conservation easements. If you can't buy it, use a conservation easement, which is a permanent restriction on the property. That's another tool maybe to use in future rounds. Or if you acquire property, you can place a conservation easement on the property and you have an additional layer of protection. So, you know, not only is it protecting the requirements set forth through the Natural Resource Damage Assessment funds that were utilized; it's being done correctly. Thank you for what you do, and I look forward to the completion of these projects.

Correspondence ID: 32 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Unaffiliated Individual
Affiliation:
Received: May,07 2018
Correspondence Type: Other
Correspondence: I care deeply about the marine wildlife and natural areas in coastal Alabama. The 2,010 oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico was a horrible tragedy, and it is imperative that we use the restoration funds resulting from the spill to improve restore wildlife and their habitats in Alabama, so we can repair the Gulf Coast as a whole. Some of the highest priorities for our community are clean water, abundant fish and wildlife, and improving natural habitats. That is why I support projects that will help sea turtles, dolphins, oysters, and wading birds; protect natural areas; restore shoreline habitat; and make our coasts more resilient. Restoration should be based on sound-science and I support projects that will help guide current and future restoration efforts. Thank you for your consideration and support,

Correspondence ID: 33 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Unaffiliated Individual
Affiliation:
Received: May,07 2018
Correspondence Type: E-mail
Correspondence: I care deeply about the marine wildlife and natural areas in coastal Alabama. The 2,010 oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico was a horrible tragedy, and it is imperative that we use the restoration funds resulting from the spill to improve restore wildlife and their habitats in Alabama, so we can repair the Gulf Coast as a whole. Some of the highest priorities for our community are clean water, abundant fish and wildlife, and improving natural habitats. That is why I support projects that will help sea turtles, dolphins, oysters, and wading birds; protect natural areas; restore shoreline habitat; and make our coasts more resilient. Restoration should be based on sound-science and I support projects that will help guide current and future restoration efforts.

We must ban oil drilling along our coastlines to enjoy wildlife and natural resources are never again devastated.

Thank you for your consideration and support,

Correspondence ID: 34 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Unaffiliated Individual
Affiliation:
Received: May,10 2018
Correspondence Type: E-mail

Correspondence: I care deeply about the marine wildlife and natural areas in coastal Alabama. The 2.010 oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico was a horrible tragedy, and it is imperative that we use the restoration funds resulting from the spill to improve restore wildlife and their habitats in Alabama, so we can repair the Gulf Coast as a whole.

Some of the highest priorities for our community are clean water, abundant fish and wildlife, and improving natural habitats. That is why I support projects that will help sea turtles, dolphins, oysters, and wading birds; protect natural areas; restore shoreline habitat; and make our coasts more resilient. Restoration should be based on sound-science and I support projects that will help guide current and future restoration efforts.

Please see that this money is directed to the environmental restoration in the gulf and not diverted to other locations which have nothing to do with the BP destruction.

Thank you for your consideration and support,

Correspondence ID: 35 **Project:** 65924 **Document:** 86431
Outside Organization: Town of Magnolia Springs Town or City Government
Affiliation: OfficialRep
Received: May,07 2018
Correspondence Type: Letter

Correspondence: The Town of Magnolia Springs located in South Baldwin County, Alabama would like to go on record supporting the inclusion of the Magnolia River Land Acquisition (Holmes Tract) in the plan.

The Holmes Tract is located partly in our town limits and wholly in our planning jurisdiction. With nearly a mile of frontage on Magnolia River and Weeks Creek it is one of the largest undeveloped properties in our area. Magnolia River is a small river designated as an Alabama outstanding water. It is also home to the only full time water mail route in the United States.

This particular property is home to a diverse assortment of wildlife, birds and fish. I have personally seen white tail deer, raccoons, foxes, herons, eagles, osprey, manatee, turtles and many other species in this area. It's shoreline is a great fishing area for both fresh fish and brackish water fish.

The protection of this tract will go along way in preserving the water quality of the Magnolia River, and protecting wetland and near shore habitat along the river and Weeks Creek.

We thank you for your time and efforts.
