

# ***Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill:*** **Draft Programmatic Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan and Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement**

**Abstract:** In accordance with the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Federal and State natural resource trustee agencies (Trustees) have prepared a Draft Programmatic Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan and Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PDARP/PEIS). The PDARP/PEIS considers programmatic alternatives to restore natural resources, ecological services, and recreational use services injured or lost as a result of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. The Deepwater Horizon oil spill natural resource Trustees have developed restoration alternatives, comprised of various restoration types, to address injuries to natural resources and resource services resulting from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Criteria and evaluation standards under the OPA natural resource damage assessment regulations guided the Trustees' consideration of programmatic restoration alternatives. The PDARP/PEIS also evaluates the environmental consequences of the restoration alternatives under NEPA. Specific restoration actions, to be selected in subsequent planning phases, will take place primarily in the northern Gulf of Mexico, Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida.

**Lead Agency:** National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

**Cooperating Agencies:**

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department  
Texas General Land Office  
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality  
Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority  
Louisiana Oil Spill Coordinator's Office  
Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality  
Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries  
Louisiana Department of Natural Resources  
Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality  
Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources  
Natural Resources Geological Survey of Alabama  
Florida Department of Environmental Protection  
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission  
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
U.S. Department of Agriculture  
U.S. Department of the Interior

**For Further Information Contact:** Courtney Groeneveld, email: [Gulfspill.restoration@noaa.gov](mailto:Gulfspill.restoration@noaa.gov)

**Comments Due:** We will consider public comments received on or before December 4, 2015.

**Public Comments May Be Submitted:**

Via the Web: <http://www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov> (preferred method)

Via U.S. Mail: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, P.O. Box 49567, Atlanta, GA 30345

# *Deepwater Horizon* Oil Spill Draft Programmatic Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan and Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

OCTOBER 2015







UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Reviewer:

In 2010, the natural resources of the northern Gulf of Mexico were seriously impacted by the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill. Since that time, the *Deepwater Horizon* natural resource Trustees have worked together to assess the injuries to natural resources in the northern Gulf of Mexico and to the services those resources provide, and to determine the restoration needed to compensate the public for these impacts. Many habitats, plants, and animals in the northern Gulf of Mexico were injured; indeed, the Trustees believe that the northern Gulf of Mexico ecosystem itself was injured.

The Trustees prepared this *Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Draft Programmatic Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan and Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement* (Draft PDARP/PEIS) in accordance with the Oil Pollution Act (OPA) and the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). The document presents the Trustees' injury assessment and proposed restoration plan and considers the environmental impacts of the proposed restoration and alternatives to that restoration. The Trustees propose to select a comprehensive, integrated ecosystem restoration plan for implementation. The Draft PDARP/PEIS is programmatic; it describes the framework by which subsequent project-specific restoration plans will be identified and developed during the coming decades.

On behalf of the Trustees, and in accordance with OPA and NEPA, we are submitting this Draft PDARP/PEIS for your review and comment, pursuant to the attached Trustee resolution supporting release to the public. We are the NOAA responsible officials for the Draft PDARP/PEIS:

David G. Westerholm  
Director, Office of Response and Restoration  
National Ocean Service  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
1305 East-West Highway  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Samuel D. Rauch III  
Deputy Assistant Administrator for Regulatory Programs  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
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Silver Spring, MD 20910

The full text of the Draft PDARP/PEIS is available at [www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov](http://www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov), and a shorter document highlighting the key findings of the injury assessment and the proposed restoration plan also will be made available on that site. For further information or questions regarding obtaining these documents you may contact Courtney Groeneveld, National Marine Fisheries Service, Office of Habitat Conservation by email at [gulfspill.restoration@noaa.gov](mailto:gulfspill.restoration@noaa.gov).

**Comments on the Draft PDARP/PEIS must be received on or before December 4, 2015.** We welcome your comments and invite you to participate in one of the public meetings the Trustees are holding to discuss the document and receive your comments. Details on those public meeting dates and locations are provided at [www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov](http://www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov) and on other Trustee websites, as well as in the Federal Register notice of availability for this document and several newspapers in each of the five Gulf states.



Written comments may be submitted via the Web at [www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov](http://www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov) or via U.S. mail to: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, P.O. Box 49567, Atlanta, GA 30345. USFWS will provide mailed comments to all of the Trustees. We join our fellow Trustees in encouraging you to comment on the Draft PDARP/PEIS so that your ideas and input can be considered in the Final PDARP/PEIS.

Sincerely,



Samuel D. Rauch, III  
Designated NOAA NEPA Coordinator  
Deputy Assistant Administrator for  
Regulatory Programs  
National Marine Fisheries Service



David G. Westerholm  
Director, Office of Response and Restoration  
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Enclosure

*DWH Natural Resource Trustees Resolution 15-2*  
ADOPTED September 23, 2015

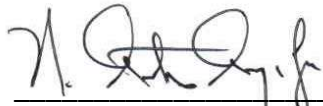
**A RESOLUTION OF THE DEEPWATER HORIZON OIL SPILL  
NATURAL RESOURCE TRUSTEES TO RELEASE THE PROGRAMMATIC DAMAGE  
ASSESSMENT AND RESTORATION PLAN AND PROGRAMMATIC  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (PDARP/PEIS)  
FOR PUBLIC COMMENT:**

In accordance with the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 (OPA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the undersigned representatives of the Natural Resource Trustees hereby approve the release of the Programmatic Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PDARP/PEIS) for public comment. The PDARP/PEIS approved in this resolution was provided to the Trustees through an e-mail dated September 23, 2015 and titled "PDARP/PEIS for TC Approval." The PDARP/PEIS will be provided to the public for comment through the *Federal Register* following this resolution. After carefully evaluating four restoration alternatives under OPA and NEPA, the Trustees identified Comprehensive Integrated Ecosystem Restoration (Alternative A) as the Trustees' Preferred Alternative, as discussed in Section 5.5 of the PDARP/PEIS. Alternative B is Resource-Specific Restoration and is described in Section 5.6 of the PDARP/PEIS. Alternative C is Continue Injury Assessment and Defer Comprehensive Restoration Planning and is detailed in Section 5.7 of the PDARP/PEIS. Alternative D is Natural Recovery/No Action and is discussed in Section 5.8 of the PDARP/PEIS. The environmental consequences of the four alternatives are evaluated in Section 6 of the PDARP/PEIS.

The Trustees are issuing this PDARP/PEIS for public review and comment. The Trustees will consider public comments on the PDARP/PEIS prior to finalizing the PEIS and prior to selecting a programmatic restoration alternative in a Record of Decision for the PDARP/PEIS.

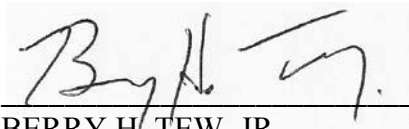
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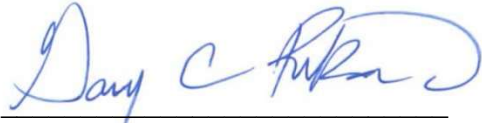
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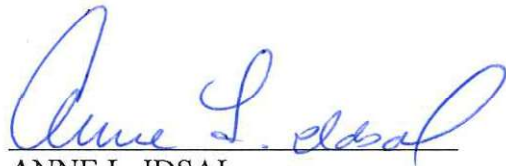


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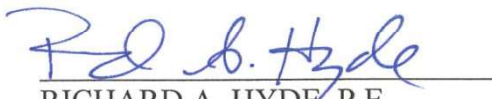
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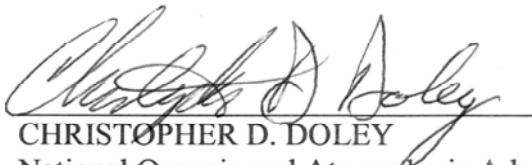
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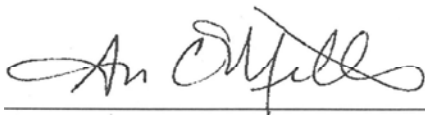
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