EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On or about April 20, 2010, the *Deepwater Horizon* (DWH) mobile drilling unit exploded, caught fire, and eventually sank in the Gulf of Mexico, resulting in a massive release of oil and other substances from British Petroleum Exploration and Production (BP) Macondo well and causing loss of life and extensive natural resource injuries. Initial efforts to cap the well following the explosion were unsuccessful, and, for 87 days after the explosion, the well continuously and uncontrollably discharged oil and natural gas into the northern Gulf of Mexico. Approximately 3.19 million barrels (134 million gallons) of oil were released into the ocean (*U.S. v. BP et al.*, 2015). Oil spread from the deep ocean to the surface and nearshore environment from Texas to Florida. The oil came into contact with and injured natural resources as diverse as deep-sea coral, fish and shellfish, productive wetland habitats, sandy beaches, birds, sea turtles, and other protected marine life. The oil spill prevented people from fishing, going to the beach, and enjoying typical recreational activities along the Gulf of Mexico. Extensive response actions, including cleanup activities and actions to try to prevent the oil from reaching sensitive resources, were undertaken to try to reduce harm to people and the environment. However, many of these response actions had collateral impacts on the environment and on natural resource services. The oil and other substances released from the well, in combination with the extensive response actions, together make up the DWH oil spill.

As an oil pollution incident, the DWH oil spill was subject to the provisions of the Oil Pollution Act (OPA) of 1990, which addresses preventing, responding to, and paying for oil pollution incidents in navigable waters, adjoining shorelines, and the exclusive economic zone of the United States. Under the authority of OPA, a council of federal and state "Trustees" was established on behalf of the public to assess natural resource injuries resulting from the incident and to work to make the environment and public whole for those injuries. As required under OPA, the Trustees conducted a natural resource damage assessment (NRDA) and prepared the Final Programmatic Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan/Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (Final PDARP/PEIS).

The primary goal of OPA is to make the environment and public whole for injuries to natural resources and services resulting from an incident involving an oil discharge (or substantial threat of an oil discharge). Under OPA regulations, the natural resource injuries for which responsible parties are liable include injuries resulting from the oil discharge and those resulting from response actions or substantial threat of a discharge. OPA specifies that Trustees responsible for representing the public's interest (in this case, state and federal agencies) must be designated to act on behalf of the public to assess the injuries and to address those injuries. The DWH Oil Spill Trustees for the affected natural resources (the DWH Trustees) conducted a NRDA to:

- Assess the impacts of the DWH oil spill on natural resources in the Gulf of Mexico and the services those resources provide.
- Determine the type and amount of restoration needed to compensate the public for these impacts.

Following the assessment, the DWH Trustees determined that the injuries caused by the DWH oil spill could not be fully described at the level of a single species, habitat type, or region. Rather, the injuries affected such a wide array of linked resources over such an enormous area that the effects of the DWH oil spill must be described as constituting an ecosystem-level injury. Consequently, the DWH Trustees' chosen alternative for restoration planning employs a comprehensive, integrated ecosystem approach to address these ecosystem-level injuries.

In the Final PDARP/PEIS, the DWH Trustees adopted a portfolio of Restoration Types that addresses the diverse suite of injuries that occurred at both regional and local scales. The DWH Trustees identified the need for a comprehensive restoration plan at a programmatic level to guide and direct the ecosystem level restoration effort, based on the following five restoration goals:

- Restore and conserve habitat.
- Restore water quality.
- Replenish and protect living coastal and marine resources.
- Provide and enhance recreational opportunities.
- Provide for monitoring, adaptive management, and administrative oversight to support restoration implementation.

These five goals work both independently and together to restore injured resources and services.

The Final PDARP/PEIS included the funding allocations for each restoration goal. In the 2016 Consent Decree resolving the DWH Trustees' claims against BP for natural resource injuries under OPA, BP agreed to pay $8.1 billion in natural resource damages (which includes the $1 billion that BP previously committed to pay for Early Restoration projects) over a 15-year period.

Draft Restoration Plan II and Environmental Assessment

The Alabama Trustee Implementation Group (AL TIG) prepared this document, the Alabama Trustee Implementation Group Draft Restoration Plan II and Environmental Assessment: Restoration of Wetlands, Coastal, and Nearshore Habitats; Habitat Projects on Federally Managed Lands; Nutrient Reduction (Nonpoint Source); Sea Turtles; Mammals; Birds; and Oysters (draft RP II/EA) pursuant to OPA and NEPA. The content and findings included in this document are consistent with the DWH Trustees' findings in the Final PDARP/PEIS, which it tiers from. The AL TIG includes two state trustee agencies and four federal trustee agencies: the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR); the Geological Survey of Alabama; the United States Department of Commerce, represented by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA); the United States Department of the Interior (USDOI), represented by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and National Park Service (NPS); the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA); and the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) (collectively the AL TIG).

The AL TIG prepared this draft RP II/EA to (1) inform the public about DWH NRDA restoration planning efforts, (2) present analysis on the potential restoration benefits and environmental consequences of the alternatives, and (3) seek public comment on the 26 alternatives presented in Table ES-1.[1]

In identifying proposed projects/alternatives[2] for this draft RP II/EA, the AL TIG considered (1) the OPA screening criteria, (2) the Restoration Goals and other criteria identified by the DWH Trustees in the Final PDARP/PEIS, (3) goals developed by the AL TIG for this restoration plan, (4) input from the public, (5) the current and future availability of funds under the DWH oil spill NRDA settlement payment schedule, (6) and Monitoring and Adaptive Management (MAM) priorities of the AL TIG. Of these 26 projects, the AL TIG identified 20 preferred alternatives to be fully funded from Restoration Type Funds,

[1] While Table ES-1 has 28 total projects, 2 projects are split across Restoration Types, resulting in 26 unique projects evaluated along with the no action alternative for each Restoration Type.

[2] For the purposes of this draft RP II/EA, each proposed project is considered a separate alternative; therefore, the terms "project" and "alternative" are used interchangeably.

1 preferred alternative to be partially funded from Restoration Type funds and partially funded from MAM funds, and 1 activity to be fully funded using MAM funds.

Table ES-1 shows the range of alternatives, noting those that are considered preferred in this draft RP II/EA. Projects proposed for engineering and design only at this time are designated with "E&D." For further information on E&D projects in restoration planning, see Section 1.3.2 of this draft RP II/EA and Section 6.4.14 of the Final PDARP/PEIS.

Table ES-1: Range of Alternatives Evaluated

Reasonable Range of Alternatives	Cost	Totals By Type
Wetlands, Coastal, and Nearshore Habitats		
Perdido River Land Acquisition (Molpus Tract)	$4,324,460	
Magnolia River Land Acquisition (Holmes Tract) – Preferred	$4,144,162	
Weeks Bay Land Acquisition East Gateway Tract – Preferred	$4,247,000	
Weeks Bay Land Acquisition Harrod Tract – Preferred	$3,606,900	
Lower Perdido Islands Restoration Phase I (E&D) – Preferred	$994,523	
Southwestern Coffee Island Habitat Restoration Project—Phase I (E&D) (also evaluated under the Birds Restoration Type) – Preferred	$825,225	
		$18,142,270
Habitat Projects on Federally Managed Lands		
Little Lagoon Living Shoreline – Preferred	$210,999	
Restoring the Night Sky–Assessment, Training, and Outreach (E&D) (also evaluated under Sea Turtles Restoration Type) – Preferred	$183,003	
		$394,002
Nutrient Reduction (Nonpoint Source)		
Bayou La Batre Nutrient Reduction	$1,000,000	
Toulmins Spring Branch E&D (E&D) – Preferred	$479,090	
Fowl River Nutrient Reduction – Preferred	$1,000,000	
Weeks Bay Nutrient Reduction – Preferred	$2,000,000	
		$4,479,090
Sea Turtles		
Coastal Alabama Sea Turtle (CAST) Conservation Program – Preferred	$935,061	
CAST Triage – Preferred	$622,915	
CAST Habitat Usage and Population Dynamics – Preferred	$1,631,696	

Reasonable Range of Alternatives	Cost	Totals By Type
CAST Protection: Enhancement and Education – Preferred	$906,874	
Restoring the Night Sky–Assessment, Training, and Outreach (E&D) (also evaluated under the Habitat Projects on Federally Managed Lands Restoration Type)[3]	$216,655	
		$4,313,201
Marine Mammals		
Enhancing Capacity for the Alabama Marine Mammal Stranding Network – Preferred	$2,432,389	
Assessment of Alabama Estuarine Bottlenose Dolphin Populations and Health	$3,059,229	
Alabama Estuarine Bottlenose Dolphin Protection: Enhancement and Education – Preferred	$686,374	
		$6,177,992
Birds		
Southwestern Coffee Island Habitat Restoration Project—Phase I (E&D) (also evaluated under the Wetlands, Coastal, and Nearshore Habitats Restoration Type) – Preferred	$825,225	
Colonial Nesting Wading Bird Tracking and Habitat Use Assessment—Four Species	$2,322,144	
Colonial Nesting Wading Bird Tracking and Habitat Use Assessment—Two Species – Preferred	$1,547,500	
		$3,301,869
Oysters		
Oyster Cultch Relief and Reef Configuration – Preferred	$480,262	
Side-scan Mapping of Mobile Bay Relic Oyster Reefs (E&D) – Preferred	$104,229	
Oyster Hatchery at Claude Peteet Mariculture Center–High Spat Production with Study – Preferred	$2,949,472	
Oyster Hatchery at Claude Peteet Mariculture Center–Low Spat Production without Study	$2,018,109	
Oyster Grow-Out and Restoration Reef Placement – Preferred	$962,370	
		$6,514,441
Grand Total		$43,322,865

[3] As noted in Section 2.7, Preferred Alternative, ultimately this project was considered appropriate for MAM funding and would be implemented using that funding, rather than from the Sea Turtles Restoration Type.