

Draft Restoration Plan for the Gulf of Mexico

On April 20, 2010, the *Deepwater Horizon* oil rig exploded, killing 11 people and releasing 134 million gallons of oil into the Gulf of Mexico. Since that time, the *Deepwater Horizon* natural resource trustees have been working to assess the impacts of the oil and dispersants on natural resources like wetlands, fish, marine mammals, and birds—and the services they provide—through a process called a natural resource damage assessment.

We propose a comprehensive, integrated, ecosystem restoration plan for the Gulf of Mexico. The draft plan allocates up to \$8.8 billion for restoration from the proposed settlement with BP. The draft plan is based on our thorough assessment of impacts to the Gulf's natural resources and to the services those resources provide.

The *Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Draft Programmatic Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan and Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement* is available for public review and comment through December 4, 2015. To learn more or to comment on the draft plan, visit www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov.

Injury

During our assessment of the Gulf following the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill, we found impacts to:

- wildlife, including fish, oysters, plankton, birds, sea turtles, and marine mammals across the Gulf;
- habitat, including marshes, beaches, floating seaweed habitats, water column, submerged aquatic vegetation, and ocean-bottom habitats
- recreational activities including boating, fishing, and beach-going

Deepwater Horizon by the Numbers

- 134 million gallons: amount of oil released into the ocean
- At least 15,300 square miles: the extent of the oil slick on June 19, 2010—an area 10 times the size of Rhode Island
- At least 43,300 square miles: cumulative extent of the surface slick during the course of the spill—an area approximately equal to the size of Virginia
- At least 1,300 miles: amount of shoreline fouled by oil—more than the distance by road from New Orleans to New York City
- 1.84 million gallons: amount of chemical dispersant used

Overall, the scope of impacts from the Deepwater Horizon spill was unprecedented, with injuries affecting a wide array of linked resources across the northern Gulf ecosystem.

Restoration

The draft plan identifies five goals intended to restore wildlife, habitat, water quality, and recreational activities in the Gulf. To achieve these goals, funds are allocated to 13 different restoration types. In proposing this plan to address the ecosystem-level injuries caused by this spill, we considered both the potential environmental benefits and impacts.

The draft plan does not identify specific projects for each restoration type, but lays out a framework by which future project-specific restoration plans will be developed. The public will have the opportunity to comment on these subsequent restoration plans.

