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Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill

Re: Deepwater Horizon Natural Resource Damage  
Assessment Trustee Council and Region-Wide TIG'S  
Annual Public Meeting

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held on Wednesday, September 28, 2016  
commencing at 6:00 p.m.  
at the Renaissance New Orleans Pere Marquette  
French Quarter Area Hotel,  
817 Common Street,  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70122

Reported by:

Melissa Burdine-Rodolfich,  
DepoLink Court Reporting and  
Litigation Support Services

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LISTENING PANEL

- Gary Rikard, Mississippi
- Robin Riechers, Texas
- Kelly Samek, Florida
- Gale Bonanno, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
- Christopher Doley, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- Ann Mills, U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Michael Ellis, Louisiana
- Cindy Dohner, Department of Interior
- N. Gunter Guy, Jr., Alabama

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PRESENTERS

- Patti Powell, Alabama TIG
- Kelly Samek, Florida TIG
- Michael Ellis, Louisiana TIG
- Gary Rikard, Mississippi TIG
- Robin Riechers, Texas TIG
- Kristopher Benson, Open Ocean TIG
- Colette Charbonneau - Region-wide TIG

1 MR. FRANKLIN:

2                   Okay. Good evening, my name is Perry  
3 Franklin, and I will be tonight's facilitator for  
4 the Deepwater Horizon Natural Resource Damage  
5 Assessment Trustee Council's annual meeting. Good  
6 evening.

7                   This meeting also serves an annual  
8 meeting of the Region-wide Trustees Implementation  
9 Group.

10                   If everyone could just take a second and  
11 silence their phones. We're pretty cozy in here.  
12 And it will sort of interfere with the  
13 communication system. I would appreciate that.  
14 Thank you so much.

15                   So we're here tonight for the first  
16 public meeting of the Deepwater Horizon Trustee  
17 Council since the settlement of BP was finalized.  
18 The trustees and their staff will present lots of  
19 useful information to you, and then you will have  
20 an opportunity to give the trustees some feedback.

21                   We have a court reporter here with us  
22 tonight who will record the entire meeting,  
23 including your comments. The Power Point  
24 presentation that you will see tonight and a  
25 transcript will also be posted to the trustee's

1 website for your further information. We also  
2 have with us two American Sign Language  
3 interpreters and they will interpret the entire  
4 meeting.

5           As you came in, you were asked to fill  
6 in a blue card. Everyone should have seen a blue  
7 card like this (demonstrating). This is very  
8 important. It not only allows us to know who is  
9 in attendance, but if you would like to make a  
10 comment at the end of tonight's agenda, it allows  
11 me the opportunity to call you forward. If you  
12 filled out a blue card and did not indicate that  
13 you would like to speak, at any time of tonight,  
14 just raise your hand and we know what that means.  
15 Someone will get a blue card to you and check "I  
16 would like to make comment."

17           If it doesn't hit you till the end of  
18 the meeting, that's fine. At the end of the  
19 meeting, you can also, when we're about to wrap  
20 up, say, hey, I have a comment. We'll get a blue  
21 card to you and I'll bring you over. That's very  
22 important.

23           And at the end of the meeting when we  
24 have public comment, if you would simply state  
25 your name and if you're part of an organization,

1 state the organization that you are representing  
2 for the public record. Again, everything that  
3 takes place tonight will be a part of the record.

4 So at this time, let's go ahead and get  
5 started with tonight's meeting. I would like to  
6 introduce the first speaker, Commissioner Gunter  
7 Guy, Jr., commissioner of Alabama Department of  
8 Conservation and Natural Resources and the current  
9 chair of the Trustee Council. Mr. Guy.

10 MR. GUY:

11 Thank you, Perry.

12 Good evening, I would like to welcome  
13 each of you to this annual meeting of the Trustee  
14 Council and to thank you for your interest and  
15 attendance. We've got a lot of people here. That  
16 shows that a lot of people are interested.

17 First, we want to thank our friends from  
18 Louisiana for allowing us to be here in the great  
19 City of New Orleans. It's always a pleasure to  
20 come back to the New Orleans and have a meeting.

21 As Perry indicated -- excuse me. Before  
22 we get started on that, one other item of  
23 business, I understand we have a few -- may have a  
24 few elected officials or representatives here.

25 And so if you don't mind, I would ask you to stand

1 if I call your name. I understand we have Ms.  
2 Kathy Stuart, a representative for U.S. Senator  
3 Bill Cassidy of Louisiana here. Is Ms. Stuart --

4 MS. STEWART:

5 I'm here.

6 MR. GUY:

7 Thank you for being here, ma'am.

8 MS. STEWART:

9 Sure.

10 MR. GUY:

11 Are there any other elected officials  
12 here tonight that we don't know of? If so, I  
13 would ask you to stand so that we could  
14 acknowledge you.

15 (Elected officials stand.)

16 MR. GUY:

17 Thank you.

18 I see my friend Mr. Patrick Gino here  
19 tonight. Mr. Gino, thank you for being here  
20 tonight.

21 As Perry indicated, my name is Gunter  
22 Guy, and it is my privilege and honor to serve as  
23 chairman over these proceedings tonight. I'm also  
24 joined at the table to my right by my fellow  
25 federal and state trustee representatives. In a

1 few minutes, I'll ask each of them to introduce  
2 themselves to you.

3 Many of you know that the trustees held  
4 many meetings prior to the settlement with BP.  
5 Most of those meetings involved presenting draft  
6 restoration plans. We developed five draft early  
7 restoration plans for implementing restoration  
8 projects before the Natural Resource Damage  
9 Assessment was completed.

10 Then we developed a draft programmatic  
11 restoration plan which established broad  
12 restoration goals and the specific types of  
13 restoration needed to meet each of these goals.  
14 There was also the proposed settlement agreement  
15 with BP. We brought all of these to you in public  
16 meetings across the Gulf to get your comments and  
17 then took your feedback into account in our final  
18 plans.

19 This evening, we're holding the Trustee  
20 Council's first public meeting since the  
21 settlement agreement was approved by the court in  
22 April. As you may be aware, the Settlement  
23 Agreement and Programmatic Restoration Plan  
24 described ways the Trustees will ensure  
25 transparency and public engagement. One of these

1 ways is holding this annual public meeting like  
2 the one we're having tonight.

3           First, I want to give you the preview of  
4 where we're heading tonight, preview of the  
5 agenda. We'll first do introductions, as I  
6 mentioned, so that other trustee representatives  
7 can introduce themselves to you. After that, I'm  
8 going to go over some slides to give you a brief  
9 update on what the Trustee Council has been doing  
10 since the settlement with BP.

11           Then you will hear an update from each  
12 of the restoration area Trustee Implementation  
13 Groups, sometimes referred to as TIGs. You'll be  
14 hearing that acronym, like NRDA, and all these  
15 different things that we've been doing over the  
16 years. So a knew one is TIGs, Trustee  
17 Implementation Group.

18           After that and most importantly, we want  
19 to hear from you. Perry will facilitate the  
20 public comment portion of the agenda. After the  
21 meeting ends, we want to make sure you know that  
22 we will be available for further conversation and  
23 to answer your questions.

24           So now let's do introductions. And to  
25 get us started, I'm going to start -- I want to

1 ask my friend, Ms. Cindy Dohner, with the  
2 Department of Interior to begin introductions and  
3 we'll work our way to the end of the table.

4 MS. DOHNER:

5 Thank you, Gunter.

6 As Gunter said, my name is Cindy Dohner.  
7 I'm the authorized official for the Department of  
8 Interior for the Deepwater Horizon NRDA that we're  
9 going to be talking about tonight.

10 Secretary Jewell sends her best, and she  
11 wanted to make sure that I thank, not everybody  
12 that's been involved in this process over the  
13 years, but all of my fellow trustees for all the  
14 hard work in developing the Deepwater Horizon NRDA  
15 the Programmatic Damage Assessment and Restoration  
16 Plan.

17 I also want to thank you, Gunter, for  
18 serving as a chair and for everybody that served  
19 as past chairs as we've gone through this process.  
20 It's been interesting over the years, and it's  
21 been a lot of hard work, especially to get to this  
22 point, so thank you.

23 MR. ELLIS:

24 Thank you, Cindy.

25 My name is Michael Ellis. I'm the

1 executive director for the Coastal Protection and  
2 Restoration Authority for the State of Louisiana.  
3 I'm here on behalf of Johnny Bradberry. He wishes  
4 he could be here, but something came up and he's  
5 not able to make it. So welcome. Welcome to  
6 Louisiana, everyone, and we look forward to the  
7 comments.

8 MS. MILLS:

9 Good evening. My name is Ann Mills. I  
10 am the deputy under secretary for Natural  
11 Resources and Environment at USDA, and I am  
12 Secretary Thomas Vilsack's designee to the  
13 council.

14 And I want to echo Cindy's comments,  
15 just this has been a lot of hard work and  
16 partnership with many, many people here in the  
17 group. So it's a really good evening and we look  
18 forward to hearing from you.

19 And I just also want to thank our hosts  
20 and the State of Louisiana and the great City  
21 of New Orleans. It's great to be back here.  
22 Thank you.

23 MR. DOLEY:

24 Hi. My name is Chris Doley. I'm the  
25 trustee representative for NOAA and the U.S.

1 Department of Commerce.

2 I echo the thoughts of Ann and Cindy and  
3 Michael about really looking forward to hearing  
4 comments from the group and really starting the  
5 next phase of the Deepwater Horizon saga, as we  
6 move from the litigation and the planning into  
7 implementation. We're very excited about the next  
8 15 years of implementation that will happen.

9 MS. BONANNO:

10 Thanks, Chris.

11 I'm Gale Bonanno. I'm with the Office  
12 of Water and the U.S. Environmental Protection  
13 Agency. I serve as a senior policy adviser.

14 And I really appreciate all of you  
15 coming out this evening and I look forward to  
16 hearing all of your comments. Thank you.

17 MS. SAMEK:

18 My name is Kelly Samek. I'm the Gulf  
19 restoration coordinator with the Florida Fish and  
20 Wildlife Conservation Commission, and I represent  
21 FWC executive director, Nick Wiley, and the  
22 Trustee Council.

23 I just want to thank everybody for  
24 taking time to be with us tonight.

25 MR. RIECHERS:

1           My name is Robin Riechers, and I'm  
2   representing the three Texas trustee agencies on  
3   the council.

4           And like Kelly, I want to thank all of  
5   you for taking some time to be with us tonight.  
6   And on behalf of the trustees, we look forward to  
7   working with you in the future.

8   MR. RIKARD:

9           Good evening. My name is Gary Rikard.  
10   I'm the executive director of the Mississippi  
11   Department of Environmental Quality and in that  
12   role, I serve as the natural resource damages  
13   trustee for the State of Mississippi.

14           As my cohorts said, we thank you for  
15   being here tonight and look forward to receiving  
16   your comments. Thanks.

17   MR. GUY:

18           Thank you.

19           I want to take a moment of personal  
20   privilege here, which is going to cause everybody  
21   in the room that wrote this script for me to  
22   panic, but Cindy mentioned, you know, about  
23   thanking me, which is unnecessary, but about past  
24   chairmen. And so before me -- I have some big  
25   shoes to fill -- Mr. Robin Riechers at the table

1 for the State of Texas was past chairman, and we  
2 haven't had an opportunity to publicly thank him  
3 for leading us, leading the Trustee Council during  
4 a really interesting, and maybe some would say  
5 difficult, time during settlement negotiations and  
6 a lot of things going on. So I would like to take  
7 this opportunity and ask everybody to join me in  
8 thanking Robin for his leadership.

9 (Applause.)

10 MR. GUY:

11 And so I don't forget, I also want to  
12 say, all these folks sitting at the table, along  
13 with myself, you know, sometimes are recognized,  
14 but there are a lot of people in this room and  
15 outside of this room that work real hard every day  
16 to make this work, and I just want to publicly  
17 thank them on behalf of all the trustees sitting  
18 at the table for what they do every day. I would  
19 like you to give them a round of applause.

20 (Applause.)

21 MR. GUY:

22 So now, I'll ask Nanciann, don't panic.  
23 I'll get back on schedule.

24 Under the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, the  
25 trustees are responsible for restoring the

1 environment and compensating the public for  
2 natural resource injuries after disasters like  
3 Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. We use a Natural  
4 Resource Damage Assessment to determine the extent  
5 of injuries to the natural resources and to seek  
6 restoration or compensation from the parties  
7 responsible. The goal is to restore injured  
8 natural resources, like wetlands, fish and birds  
9 to the conditions they would have been in had the  
10 spill not occurred.

11 We will also address recreational uses,  
12 like beach use, boating, and swimming that were  
13 affected by the oil spill. The Deepwater Horizon  
14 Oil Spill and the response to the spill affected  
15 public use and enjoyment of many of the natural  
16 resources across the Gulf.

17 Let me give you a little bit of  
18 background just to get up to today. And as you  
19 know, the spill began in April 2010. The oil  
20 flowed for 87 days, but the injury assessment  
21 started right away. In April 2011, BP agreed to  
22 make up to \$1 billion available for restoration  
23 even before the injury assessment was complete.  
24 So we, as trustees, were able to get a jump-start  
25 on restoration. From 2011 to 2016, we approved a

1 total of five restoration plans and 65 projects  
2 with a combined cost of \$866 million. Generally  
3 speaking, these projects restored marshes,  
4 beaches, shorelines, sea grasses, oysters, fish  
5 and shellfish, wildlife, as well as recreational  
6 uses.

7           On April 4, 2016, the federal government  
8 and the five Gulf states reached in a settlement  
9 with BP. It totaled approximately \$20.8 billion.  
10 Of the 20.8 billion, up to 8.8 billion will go to  
11 natural resource restoration. That total includes  
12 the 1 billion from BP for early restoration. It  
13 also includes 7.1 billion for restoration beyond  
14 early restoration. The last amount on the screen  
15 that I would like to point out is the \$700 million  
16 that will be available for conditions that were  
17 not known or contemplated when the settlement was  
18 drafted.

19           The Trustees finalized a Programmatic  
20 Restoration Plan in 2016. That plan does not  
21 include individual projects. Rather, it is  
22 programmatic, which means that it includes  
23 overarching restoration goals for the entire Gulf  
24 Coast ecosystem and the broad restoration types  
25 that will be -- excuse me, that will guide

1 development and selection of those restoration  
2 projects.

3           Now, that's going to be kind of hard to  
4 read, so if you can't read it, there will be some  
5 slides that are available outside if you didn't  
6 already get them, and we'll -- if you raise your  
7 hand or tell one of the folks here, we'll get you  
8 that. It's just a lot of information in a small  
9 space, but let me just tell you a little bit about  
10 that slide.

11           The settlement also determined where the  
12 funds will be spent. The funds are first broken  
13 out geographically into restoration areas for each  
14 state, as well as funds for region-wide  
15 restoration to be used in all of the five states  
16 and restoration in the open ocean, then by each  
17 restoration type in those areas. So again, we'll  
18 get that to you or it is available after the  
19 meeting if you haven't already picked up one.

20           With the settlement agreement, we have a  
21 new governance and management structure. This  
22 structure is unique, as is this restoration  
23 effort, which is the largest restoration effort  
24 ever conducted. To accomplish restoration of this  
25 scale, we established these eight Trustee

1 Implementation Groups, TIGs, focusing on different  
2 restoration areas. These provide flexibility and  
3 accountability that allows for the difference  
4 between restoration areas and trustees. The  
5 Trustee Council serves to ensure coordination  
6 amongst these TIGs. Specifically, the Trustee  
7 Council's role is to provide coordination and  
8 ensure the transparency, physical and scientific  
9 accountability, and consistency with the  
10 Programmatic Plan and across the implementation  
11 groups. Boy, that's a mouthful, but that -- you  
12 know, we oversee to make sure all these things  
13 come together.

14 So what has the council done since the  
15 settlement? To ensure transparency and public  
16 engagement, we've redesigned our website. It  
17 reflects the new government structure and makes  
18 the site easier to use. We have also approved  
19 standard operating procedures, which provide  
20 detail about our process for long-term management  
21 and administration of settlement funds. These are  
22 available on our website.

23 We collected a lot of information during  
24 the injury assessment, and we're monitoring our  
25 restoration projects as we go. Therefore, we are

1 developing a manual for monitoring and adaptive  
2 management of our project -- projects, plural, and  
3 when it's complete, we will share it with you as  
4 well.

5           As I mentioned, we've updated our public  
6 database so you can find all this information more  
7 easily, a lot more information than I am talking  
8 about tonight. You can check out that database at  
9 the table out in the hall or by visiting the  
10 website. It's not on the screen, but it is  
11 [www.GulfSpillRestoration.NOAA.gov](http://www.GulfSpillRestoration.NOAA.gov). Again, that's  
12 [www.GulfSpillRestoration](http://www.GulfSpillRestoration), all spelled out, [.NOAA.gov](http://www.GulfSpillRestoration.NOAA.gov).  
13

14           Okay. So with that, we are now at that  
15 point that we're going to provide you some  
16 updates, and we're going to begin these updates  
17 with some reports from the implementation groups  
18 on what they've been doing for their restoration  
19 areas.

20           And it's a privilege for me to introduce  
21 one of my partners from the State of Alabama,  
22 Ms. Patti Powell, who is a member of the Alabama  
23 Restoration and Planning Implementation Group.

24 Ms. Powell.

25 MS. POWELL:

1           Thanks, Commissioner Guy.

2           He was very kind in calling me one of  
3 his partners. He's actually also my boss, but  
4 thank you for that. I'll remind you of that  
5 later.

6           But, again, I'm Patti Powell. I'm  
7 director of State Lands Division for the Alabama  
8 Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.  
9 And on behalf of the Alabama TIG, we welcome you  
10 here tonight. Thank you for being here. Each TIG  
11 is going to be brief because as you saw, we have a  
12 bunch of TIGs.

13           But I do want to make take a minute to  
14 go run through the members of our Alabama TIG.  
15 The first two individuals, Amy Hunter and Seth  
16 Newton, our representatives for the State of  
17 Alabama trustees. The remaining individuals, Dan  
18 Van Nostrand, Ben Frater, Chris Parker, and Ron  
19 Howard, our representatives serving with our  
20 federal trustee partners. Will our TIG members  
21 stand if you are here? I just want for those from  
22 Alabama to be able to kind of see. Dan is waving  
23 in the back. Chris and Seth and Amy and I saw  
24 Ron. Oh, sorry. Ron's back there. Ben?

25 MS. HUNTER:

1                   He's not here.

2       MS. POWELL:

3                   Oh, I'm sorry. Ben's not here. So  
4 anyway, I just wanted you to know who to talk to  
5 while you're here to tonight if you would like to  
6 meet the members of the Alabama TIG.

7                   This slide is actually just a different  
8 visual representation of the busy spreadsheet or  
9 chart you saw earlier. You will notice around the  
10 room, there is a different doughnut for each TIG,  
11 if you' like to go check that out. It goes  
12 clockwise, as you see, and it's color-coded and  
13 shows the dollars for each TIG that has been  
14 allocated under the consent decree for the  
15 restoration types, which you'll see, again, by  
16 different dots, different colors. So those are  
17 around the room for you to look at from whichever  
18 state or different TIG you may be interested in.

19                   Wanted to spend just a minute -- this  
20 slide is organized as past, present, and future  
21 categories. Frankly, the activities of the  
22 Alabama TIG don't fit nicely into past, present,  
23 and future. But the way we've got it organized,  
24 the past column represents early restoration phase  
25 work. The other meetings that you've attended

1 that were presettlement focused on early  
2 restorations phase projects. In Alabama, there  
3 was \$117 million in early restoration work  
4 benefiting our state. That's what you see listed  
5 here. All those projects constituting the 117 are  
6 listed.

7 Now, those projects in their differing  
8 stages and involve differing restoration types, as  
9 you will see. Some of the projects, such as  
10 Alabama Dune Restoration, that project is in  
11 monitoring and adaptive management. The Oyster  
12 Cultch Project is complete, and it is simply in  
13 the monitoring phase.

14 You have other projects, like our Living  
15 Shorelines, the Swift Tract that's in  
16 construction. The other two projects you see  
17 listed there are in the design phase.

18 The Gulf State Park Enhancement Project  
19 is an example of a project that actually has five  
20 individual elements. Each individual element is  
21 its own stage of -- as an example, the Trail  
22 Enhancements and Dune Restoration work is in  
23 construction.

24 When you move into the present column,  
25 first and foremost, we are continuing the early

1 restoration project implementation for each of  
2 those projects and will continue monitoring on  
3 into the future. But we have for Alabama, the  
4 Alabama TIG, an additional \$179 million available  
5 for future restoration work. The Alabama -- and  
6 that's what the Alabama TIG will be focusing on,  
7 is that 179 million.

8           For the Alabama TIG, the current efforts  
9 involve two different restoration plans that are  
10 in development. Restoration Plan 1 will focus on  
11 recreational use. Public scoping on that plan  
12 actually began summer of this year, summer of  
13 2016. So that -- as you see, it goes maybe in the  
14 past, but anyway, that work is still underway.  
15 The Alabama TIG has received public comment and  
16 has been reviewing that in connection with  
17 reviewing potential project alternatives for that  
18 restoration plan. And that Restoration Plan 1  
19 will go out for public review and comment. That  
20 is similar to the early restoration plans that you  
21 saw come out for comment.

22           The TIG is also working on Restoration  
23 Plan 2. That will group together ecological  
24 restoration types, which you saw before, and that  
25 work is underway. We're currently -- the next

1 step for the TIG is identifying the specific types  
2 that will be included in that Restoration Plan 2.  
3 And, again, you will see future restoration plans  
4 similarly numbered, numbered after that. So that  
5 is what we describe as our present.

6 But also moving forward for the future,  
7 obviously again, everything I've talked about is  
8 continuing into the future, and restoration  
9 planning will continue. And what you see on the  
10 slides are just a few examples of the restoration  
11 types that the TIG will be working on.

12 On behalf of the Alabama TIG, I very  
13 sincerely want to thank each of you for being  
14 here. Every minute you spend at one of these  
15 public meetings is -- I always say is a minute  
16 away from your family, and we appreciate you being  
17 here. We also want to encourage your continued  
18 participation, as an example, coming to meetings  
19 in the future. You will see some meetings in each  
20 state for the TIGs, as an example. But also to  
21 visit the websites. You have the Trustee Council  
22 website. In the State of Alabama, you have the  
23 AlabamaCoastalRestoration.org website. Both of  
24 those websites contain a lot of information.

25 And, as an example, the Alabama portal

1 has an online project suggestion portal. You can  
2 go on there and both see suggestions that have  
3 already been entered by others, as well as enter  
4 additional suggestions. And really, the project  
5 suggestions, information submitted to the Trustee  
6 Council site, as well as the Alabama portal are  
7 critical for the Alabama TIG because that really  
8 provides the type of project suggestions that the  
9 TIG can utilize in developing future project  
10 alternatives for future plans. So please do  
11 continue those submissions and thanks for the ones  
12 that are already in those -- the ones that are  
13 already in the portals.

14 So I know that was quick, but we have  
15 other TIGs coming up. So again, thank you. And I  
16 want to welcome up the Florida TIG. Thank you.

17 MS. SAMEK:

18 Thank you, Patti.

19 So in Florida, the Florida TIG, two  
20 state agencies share trustee responsibilities, the  
21 Florida Department of Environmental Protection and  
22 the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation  
23 Commission.

24 Mimi Drew is the primary TIG  
25 representative for DEP, and I'm the primary

1 representative for FWC. We're joined on the TIG  
2 by Ben Frater for DOI, Cecelia Harper for EPA,  
3 Laurie Rounds for NOAA, and Michele Laur for USDA.

4           So injury in Florida was largely lost  
5 recreational use. Gunter described this a little  
6 bit, but this is basically about the public's  
7 ability to access and enjoy natural resources for  
8 recreational purposes being impaired as a result  
9 of the spill. And those effects were felt well  
10 beyond the area oil and the response in Florida.  
11 So it's not surprising, then, that the allocation  
12 for the Florida TIG is distinguished by relatively  
13 large amounts for providing and enhancing  
14 recreational opportunities and restoring water  
15 quality, which is also tied to our recreational  
16 injury. Good water quality is, after all, a  
17 momentum to enjoying Florida's beaches and other  
18 Coastal habitats.

19           Recreational use projects accounted for  
20 the majority of over \$144 million in projects in  
21 early restoration projects assigned to the Florida  
22 TIG. We have so many projects, in fact, it was  
23 difficult to put them all in the slide, so I'm  
24 going to talk a little bit more about phases, give  
25 you an idea of what we've got that are completed

1 or underway now.

2 In addition, the State of Florida  
3 benefits from early restoration projects that are  
4 assigned to the Open Ocean and Region-Wide TIGs as  
5 well, including a substantial effort to reduce  
6 disturbance by lighting on sea turtle nesting  
7 habitat.

8 So I'm going to give, as I said, a few  
9 highlights by phase to let you know where we are  
10 with these. So Phase 1 is complete in the State  
11 of Florida. This included the construction or  
12 enhancement of four boat ramps in Escambia County,  
13 as well as a dune restoration at Pensacola Beach.

14 Phase 2 is underway. It's been underway  
15 since 2013, includes its beach nesting bird  
16 habitat, reduction of disturbance in the their  
17 habitat. This is underway and expected to be  
18 completed by 2019.

19 Phase 3, this is where we get into a  
20 large variety of projects mostly in the  
21 recreational use category. These are all underway  
22 at various states of implementation. A lot of  
23 design going on, but we do expect to have a lot of  
24 construction underway sometime this fall.

25 For Phase 4, DOI will be implementing a

1 sea grass restoration project at Gulf Islands  
2 National Seashore. And then in Phase 5, we've got  
3 four coastal community parks that have been either  
4 acquired or are in some phase of enhancement with  
5 amenities design going on right now. And, in  
6 fact, DEP is working with local governments to  
7 identify additional parcels for acquisition within  
8 this phase allocation.

9 So looking ahead to new projects, the  
10 Florida TIG held its first public meeting by  
11 webinar on August 25th, where we proposed the  
12 initial restoration types to be tackled in a new  
13 plan would be water quality restoration, the  
14 provision of additional and enhanced recreational  
15 opportunities, as well as habitat projects on  
16 federally managed lands. So public comment on  
17 those restoration types was accepted through  
18 September 9th, and now the TIG is working to  
19 prepare a public notice that will solicit projects  
20 that are appropriate for those restoration types.

21 While we are not intending to focus on  
22 the living coastal marine species or wetlands,  
23 coastal and nearshore habitat in this first plan  
24 after the settlement, we will be working  
25 internally in the TIG to think about the future

1 for these restoration types, in conjunction to  
2 related efforts. Those efforts, such as  
3 frameworks that are underway with the Region-wide  
4 TIG, as well as something that a lot of folks here  
5 who are familiar with Florida will understand,  
6 working on the restoration strategy for the  
7 National Fish and Wildlife Funds, the Gulf  
8 Environmental Benefit Fund in Florida. Those are  
9 very related to those living, coastal, and marine  
10 species, as well as those habitat types, so we  
11 want to think through how to best use the NRDA  
12 resources to leverage against those efforts as  
13 well.

14 I do want to encourage you, if you want  
15 to learn anything more about these projects we've  
16 got underway or give us ideas about projects you  
17 might want to see in Florida in the future, please  
18 visit [DeepwaterHorizonFlorida.com](http://DeepwaterHorizonFlorida.com). That is a  
19 consolidated website for the two state agencies  
20 where we look at projects, not only for NRDA, but  
21 also for GEBF, as well as our activities under the  
22 RESTORE Act.

23 And with that, I'll turn it over to our  
24 friends in Louisiana.

25 MR. ELLIS:

1           Okay. Thank you, Kelly.

2           All right. First, I would like to  
3 introduce the Louisiana restoration area members.  
4 And like I said earlier, I am here on behalf of  
5 Johnny Bradberry, who is the Louisiana lead, and  
6 Ms. Colette Charbonneau, from the Department of  
7 Interior, who is also one of our Louisiana  
8 members, Mel Landry with NOAA, Brad Crawford with  
9 the U.S. EPA, and Michele Laur with the United  
10 States Department of Agriculture. We really  
11 appreciate all their support throughout this  
12 process.

13           A little bit about the allocation for  
14 Louisiana, Louisiana TIG will receive about  
15 \$5 billion for restoration projects. As you can  
16 see, our doughnut is disproportionate, and it's  
17 because two of the largest allocations for the  
18 Louisiana TIG are for the restoration categories,  
19 Restore and Conserve Habitat and Replenish and  
20 Protect Living Coastal and Marine Resource.

21           Under the first -- the first category,  
22 Restore and Conserve Habitat, approximately  
23 \$4.3 billion is dedicated to this category. We  
24 intend to utilize these funds for coastal  
25 restoration projects, to restore for the injuries

1 caused by the spill which provide sustainable  
2 coastal benefits.

3 Some examples of these projects include  
4 large-scale marsh creation projects, barrier  
5 island projects, sediment diversions, and other  
6 habitat projects consistent with the master plan.

7 The second category of the largest  
8 categories is approximately \$343 million, and  
9 that's to replenish and protect living coastal and  
10 marine resources this allocation will be used for  
11 projects that will benefit birds, oysters, marine  
12 mammals, sea turtles, and submerged aquatics.

13 Okay. A little bit about the past and  
14 the present and where we intend to go in the  
15 future. Under the Early Restoration Phase 1  
16 projects, we had a couple of projects. The first  
17 project was a -- it was a Louisiana Wildlife and  
18 Fisheries led project. It was an oyster cultch  
19 project. It involved the placement of oyster  
20 cultch onto approximately 850 acres in six  
21 locations along the coast of Louisiana. In  
22 addition, we constructed an oyster hatchery  
23 facility to improve existing oyster hatchery  
24 operations. Both phases of the project have been  
25 completed and the trustees -- and we're in the

1 process of completing the final monitoring and  
2 closure reports.

3           The second project, Lake Hermitage Marsh  
4 Creation Project, was a win for us because we had  
5 an ongoing CWPPRA project where we created about  
6 549 acres of marsh, but we were able to tag onto  
7 that, if you will, and created 104 acres of  
8 brackish marsh, so -- for a total of over 650  
9 acres. The construction is complete and  
10 monitoring is ongoing for that project.

11           Presently, under Early Restoration Phase  
12 3 projects, we have an Outer Coast Restoration  
13 Program to restore beach dune, back-barrier marsh  
14 habitats on four barrier islands. Those barrier  
15 islands are the Caillou Headlands -- Lake  
16 Headlands, and Shell Island, which are both led by  
17 CPRA as the lead trustee. Chenier Ronquille is  
18 also in construction and is -- the lead  
19 implementation -- excuse me, the lead trustee is  
20 NOAA. Sorry. I have kind of a dry throat from  
21 sinus issues. North Breton is under engineering  
22 design and it's a DOI led project.

23           In addition, what's going on right now  
24 is the Louisiana Marine Fisheries and Enhancement  
25 Research, and Science Center, and the lead trustee

1 is the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries for  
2 that. This project is currently in the planning  
3 phase.

4 In addition, the first restoration --  
5 we're working on the First Restoration Plan. The  
6 Louisiana TIG published the Notice of Initiation  
7 of the Restoration Plan on July 12 of this year,  
8 and we received comments and project proposals,  
9 particularly around -- two for birds and one  
10 supportive of sediment diversions, which we'll  
11 obviously take into account into the plan.

12 We also published a Notice of Intent to  
13 a Draft Restoration Plan on August 22 of this  
14 year, and this plan will consist of evaluating  
15 projects intended to restore for injuries caused  
16 by damages of the spill. Also, we'll be focusing  
17 on restoring coastal habitats, marshes, and in  
18 addition, restoring injury to birds and injuries  
19 to federally-managed lands. The goal is to  
20 publish this draft plan in the next month or so,  
21 and the final plan published by the end of year.

22 As far as the future is concerned, we  
23 would obviously continue our vision for long-term  
24 sustainable restoration in Louisiana. The vast  
25 majority of our funds, around 4 billion of the 5

1 billion, is allocated to restoring wetlands,  
2 coastal and nearshore habitats, so our focus will  
3 be on the coastal restoration projects consistent  
4 with our master plan.

5           And one thing I would like to note is  
6 Governor Edwards signed into executive order  
7 requiring that all Deepwater Horizon settlement  
8 funds be spent on projects consistent with our  
9 coastal master plan. Therefore, most of the  
10 projects evaluated for consideration will come  
11 from our master plan. These master plan projects  
12 have already been vetted by the public, the  
13 scientific community, and the Louisiana  
14 legislature.

15           And with that, I'm going to turn it over  
16 to Mississippi.

17 MR. RIKARD:

18           Thanks, Mike.

19           So I'm Gary Rikard. I'm the executive  
20 director of the Mississippi Department of  
21 Environmental Quality and the Mississippi Trustee.

22           Our Trustee Implementation Group is made  
23 up of myself, Jon Hemming, Dan Van Nostrand with  
24 NOAA, Michele Laur with USDA, and Troy Pierce with  
25 EPA.

1 Mississippi's allocation totaled about  
2 \$296 million. Of that \$296 million, about  
3 \$112 million was spent during early -- or  
4 allocated, I should say, during early restoration,  
5 leaving about \$183 million that will be paid out  
6 over the next 15 years for us to do further NRDA  
7 projects.

8 So in the early restoration in  
9 Mississippi, the Phase 1, a couple of projects  
10 that are now in the monitoring stage, the  
11 Mississippi Oyster cultch Restoration and the  
12 Mississippi Artificial Reef Habitat. The Oyster  
13 cultch Restoration was about an \$11 million  
14 project. It restored about 1400 acres of oyster  
15 reef.

16 The Artificial Reef Habitat Project was  
17 a nearshore projects where we went in and enhanced  
18 about 47 different reefs across the entire  
19 Mississippi Sound out from each of the three  
20 coastal counties, and it was about a \$3 million  
21 project. Again, those projects are completed.  
22 They're in the monitoring stage.

23 Presently, what's happening in Phase 3  
24 and 4 of Early Restoration, there were three  
25 recreational opportunities project, projects that

1 were put together to hopefully restore from past  
2 recreational loss associated with the spill, and  
3 that was the Infinity Science Center, the Popp's  
4 Ferry Causeway, and the Pascagoula Beachfront  
5 Promenade.

6           The Infinity Science Center is a project  
7 that's an ongoing now. I think construction is  
8 supposed to be completed sometime in mid to late  
9 2017. That took an existing state-of-the-art  
10 facility and expanded that with different types of  
11 educational and research opportunities for the  
12 public to come into, created a nature trail that's  
13 about two miles long and, again, added some  
14 educational opportunities for -- it's a lot of  
15 school-aged children that come in and use that  
16 facility now. And we just kind of enhanced that  
17 and added some additional projects there.

18           The Pascagoula Beachfront Promenade was  
19 approximately a \$3 million project. It creates  
20 about two miles of beachfront area, expands an  
21 existing walkway to about 10 feet, puts in fire  
22 pits and shade and all other opportunities for the  
23 public to more enjoy the beach there in the  
24 Pascagoula area. And that project has begun and  
25 we anticipate it being completed sometime in 2017

1 also.

2           The Popp's Ferry Causeway, that project  
3 is in Biloxi Bay. It takes the existing park area  
4 and does a lot of enhancement to that to the tune  
5 of adding fishing piers, adding an interpretive  
6 center, and putting a pretty long pier out into  
7 the Bay area for the public to use. And that  
8 project was about \$6 million in cost. Engineering  
9 design on that project is about 90 percent and we  
10 anticipate construction to begin sometime in 2017.

11           The Hancock County Living Shoreline  
12 Project is sort of the -- probably the bell cow of  
13 the early restoration projects in Mississippi.  
14 That project, it was a \$50 million project.  
15 Construction started last month. That project is  
16 going to create about six miles of living  
17 shorelines/breakwater, put in about 47 acres of  
18 marsh creation and another 46 to 47 acres of  
19 subtidal reef. And we've worked real closely with  
20 NOAA as our project sponsor working on that  
21 project with us.

22           And then finally, on the existing  
23 projects, Restoring Living Shorelines and Reefs,  
24 that project is a Phase 4 project. It's going to  
25 create approximately 270 acres of subtidal reef

1 and about a mile and a half of breakwaters in the  
2 estuaries across the Mississippi Coast. We  
3 anticipate the construction on that project to  
4 begin sometime in 2017.

5 And then looking toward the future,  
6 we're working with the Mississippi TIG. In fact,  
7 we had a meeting today that was -- well, there was  
8 a lot of robust discussion, but very productive.  
9 I think our federal partners will agree with that.  
10 We're focusing on three main items. One is birds,  
11 working with the Department of Interior on that,  
12 nutrient reduction, and also looking at wetlands,  
13 coastal and nearshore Habitats. And so that's  
14 what we'll be looking at for the upcoming projects  
15 in '16 and '17.

16 With that, I'll turn it over to my Texas  
17 counterpart, Robin. Thank you.

18 MR. RIECHERS:

19 Well, thank you, Gary. And thank you  
20 all again for being here, on behalf of the Texas  
21 Trustees and the Texas TIG.

22 As indicated before, my name is Robin  
23 Riechers, and I work with Texas Parks and Wildlife  
24 Department, but I'm representing the Texas TIG  
25 tonight. And I want to give you those members as

1 well. As I indicated, there's three Texas  
2 agencies who are Natural Resource Damage  
3 Assessment trustees. That's Texas Parks and  
4 Wildlife, where Don Pitts is the member of the  
5 TIG; the Texas Commission on Environmental  
6 Quality, where Richard Seiler is the member and  
7 the Texas General Land Office, where Angela Sunley  
8 sits on the TIG with us.

9           Then we have our four federal agency  
10 partners as well, who are represented. Chip Wood,  
11 Department of Interior is represented by Chip.  
12 Jamie Schubert, National Oceanic and Atmospheric  
13 Administration. And I would just note that those  
14 two guys used to work for Parks and Wildlife as  
15 well. Michele Laur, who represents the U.S.  
16 Department of Agricultural, and Doug Jacobson, who  
17 also works for U.S. Environmental Protection  
18 Agency. So that's our members of our TIG.

19           Now, as we move to our doughnut hole  
20 that you guys are probably starting to -- all the  
21 doughnut holes are running together by now, we'll  
22 take a look at this one here. Certainly, the  
23 larger blue area there for us is Restore and  
24 Conserve Habitat. But for us, that's even a  
25 little bit tighter. When you look at that chart

1 Gunter had up here, you'll notice that all of our  
2 dollars in that category are in wetlands, coastal  
3 and nearshore habitats.

4           Then when you go to the next, kind of  
5 the burnt orange part of that, you'll see at  
6 \$23 million and that's water quality. And for  
7 those of you who really look at those charts  
8 closely, it's rounded up here. It's 22.5 in the  
9 table, but it's 23 here. And then you move over  
10 to the \$91 million kind of green chart and for us,  
11 that is focused on sea turtles, birds, and  
12 oysters.

13           And then the 19 million which is the --  
14 the next color there is 19 million, which is  
15 Provide and Enhance Recreational Opportunities.  
16 And for those -- as we move forward, those will  
17 all be covered in earlier projects that were in  
18 Round 3 and Round 4 of early restoration. And  
19 then lastly, we, too, have some monitoring and  
20 adaptive management and administrative oversight  
21 monies.

22           So like every one else, we're going to  
23 kind of go through a past, present, and future.  
24 And as you can see there, we basically have  
25 spent -- or are spending in our early restoration

1 activities about 59 million. All of our projects,  
2 as I said -- or as I may have said, came in Rounds  
3 3 and 4 of the early restoration. All of them are  
4 underway and in some form of progress. Now I will  
5 walk through those just a little bit.

6 Texas Rookery Islands, that's a group of  
7 rookery islands that were basically being restored  
8 for colonial waterbirds. There are three in  
9 Galveston and one in east Matagorda Bay.  
10 Dickinson Island in Galveston and Dressing Point  
11 in East Matagorda Bay are under design now, and we  
12 would hope that we would have construction  
13 underway, at least in Dickinson by the fall of  
14 2017. The other two, obviously we'll start  
15 designing the minute we finish the design of those  
16 two.

17 And then we move on to our artificial  
18 reef projects and those were the Freeport  
19 Artificial Reef Project, the Matagorda Artificial  
20 Reef, and then the Mid and Upper Texas Coast  
21 Artificial Reef Ship Project.

22 And those two first ones, Freeport and  
23 Matagorda, are what we call nearshore reefs.  
24 They're six and 10 miles respectively off the  
25 Coast of those two locations. They will be done

1 with those prefab pyramids that set down.  
2 Typically, we use those in shallower waters so  
3 that we can still have the depth that we need to  
4 have for boat traffic. And if all goes well,  
5 basically the construction of that -- those  
6 pyramids will be finished very soon and we can  
7 start deploying them here in the fall.

8 The Ship project is well underway as  
9 well. The ship is now in Port of Brownsville.  
10 It's being cleaned. And if -- that project is 67  
11 miles south of Galveston, and we would hope we can  
12 have deployment of that in early 2017.

13 Lastly, we have two state projects, the  
14 Galveston Island State Park Beach Project and a  
15 Sea Rim State Park Improvement Project. The  
16 Galveston Island Project is about \$10.7 million.  
17 The Sea Rim was about \$200,000.

18 The Galveston Island State Park design  
19 should be completed in 2018. That is a  
20 redevelopment of that entire park site. This is  
21 only a portion of it. That park site was  
22 devastated after Hurricane Ike, and the whole park  
23 is being reconstructed so that's just a portion of  
24 that, but a very important portion as well.

25 And then the Sea Rim State Park,

1 hopefully we will -- design is almost finished and  
2 we will be under construction quickly with that  
3 one. Fairly small project with some viewing  
4 areas, some comfort stations, and a fish cleaning  
5 table there.

6           Lastly, and I don't think we have it  
7 included here, but it was also -- some sea turtle  
8 projects that we had that were included in that.  
9 Those sea turtle projects basically are for  
10 basically beach nesting protection and salvage  
11 network protection, basically if we find injured  
12 turtles. Those all were signed agreements that  
13 went into place before the start this year with  
14 those people, and so that has all been underway,  
15 as well as nesting beach protection in South Padre  
16 Island and some work that we do in Mexico through  
17 a third party as well. That all took place this  
18 current nesting season and that will continue.

19           There is one component to that which is  
20 a law enforcement component that we will hopefully  
21 start in this next spring when we're able to get  
22 that extra enforcement. And basically, that's  
23 putting enforcement on the water at a time when  
24 there's a greater opportunity for interaction  
25 between sea turtles and shrimping vessels.

1           So when we move now to the present, you  
2 know, we have recently put out a solicitation for  
3 individual restoration projects like all the other  
4 states using all the other portals. There are  
5 many, many projects that have already been turned  
6 in, but we sent out a notice notifying folks that  
7 we're now accepting projects again. We're fixing  
8 to go forward with a NRDA Early Restoration Draft  
9 Plan -- or a NRDA Draft Restoration Plan. That  
10 has -- that call has either come to fruition or  
11 very close to fruition. Those projects will be  
12 being reviewed as we speak and moving forward, and  
13 we would like to have a Draft Restoration Plan out  
14 by the spring of 2017 with the hopes that we would  
15 have a final restoration plan by the summer of  
16 2017.

17           That's really all that I have about our  
18 area in Texas. Again, thank you all for being  
19 here. And now, I will turn it over to the Open  
20 Ocean Restoration Team.

21 MR. BENSON:

22           Hello, everyone. Good evening. My name  
23 is Kristopher Benson, and I am currently serving  
24 as NOAA's team lead for the Open Ocean Trustee  
25 Implementation Group, and I'm located in the NOAA

1 lab in Galveston, Texas.

2 So the Open Ocean groups members include  
3 representatives of all of the federal trustees  
4 for the case. So Ashley Mills is our  
5 representative from the Department of Interior. I  
6 am representing NOAA'SA. Michele Laur is  
7 representing Department of Agriculture, and Gale  
8 Bonanno is representing the EPA.

9 The federal trustees are going to be  
10 working together for restoration on -- of  
11 wide-ranging and migratory species that inhabit  
12 the open ocean. These include water column and  
13 ocean bottom fish and invertebrates, sea turtles,  
14 birds, marine mammals, sturgeon, and deep sea  
15 corals. And we will target restoration of these  
16 species throughout their life stages and  
17 geographic ranges, including inland, coastal, and  
18 offshore areas. And because some of these species  
19 are very highly migratory, we may use some funds  
20 for restoration that's outside of the Gulf of  
21 Mexico. It's important to note we will be  
22 coordinating the appropriate state trustees when  
23 proposed projects overlap with their  
24 jurisdictions.

25 So this is what the funding allocation

1 looks for the Open Ocean area. And as you can  
2 see, there's a substantial allocation for  
3 monitoring and adaptive management and  
4 administrative oversight, and that's partially  
5 because the federal trustees represented on this  
6 implementation group are drawing funds from this  
7 allocation that they need for their administrative  
8 oversight and their representation in all of the  
9 other Trustee Implementation Groups for  
10 comprehensive planning.

11 That \$350 million breaks down to \$200  
12 million for monitoring and adaptive management,  
13 specifically for this restoration area, and  
14 \$150 million for administrative oversight and  
15 comprehensive planning. The \$868 million  
16 allocated to Replenish and Protect Living Coastal  
17 and Marine Resources is divided between  
18 \$380 million for fish and water column  
19 invertebrates, \$15 million to restore sturgeon,  
20 \$55 million to restore sea turtles, another  
21 \$55 million to restore marine mammals, \$70 million  
22 to restore birds, and \$273.3 million to restore  
23 mesophotic and deep-benthic communities. Another  
24 20 million was allocated in early restoration to a  
25 project to benefit highly migratory fish.

1           And \$22 million was also allocated in  
2   early restoration to provide enhanced recreational  
3   opportunities on federal lands in Mississippi,  
4   Alabama, and Florida. And those funds show up  
5   under the columns for those states in the funding  
6   allocation table that you saw earlier, but because  
7   the projects are federally led, the funding for  
8   those projects flows through this all-federal  
9   Trustee Implementation Group for administrative  
10  efficiencies.

11           This slide, like the other groups, will  
12  tell you a bit about where we've been, where we  
13  are, where we're going. As I just described,  
14  early restoration projects undertaken by the Open  
15  Ocean Implementation Group include \$42 million to  
16  benefit fish and water column invertebrates with  
17  the pelagic long line by-catch reduction project  
18  and to provide an enhanced recreational  
19  opportunity on federal lands.

20           We are currently working toward the  
21  release of a Notice of Intent to perform  
22  restoration planning, which we intend to publish  
23  in mid to late November. And with that notice, we  
24  will be soliciting input from the public about  
25  projects that will be appropriate to accomplish

1 our goals for specific restoration types that will  
2 be identified in that notice.

3 We'll also look for public comment on  
4 that topic during a public meeting in early  
5 December. And we're currently working through the  
6 logistics of how to make that meeting accessible  
7 to all, either through webinar or in person.  
8 We'll then work through the spring and summer of  
9 2017 to release this Trustee Implementation  
10 Group's Restoration Plan in the fall of next year.

11 So with that, I look forward to hearing  
12 comments this evening. I'm happy to speak to  
13 anyone separately if you have any questions I can  
14 answer about the work that our group is doing.  
15 And I'll hand it over to Colette to tell you about  
16 the work that the Region-wide TIG is doing, so  
17 thank you very much.

18 MS. CHARBONNEAU:

19 Good evening, everyone. I'm Colette  
20 Charbonneau. I'm the Deepwater Horizon  
21 Restoration Program Manager for the Department of  
22 Interior, and I'm representing the Region-wide TIG  
23 tonight. The Region-wide TIG is the TIG that's  
24 going to bring it all together along with the  
25 Trustee Council.

1           We are region-wide and our membership  
2 includes a member from each of the state trustees  
3 as well as all the feds, so we encompass all the  
4 trustees on our TIG.

5           The allocation that we have received  
6 through the settlement includes the region-wide  
7 work that will be done for the critters, the  
8 marine mammals, the sea turtles, the birds, and  
9 the oysters, those critters that cross state lines  
10 and we can look at them region-wide across the  
11 whole Gulf. And we also have a large piece for  
12 the monitoring and adaptive management, and this  
13 will be looking to do the monitoring across the  
14 Gulf to see how the restoration is progressing.

15           We also have the administrative  
16 oversight. This helps support the work that the  
17 Trustee Council needs to support all the TIGs, and  
18 we'll see that on the next slide.

19           So for the past, we also have some early  
20 restoration projects that we are watching over,  
21 and we have the Sea Turtle Early Restoration  
22 project. There's two components. One is the  
23 stranding and salvage network, which goes across  
24 the five Gulf states, as well as development of an  
25 emergency response program for sea turtles across

1 those five states. It's a 10-year project that is  
2 just beginning this year with developing  
3 implementation memos.

4 We also have the enhanced management of  
5 avian breeding habitat. And this is a project  
6 that is on federal lands, but it's in Florida,  
7 Alabama, and Mississippi, so it's region -- a  
8 little bit more region-wide and it's crossing  
9 several states. This project is in its fourth  
10 year this year. Next year in 2017 will be the  
11 last year of this five-year project.

12 And the last project we have is  
13 Restoring the Night Sky, which is in Florida and  
14 Alabama, and that's to expand the dark from some  
15 of our state and federal land for sea turtle  
16 nesting, and it's also good for birds.

17 What we've been working on presently, in  
18 coordination with the Trustee Council with that  
19 administration oversight money, is to help set up  
20 the lead administrative trustee and that entity  
21 helps support all of the TIGs with  
22 administration -- with administration -- I lost my  
23 place -- the website, financial tracking  
24 reporting, the reporting out to the public and our  
25 administrative record and also the restoration

1 portal for the trustees as a whole where you can  
2 submit restoration ideas and projects that we all  
3 will look at in our restoration planning efforts.

4           Also, with the Trustee Council, we have  
5 set up a cross-TIG, monitoring and adaptive  
6 management work group, so this is a work group  
7 that has been pulled together with trustee experts  
8 that will develop monitoring and adaptive  
9 management standards that all the TIGs will use in  
10 their restoration planning and to monitor their  
11 projects.

12           We are also setting up teams that  
13 consist of trustee experts that will develop  
14 strategic frameworks for sea turtles, marine  
15 mammals, birds, and oysters, and these groups will  
16 develop the strategies to restore these critters  
17 across the Gulf.

18           And then in the future, we've decided to  
19 be patient and just take a step back, and we'll be  
20 watching all the other TIGs that came before me in  
21 their restoration efforts. And we're going to pay  
22 attention to what they are doing and see if  
23 there's any restoration gaps that need to be  
24 filled and then the Region-wide TIG will step in;  
25 or if there are projects that all the TIGs are

1 looking at that are the same, for -- such like for  
2 sea turtles, then maybe that's a place where the  
3 Region-wide TIG can step in and we would do that  
4 in our restoration planning and use our allocation  
5 to do that region-wide type work.

6 So I would like to follow up from Patti.  
7 She started out thanking you all for coming. I  
8 want to echo for that. Thank you for spending  
9 your time with us tonight. And then I'll hand it  
10 over to Perry.

11 MR. FRANKLIN:

12 Okay. So that was a lot of information  
13 why don't we just take a second to stand up and  
14 just kind of get ready for the second half of  
15 tonight's meeting. Let's just take a second.  
16 That was a mouthful.

17 (Short break.)

18 MR. FRANKLIN:

19 I would like to remind each of you that  
20 in order to make a comment at this point, you need  
21 to let us know in advance of coming forward. If  
22 there is anyone who would like to get their names  
23 on the speaking list who did not simply check  
24 "yes," on the blue card, if you'll just raise your  
25 hand, we'll get a blue card to you and that person

1 will get that blue card to me.

2           Is there anyone who did not check "yes"  
3 on their blue card when they walked in and would  
4 like to now make a public comment who did not  
5 earlier? And no problem, if you change your mind,  
6 if you don't hear somebody expressing your opinion  
7 or view or comment, raise your hand at any point  
8 and we'll get a card to you.

9           Because we have a number of speakers  
10 tonight, we're going to limit to three minutes as  
11 we typically do. Some people have driven many  
12 miles to be here tonight. We want to respect  
13 everyone's opportunity to be heard. When you  
14 begin speaking, there's a little monitor  
15 underneath the screen, it will be green for the  
16 first two and a half minutes. It will be yellow  
17 in the last 30 seconds. And when it turns red, I  
18 would hope that you would acknowledge that and go  
19 ahead, take your seat, wrap it up so that the next  
20 individual can come forward. Thank you in advance  
21 for honoring the three-minute rule.

22           When you do come forward, I will do my  
23 best with your handwriting to state your name and  
24 the organization that you're representing. To  
25 make sure that we get it proper and correct for

1 the record, if you will state your name and if  
2 you're representing an organization, that you also  
3 state the organization that you want to be  
4 reflected in the public record.

5 So at this time, let's go ahead and get  
6 started. The first individual to speak is Scott  
7 Eustis with Gulf Restoration Network. While Scott  
8 is coming forward, I will next call Mr. Tucker  
9 Mendoza.

10 If you'll state your name and  
11 organization for the record, sir. You have three  
12 minutes.

13 MR. EUSTIS:

14 Good evening. Yeah. Scott Eustis, New  
15 Orleans, Louisiana. I'm the Coastal Wetlands  
16 Specialist for the Gulf Restoration Network for an  
17 more than 20-year-old clean water and sustainable  
18 fisheries organization across the five states in  
19 the Gulf of the Mexico, so we're often tasked  
20 looking to where the holes are in the plan, where  
21 the cracks are.

22 I think, you know, we've -- in our  
23 comments, we've heard, I'm sure, you're not  
24 thinking about the formation, the system of  
25 government. For the NRDA part of the settlement,

1 it seems designed with a lot of holes and a lot of  
2 places where the different TIGs will interact.  
3 Because instead of being based on a watershed  
4 approach, you're just segmented into different  
5 political entities, and we're concerned how this  
6 process is going to overlap with itself and click  
7 with itself because often, you know, the water  
8 flows across the state lines and several really  
9 important rivers, like the Pearl River, the Sabine  
10 that are, you know, on both states.

11 In our experience as an environmental  
12 organization, if you have two entities, government  
13 entities charged with the care of a resource, we  
14 can get in a pointed game where it's neither's  
15 responsibility. So we're concerned about the  
16 coordination of this process amongst itself, but  
17 also with the Restore Council and all of the other  
18 processes across the Gulf.

19 You have a great task ahead of you, a  
20 huge task and often you can find yourselves  
21 conflicting amongst yourselves with these groups.  
22 You can -- there are many outside pressures to be  
23 aware of as we, you know, move into the hottest  
24 year in human history with the hottest Gulf sea  
25 surface temperatures we have ever seen.

1           And your job -- we don't want to see  
2     some of the -- a lot of these outside pressures  
3     subvert the good -- all the good work that you're  
4     doing. And that looks very different in all kinds  
5     of states. In Louisiana, we have our own troubles  
6     with coastal consistency and compliance with the  
7     Coastal Zone Management Act. This latest governor  
8     has been the strongest governor we've ever seen on  
9     holding oil and gas companies into account. This  
10    past summer has been a really bad summer, though,  
11    for oil spills in Barataria Bay, a place where we  
12    have a lot of restoration projects from a  
13    particular company, Hilcorp, whose business model  
14    is to go in to oil -- the oil fields where a lot  
15    of the restoration is planned.

16           So thanks so much for that executive  
17    order on coastal consistency, and we hope that the  
18    plan moves forward as -- and the damages that are  
19    ongoing and coming for us aren't -- the burden  
20    isn't placed on the restoration program when it  
21    should have been taken care of in another process,  
22    another environmental review process. Let's get  
23    ahead of those other impacts that may be outside  
24    of your jurisdiction, but we can see them coming.  
25    A lot of times we had --

1 MR. FRANKLIN:

2 Let's go ahead and wrap up, Mr. Eustis.

3 MR. EUSTIS:

4 Right.

5 Sometimes it's from industry. Sometimes  
6 it's from states or other parts of the state  
7 program. We're also concerned that because both  
8 the Restore Council and NRDA are very  
9 state-driven, the Open Ocean pot will be used to  
10 kind of cement where those cracks come.

11 So just -- we would like to see more  
12 transparency on how these projects mesh because  
13 when we come to y'all with projects, we're often  
14 told, it's this one and that one and the other  
15 one, and it's ending up being none of them. So  
16 thank you very much for your time and all your  
17 work.

18 MR. FRANKLIN:

19 Thank you, Mr. Eustis.

20 Next speaker will be Mr. Tucker Mendoza,  
21 followed by Thao Vu.

22 MR. MENDOZA:

23 My name is Tucker Mendoza. I'm a Gulf  
24 Coast response -- responder. The thing is, I want  
25 to ask a question.

1           First, I've got a statement. The  
2 statement is, on September 6, a dredging company  
3 working on a restoration project caused a 5,000  
4 gallon spill.

5           My question to that is: Does this group  
6 have any plans to help prevent spills during  
7 future restoration projects and what is that plan?

8 MR. FRANKLIN:

9           If you'll just state your comment. This  
10 is a listening table, if you'll just state your  
11 comment for the record.

12 MR. MENDOZA:

13           Okay. Who will be in charge of that  
14 plan? And a solution to that plan would be to  
15 have all the dredging companies or corporations  
16 that are working on these projects to be trained  
17 for a faster response. And when I say "a faster  
18 response," not meaning like the last response that  
19 we just had. If those people had to respond -- we  
20 could have lessened the impact to the marsh grass  
21 and to the project that we're working on. I have  
22 some problems with some of the -- some of the  
23 response situations to that project, such as  
24 sometimes it seems like we're doing more damage  
25 than we are doing good, such as we're utilizing

1 all these air boats to go in there and do some of  
2 these works. What I'm noticing is that these air  
3 boats going into these hot zones and then leaving  
4 out of hot zones or circling around marsh grass  
5 causing more cross-contamination. We need to work  
6 on a better plan to have a better response and to  
7 do less cross-contamination.

8           And that's it for me, I guess. But I  
9 hope y'all have a plan for the next one because I  
10 am assuming there's going to be future problems.  
11 And I -- as a responder, I do understand the  
12 faster that we contain this, the less impact on  
13 the environment will be. And, again, we have a  
14 real, real lack of training for offshore  
15 responders these days.

16           Again, I've been doing this since the  
17 Exxon-Valdez. I've been in that field. I see  
18 things. I know things that people don't see and  
19 know. And if we don't treat and if we don't train  
20 these people to respond better than what we're  
21 doing, we're doing more damage than good to the  
22 environment. Okay. Thank y'all.

23 MR. FRANKLIN:

24           Thank you, Mr. Mendoza.

25           Next individual to come forward is Thao

1 Vu, followed by David Muth.

2 You're next.

3 MS. VU:

4 Thank you, Mr. Hunter.

5 Good evening. Thao Vu. I'm with the --  
6 I'm the director of the Mississippi Coalition for  
7 Vietnamese-American Fisher Folks and Families.  
8 It's a pleasure to see some familiar faces. I've  
9 attended some of the recent Restore Council  
10 meetings, and I think some of us would greatly  
11 appreciate better communication and coordination  
12 between the various coastal restoration trustees  
13 and councilors.

14 I think this month alone, there's been  
15 so many meetings, public meetings and there are  
16 some state deadlines and it's very difficult for  
17 some of us to be able to travel extensively or be  
18 as active in the forums. I know that's very  
19 important for our -- you know, in terms of public  
20 participation for us to be as actively -- you  
21 know, to be informed and get the right  
22 information, but it's very challenging.

23 Actually since last week, I've attended  
24 multiple meetings, Restore Council meetings, an  
25 Alabama meeting to get an overview, and that was

1 very helpful as well, and the Restore Council, and  
2 then this NRDA meeting, followed by some  
3 deadlines, comment deadlines that are just around  
4 the corner. It's very, very challenging for us,  
5 so please help spread it out. That's one of our  
6 wishes right now.

7           The other thing is that this location is  
8 really, we don't think -- and this has been  
9 expressed before -- very accessible for the  
10 public. If this is really generally a public  
11 meeting, we ask that you actually go to more  
12 accessible locations that are outside of hotels.  
13 And I think many of us here are not really just  
14 regular folks. Many of us here are really maybe  
15 with an agency or institution or university or  
16 perhaps a large organization. It's very  
17 challenging for some of us to be here.

18           I work with a -- primarily the  
19 Vietnamese-American fishing communities in  
20 Mississippi and right now, as I expressed earlier,  
21 the shrimping season is very hard for them to  
22 attend this. We appreciate the translated fact  
23 sheets for all the TIGs. However, that's a very  
24 high number of TIGs. That's seven, wow. We can  
25 only envision how difficult and challenging it

1 will be moving forward for those of us who are  
2 trying to be as active and informed and engaged  
3 and to bring the information back to your  
4 constituency. You know, how are we going to be  
5 able to keep up with all of this?

6           And I think that in the future, we  
7 greatly need more than three minutes. I know the  
8 three minutes is typical. But if we had to  
9 comment on each TIG, three minutes is really  
10 insufficient. And I know this is the first  
11 informational meeting. I know moving forward, I  
12 think we're going to need more than three minutes.

13           And another great thing we want to  
14 recommend is, in terms of the projects, if there  
15 is a way for the public to be more re-engaged in  
16 terms of developing the projects, if the projects  
17 have greater analysis of the pros and cons.

18 Right? And not only the status of the projects,  
19 but in terms of the monitoring, is it really on  
20 track to reach the restoration objectives or not.

21 Right? And if it's not, what are the adaptive  
22 management practices that will be taking place?

23           The last comment is that on -- the  
24 Restore Council recently just -- it's trying to  
25 update its comprehensive plan. And in the plan,

1 they're asking for improved coordination between  
2 all the coastal restoration processes. We would  
3 like the -- you know, we would like the NRDA,  
4 Trustee Council, as well as the individual TIGs to  
5 try to really communicate and coordinate all of  
6 your restoration efforts, you know, from project  
7 implementation -- project design to implementation  
8 and monitoring and make sure that everything is  
9 uniform, consistent. Make sure that we really  
10 have effective restoration. I think particularly  
11 for the natural resource-dependent populations,  
12 this is critically important that we get it right.  
13 Thank you.

14 MR. FRANKLIN:

15 Thank you, Ms. Vu.

16 Next speaker is Mr. David Muth, followed  
17 by next would be Natalie -- and, Natalie, I'm  
18 going to butcher your name.

19 MR. MUTH:

20 Natalie, you want to just come up and  
21 step on me like I did -- my name is David Muth.  
22 I'm the Gulf Restoration Program Director for the  
23 National Wildlife Federation working in all five  
24 states. I work here in New Orleans with a lot of  
25 partners working on Gulf restoration.

1           We really appreciate the opportunity to  
2    come speak to you tonight. We appreciate the work  
3    that has gone into this extraordinarily complex  
4    undertaking. You, as trustees, are in charge of  
5    one of the most exciting opportunities for  
6    meaningful, large scale, comprehensive restoration  
7    of an ecosystem ever undertaken on this planet,  
8    funded for the next 15 years with \$8 billion.  
9    That's something that very few programs have ahead  
10   of them. And we look forward to working with you.  
11   We're very pleased with much of what we have seen  
12   so far. We will be providing written comments as  
13   this process unfolds.

14           Our concern and I think it's a concern  
15   shared by everyone at this table, many of you have  
16   several hats, is that in addition to the funds  
17   that are going to be available for the natural  
18   resource damage repair, we need to see  
19   coordination, complete coordination, across the  
20   board with NFWF, the Restore Council, and with  
21   each of the individual state and federal agencies  
22   that are engaged in this work. That greatly  
23   compounds the possibilities for this restoration  
24   program and for the work that you're doing. We  
25   know that you have all expressed the desire to do

1 that, and we merely urge you to make that happen,  
2 to find the mechanisms that are going to be  
3 necessary to make that happen. We appreciate that  
4 very much.

5 We might mention that the meetings the  
6 Restore Council has proposed for coordination next  
7 year and hope that since some of you are on the  
8 Restore Council that that happens and that becomes  
9 a framework if appropriate for moving forward.

10 So I'm going to thank you all, once  
11 again, on behalf of my staff and my partners. I  
12 welcome you to New Orleans and look forward to  
13 working with you as we go forward. Thank you very  
14 much.

15 MR. FRANKLIN:

16 Thank you for your comments. The next  
17 individual will be Natalie --

18 MS. PEYRONNIN:

19 I'll handle it.

20 MR. FRANKLIN:

21 Okay. You'll handle it. Followed by  
22 Kara Lankford next.

23 MS. PEYRONNIN:

24 Hi, I'm Natalie Peyronnin with the  
25 Environmental Defense Fund. I'm here representing

1 the Mississippi River Delta Coalition, a  
2 collaborative effort of EDF, National Wildlife  
3 Federation, National Audubon Society, the Lake  
4 Pontchartrain Basin Foundation, and the Coalition  
5 to Restore Coastal Louisiana.

6 First, I wanted to thank y'all for being  
7 here and we greatly appreciate the work that went  
8 into the Programmatic Restoration Plan and  
9 specifically the emphasis on restoring physical  
10 processes at a landscape scale and the importance  
11 of restoring Mississippi River Delta and its  
12 riveting process to those coastal habitats and  
13 wetlands.

14 We understand that y'all are --  
15 specifically the Louisiana TIG is developing and  
16 finalizing the First Restoration Plan. We would  
17 love to see an emphasis in that restoration plan  
18 and commitment from the Trustees to use the  
19 Louisiana Coastal Master Plan as the  
20 decision-driver for the restoration funding moving  
21 forward.

22 And we also would like to reiterate the  
23 support of CPRA, who has come out and said that  
24 we -- that they would like to use NRDA restoration  
25 funding to fund the construction of the

1 mid-Barataria sediment diversion. Would love to  
2 see the Trustee Council's commitment to that  
3 within the restoration plan moving forward, not  
4 only to indicate where the restoration plan is  
5 going to go in the future, but also to ensure that  
6 you're coordinating at this ground level. While  
7 engineering design is going on, while permitting  
8 is going on, that there is coordination between  
9 the Trustee Council who potentially would fund the  
10 construction with the other NFWF and Restore who  
11 could potentially fund some of the engineering  
12 design work on sediment diversions, so thank you.

13 MR. FRANKLIN:

14 Thank you very much.

15 Next individual to give public comment  
16 is Ms. Kara Lankford with the Ocean Conservancy,  
17 followed by Casi Callaway.

18 MS. LANKFORD:

19 Hi, everyone. My name is Kara Lankford.  
20 I'm with Ocean Conservancy. It's good to see  
21 everyone this evening. Thanks so much for the  
22 opportunity to give comments tonight.

23 I think one of the great things that  
24 happened after settlement was it removed any  
25 barriers to transparency and creates a great

1 opportunity for information to be shared with the  
2 public and to increase the public's role in the  
3 restoration planning effort going forward,  
4 including making any meetings or at least  
5 dedicated portions of meetings open to the public.

6           Given the decentralized government  
7 structure of the TIGs, we believe it is crucial  
8 that the full Trustee Council continue to meet on  
9 a regular basis for TIGs to proactively share  
10 restoration plans, best management practices, and  
11 to consider how they're intended activities fit  
12 together into the larger restoration landscape.

13           With the first BP payment happening  
14 April 2017 -- that day is fast approaching, by the  
15 way -- open communication and structured  
16 coordination with all Deepwater Horizon  
17 restoration programs is particularly important to  
18 ensure all programs are in sync and working  
19 towards similar goals and not cross-purposes.

20           We appreciate the Trustees moving  
21 forward -- moving the process forward with  
22 releasing their standard operating procedures and  
23 addressing many important topics and helping  
24 clarify important protocols. In particular, we're  
25 encouraged by the trustees' commitment in the SOPs

1 to coordinate with other Deepwater Horizon  
2 Restoration Programs.

3 We strongly urge the trustees to  
4 participate actively the workshops set out by the  
5 Restore Council in their updated comprehensive  
6 plan. We also commend the Trustee Council for  
7 establishment of the cross-TIG monitoring adaptive  
8 management work group, which we believe will serve  
9 a critical role in coordinating and, where  
10 appropriate, standardizing the Trustee Council's  
11 data collection and monitoring process both  
12 internally, amongst individual TIGs, and  
13 externally with other restoration programs. And  
14 in the spirit of advancing the science of  
15 restoration following the principles of  
16 ecosystem-based management, we urge the Trustees  
17 to coordinate with other restoration programs and  
18 the cross-TIGs to develop comparable monitoring  
19 standards and an integrated data monitoring  
20 system. Thank so much.

21 MR. FRANKLIN:

22 Thank you, Ms. Lankford.

23 Next individual Casi Callaway, followed  
24 by Matt Rota.

25 MS. CALLAWAY:

1           Thank you, and thank you for getting  
2           that right, Perry. I'm Casi Callaway. I'm the  
3           executive director of Mobile Baykeeper. And also,  
4           I'm -- very, very cool to be here. Very, very,  
5           cool for this opportunity.

6           What y'all are doing, especially the way  
7           you're setting it up to make sure you're doing it  
8           by state, but you're also doing it by region and  
9           by Open Ocean is just as imperative that we keep  
10          those -- all those conversations happening.

11          The thing I want to talk about  
12          particularly for Alabama, of course, is the  
13          challenge of addressing lost use of our water --  
14          access to our waterways and making sure that we  
15          don't create projects that then further limit  
16          anybody from that. So we've stated this, I think,  
17          maybe 4- or 500 times to make sure that we're  
18          doing land acquisition, that we get the public  
19          able to get to beaches. It sounds like that's  
20          happening in some other states, too, that we're  
21          looking at buying land and building projects on  
22          them and making them -- when there really needs to  
23          be a good emphasis on making sure that we're  
24          keeping that access open.

25          The next thing I want to talk about,

1 too, that y'all probably saw, a Duke University  
2 study came out today about wetland loss and impact  
3 from wetland loss, so -- and I know all the really  
4 awesome science organizations and the amazing  
5 scientists that sit on the NRDA TIGs are vitally  
6 important to this. But I think what we also need  
7 to make sure we reiterate and make sure y'all hear  
8 is to consistently look at new science and looking  
9 at new data to make sure that if -- just because  
10 we think we had an impact, there may be a greater  
11 one, there may be something else coming along and  
12 the science really is the driver for that.

13           Very excited to see such a focused --  
14 especially from Open Ocean on monitoring. Need to  
15 see that in all five Gulf states because our  
16 biggest problem starting with this is that we  
17 didn't have any good baseline data. Said before,  
18 said for six and a half years, let's not have to  
19 say this a whole lot longer.

20           The next thing, I think Natalie stated  
21 about using the master plan in Louisiana, use all  
22 master plans. Alabama is going through a  
23 phenomenal process now with other funding to have  
24 watershed management plans on every watershed.  
25 We've got the Army Corps of Engineers developing a

1 master plan. All I want for Christmas is a master  
2 plan, and then I want you to use it. So that is  
3 vitally important. I don't want another master  
4 plan that's on a shelf or -- shelf art, is what  
5 they call it.

6           Again, also, I think David mentioned  
7 this, too, I want to say it again is, collaborate,  
8 connect. Make sure that NRDA is working with NFWF  
9 is working with Restore. Make sure that the  
10 Restore federal council is working with our state  
11 councils and our state issues and our county  
12 issues. Make sure that all of you are working  
13 together to make sure the projects are happening  
14 at the right time, together so that we're not  
15 working at cross-purposes.

16           And then lastly, and this is just hugely  
17 important to all of us -- and I want to say Thao  
18 Vu said it the best, but it's keeping those lines  
19 of communication open. I did mention to  
20 Commissioner Guy earlier that if I hear somebody  
21 else say I've never been included in this process,  
22 why didn't you include me, then I might have to  
23 be mean. But it is hard and I get that, but  
24 keeping these kind of meetings happening is just  
25 vitally important, and we appreciate it. Thank

1 you.

2 MR. FRANKLIN:

3 Thank you, Ms. Callaway. Individual and  
4 coming forward, Matt Rota, be followed by Sean  
5 Duffy. Mr. Rota, name and organization, please.

6 MR. ROTA:

7 Hi, I'm Matt Rota. I'm the senior  
8 policy director for the Gulf Restoration Network.  
9 I'm going to try not to repeat what a lot -- what  
10 you've heard is some excellent things from Scott,  
11 Natalie, David, from Casi, from all these other  
12 great people. And thank you for being here today.

13 One thing that I did want to mention is  
14 frustration. Whenever I was coming to this  
15 meeting, I had no idea what this meeting was going  
16 to entail. There was no agenda. There was like a  
17 paragraph saying that we're meeting and that's  
18 about it. And I know the NRDA is important so  
19 That's why I came. So, you know, being more  
20 straightforward as far as what the goals of the  
21 meeting are going to be, what is the audience  
22 going to get, what kind of contribution is the  
23 audience going to be able to give, you know, as  
24 far as -- there was mention there was going to be  
25 a comment period, which is good.

1           So, you know, being more proactive with  
2     that because, you know, people might have come  
3     that didn't know what was going to happen so they  
4     decided not to come, and vice versa. There might  
5     be people in here that are wondering what they're  
6     doing here now that the meeting is happening. So  
7     I want to make sure that, you know, we know what  
8     the meetings are going to entail.

9           Also, you know, I think this is a great  
10    opportunity because there's been a lot of  
11    frustration with NRDA up to the settlement because  
12    of this legal black box that we couldn't really  
13    look into for understandable reasons because there  
14    was litigation -- ongoing litigation. But now I'm  
15    excited to see that that box is being opened up,  
16    and I want to encourage y'all to keep putting out  
17    all the data that you're gathering, all of the  
18    information that you're putting out there, what  
19    you're considering because there's a lot to make  
20    up for with that lost process of not knowing what  
21    y'all have been doing for, you know, five-plus  
22    years. So I understand that necessity, but that  
23    black box needs to be wide open at this point, so  
24    I encourage you to keep doing that. Having a data  
25    portal is great and keeping going with that.

1           Finally, I guess the last thing that I  
2 would like to say, because like I said I don't  
3 want to repeat all the other things that everybody  
4 else has been saying, is moving forward with all  
5 these projects, I want us to not just focus on  
6 money and how much money we're spending. I see  
7 that with federal agencies and state agencies,  
8 being proud about how much money they spent  
9 whenever what we really want to see are results.  
10 We want to see how many acres have been restored,  
11 how many more people are getting to the beaches,  
12 how much less nitrogen phosphorous is flowing into  
13 our waters, how many more people are getting out  
14 there to enjoy it, how many more birds are  
15 nesting, how many more turtles are nesting. Those  
16 are the things we want to hear about. We want to  
17 hear about how things are being restored.

18           The money has been allocated. Now you  
19 need to spend it the best way possible and make  
20 sure that you're sharing the results and when you  
21 aren't getting the results that you wanted,  
22 sharing with us what happened and how it's going  
23 to be fixed. Thank you.

24 MR. FRANKLIN:

25           Thank you, Mr. Rota.

1                   Next individual, Mr. Sean Duffy, Big  
2 River Coalition, followed by Karen Gautreaux.

3 MR. DUFFY:

4                   Yes. I appreciate the comments before  
5 me, as I wasn't exactly aware of what to expect  
6 either. So first of all, I appreciate you being  
7 here. And I didn't come here to offend anybody.

8                   I do represent the navigation industry,  
9 and I think it's important in New Orleans and in  
10 Louisiana to remember the economics of the  
11 Mississippi River. George Friedman from StatFor  
12 wrote a great article called "The Inevitable  
13 Empire," and basically what he said was this  
14 country is great because of where it is and what  
15 it had, not necessarily because of who we were.  
16 And I'd like to think that maybe we can start to  
17 prove him wrong. Maybe we can do some things that  
18 benefit the environment and also the economics of  
19 the river and the State of Louisiana itself.

20                   I understand the master plan. There's a  
21 lot of projects that happened with dredging that a  
22 lot of the people used to call the material  
23 spoils. I also knew one day I was going to drive  
24 past a sign in Louisiana that said, Welcome to  
25 Spoiled Louisiana. So I thought, spoils is not

1 what we're talking about. This is a resource.  
2 This is a valuable commodity to us. It's what  
3 this state was built upon.

4 And the Big River Coalition, in  
5 partnership with the Corps of Engineers, and  
6 dredging contractors and members of CPRA and  
7 before there was a CPRA have talked about  
8 beneficial use of dredging material, or the term I  
9 like use is sediment recycling. We need  
10 oftentimes the dredge material out of the river,  
11 especially after a high river, some of the storm  
12 impacts. And what better place for it to go than  
13 back into the marsh just over the river channel?

14 As I stand here today, I can tell you  
15 that in 2009 with -- through this partnership, we  
16 started using cutterhead dredges in the lower  
17 Mississippi River. When I talk about "lower  
18 Mississippi River," I'm talking about the real  
19 lower end, below Venice, so 80 to 90 miles below  
20 New Orleans. And what happened at that time was  
21 the first year we did it, they created about 43  
22 acres. But last year, over 50 percent of the  
23 material dredged below Venice was beneficially  
24 used. 2,000 acres of land was created. In the  
25 Morgan -- there's a project. They talk about the

1 Hopper Dredge Disposal Area, which will create  
2 another thousand acres of land. In this area  
3 below Venice, although there's not really  
4 inclusion in the master plan, we do have a letter  
5 stating that it's complimentary to or consistent  
6 with the master plan.

7           And I spoke at the State of the Coast.  
8 And, again, I'm often in the room with scientists  
9 and I'm just a navigation guy. I'm just a kind of  
10 common-sense, this is what we're looking at -- but  
11 the numbers that I talk about with the cutterhead  
12 dredging and -- being used to create acreage is  
13 \$2.70 a cubic yard. That's a five-year average.  
14 Someone else on the same panel had a number within  
15 the state -- taking material from the river and  
16 was using a \$30 a cubic yard. Well, of course, if  
17 you pump the material long distances, the costs go  
18 up, but we're dredging the material from the river  
19 and beneficially using it. And the HDDA project,  
20 it okayed about 1,000 acres.

21           One of the things that I'll remember and  
22 the two most trying times of my life as a single  
23 dad in Louisiana were Hurricane Katrina and the  
24 oil spill, Deepwater Horizon. I testified before  
25 the president's Oil Spill Commission after working

1 18-hour days with the Coast Guard to try to put  
2 the river back together, and I had no idea what I  
3 was getting into. When I noticed everybody next  
4 to me had a team of lawyers and statements that  
5 were written, I almost developed the stomach flu  
6 to get out of the room. But I decided I was going  
7 to talk about what I knew, the river, navigation,  
8 importance of the dredging, maintaining the river,  
9 and trying to take that material that is a  
10 hinderance in the channel and move it to create  
11 a --

12 MR. FRANKLIN:

13 Mr. Duffy, if you can go ahead and wrap  
14 up.

15 MR. DUFFY:

16 So since that started in 2009, after  
17 this HDDA project, that's 7,000 acres that's been  
18 created below Venice. So my point, I guess, is  
19 that there's real-time projects that can be done  
20 tomorrow with a check, that can be done right  
21 away. And no offense to the master plan and some  
22 of the other folks, but it doesn't have to be  
23 studied. It doesn't have to be reviewed. It's  
24 been being done. And hopefully we can look at  
25 doing more of that.

1                   And I'll look forward to the draft  
2 report and following comments, but the river was  
3 really impacted during this oil spill too. There  
4 was areas in Southwest Pass that were shut down.  
5 Hopper dredges encountered oil too. A lot of the  
6 marsh in that area was oil. I would like to see  
7 us remember those areas in the river that were  
8 oiled as well. Thank you.

9 MR. FRANKLIN:

10                   Thank you for your comments.

11                   Next forward, Ms. Karen Gautreaux and  
12 she will be followed by Chris Lagarde.

13 MS. GAUTREAUX:

14                   Okay. Thank you. I'm here as director  
15 of government relations for the Nature  
16 Conservancy's Louisiana office. And I'm also part  
17 of our Gulf of Mexico team.

18                   And many of you know that TNC has been  
19 involved in the long-term conservation with the  
20 Gulf. As a matter of fact, we've been engaged for  
21 about 40 years we have staff chapters in all the  
22 five states, and we're committed to long  
23 restoration of the Gulf.

24                   So we've closely followed the  
25 development of the PDARP and believe it is a sound

1 scientific-based -- science-based, excuse me,  
2 analysis of the specific damages caused by  
3 Deepwater Horizon, the species and habitats in the  
4 Gulf and it presents appropriate recommendations  
5 for restoration actions to address that damage.  
6 We're also very supportive of the monitoring  
7 adaptation provision set out in the DARP.

8           We have a few recommendations to echo  
9 some of the ones that you've already heard today.  
10 First, we recommend that the state Region-Wide and  
11 Open Ocean TIGs establish a formal mechanism for  
12 government agencies, organizations, and  
13 individuals to have input into the drafting of the  
14 restoration plans for specific species and  
15 habitats, including the opportunity for specific  
16 project proposals for the implementation plans.

17           TNC will soon propose such project ideas  
18 beginning with recommendations on birds, gulf  
19 sturgeons, and then oysters and oyster reefs.

20           In general, now that the settlement has  
21 been reached with the BP, we believe the TIGs can  
22 be more public and open in their deliberations, as  
23 has been noted earlier in the evening. And to  
24 echo the comments on the necessity for close  
25 cooperation and coordination with plans, we're

1 spending the Natural Resource Damage funds that we  
2 need to coordinate them with Restore and NFWF  
3 environmental benefit funds.

4           This oil spill is a unique opportunity  
5 to make long-term projects -- to do large scale  
6 and long-term projects that contribute to the  
7 restoration of the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem, but  
8 that goal can only be achieved if the funds  
9 allocated to various categories are invested in a  
10 coordinated way that will provide the foundation  
11 for comprehensive Gulf restoration.

12           For inshore waters, we continue to  
13 believe that watersheds are an appropriate  
14 cleaning unit for multiple restoration  
15 investments. Toward this end, you need to endorse  
16 the coordination workshops included in the Draft  
17 Gulf Comprehensive Restoration Plan update now  
18 under review by the Restore Council, and other  
19 such mechanisms to design large-scale and  
20 multi-faceted projects with multiple funding  
21 sources.

22           So, again, thank you for the opportunity  
23 to speak tonight and we look forward to working  
24 with you in the development and implementation of  
25 the restoration projects in the Gulf.

1 MR. FRANKLIN:

2 Thank you, Ms. Gautreaux.

3 Next individual, Chris Lagarde, followed  
4 by John Hosey.

5 MR. LAGARDE:

6 Hi. Good evening. Chris Lagarde from  
7 Bay St. Louis, Mississippi.

8 I think some of you all were in Long  
9 Beach the other night when we had -- that  
10 thunderstorm came down. I think that was a  
11 godsend for whatever reason. It was lightening  
12 and rain and we all got wet leaving the place.

13 I represent myself. I'm a citizen.

14 (Applause.)

15 MR. LAGARDE:

16 One of the things I've heard tonight is,  
17 I've heard "recreational" four times. I haven't  
18 heard nothing about commercial. And we all now  
19 know the way to create wealth is oil, timber, and  
20 fisheries. And I think the recreational sector is  
21 driving a lot of this. These artificial reefs,  
22 for instance, you want to see some gnashing of  
23 teeth, build an artificial reef and tell them they  
24 can't fish on it. That would do some good for  
25 conservation, but it's not about conservation.

1 It's about catching more fish. And they're after  
2 not conservationists. One of the things  
3 artificial reefs do is put shrimpers out of  
4 business because you can't drag on top of an  
5 artificial reef. You build a reef out in the  
6 Gulf, those guys can't shrimp anymore.

7 Our big problem in Mississippi, among  
8 others, is water quality. We probably have the  
9 worst quality. We've had the beach closings.  
10 We've red tide. We've have low DO. We've had  
11 fish kills. And our Coast is not that big. We  
12 ought to be able to figure it out.

13 After Katrina, we spent millions fixing  
14 our sewers because we were basically washed out.  
15 Right? All our sewer systems got rebuilt. Yeah.  
16 We have beach closings. They call them  
17 advisories. We don't even have the nerve to tell  
18 the people that you really ought not be in that  
19 water. Don't go in that water. You know how we  
20 tell the tourists? They're the ones in the water.  
21 All right? And that's kind of sad, but the locals  
22 won't go in the water.

23 Wetland permitting, building wetlands is  
24 wonderful but if we're going to continue to permit  
25 the destruction of wetlands, we're losing ground.

1 And we don't know how many wetlands were  
2 permitted. A lot of them, we built housing  
3 developments, golf courses, all these things after  
4 the storm. A lot of them in -- is what they call  
5 in low-spur wetlands. People -- there's -- nobody  
6 is paying attention.

7 If DOJ is here, if there's somebody from  
8 Department of Justice, I wish y'all would move to  
9 the Mississippi Gulf Coast because we need help.  
10 There's lots of things going on down there that we  
11 need help with.

12 Speckled trout -- this is not anything  
13 to do with DOJ. Speckled trout are the only fish  
14 in Mississippi right now. Yet, we tell people  
15 that hatchery-raised fish is an answer to all the  
16 fish stocks. It's not. It's pure folly. We  
17 don't have any scientists who will say, you know  
18 what, raising speckled trout and putting them in  
19 the water only for other fish to eat them really  
20 doesn't get us anywhere. It doesn't work with  
21 snapper. It doesn't work with speckled trout. It  
22 makes people feel good. It might get people a few  
23 jobs, but it doesn't work.

24 Public involvement, most of the people  
25 that I know have no idea what's going on with all

1 of this. It's complicated. It's involved. You  
2 guys spend your entire careers, or at least part  
3 of it, working with these issues. The other night  
4 at the meeting, there weren't very many people  
5 there in Long Beach. There's a lot more people  
6 here tonight, but I think people just don't --  
7 regular citizens don't have an idea what's going  
8 on. Somehow you need to get public involvement in  
9 this. There's nothing in the paper. They did do  
10 a story about the Living Shoreline Project on the  
11 local station last night.

12 MR. FRANKLIN:

13 If you can go ahead and conclude, Mr.  
14 Lagarde.

15 MR. LAGARDE:

16 Am I done? One other thing, there's no  
17 sense of urgency. I walk the beaches every day  
18 and I find a needlerush, big clumps of it. I  
19 guess it belongs to Louisiana. I don't know where  
20 it's coming from. And, look, I was born in New  
21 Orleans. Okay? I love Louisiana. But there is  
22 no sense of urgency. And so I know that's not  
23 y'all's fault.

24 But as I said Wednesday or the other  
25 night, when you do something under a federal

1 umbrella and then it gets down to the local level,  
2 somebody needs to be watching what's going on, the  
3 nuts and bolts on what's going on with these  
4 projects at the local level. Thank you so much.

5 (Applause.)

6 MR. FRANKLIN:

7 Thank you for your comments.

8 Next individual, John Hosey. Is he  
9 still with us?

10 Were there any others who would like to  
11 make public comment at this time who did not say  
12 so at the beginning of the meeting? If you would  
13 just simply raise your hand, we'll get a blue card  
14 to you so that you can properly introduce yourself  
15 for the record. Was there anyone who did not  
16 elect to make a public comment who would like to  
17 do so at this time?

18 MS. ANTALAN:

19 I have a question before I do my public  
20 comment. Is there a way -- I can't find anything  
21 to say where you can submit written comments. Is  
22 there a method to submit written comments?

23 MR. FRANKLIN:

24 If you would just make that comment for  
25 the record.

1 MS. ANTALAN:

2                   You want me to make the comment?

3                   Oh, God. And I'm still not going to get  
4 an answer?

5 MR. FRANKLIN:

6                   It will be in the public record. If  
7 you'll just give us your name, ma'am. There you  
8 go.

9 MS. ANTALAN:

10                   Hey, everybody. I'm Jackie Antalan  
11 Operation Homecare, coastal communities, rural and  
12 incorporated, southwest Alabama and southeast  
13 Mississippi.

14                   I'm sad. I'm very, very sad. So many  
15 comments have been made that we've heard for years  
16 and years. Unfortunately, it's a lot of people  
17 here who's hearing it for the first time and that  
18 saddens me because we are the citizens. We are  
19 the public, and we live with this day to day, week  
20 to week. We don't get paid to do this. It's not  
21 in our job description. It's not in one of these  
22 pots.

23                   I'm so sad that we can count the number  
24 of citizens in this room on this one hand that  
25 isn't affiliated with a grant recipient, a federal

1 agency or with a state or local government that  
2 have had benefits from the get-go from this when  
3 communities were ready to move and go forward from  
4 Day 1 but we were told it was conflict of  
5 interest. We were told this and this and this.  
6 But over and over, the same agencies are involved,  
7 and they're distributing the money here and  
8 they're distributing the money here and they're  
9 getting a little of that from this pot and a  
10 little bit of that from that pot and another  
11 administrative pot. And everybody's  
12 administrative money is being done and nothing is  
13 being done in our communities. It saddens me.

14 It saddens me that our federal  
15 government looks at the public in the manner that  
16 it does. It saddens me that the people at this  
17 table look at us, the community, as a bucket, as a  
18 pot, as an opportunity.

19 This meeting was held. No transparency.  
20 No information, who, what, when and why we are  
21 here. Only people that know are those on the  
22 payroll. I would like to have a firm date where  
23 written comments within the next 30 days can be  
24 provided so we can get it out to our citizens to  
25 comment on this process. Thank you.

1 MR. FRANKLIN:

2 Thank you for your comment. Are there  
3 any others that would like to come forward and  
4 make public comment before we conclude tonight's  
5 meeting?

6 (No other comments.)

7 MR. FRANKLIN:

8 I just want to remind you that all of  
9 the open house professionals who are at these  
10 stations will remain at those stations until the  
11 last person leaves tonight. So if you have a  
12 specific question about one of TIGs, these  
13 individuals will be at those stations.

14 Also, I want to let you know that if you  
15 pass by the table that you signed in on, there are  
16 parking discount cards for you if you parked at  
17 this hotel, and so please pick one of those up on  
18 your way out.

19 At this time, I would like to ask  
20 Commissioner Guy to come up and close tonight's  
21 meeting.

22 MR. GUY:

23 Thank you, Perry. Before I close, I do  
24 want to thank you, Mr. Franklin, for your work.  
25 Perry, you've always done a professional job, and

1 we're very fortunate to have you and your  
2 assistants in this endeavor.

3           And I'm also going to answer Ms.  
4 Jackie's question. So there is a place to make  
5 comments and that's GulfSpillRestoration.NOAA  
6 site. And then I also want to mention to you,  
7 Jackie, that every state -- I know State of  
8 Alabama does, has a website address. I'm pretty  
9 sure all the other states do. Probably all the  
10 federal agencies do. I don't want to speak for  
11 them. But we have the tables here tonight if  
12 anybody has a question about that, if they don't,  
13 I'm sure they will get your comments or tell you a  
14 place you can provide those comments because we  
15 certainly do want to hear from you.

16           And then before we close, I do want to  
17 say this and I'm really kind of speaking for  
18 myself, but maybe for everyone, we all recognize  
19 that we have a lot of challenges. Okay? We all  
20 recognize that. Just listen to everyone and  
21 listen to everyone in every stage. At the same  
22 time, we have a lots of opportunities and, you  
23 know, what we have to do is just try to find that  
24 common ground between those challenges and those  
25 opportunities.

1                   And all I can say is this: I sincerely  
2 know that the people here over here at this table  
3 want to try to do that as best they can and in as  
4 efficient a way as they can.

5                   And so with that, I want to thank  
6 everyone for attending tonight. Have a good  
7 evening.

8                   (Public hearing concluded at 8:23 p.m.)

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I, MELISSA BURDINE-RODOLFICH, Court Reporter  
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\_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2016.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Melissa Burdine-Rodolfich  
My Commission Expires 4/28/20

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