

DWH Texas Trustee Implementation Group 2021 Annual Public Meeting Script

Question 1. I would like to know more about grants and funding opportunities.

Answer: Hi, this is Erin Chandler with Department of the Interior US Fish and Wildlife Service. This is an excellent question. A reminder that Deepwater Horizon restoration is not a grant application program. We do solicit project ideas from the public for consideration in our restoration planning. Unfortunately, the request for project ideas for Restoration Plan 2 (RP2) closed in December 10, 2020. We do greatly appreciate input from the public and there will be opportunities in the future to submit project ideas. This information can be found on the Gulf Spill Restoration website. Thank you for that question.

Question 2: Have you all done any kind of assessment on the progress of the restoration since it began?

Answer: Hi, this is Mike Cave from TCEQ again. This is a great question, and it gives me the opportunity to advertise that this past November, the Deepwater Horizon NRDA Trustee Council released its first programmatic review document of all the restoration work that the Trustees have been doing in the gulf so far. It is a really great overview of the restoration program, and also includes a look at our administrative programs and processes such as our governance structure, financial management, public engagement, and regulatory compliance. There's also an interactive storymap that is very helpful to check out too. It is available on the NOAA gulf spill restoration webpage that we provided earlier, and we'll provide a link in the comments bar to direct anyone who's interested. I really recommend checking it out! Link to programmatic review document:

https://www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov/sites/default/files/2021-11_Deepwater_Horizon_TC_Final_2021_Programmatic_Review.pdf

Question 3. Are there any fishery related goals related to the Bahia Grande channel project?

Answer: Hi, this is Allison Fischer with the Texas General Land Office. Thanks for the great question. The monitoring and adaptive management plans define the goals and monitoring parameters that we look at for projects to determine project success. You can take a look at the first Restoration Plan if you are interested in all of the details. The MAM goals of this project include water flow and physical parameter improvements, such as dissolved oxygen like I said earlier, to help prevent algae blooms and fish kills. It does not include fish monitoring, however the Army Corps of Engineers Permit does require nekton (fish) monitoring, so it will be done. This monitoring will be completed in partnership with Department of Fish and Wildlife staff. Thanks for your question.

Question 4. What sorts of birds will benefit from the Dickinson Bay bird island?

Answer: This project is one component of a larger Rookery Island restoration project group that the Texas TIG is working on. All of these components of this project aim to benefit colonial waterbirds who frequent Texas, such as the brown pelican, laughing gull, royal tern, sandwich tern, great blue heron, roseate spoonbill, I could go on, just to name a few. So, we are really excited about this project and excited that it will be a great benefit to these birds. Thank you for your question.

Question 5. Do you have any estimate for when planning or project solicitation for Restoration Plan three will begin?

Answer: Hi, thanks for your question. I am Angela Schrift from the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. At this time, we are focusing on Restoration Plan 2, so we have not begun planning for Restoration Plan 3 yet, but like other plans in the past and as mentioned in the presentation, please keep checking the Gulf Restoration website for updates. We have not begun planning yet. Besides the NOAA Gulf Spill Restoration page, we announce upcoming solicitations on the Texas website, (restorethetexascoast.org). There is a portal on this website to submit projects.

Question 6. Recognizing that this is not a traditional grant program, if we submitted a project pre-proposal to the program, when might we hear back about a final proposal?

Answer: Thank you. This is Alison Fischer with the Texas General Land Office. I won't repeat what Angela stated about the difference between the solicitation for project ideas and the Restoration Plan project solicitations, but I believe your question is about submitting a project idea for the upcoming Restoration Plan. We anticipate the publication of the draft restoration plan to come out in March 2022. That's when everyone will have notification all at the same time, so look out for March 2022. This draft restoration plan will be posted on the Gulf Restoration Website mentioned during the webinar and will be the opportunity for the public to see the upcoming projects.