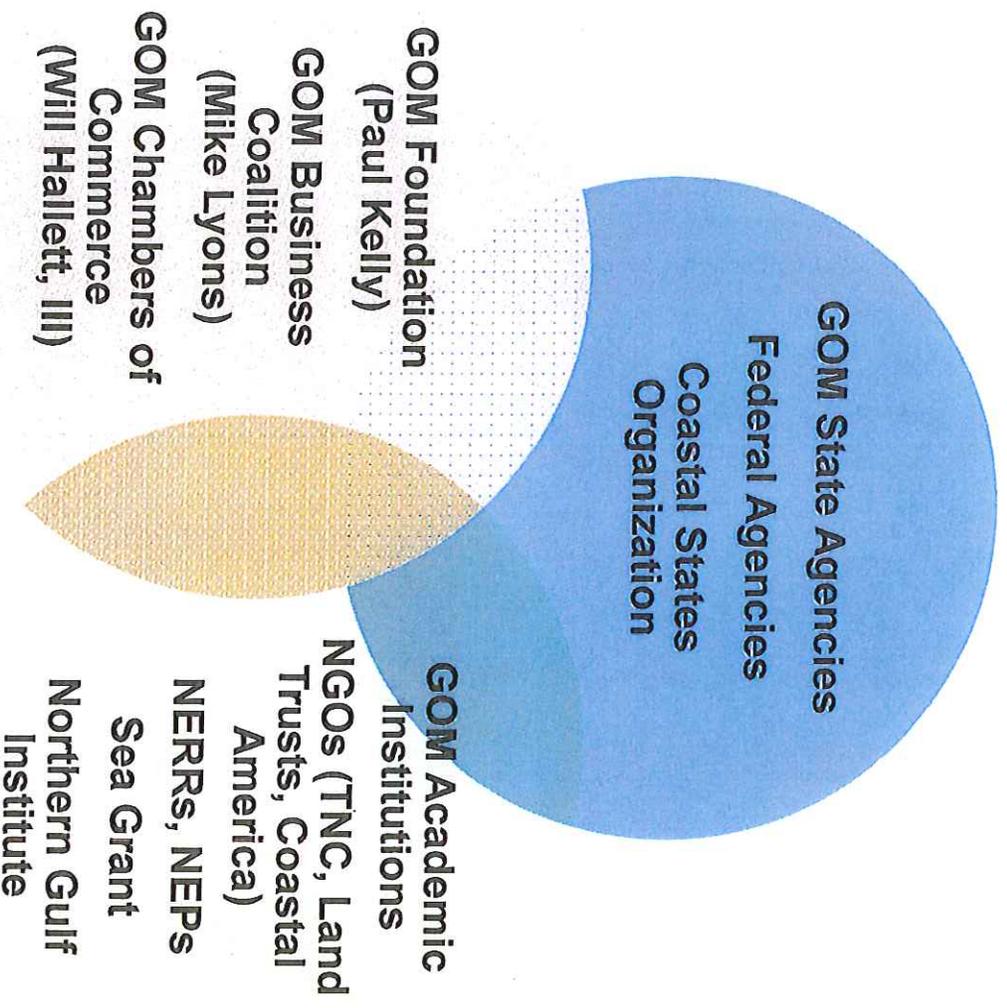


GULF OF MEXICO ALLIANCE

A Partnership Working to Improve and Sustain the Ecology and Economy of the Gulf of Mexico



Joint Appropriations Request for Regional Ocean and Great Lakes Partnerships—FY 2011

Credit: SCSGO

Regional governance mechanisms are needed to achieve a more coordinated, ecosystem-based management approach for improving ocean and coastal health. Multi-state initiatives ... can strengthen the voice of local stakeholders in communicating those needs to the federal government.

JOINT OCEAN COMMISSION INITIATIVE

Empowering Regional Ocean and Coastal Solutions

Our nation's oceans, coasts and Great Lakes provide immeasurable economic, environmental, and recreational benefits, yet we face significant challenges. Pollution, water level changes, resource depletion and conflicts between new and traditional uses affect all coastal states and territories. Reversing the decline in ocean and Great Lakes ecosystem and economic health is clearly beyond the reach of any individual state. There is an ever-growing recognition that **multi-state, regional approaches are the right solution and are needed now.** Increased federal investment in regional



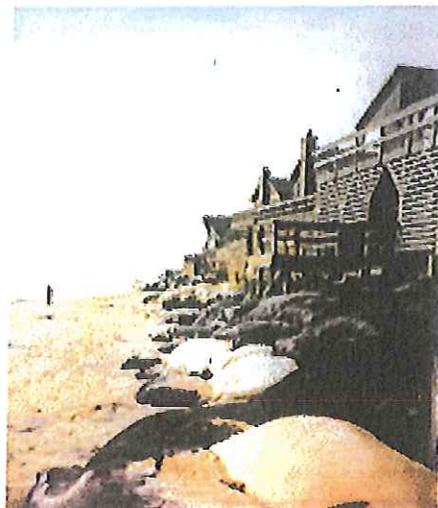
ocean partnerships—now in existence representing every coastal state in the continental US—will enhance economic development, grow employment in green technologies, foster sustainable use of our oceans, coasts and Great Lakes, and leverage state and nongovernmental investments.

The Joint Ocean Commission Initiative is a collaborative effort of the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy and the Pew Oceans Commission. For more information, visit www.jointoceancommission.org.

To meet our ocean and coastal challenges, Governors have voluntarily established Regional Ocean Partnerships. As place-based organizations, Regional Ocean Partnerships serve as forums to develop shared priorities and to take critical action on a broad diversity of ocean, coastal and Great Lakes needs. While the coastal and ocean challenges that face the nation are common



to all regions, each partnership addresses them from different perspectives under diverse jurisdictional arrangements that reflect the unique character of the region—their efforts involve non-governmental stakeholders, multiple agencies within each state, multiple states, and multiple federal programs. Although their methods and approaches may differ, **Regional Ocean Partnerships are working to enhance the ecological and economic health of the regions, and ultimately the nation,**



in the belief that multi-sector, multi-state management decisions will result in an improved ocean environment and ocean-related economy.

While each Regional Ocean Partnership is unique and tailored to the needs and concerns of one region, priorities are similar across regions, including **habitat conservation and restoration, planning and recovery from dangerous storms, water quality improvement, support of critical research and monitoring programs, and the need for coastal and marine spatial planning, a tool that allows all of these issues to be dealt with comprehensively.** Through these partnerships, states link their activities with federal programs to meet not only regional, but also national goals. The Interim Report of the Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force



identified nine priorities that the nation should pursue to implement the recommended National Policy for the Stewardship of Oceans, Our Coasts, and the Great Lakes and called for the establishment and support of regional partnerships to help in its implementation. Given the strong alignment between national and regional priorities, the Partnerships will be key implementing bodies for the national policy.

FY 2011 Funding Requests

Regional Ocean Partnerships: \$30 million

| | |
|------|--------------|
| 2011 | \$30 million |
| 2012 | \$45 million |
| 2013 | \$60 million |

These grants will provide essential support for the development and implementation of Action Plans for each Regional Ocean Partnership. For information on projects in each region, please visit the individual Regional Ocean Partnership websites or see attached summaries.

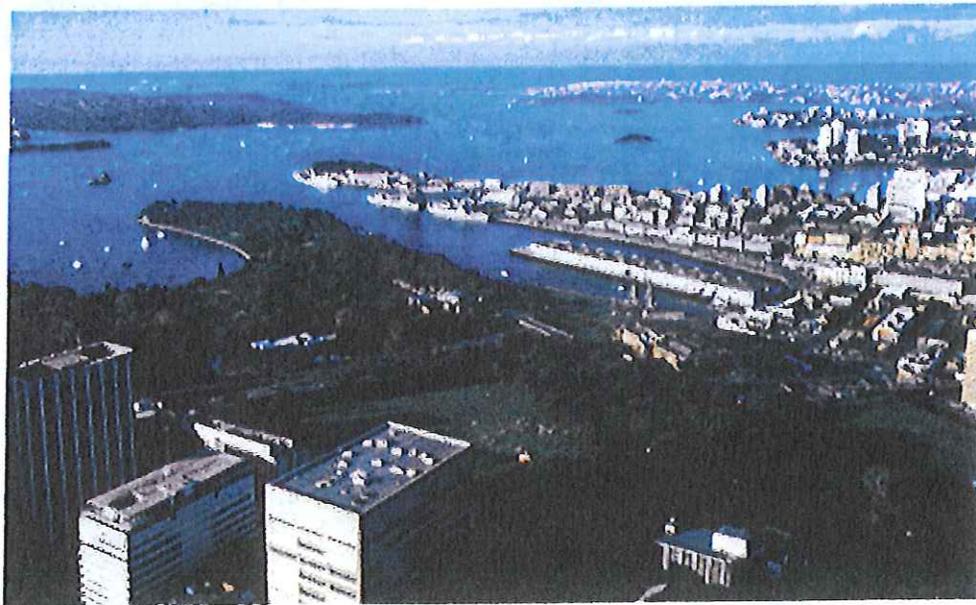
Funding should be provided in equal shares to the regions, but awarded through a merit-based process to projects within each region. Up to 5% of the funding for each region should be available to pay for administration of the partnerships, to ensure that these entities become enduring institutions that can guide regional efforts in the long-term. These grants should be administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

As these partnerships mature, funding should increase to \$45 million in FY 2012 and \$60 million in FY 2013 in order to fully meet their needs.

Coastal and Marine Spatial Planning: \$20 million

| | |
|------|--------------|
| 2011 | \$20 million |
| 2012 | \$25 million |
| 2013 | \$30 million |

These grants will provide funding to the states to engage in coastal and marine spatial planning (CMSP) in state waters, engage with federal agencies on planning in federal waters and build regional marine plans envisioned by the national strategy. Regional Ocean Partnerships will serve as organizational forums to coordinate federal and state efforts on CMSP. These grants should be administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. An equal amount of



funding should be provided to the federal agencies to engage in CMSP at the federal and regional levels.

This Funding will serve as an initial down payment on the long-term implementation of CMSP, supporting planning efforts that include the collection and analysis of data, creation and implementation of maps, information portals and consensus building tools, and the facilitation of broad public participation. As these efforts are expected to increase over the next few years, the funding should increase to \$25 million in FY 2012 and \$30 million in FY 2013.

Regional Ocean and Great Lakes Partnerships

Great Lakes Regional Collaboration

Illinois
Indiana
Michigan
Minnesota
New York
Ohio
Pennsylvania
Wisconsin
<http://www.glrcc.us>

Governors' South Atlantic Alliance

Florida
Georgia
North Carolina
South Carolina
<http://www.southatlanticalliance.org>

Gulf of Mexico Alliance

Alabama
Florida
Louisiana
Mississippi
Texas
<http://gulfofmexicoalliance.org>

Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean

Delaware
Maryland
New Jersey
New York
Virginia
<http://www.midatlanticocean.org>

Northeast Regional Ocean Council

Connecticut
Maine
Massachusetts
New Hampshire
Rhode Island
Vermont
<http://community.csc.noaa.gov/nroc>

West Coast Governors' Agreement on Ocean Health

California
Oregon
Washington
<http://westcoastcoceans.gov>

GOVERNORS' ACTION PLAN II

For Healthy and Resilient Coasts

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

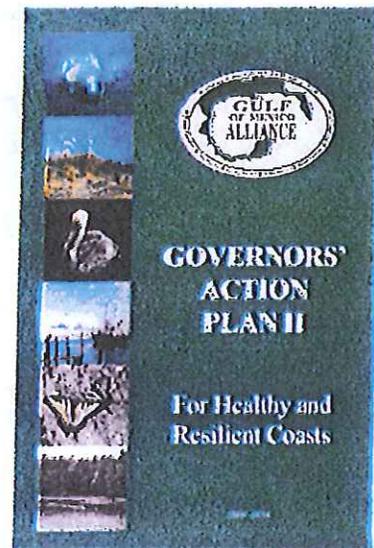


History of the Partnership

The Gulf states of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas, supported by thirteen federal agencies, conceptualized the Gulf of Mexico Alliance in 2005 and signed the first Governors' Action Plan in March 2006. The Alliance partnership of local, regional, state and national public and private stakeholders shares the vision of a healthy and resilient Gulf Region. The Alliance is also working closely with a number of partners to facilitate and improve collaboration with the six Mexican Gulf States.

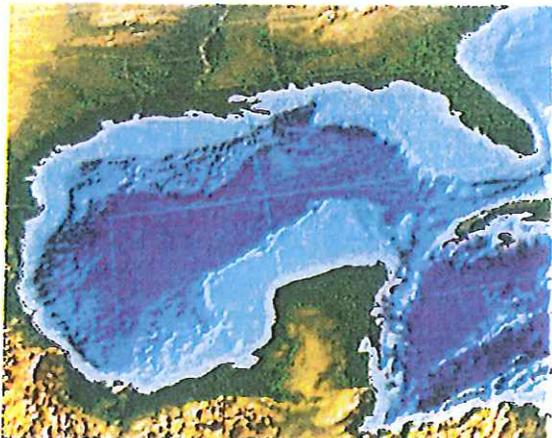
Priority Issues: 2009 through 2014

- *Water Quality for Healthy Beaches and Seafood*
- *Habitat Conservation and Restoration*
- *Ecosystem Integration and Assessment*
- *Reducing Nutrient Impacts to Coastal Ecosystems*
- *Coastal Community Resilience*
- *Environmental Education*



“With this plan, the Alliance will continue to improve the economic and environmental health of the Gulf Region.”

~Nancy H. Sutley, Chair, White House Council on Environmental Quality~



The second *Governors' Action Plan* collectively addresses the following actions and priorities:

- 1) *Improving Ecosystem Health*
- 2) *Sustaining Gulf Economy*
- 3) *Mitigating Impacts of Climate Change*
- 4) *Improving Water Quality*

“Building Partnerships for a Healthy Gulf.”

www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org

Key Accomplishments

Since releasing the first *Governors' Action Plan* in 2006, the Alliance has successfully demonstrated that coordinated and collaborative efforts offer tremendous opportunity for economic and environmental health. Some key accomplishments include:

- *Coastal Ecosystem Learning Centers established in each Gulf State and Veracruz, Mexico*
- *Regional Sediment Management Master Plan developed to decrease coastal erosion and support restoration*
- *Three bi-national workshops coordinated to standardize harmful algal bloom identification and sampling methods*
- *Ecosystem data portal established to evaluate habitat extent and changes over time*

Action Plan II Focus Areas

Water Quality

Pathogens, Harmful Algal Blooms, Mercury in Seafood, Monitoring

Restoration

Partnerships, Policy Changes, Technology Development, Gulf Regional Sediment Management Master Plan, Reversing Downward Trends in Ecosystem Services

Ecosystem Integration

Gulf Master Mapping Plan, Data Access and Acquisition, Living Marine Resources, Wetlands Status and Trends Report, Ecological Services Valuation

Nutrient Reduction

Nutrient Characterization, Nutrient Criteria Development, Hypoxia, Nutrient Reduction Strategies

Community Resilience

Risk Assessment, Outreach and Communication, Community Toolbox Development

Environmental Education

Community Education and Outreach, Public Awareness, K-20 Environmental Literacy, Economic Value Communication,

For more information on the Gulf of Mexico Alliance please visit www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org or contact: Terry Teague

228/688-1172



State Partners

AL Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
AL Department of Environmental Management
AL Department of Public Health
FL Department of Environmental Protection
FL Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
LA Department of Education
LA Department of Environmental Quality
LA Department of Natural Resources
LA Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
LA Office of Coastal Protection and Restoration
MS Department of Environmental Quality
MS Department of Marine Resources
TX Commission on Environmental Quality
TX General Land Office
TX Parks and Wildlife Department

Federal Partners

Council on Environmental Quality
National Aeronautics and Space Administration
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Science Foundation
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
U.S. Department of Agriculture
U.S. Department of Defense
U.S. Department of Energy
U.S. Department of Interior
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
U.S. Department of State
U.S. Department of Transportation
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Additional Partners

America's WETLAND Foundation
Coastal America
Coastal Ecosystem Learning Centers
Coastal States Organization
Dauphin Island Sea Lab
Florida Institute of Oceanography
Gulf Business Coalition
Gulf Coast Research Laboratory
Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ocean Observing System
Gulf of Mexico Research Plan
Gulf of Mexico Foundation
Harte Research Institute
National Estuarine Research Reserve System
National Estuary Program
National Marine Sanctuaries
National Sea Grant College Program
NatureServe
Northern Gulf Institute
The Nature Conservancy

For Healthy and Resilient Coasts



What is the Gulf of Mexico Alliance?

The Gulf of Mexico Alliance is a partnership, initiated in 2004, by the states of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas, with the goal of significantly increasing regional collaboration to enhance the environmental and economic health of the Gulf of Mexico. The Alliance works closely with a variety of partners including state and federal agencies, the Gulf of Mexico Foundation, the Northern Gulf Institute, the Hart Research Institute, the Nature Conservancy and the six Mexican states.

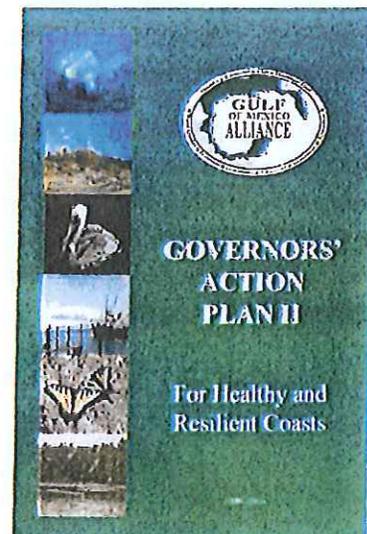
The Alliance has identified six priority issues that are regionally significant and can be more effectively addressed through collaboration at state, local and federal levels. Each issue area has a team of scientists and resource managers working to establish priorities and plans to address the most pressing issues.

- Water quality for healthy beaches and shellfish beds
- Habitat conservation and restoration
- Environmental education
- Ecosystem integration and assessment
- Nutrients and nutrient impacts
- Coastal community resilience

The Alliance emphasizes actions within these six priorities that support Gulf Coast recovery, rebuilding and sustainability efforts, and that work to mitigate environmental impacts and economic disruptions from future hurricanes, sea level rise, and other coastal hazards.

Governors' Action Plan

The five U.S. Gulf State Governors released the 1st Governors' Action Plan for Healthy and Resilient Coasts in March 2006. That first plan challenged the new Alliance partnership to make tangible progress over the next 36 months. Building on the unprecedented success of the first, the Alliance is releasing the second Governors' Action Plan in June 2009. This second longer more aggressive plan addresses some of the most pressing issues affecting the Gulf region.



View and download the Governors' Action Plan at:
www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org

For Healthy and Resilient Coasts

Why an Alliance?

The Gulf of Mexico region is exploring the power of partnership. By working together on selected regional issues, the five U.S. Gulf States are committed to realizing the benefits of shared management successes and coordinated environmental monitoring efforts that support effective management decisions. Furthermore, by developing a common vision and strategy for enhancing the environmental and economic health of the Gulf of Mexico, the Gulf States can more effectively target the efforts of partner federal agencies.

Federal Support to the Alliance

The U.S. Ocean Action Plan (USOAP) recognizes the leadership that the five U.S. Gulf States have demonstrated in forming the Alliance and identifying regional priorities, and calls for increased integration of resources, knowledge, and expertise to address these priorities. Thirteen federal agencies committed to supporting the Gulf Alliance have been brought together under the coordination of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). This Federal Workgroup has the following objectives:

- Support Gulf of Mexico state leadership;
- Coordinate an integrated federal response to priority regional issues identified by the Alliance; and
- Support Gulf Coast recovery and rebuilding and work to mitigate effects from future hurricanes and other coastal hazards.



Alliance Management Team

Alabama

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Phillip Hinesley, Alternate
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Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality
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Bill Walker
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Mississippi Department of Marine Resources
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Trudy Fisher

Executive Director
Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality
601-961-5000

Texas

Buddy Garcia, Commissioner
Becky Walker, Alternate
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
512-239-5515

The Federal Workgroup

- Council on Environmental Quality
- NASA
- National Science Foundation
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- Department of Agriculture
 - Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Forest Service
- Department of Commerce
 - NOAA
- Department of Defense
 - Navy
- Department of Energy
- Department of Interior
 - MMS
 - National Park Service
 - U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
 - USGS
- Department of Health & Human Services
 - Food & Drug Administration
- Department of State
- Department of Transportation
- Environmental Protection Agency