This fact sheet reviews the recent and upcoming public participation opportunities associated with three key Gulf restoration and recovery processes initiated after the Deepwater Horizon disaster.

What is early restoration?
In a typical damage assessment, the federal and state Trustees must first assess natural resource injuries and develop a restoration plan before they can start implementing restoration projects. In this case, however, in April 2011 BP agreed to provide up to $1 billion to implement early restoration projects before the assessment process is complete. The Trustees are implementing these projects in phases. Phase I and II projects have already been selected. In December 2013, the Trustees proposed Phase III projects.

Natural Resource Damage Assessment

Early Restoration

NOV 2011 – DEC 2012: PHASE I & II RESTORATION PLANS
The Trustees received public comment on and held public meetings about the draft phase I (Nov 2011 – Feb 2012) and draft phase II (Nov – Dec 2012) early restoration plans.

JUN – AUG 2013: EARLY RESTORATION PEIS SCOPING
The Trustees received public comment and held public meetings to accept input on scope, content, and significant issues that should be considered in the PEIS.

DEC 2013 – FEB 2014: DRAFT PHASE III PLAN & DRAFT EARLY RESTORATION PEIS
The Trustees will receive public comment on both documents through Feb 19, 2014.

Restoration

MAR – MAY 2011: RESTORATION SCOPING
The Trustees solicited public comment and held public scoping meetings to gather public input on categories of restoration projects.

TIMING UNKNOWN: DRAFT PEIS
Once the Draft PEIS is released, it will be open for public comment.

How did NFWF and NAS receive funding?
The U.S. Department of Justice has settled some charges related to the disaster, including criminal charges against Transocean and BP. Among other things, the criminal plea agreements provide funds to two organizations: (1) the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation will receive over $2.5 billion to establish a Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund to conduct natural resource restoration in the Gulf; and (2) the National Academy of Sciences will receive $500 million to establish a 30-year science program that focuses on human health, environmental protection, and oil system safety in the Gulf of Mexico.

What is the NAS Advisory Group?
The NAS appointed a 24-member advisory group of expert volunteers to begin program planning. The advisory group began working to develop a strategic vision and operational framework for the program in June 2013.

Where can I find out about public participation opportunities?
Visit the Trustees’ website: www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov

Settlement Agreements

National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)

National Academy of Sciences (NAS)

*ONGOING* PROJECT SELECTION
NFWF must consult with state and federal resource agencies in identifying projects to fund. The public will be permitted to submit projects through the state resource agencies.

JUL – DEC 2013: GULF ADVISORY SCOPING
The NAS Gulf Program Advisory Group is holding meetings to clarify what restoration activities are already underway in the Gulf and to generally guide the development of a strategic plan for the program.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION WEBSITES
Some states are working to set up or have already set up websites for project proposal submissions.
The RESTORE Act

**Equal-Share State Allocations**

*ONGOING* \*STATE MEETINGS\*

Some Gulf States and local political subdivisions allow the public to attend restoration planning meetings and provide input.

E.g., Louisiana's Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) is holding public meetings across the state and allowing the public to ask questions.

Note: These meetings address both the Equal-Share and the Impact-Based State Allocations.

**Restoration Council**

FEB 2013: PROPOSED COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

After releasing a proposed comprehensive plan, the Council held a series of public engagement sessions to gather initial input.

**Impact-Based State Allocations**

MAY – JUL 2013: DRAFT INITIAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The Council received public comment and hosted public engagement sessions in each of the Gulf states so that people could provide input on the draft initial comprehensive plan.

**Centers of Excellence**

**Restoration Science Program**

JUN – SEPT 2013: ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS

NOAA held its first engagement session in June in Tampa, to introduce the science program and solicit public input. NOAA held additional virtual engagement sessions in August and September to obtain further input on research needs.

**U.S. TREASURY REGULATIONS**

The RESTORE Act requires the Secretary of the Treasury to develop regulations establishing accountability mechanisms for the management and administration of the Restoration Trust Fund that holds RESTORE Act monies. The Treasury issued draft regulations on Sept 6, 2013. The draft regulations were open for public comment until Nov 5, 2013, and are in the process of being finalized.

### Where can I find out about regional RESTORE Act public participation opportunities?

**Restoration Council:**
www.restorethegulf.gov

**The NOAA RESTORE Act Science Program:**
www.restoreactscienceprogram.noaa.gov

### The RESTORE Act

**Proposed Comprehensive Plan**

After releasing a proposed comprehensive plan, the Council held a series of public engagement sessions to gather initial input.

**MAY – JUL 2013: Draft Initial Comprehensive Plan**

The Council received public comment and hosted public engagement sessions in each of the Gulf states so that people could provide input on the draft initial comprehensive plan.

### What is the Comprehensive Plan?

The RESTORE Act requires the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council to develop a comprehensive plan for restoring and protecting Gulf natural resources. The Council released a Proposed Comprehensive Plan in January 2013 and a Draft Initial Comprehensive Plan in May 2013. On August 28, 2013, the Council voted unanimously to approve the plan.

The Plan is available online at: www.restorethegulf.gov.

### What specified opportunities to participate in Centers selection?

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This fact sheet reviews the recent and upcoming public participation opportunities associated with three key Gulf restoration and recovery processes initiated after the Deepwater Horizon disaster.

### Natural Resource Damage Assessment

#### Early Restoration

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The Trustees received public comment and held public meetings to accept input on scope, content, and significant issues that should be considered in the PEIS.

#### Restoration

**MAR – MAY 2011: RESTORATION SCOPING**

The Trustees solicited public comment and held public scoping meetings to gather public input on categories of restoration projects.

**DEC 2013 – FEB 2014: DRAFT PHASE III PLAN & DRAFT EARLY RESTORATION PEIS**

The Trustees will receive public comment on both documents through Feb 4, 2014.

### What is a PEIS?

A Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, or PEIS, is a planning document that analyzes proposed restoration projects, feasible alternatives, and likely environmental impacts. The Trustees are drafting a PEIS for early restoration in order to better understand the potential cumulative effects of early restoration projects.

### What can I find out about NRDA public participation opportunities?

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### Where can I find out about public participation opportunities?

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### How did NFWF and NAS receive funding?

The U.S. Department of Justice has settled some charges related to the disaster, including criminal charges against Transocean and BP. Among other things, the criminal plea agreements provide funds to two organizations: (1) the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation will receive over $2.5 billion to establish a Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund to conduct natural resource restoration in the Gulf; and (2) the National Academy of Sciences will receive $500 million to establish a 30-year science program that focuses on human health, environmental protection, and oil system safety in the Gulf of Mexico.

### What is the NAS Advisory Group?

The NAS appointed a 24-member advisory group of expert volunteers to begin program planning. The advisory group began working to develop a strategic vision and operational framework for the program in June 2013.

### Where can I find out about public participation opportunities?

- **NFWF Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund:** www.nfwf.org/Pages/gulf
- **NAS Gulf of Mexico Program:** www.nationalacademies.org/gulf/index.html

### Settlemrnt Agreements

**National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)**

- **Settlement Agreements**

**National Academy of Sciences (NAS)**

- **Settlement Agreements**

### PROPOSAL SUBMISSION WEBSITES

Some states are working to set up or have already set up websites for project proposal submissions.

### What did the Trustees do?

The Trustees received comments on both documents through Feb 4, 2014.