

RESTORE

THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER DELTA

RECONNECTING THE RIVER WITH ITS DELTA TO PROTECT PEOPLE, WILDLIFE AND JOBS

mississippiriverdelta.org

The RESTORE Act

The Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act (RESTORE Act) dedicates 80 percent of all Clean Water Act penalties paid by those responsible for the 2010 gulf oil disaster to Gulf Coast restoration.

The RESTORE Act is important because without it, these funds would have gone to the U.S. Treasury and could have been used for spending unrelated to the disaster. Because Clean Water Act penalties from the spill could reach \$21 billion, the RESTORE Act is a huge win for the Gulf Coast.

Now that the RESTORE Act is signed into law, **communities and ecosystems along the Gulf Coast are guaranteed funding to assist with recovery from one of the worst environmental disasters of our time.**

HOW DID THE RESTORE ACT COME ABOUT?

The RESTORE Act was introduced in July 2011 by a bipartisan coalition of nine Gulf Coast senators. The legislation was prompted in part by two official reports on the spill, one by Navy Secretary and former Governor of Mississippi Ray Mabus and another from the bipartisan National Commission on the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling. Both reports recommended that Clean Water Act penalties from the spill be dedicated to Gulf Coast restoration. Given the devastation the spill caused in the gulf, this was the only fair thing to do.

On July 6, 2012, after more than two years of work by legislators and advocates, the RESTORE Act was signed into law by the President. The law creates an essential framework for managing and financing the Gulf Coast's recovery and establishes a trust account that will receive 80 percent of Clean Water Act penalties from the spill for Gulf Coast restoration.



Sen. Mary Landrieu introducing Rep. Steve Scalise at the RESTORE Act passage celebration in Washington, D.C.



BREAKDOWN OF RESTORE ACT FUNDING

As BP and other responsible parties pay fines under the Clean Water Act, the money will first be transferred to a trust fund. The money in this Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund will be allocated to the Gulf Coast states and Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council according to the following guidelines:

- 30 percent for environmental restoration projects in the comprehensive plan, as determined by the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council.
- 30 percent divided among the five gulf states based on the Oil Spill Impact Allocation Formula.
- 35 percent divided equally between the five gulf states (7 percent to each) to be used for eligible restoration activities.
- 2.5 percent dedicated to a Gulf Coast fisheries monitoring program.
- 2.5 percent to establish a Gulf Coast Centers of Excellence research center.

HOW DOES THE RESTORE ACT WORK?

Establishes the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council

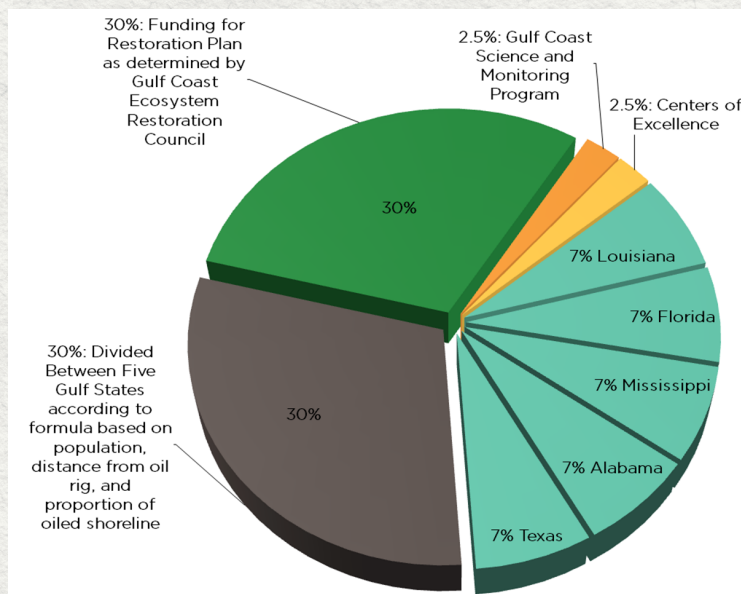
Made up of officials from six federal agencies and five gulf states, the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council will oversee how 60 percent of RESTORE Act funds are spent. The Council is charged with developing a comprehensive ecosystem restoration plan for the Gulf Coast and will also approve projects submitted by states under the Oil Spill Impact Allocation Formula.

Mandates a Gulf Coast Comprehensive Restoration Plan

The Restoration Council must publish a Comprehensive Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Plan by July 6, 2013. The RESTORE Act mandates that the restoration plan:

- Restore and protect the natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches, and wetlands of the Gulf Coast.
- Prioritize large-scale projects that make the greatest contribution to ecological restoration.
- Incorporate recommendations from existing plans, such as the Gulf of Mexico Regional Ecosystem Restoration Strategy and Louisiana Coastal Master Plan.
- Be based on the best available science.
- Be updated every five years.

Thirty percent of the RESTORE Act funds will go to projects directly outlined in this plan. It is likely the restoration plan will include several sediment diversions, which have been shown to rebuild and sustain coastal environments in the Mississippi River Delta. The council will also direct another 30 percent of the RESTORE Act's funding to the states through the Oil Spill Impact Allocation Formula, which is based on factors like population, miles of shoreline oiled and distance to the rig. This 30 percent will go toward eligible restoration activities consistent with the goals and objectives of the plan and must be approved by the Council.



Distribution of funds according to the RESTORE Act.

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WHO WE ARE The Mississippi River Delta Restoration Campaign is a coalition of Environmental Defense Fund, National Audubon Society, National Wildlife Federation, Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana and Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation. Made up of scientists, engineers, policy experts and outreach professionals, we work to advance long-term sustainable solutions for the delta's communities and wildlife.

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