

**DWH Trustee Council
7/12/21 Conference Call Summary**

Attendees:

TX	AL	DOI	USDA
Robin Riechers	Chris Blankenship	Mary Josie Blanchard	Ron Howard
James Murphy	Bethany Kraft	Michelle Eversen	Tanya Culbert
Angela Sunley	Amy Hunter	Don Imm	Craig Johnson
	Kelly Swindle		
LA	Jane Calamusa		EPA
Beth Golden		NOAA	Gale Bonanno
Maury Chatellier	FL	Chris Doley	Mary Kay Lynch
	Gareth Leonard	Craig O'Connor	Tim Landers
MS	James Reynolds		
Chris Wells	Nadia Martin		LAT
Bradley Ennis			Holly Herod

Discussion Item 1: Report Outs

- a. AL TIG: The AL TIG has been busy with land acquisition projects and two are now being managed by Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Preserve. The East Gateway Tract (106 acres) and the Holmes Tract (91 acres) are both now under management of the Weeks Bay Reserve Management Plan. The AL TIG also closed on the acquisition of the West End of Dauphin Island and the beach nesting habitat will be protected for birds. That property will be managed by Mobile County and the town of Dauphin Island. A bird management plan is being drafted. The Stewardship of Coastal Alabama Beach Nesting Bird Habitat project is ongoing and is co-implemented by DOI. The 3-year project is going well.
- b. FL TIG: The FL TIG released their Final Restoration Plan 2 last month. The 18 projects total \$62 million and include:
 - o Habitat Projects on Federally Managed Lands (four projects),
 - o Sea Turtles (three projects),
 - o Marine Mammals (one project),
 - o Birds (four projects), and
 - o Provide and Enhance Recreational Opportunities (six projects).

The implementation plans for the new projects are being drafted now. The FL TIG is also continuing early restoration projects. A 90-acre park was donated to the City of Lynn Haven a few weeks ago after construction was completed. A living shoreline project in Pensacola Bay will be starting soon. FL DEP is starting planning E&D for a \$12 million

park for the City of Destin. There are also a number of completed projects that will be closed out this year.

The TX and OO TIGs will give their report outs on the next TC call.

Discussion Item 2: Cross TIG MAM

- a. Topic: Standing Cross TIG MAM update
- b. Discussion: No updates at this time.

Discussion Item 3: LAT Items

- c. Discussion:
 - Annual Public Meeting Recap – The meeting went well, and the Q&A was a good addition to the virtual meeting. The group is hopeful that the meeting can be in person next year and the communications team will consider if it's possible to also do a virtual component. There are some tweaks that could be made to smooth out the confusion around the Q&A and verbal public comment portion.
 - Action Item: The communications team will work on ideas to refine the 2022 meeting.
 - 5-Year Programmatic Review Update – Comments are due from the small group (on the collated main text) and the TIGs (on the TIG pages) by COB on Friday July 16. The revised document will be circulated on August 23 to the TC for fatal flaw review. The Cross TIG MAM also created a file of supplemental materials that the small group is reviewing. A decision will need to be made about what to do with that supplemental information (i.e., post online, shared in some other way, kept as an internal resource, etc.). This decision point will be brought to the TC in August once the small group has a chance to make a recommendation.
 - SOP – A clean and redline copy of the SOP was circulated on July 6. These documents reflect the comments that were received previously by the small group. The group discussed revised SOP. If the TC is ready to proceed, then the resolution will be circulated for signature.
 - Action Item: Holly will cross reference the Unknown Conditions TIG language with the consent decree and will send out an update via email. Comms will circulate a draft web story to accompany the released.
 - Decision: TX, AL, LA, MS, FL, NOAA, DOI, EPA, USDA are ok with the resolution being circulated for signature.

- Revised Gulf Spill Restoration Website – The website updates are complete. Thank you to everyone involved. Please look at the restoration pages and other pages for the updates. There is also a webstory to announce the updates that was approved last year.
- Action Item: TIG support will circulate the web story as an FYI, but will plan on releasing the story this week.

- TC Chair Rotation – This is Robin’s last meeting as TC chair. Chris Blankenship will rotate in as the next chair starting on August 1. The group thanks Robin for his leadership over the past year.

Other Business

- a. SCA Program – The brochure was circulated to the TC with the call agenda. Stephanie Meeks, the Student Conservation Associate Executive Director, reached out to remind the Trustees that their organization can help provide services and staffing for various types of work. There may be opportunities for cooperation between SCA and the Trustees.

- b. The next regularly scheduled TC call is on Monday, August 2.

**DWH Trustee Council
8/2/21 Conference Call Summary**

Attendees:

TX	AL	DOI	USDA
Robin Riechers	Chris Blankenship	Mary Josie Blanchard	Ron Howard
James Murphy	Bethany Kraft	Michelle Eversen	Tanya Culbert
	Amy Hunter	Don Imm	Craig Johnson
	Jane Calamusa	Ashley Mills	
LA		Dave Hewitt	EPA
Beth Golden	FL	Greg Steyer	Gale Bonanno
Maury Chatellier	Lisa Robertson		Mary Kay Lynch
	Rachel Schamlfuss	NOAA	Tim Landers
MS		Chris Doley	
Chris Wells		Craig O'Connor	LAT
Bradley Ennis		Laurie Rounds	Holly Herod
		Aileen Smith	
		Melissa Carle	

Discussion Item 1: Report Outs

- a. **TX TIG**: The TX TIG is moving forward with their second restoration plan. The Notice of Initiation is expected to be published on August 23. They are also about to award the construction contract for the McFaddin Beach and Dune Restoration. The project uses all three funding sources. The Bahia Grande Hydrologic Restoration project (which will open up a channel to bring in tidal waters) is about halfway through construction. Unfortunately, there was a submerged car that was discovered in the channel that had to be removed which slowed the work down. The project is now back on track and work is expected to be complete by late this fall.
- b. **OO TIG**: The OO TIG has a number of project updates.
 - o The barotrauma project is beginning its first phase of implementation in September. It will use the public slogan “Return ‘Em Right” and there will be a dedicated website to go with the campaign. The Trustees are working with project partner Florida Sea Grant. A PDF of the announcement of the studies will be circulated after the call.
 - o Fish bycatch reduction: This project is partnering with Sea Grant extension programs in Texas and Louisiana to develop training materials for gear testing and monitoring to determine their success in reducing fish bycatch. NOAA is working closely with the states and has a number of upcoming events to help provide training.

- Marine mammal projects have begun work. The project to improve disaster response held its first working group meeting in May and is working closely with the states.
- Sea turtle projects: The project to develop observer methods with the Menhaden fishery will begin a proof of concept phase in late September or early October to test initial observer methods identified by NOAA and industry representatives. Following the proof of concept, NOAA and the industry will evaluate the outcomes and move into the pilot testing phase.
- Prototype TEDs: This project is forming a stakeholder working group and working with TX and LA Sea Grants. The first meeting will be held this fall.
- Long Term Nesting Beach Habitat for Sea Turtles: Last Friday they closed on a high-priority acquisition near the Archie Carr refuge. It's a 3-acre parcel including a 400-foot stretch of beach that is frequently used by nesting sea turtles. The TIG will continue to work on additional acquisitions.
- Sturgeon: The OO TIG has three efforts in progress for Gulf sturgeon. They recently extended the Gulf Sturgeon project from RP1 for another year due to impacts and delays from COVID-19 restrictions in 2020. That project is working to characterize spawning habitat, habitat use, and origins of juvenile sturgeon in the Pearl and Pascagoula Rivers over the next few years. And they plan to extend the juvenile sturgeon population dynamics and habitat use MAM activity and possibly extend the sturgeon pop status and trends data MAM activity for the same reasons (COVID-19 restrictions).

Restoration Plan 3 is underway and will focus on birds and sturgeon. The OO TIG is in the screening process for 76 ideas that were submitted during the open period. The goal is to release a draft RP in spring or summer of 2022.

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

Discussion Item 2: Cross TIG MAM

- a. Topic: Standing Cross TIG MAM update
- b. Discussion: The team is working to finalize the next set of updates to the MAM Manual. It will be brought to the TC this fall for approval. The updated file will include guidance for birds, sea turtles, marine mammals, fish, and benthic communities. With those additions the guidance for all restoration types will be complete. Additional organizational and language updates will also take place during this update.

Discussion Item 3: LAT Items

c. Discussion:

- 5-Year Programmatic Review – The planning committee will have a fatal flaw draft for the small group to review later this week. The plan is to give the TC a document for fatal flaw review on August 23. The TC will have about 30 days to complete their review.

In December, the TC approved a communications strategy for the programmatic review that included release via webstory, email, factsheet, and landing page on the website. Additional updates were promised at a later time, and now there are additional products for the TC to consider:

- Translation into Vietnamese of Executive Summary and factsheet,
- Talking points for Trustees,
- Consider holding a public webinar,
- Create an interactive factsheet via the Storymap platform.

The LAT gave a presentation on the interactive factsheet which the 5-year small group is recommending the TC approve for development to accompany the document.

- Action Item: The presentation will be circulated to the TC after the call. Approval on the interactive factsheet will be requested on the September TC call.
- Revised SOP – Thank you for your approvals on the SOP resolution. It will be posted to the AR, distributed, and linked on GSR. The group discussed the web story to release the SOP.
- Action Item: An additional sentence will be added to the draft story and an email with the revised text will be circulated to the TC.

Other Business

- a. The next regularly scheduled TC call is on Monday, September 6 which is Labor Day. The call will be rescheduled for one week later on Monday, September 13.

**DWH Trustee Council
9/13/21 Conference Call Summary**

Attendees:

TX	AL	DOI	USDA
Robin Riechers	Chris Blankenship	Nanciann Regalado	Ron Howard
James Murphy	Bethany Kraft		Tanya Culbert
Mike Cave	Jane Calamusa	NOAA	
	Emily Seale	Rachel Sweeney	EPA
LA		Aileen Smith	Mary Kay Lynch
Beth Golden	FL	Melissa Carle	Treda Grayson
Maury Chatellier	Lisa Robertson		
	Rachel Schamlfuss		
MS	Gareth Leonard		LAT
Valerie Alley	Emily Mazur		
Bradley Ennis	James Reynolds		

Discussion Item 1: Report Outs

- a. **MS TIG:** The MS TIG is in the process of drafting Restoration Plan 3 that may include projects in the following restoration types: Habitat on Federally Managed Lands, Marine Mammals, Birds, Recreational Use, and possibly Sea Turtles. RP3 has intentionally overlapped with the Regionwide TIG’s Restoration Plan 1. The MS TIG expects to announce the reasonable range of projects at the MDEQ restoration summit on November 9. The restoration summit also includes the MS TIG annual meeting. Early restoration project construction updates include:
 - **Mississippi Hancock County Marsh Living Shoreline Project:** This is a phase 3 early restoration project. Construction was completed on 46 acres of marsh in Heron Bay in June 2021. This section was the last construction component for this project. It will be in construction monitoring for 12 months and then will move into monitoring.
 - **Restoring Living Shorelines and Reefs in Mississippi Estuaries:** This is a phase 4 early restoration project that has multiple construction components in various stages. This year, several subtidal and intertidal reef construction segments have been completed. Several other reef segments are expected to start construction later this year.

- b. **Cross-TIG MAM:** The Cross-TIG MAM has a number of updates which were included in a PDF that was circulated with the call agenda. The group is focused on completing activities that rolled over from last year into this year including work on the programmatic review and finalizing the monitoring guidance for living coastal and marine resources. Most of that monitoring guidance is now complete and will be pulled

together into a fatal flaw draft and then circulated to the TC for review in late fall. The Cross-TIG MAM is also planning to dig into the new tasks for the year including thinking about lessons learned from the first programmatic review.

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

Discussion Item 2: LAT Items

a. Discussion:

- 5-Year Programmatic Review – The fatal flaw draft was circulated on August 30 and comments are requested by October 1. The group discussed initial comments with the draft. There may be some phrasing suggestions and expansion requested in the Regionwide TIG section. The goal is to release the document on November 8 or 9 assuming there are no major delays.

Last month, the TC discussed the communications plan for releasing the 5-year programmatic review. The communications team is no longer recommending a factsheet or a public webinar given the other outreach efforts (website landing page, web story, email distribution, etc.) that are already planned. Instead, the proposal is to approve translating the executive summary into Vietnamese and developing the interactive story map, in addition to the standard outreach.

The webstory and landing page text will be circulated for review in late September or early October. Let the LAT know if you would like talking points.

- Decision: The TC approves moving forward with translating the Executive Summary into Vietnamese and developing the interactive storymap. The TC concurs with the communications team recommendation of not producing a factsheet or holding a stand-alone webinar.

Other Business

- a. Vice Chair Rotation – Mary Josie Blanchard (DOI) will take over the vice chair position starting on October 1.
- b. Please review the call notes from this year.
- c. The next regularly scheduled TC call is on Monday, October 4.