Meeting Details

- DATE AND TIME: February 28, 2017, 3:00-4:30 PM ET
- PLACE: (641) 552-9134, access code: 124-915. Adobe Connect Meeting is also being used to present material via the internet. To join the meeting use the following link and log in as a guest: <u>https://fwc.adobeconnect.com/osi/</u>







National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's (NFWF) Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund (GEBF) 2017 Cycle and FL Restoration Strategy Update

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- Background on Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund (GEBF) and Review of Projects, 2013-2016
- 2017 Funding Cycle
- Update on the Restoration Strategy
- Q&A



Part I: GEBF Background, 2013-2016





This is a flowchart of oil spill funds in Florida, specifically a high-level overview of the three main funding streams associated with DWH: NRDA, RESTORE, and NFWF-GEBF.

- <u>NRDA</u> (left side of the flowchart); more information at <u>www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov/</u>
- <u>RESTORE Act</u> (middle area of the flowchart 5 buckets/pots): allocates 80% of the Clean Water Act penalties from DWH to the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund.
 - Direct Component administered by the Treasury to the Gulf coastal counties, primarily counties in Panhandle; more information at <u>www.treasury.gov/services/restore-act/Pages/home.aspx</u>
 - Comprehensive Plan Component administered by the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (or Council) via the Comprehensive Plan (competitive); more information at <u>restorethegulf.gov/</u>
 - Spill Impact Component administered by the Council via the State Expenditure Plan developed by the Gulf Consortium; more information at restorethegulf.gov/
 - 4. NOAA RESTORE Act Science Program administered by NOAA; competitive grants: research, observation and monitoring to support the long-term

sustainability of the ecosystem, fish habitat, and the fishing industry in the Gulf; more information at <u>restoreactscienceprogram.noaa.gov/</u>

- 5. Centers of Excellence competitive grants to NGOs in the Gulf region for the establishment of centers of excellence; administered in FL by the FL Institute of Oceanography; more information <u>at www.fio.usf.edu/flracep</u>
- <u>NFWF-GEBF</u> (right side of chart) what we will be discussing today.

Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund (GEBF)

- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) established GEBF in early 2013
- \$2.554B allocated to GEBF from the criminal cases against BP/Transocean
- \$356M allocated for projects in Florida
- FWC and DEP work directly with NFWF to identify GEBF projects for the State of Florida





www.nfwf.org/gulf/Pages/hom

- The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's (NFWF's) Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund (GEBF) was established in early 2013 as a result of the two plea agreements resolving the criminal cases against BP and Transocean after the DWH oil spill.
- Pursuant to the criminal plea agreements, BP and Transocean will pay \$2.544 billion to NFWF.
 - BP: \$2.394B
 - Transocean: \$150M
- Under the plea agreements, \$356 million is allocated for projects within the State of Florida.
 - Pursuant to the Transocean criminal settlement, \$21 Million will be paid to NFWF over 3 years to be used for restoration projects in Florida.
 Pursuant to the BP criminal settlement, \$335,160,000 will be paid to NFWF over 5 years to used for restoration projects in Florida.
 - Note: To date \$231M has been deposited, with one final payment of \$125,160,000 remaining to be paid in early 2018.
- NFWF is directed by the criminal plea agreements to consult with the appropriate state resource managers (in FL's case, FWC and DEP) in its selection of projects to be funded by GEBF funds.

GEBF Funding Priorities

- FP #1: Restore and maintain coastal habitats
- FP #2: Restore and maintain coastal bays and estuaries
- FP #3: Replenish and protect living resources

GEBF objective

"To support projects that remedy harm to natural resources (habitats, species) where there has been injury to, or destruction of, loss of, or loss of use of those resources resulting from the oil spill. Projects are expected to occur within reasonable proximity to where the impacts occurred, as appropriate."

- Consistent with the terms of the criminal plea agreements, GEBF supports projects that remedy harm to natural resources where there has been injury resulting from the DWH oil spill. To that end, NFWF has articulated three GEBF funding priorities (FPs) to help people understand what types of actions would be eligible for consideration under GWBF funding. The three funding priorities are:
 - FP #1: Restore and maintain the ecological functions of landscape-scale coastal habitats and ensure their viability and resilience against existing and future threats;
 - FP #2: Restore and maintain the ecological integrity of priority coastal bays and estuaries; and
 - FP #3: Replenish and protect living resources, including oysters, red snapper, and other reef fish; Gulf Coast bird populations; sea turtles; and marine mammals.

Note: More information on the GEBF funding priorities can be found on the NFWF webpage (nfwf.org/gulf).

GEBF Project Selection Criteria

- Remedy harm to the type of natural resources (habitats, species) affected by the oil spill
- Projects must occur within the Gulf states and waters and be within reasonable proximity to impacts, as appropriate
- Infrastructure only as necessary to restore or protect natural resources
- Alignment with restoration plans
- Science based, measurable outcomes
- · Cost-effective and potentially leveraged to maximize impact
- · Reasonable expectation regarding permit approval



- These factors are <u>crucial</u> for a project being eligible and competitive for GEBF.
- First, a project must show how it remedies harm to the type of natural resource affected by the oil spill as outlined by the GEBF funding priorities
- Similarly, a project must occur within Gulf states and waters and be within reasonable proximity to impacts, as appropriate.
- Projects should involve infrastructure ONLY as necessary to restore or protect natural resources.
- Finally, projects should align with restoration plans, have science-based and measurable outcomes, be cost-effective, and have reasonable permitting expectations.

GEBF Geography

- Panhandle*
- Big Bend*
- Peninsula & The Keys
- Offshore

*The majority of GEBF projects will be in the Panhandle and Big Bend regions because these areas were most directly affected by the spill.



- For the purposes of the Restoration Strategy, Florida is divided into four geographic regions: 1) Panhandle, 2) Big Bend, 3) Peninsula & The Keys, and 4) Offshore.
- The latter two regions are restricted to restoration or protection of migratory living resources (FP #3). These geographic restrictions are intended by NFWF to be consistent with the underlying provisions of the plea agreements under which GEBF was established.

GEBF Funded Projects in Florida • NFWF has approved 25 projects totaling ~\$101M from 2013 - 2016:										
	Year	Projects	Amount							
	2013	6	\$14.7 million							
	2014	9	\$34.4 million							
	2015	6	\$19.7 million							
	2016	4	\$32.1 million							
• Remaining G	EBF fur	nds in FL	= ~\$255.2M*	ONFWF						
http://www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/gebf.htm										

*Full amount once all payments are received based off of what we have spent to date.

<section-header> GEBF Funded Projects in Florida Frojects focused on FP#1 - Coastal Habitats Management & Restoration of Escribano Point Coastal Habitat -Phase I-II (2013-2014; \$3.2M) Restoration of Florida's Coastal Dune Lakes (2014; \$3.1M) Frojects focused on FP#2 - Coastal Bays and Estuaries Government Street Regional Stormwater Pond at Corrine Jones Park (2013; \$2.1M) Bayou Chico Restoration (2014; \$11M) Boggy Bayou Watershed Water Quality Improvement (2014; \$4.2M) Destin Harbor, Joe's Bayou, and Indian Bayou Water Quality Improvement (2014; \$3.3M)

For more information on these projects, please go to www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/gebf.htm.

GEBF Funded Projects in Florida

Projects focused on FP#3 - Living Resources

- Comprehensive Panhandle Coastal Bird Conservation (2013; \$3.1M)
- FL Shorebird Conservation Initiative (2014; \$1.5M)
- Restoring Florida's Shorebird & Seabird Populations Phase I (2016; \$11.3M)
- Enhanced Assessment for GOM Fisheries Phase I-IV (2013-16; \$16.6M)
- Benthic Habitat Mapping, Characterization and Assessment (2014; \$4.5M)
- Increased Capacity for Marine Mammal Response (2015; \$4.4M)
- Eliminating Light Pollution on Sea Turtle Nesting Beaches Phase I-II (2013, 2015; \$3.6M)
- Enhancement of Sea Turtle Stranding Response Capacity in FL (2016; \$6.3M)

http://www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/gebf.htm

For more information on these projects, please go to www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/gebf.htm.

GEBF Funded Projects in Florida

Projects addressing multiple funding priorities:

- Apalachicola Bay Oyster Restoration (2013; \$4.2M)
- Oyster Reef Habitat Restoration in St. Andrew Bay (2014; \$2M)
- Pensacola East Bay Oyster Habitat Restoration- Phase I (2015; \$1.5M)
- Recovery and Resilience of Oyster Reefs in the Big Bend (2016; \$8.3M)
- Water Quality Improvements to Enhance Fisheries Habitat in the Lower Choctawhatchee River Basin – Phase I (2015; \$932K)
- FL GEBF Restoration Strategy (2015; \$4.4M)



http://www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/gebf.htm

- The 4 oyster projects are applicable to FPs #1 and #3
- Water Quality Improvements to Enhance Fisheries Habitat in the Lower Choctawhatchee River Basin – Phase I project – FPs #2, #3
- FL GEBF Restoration Strategy applicable to FPs #1-3

For more information on these projects, please go to www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/gebf.htm.



For projects addressing multiple FPs, project costs were equally divided between FPs.



For projects addressing multiple watersheds, project costs were equally divided between each watershed.

Part II: GEBF 2017 Cycle



GEBF 2017 cycle – one project proposal

- Enhanced Assessment of Gulf of Mexico Fisheries (Phase V)
 - Builds upon and expands the GEBF investments in both fisheriesdependent and –independent data collection
 - Focuses on reef fish (e.g., red snapper) that have historically been subject to overfishing and habitat loss
 - Addresses the lack of sound data related to both catch effort and population levels.
 - Improves effective management of GOM reef fisheries



- This project builds upon and expands the GEBF investments in both fisheriesdependent and -independent data collection.
- Reef fish, particularly red snapper, have historically been subject to overfishing and habitat loss, causing significant decline in stocks.
- The largest single impediment to effective management of Gulf of Mexico reef fisheries remains the lack of sound data related to both catch effort and population levels. This lack of reliable data is particularly evident in relation to the recreational fishery, a significant and growing component.

Part III: Florida GEBF Restoration Strategy Update



FL GEBF Restoration Strategy

- In 2015, FWC/DEP were awarded a NFWF grant to develop the Restoration Strategy (RS)
- Planning tool for the remaining GEBF investments in Florida
- Includes SWIM plan updates by the NWFWMD and SRWMD, and SAV assessment by FWRI
- Draft RS completed in Oct 2016 (on website)
- Final RS fall 2017





www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/gebf.htm

SWIM: Surface Water Improvement and Management NWFWMD: Northwest Florida Water Management District SRWMD: Suwannee River Water Management District SAV: submerged aquatic vegetation FWRI: Fish and Wildlife Research Institute



- The NWFWMD is developing updated SWIM plans for each of the seven major watersheds in the Panhandle (see map).
 - Technical advisory committees (TACs) will be engaged for each watershed to help define issues, develop goals and objectives, identify and prioritize strategies and projects, and assist in development and review of plan documents.
 - Public outreach and engagement will include public workshops within each watershed and online review and comment.
 - Priority projects will be defined to achieve goals and objectives established for each watershed.
- It is anticipated that draft SWIM plans will be available for public review in early June with final plan completion by the end of Sept.



- The objective of this project is to develop SWIM plans that address priority issues on a watershed basis. A SWIM plan will be developed for the Suwannee River and Coastal Rivers basins. These basins include, but are not limited to, the following water bodies:
 - Suwannee River Basin: Suwannee River; Santa Fe River; Alapaha River; Withlacoochee River; Ichetucknee River
 - **Coastal Rivers Basin:** Aucilla River; Wacissa River; Econfina River; Steinhatchee River; Fenholloway River; Waccasassa River
 - Review of existing SWIM plans, natural resource plans, research papers, and related publications about these two basins.
 - Public and stakeholder outreach including public workshops in each basin to identify priority issues, needs, and projects to restore and protect the water and natural resources in each basin.
 - Final public meetings following circulation of draft SWIM Plans to receive public comment on draft plans.
- It is anticipated that draft SWIM plans will be available for public review in May with final plan completion by the end of August 2017.

GEBF Restoration Strategy – SAV Assessment

- Assesses conditions in the estuaries of Florida's Panhandle and Big Bend to determine what factors may be preventing seagrass recovery
- Develop a spatial model to provide managers and scientists an assessment of local conditions in each estuary and the potential of success for seagrass restoration projects
- Assessments will be conducted through mid-2017 with the model scheduled for completion in the fall of 2017.



- The SAV project, led by FWRI, assesses conditions in the shallow waters of six Panhandle/Big Bend estuaries (shown here on the map) to determine what factors may be preventing SAV recovery in these areas where seagrasses have disappeared.
- A critical facet of this work will be the creation of a SAV Recovery Potential model that will provide managers and scientists an assessment of local conditions in each estuary and the potential of success for seagrass restoration projects.
- The assessments will be conducted through mid-2017 with the model scheduled for completion in the fall of 2017.



- Last September, we conducted a public webinar to provide an in-depth look at the approach and results of the DRS. There is a recording and a PDF of the slides from that webinar on our website. Addiitonally, there are videos available on the website for even more detail into the approach and analysis of the DRS. That being said, in today's webinar, I will provide a high level review of the approach to the DRS but will not get into much detail that has already been covered.
- Florida has a long history of planning for natural resource management and conservation, therefore the DRS was based on key information found in existing plans. To that effect, we compiled plans developed by a variety of entities, including federal agencies, state agencies, water management districts, and NGOs. This effort resulted in the identification of 292 plans, of which 204 were GEBF-relevant and were included in the DRS. The bibliography is included in the DRS.
- Next, we conducted a stepwise analysis of the GEBF-appropriate actions from the 204 plans to identify the top restoration needs in each GOM watershed.
- Finally, we developed potential action lists for each watershed using the state project portal. These potential action lists include GEBF-relevant, un-prioritized potential actions that will used as a tool to plan future GEBF investments in Florida.

FL GEBF Draft Restoration Strategy*: Top Restoration Needs in Florida





- The next three slides present the most <u>frequent</u> top restoration needs across watersheds according to each Funding Priority.
- Note: in the DRS, we also provide detail on each watershed individually.
- *These are draft results and are subject to change with addition of new/updated plans to Final Restoration Strategy.

FP #1: Coastal Habitats

- Most frequent top restoration needs across the Panhandle and Big Bend watersheds:
 - Land acquisition
 - General habitat restoration/protection
 - Restoration/protection of aquatic vegetation
 - Habitat restoration/protection through the treatment of exotic and invasive vegetation





 Notable results which denote specific needs for particular watersheds: marsh and wetland habitats in the Pensacola and Perdido watersheds, reef or living shoreline habitat in the Pensacola watershed, and prescribed fire in the Apalachicola – Chipola watershed.

FP #2: Coastal Bays and Estuaries

- Most frequent top restoration needs across the Panhandle and Big Bend watersheds:
 - · General water quality
 - Stormwater and wastewater quality
 - Hydrologic restoration





• For FP #2 (restoring and maintaining coastal bays and estuaries) the most frequent top restoration needs across the Panhandle and Big Bend watersheds are general water quality, stormwater and wastewater quality, and hydrologic restoration.

FP #3: Living Resources

- Most frequent top restoration needs across the GOM watersheds:
 - Restoration/protection of multiple species
 - Restoration/protection of birds
 - Restoration/protection of fish





- For FP #3 (replenishing and protecting living resources) the most frequent top
 restoration needs across the <u>Florida GOM</u> watersheds were restoration and protection
 of multiple species, restoration and protection of birds, and restoration and protection
 of fish.
- Notable results: mammals in the Perdido watershed; exotic and invasive animal management in the Pensacola watershed; sea turtles in the Choctawhatchee – St. Andrews watershed; sustainable harvest of shellfish in the Apalachicola – Chipola, Ochlockonee – St. Marks, and Suwannee watersheds; and marine mammals in the Springs Coast watershed.

2017 Restoration Strategy (RS) Timeline 2/23/17											
	Mar Ap	May	<u>Jun</u>	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec		
FWC/DEP - central planning	Prepare the Final RS: evaluate comments on Draft RS, new/updated plans, and new/updated projects to state project portal (deadline 7/14/17) RS webinar (<i>TBD</i>)										
NWFWMD - SWIM plan updates	•Develop draft plan •Apalachicola technical mt	s g (April)	•Apalachicol public mtg (Jur •Distribute dra plans for revie	a ne) •De aft • ww	•Develop final plans •Finalize plans						
SRWMD - SWIM plan updates	Develop draft plans	•Distrik fo •Public	oute draft plans or review meetings (<i>TBD</i>)	•Develop •Finali	Develop final plans •Finalize plans						
FWRI - SAV assessment	 Seagrass, water, & sedimen quality assessments Create maps Build/revise website and SAV model 	•Complete seagrass, water, and sediment quality assessments •Finish maps •Build/revise website and SAV model				Finalize website & SAV model					
FWC/DEP central planning: http://www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/gebf.htm Northwest Florida Water Management District (NWFWMD) Surface Water Improvement and Management (SWIM) plan update: http://www.nwfwater.com/Water-Resources/SWIM/SWIM-Plan-Updates Suwannee River Water Management District SWIM plan update: http://www.mysuwanneeriver.com/index.aspx?nid=447 FWC's Fish and Wildlife Research Institute submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) assessment: http://myfwc.com/research/habitat/seagrasses/projects/roadblocks/											

Next Steps

- Update AND/OR submit new projects to the Portal (link below) for consideration in the Final Restoration Strategy by <u>JULY 14, 2017</u>.
- Stay involved with SWIM planning efforts:
 - NWFWMD: <u>Paul.Thorpe@nwfwater.com</u>
 - SRWMD: <u>Leslie.Ames@srwmd.org</u>
- Join our GEBF stakeholder email list for updates and notifications on the FL GEBF Restoration Strategy and funding opportunities
- This presentation will be posted at: <u>www.dep.state.fl.us/deepwaterhorizon/gebf.htm</u>



- Please update existing projects AND/OR submit new projects to the Portal at the link at the bottom of this slide by July 14, 2017 for consideration in the Final Restoration Strategy. All submitted projects will also be considered for NRDA and RESTORE Bucket 2 restoration planning efforts as they occur.
- Stay involved with the SWIM planning efforts by the WMDs and participate in public engagement opportunities (information available on websites listed earlier in the presentation or by emailing Paul or Leslie with Northwest and Suwannee, respectively. Updates are also distributed via our GEBF email stakeholder list.
- To be added to the email list, please email me at Amy.Raker@MyFWC.com
- This presentation will be posted online at the website above and will be distributed via the email list as a PDF.