

DWH Trustee Council 4/1/24 Conference Call Summary

Attendees:

TX	AL	DOI	USDA
Robin Riechers	Amy Hunter	Mary Josie Blanchard	Ron Howard
	Jane Calamusa	Michelle Eversen	Jon Morton
LA		Nanciann Regalado	
Maury Chatellier			
			EPA
MS	FL	NOAA	Mary Kay Lynch
Chris Wells	Gareth Leonard	Chris Doley	Danny Wiegand
Bradley Ennis	Sarah Ketron	Craig O'Connor	
Valerie Alley	Rachel Schmalfuss	Rachel Sweeney	LAT
	Amy Raker	Laurie Rounds	Holly Herod
			Angel Irwin

Discussion Item 1: Report Outs

- a. **TX TIG:** The TX TIG is working on project implementation from their second post-settlement restoration plan. To date they have authorized funds to implement nine out of the 13 selected projects and are working on resolutions to authorize the use of funds for the four remaining projects.

The TIG is also working on its third post-settlement restoration plan which will evaluate projects to construct coastal marsh. This plan builds on an engineering and design project that was approved in the TIG's 2017 restoration plan. They anticipate releasing a draft plan in early 2025.

In project news, the Pierce Marsh Wetland Restoration Project Galveston Bay has completed sediment placement. Over the next year the sediments will dewater leaving optimal elevations for marsh establishment and the restoration of approximately 115 marsh acres.

The construction associated with the McFaddin Beach and Dune restoration project is ongoing. Approximately 12 miles of beach and dune habitat has been restored so far and construction is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2024.

The partners in the Sea Turtle Early Restoration Project responded to a large-scale sea turtle cold-stunning event that occurred in Texas in January 2024. Approximately 1,600 sea turtles were recorded as being cold-stunned and most of these turtles were located alive. To date, 84.5% of the cold stunned turtles were rehabilitated and released and

about 40 turtles are still receiving medical care in rehabilitation facilities throughout the state.

- b. OO TIG: The OO TIG provided updates on restoration planning and implementation efforts.
- The OO TIG approved two investments in February, are currently reviewing progress reports, and will soon be developing materials for the June TC annual meeting.
 - The OO TIG's Draft Restoration Plan 4 (focusing on sea turtles and fish and water column invertebrates) is in progress. Five sea turtle projects were selected for the reasonable range and they expect to have the fish and water column invertebrates reasonable range completed later this spring. The OO TIG expects to announce initiation of restoration planning this summer and release a draft restoration plan this fall.
 - The OO TIG's Final Restoration Plan 3 was completed in September 2023. DOI is drafting project implementation plans for the seven bird projects and work is expected to begin later this year.
 - The OO TIG is also continuing implementation of 34 restoration projects and ten MAM activities.
 - Four mesophotic and deep benthic communities restoration projects started their third year of implementation in March. On March 26 the OO TIG held a well-attended webinar that provided an overview of the 2024 field season and summarized initial results from the eight cruises completed in 2023.
 - In March the OO TIG approved a new MAM Activity called Coastal Restoration Effects on Inshore, Nearshore, and Offshore Ecological Condition which will be led by EPA.

The MS TIG and Cross-TIG MAM will give their report outs on the next TC call.

Discussion Item 2: Standing Cross-TIG MAM

Discussion: The Cross-TIG MAM is finalizing the 2024-2025 budget and will send a request for funding to the RW TIG soon. That request will also be shared with the TC. The group is continuing to work on resource specific groups to develop key messages for the 2026 programmatic review.

Discussion Item 3: LAT Items

a. Discussion:

1. NEPA Status Update – The draft analysis and suggested language for incorporating the review language has been shared with the states for review and comment. The NEPA small group will discuss the draft on an upcoming call and will ideally finalize the materials for TC review towards the end of the month.
2. Annual Deposit Update – The joint resolutions are all signed and the information has been sent to DOJ. An update will be sent via email once the funds are received.
3. Annual TC Meeting Planning – June 26 is the date for the Trustee Council Annual Meeting/Webinar. The webinar will very likely serve as the RW TIG annual meeting like in prior years. The group discussed the plan for a highlights reel for the upcoming webinar. The TIG leads confirmed that each TIG has materials for consideration for a highlights video. Viewership of the prior year's video is unclear due to its location posted on Gulf Spill Restoration website as opposed to the YouTube Channel. The idea for this year's video is to identify projects and provide more information about the visuals.

Decision: AL, FL, MS, TX, LA, NOAA, DOI, EPA, USDA approve the creation of a highlights video for the annual meeting.

Action Item: The LAT Communications team will work with the TIGs to gather materials for the video.

Other Business

- a. EPA FOIA update.
- b. The next regularly scheduled TC call is scheduled for Monday, May 6.

DWH Trustee Council 5/6/24 Conference Call Summary

Attendees:

TX	AL	DOI	USDA
Robin Riechers	Chris Blankenship	Mary Josie Blanchard	Ron Howard
Shannon Love	Amy Hunter	Amy Mathis	
Michael Cave	Jaime Miller	Nanciann Regalado	
	Jane Calamusa		
			EPA
LA	FL	NOAA	Mary Kay Lynch
Maury Chatellier	Gareth Leonard	Chris Doley	Gale Bonanno
	Sarah Ketron	Craig O'Connor	Tim Landers
MS	Rachel Schmalfuss	Rachel Sweeney	Danny Wiegand
Chris Wells	Amy Raker	Mel Landry	
Bradley Ennis	Nadia Martin	Ramona Schreiber	LAT
Valerie Alley	Emily Mazur	Natalie Matthews	Holly Herod
Anderson Thomas			Angel Irwin

Discussion Item 1: Report Outs

- a. MS TIG: The MS TIG released their Final Restoration Plan 4 in January. The plan approved seven projects which are in various stages of implementation. A notice requesting ideas for Restoration Plan 5 will be published on the Trustees' website this week or next. They also completed the acquisition of 611 acres for Graveline Bay Coastal Preserve in February 2024. The MS TIG's Phase 3 Early Restoration project, Hancock County Marsh Living Shoreline, received a 2nd place in the "Working with Nature Award 2024" from PIANC. The award will be presented during the 2024 PIANC World Congress in Cape Town, South Africa. A web story announcing the award will be released in the near future.
- b. Cross-TIG MAM: The Cross-TIG MAM included a quarterly activity update with the call agenda. The group is proposing some updates for the MAM manual. These updates will work their way through the Cross-TIG MAM group and then go to the TC for review. The group is also working on preparations for the 2026 programmatic review including the formation of resource subgroups. Those groups are developing key messages that will be shared with the small group and then the TC per the schedule.

The LA and RW TIGs will give their report outs on the next TC call.

Discussion Item 2: NEPA 5-Year Reevaluation

Discussion: The small team has been meeting to discuss the reevaluation of the Programmatic Restoration Plan to reaffirm its applicability pursuant to the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023. The group discussed the interpretation of the five-year timeframe and the mechanics of looking at specific restoration types as needed per future restoration plans. The AL and FL TIGs both have final plans that are expected to be released in the coming months that may impact the timing for this topic.

Action Item: The small group will provide options by Friday, May 10 for the TC to consider. An ad hoc TC call will occur on May 13 or 20 to discuss options; DOI solicitors are requested to attend. AL and FL TIGs will look at their restoration plan schedules to determine the timing needed to resolve this topic.

Discussion Item 3: LAT Items

a. Discussion:

1. Annual Deposit Update – The funds were received by the Trustees.
2. Annual TC Meeting Planning – June 26 is the date for the Trustee Council Annual Meeting/Webinar. The group walked through the TC run of show document and watched a first draft of the highlights video. Any edits on the draft factsheet, slides, and script are requested by Friday, May 10. There will be a practice session for the webinar on Tuesday, June 18 for those with speaking roles.

Action Items: Confirm your TC rep for the webinar. An email with a link to the draft highlights video and a sheet to request edits will be circulated soon. Review the draft factsheet, slides and script by Friday, May 10.

Other Business

- a. The next regularly scheduled TC call is scheduled for Monday, June 3.

DWH Trustee Council 6/3/24 Conference Call Summary

Attendees:

TX	AL	DOI	USDA
Robin Riechers	Chris Blankenship	Mary Josie Blanchard	Ron Howard
Shannon Love	Amy Hunter	Michelle Eversen	Craig Johnson
	Jaime Miller	Amy Mathis	Jon Morton
	Jane Calamusa	Nanciann Regalado	
	Chandler Williams	Erin Plitsch	EPA
LA		Lisa Stevens	Mary Kay Lynch
Maury Chatellier			Gale Bonanno
	FL	NOAA	Tim Landers
MS	Gareth Leonard	Chris Doley	Danny Wiegand
Chris Wells	Sarah Ketron	Craig O'Connor	
Bradley Ennis	Rachel Schmalfuss	Rachel Sweeney	LAT
Valerie Alley	Nadia Martin	Mel Landry	Holly Herod
	Emily Mazur	Ramona Schreiber	Angel Irwin
		Natalie Matthews	

Discussion Item 1: Report Outs

- a. LA TIG: The LA TIG provided updates on several projects.
 - The Lake Borgne Marsh Creation project began in 2022 and is still ongoing. It is about halfway complete now and will ultimately be 2,700 acres.
 - The Cypremort Point State Park project is also complete and construction on the campsites and other amenities is done.
 - The Chandeleur Island effort will likely have a Notice of Intent to begin drafting the Restoration Plan #9 released soon. Trustees conducted a site visit last week to look for sea turtle crawls among other activities.
 - The Terrebonne HNC Island Restoration project went out to bid in March and should be starting construction soon.
- b. RW TIG: The RW TIG is busy implementing projects from Early Restoration and the Regionwide TIG's Restoration Plan #1. The avian monitoring portal is now live and accessible to the public at <https://avianmonitoring.com>.

The AL and FL TIGs will give their report outs on the next TC call.

Discussion Item 2: Standing Cross-TIG MAM Update

Discussion: The group created resource subgroups which are working through restoration types in preparation for the next programmatic review. The Cross-TIG MAM is also developing key messages that will go to the TC small group in the late summer and then make their way to the TC in the fall.

Discussion Item 3: NEPA 5-Year Reevaluation

Discussion: The small team has been meeting to discuss the reevaluation of the Programmatic Restoration Plan to reaffirm its applicability pursuant to the Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2023. The group has come to agreement on language for both the memo and the language that will go in future restoration plans. That language will be used in the upcoming Alabama Trustee Implementation Group Final Supplemental Restoration Plan II and Environmental Assessment: Marine Mammals and Florida Trustee Implementation Group Final Restoration Plan 3 and Environmental Assessment: Water Quality documents.

Action Item: The TC Chair will draft a resolution that will go to the small group for review before being circulated to the TC for review and signature.

Discussion Item 4: LAT Items

a. Discussion:

1. Annual Reporting Update – On Friday 340 reports were published on the Gulf Spill Restoration website. If you are interested in closing out projects prior to December 31, 2024, please get in touch with the LAT.
2. Annual TC Meeting Planning – June 26 is the date for the Trustee Council Annual Meeting/Webinar. Meeting materials (factsheets, slides, script, and highlight video) were circulated for their final approval/review. A practice session will be held for presenters the week prior to the webinar.

Action Items: Please approve the factsheet, slides, and script by June 7 and the highlights video by June 14.

Other Business

- a. The next regularly scheduled TC call is scheduled for Monday, July 1.