

February 19, 2013

The Honorable Robert Bentley
Governor, State of Alabama
State Capitol
600 Dexter Avenue
Montgomery, AL 36130

Dear Governor Bentley,

We write as the entrepreneurs and professionals who represent a cross-section of the industries that see a healthy Gulf Coast as a key to driving private sector job growth and our state's future prosperity. We represent companies and associations who welcome the nation to enjoy our seafood, one of a kind culture and world-class fisheries, beaches and tourist destinations, as well as the wide spectrum of firms poised to conduct future ecosystem restoration projects. As such, we encourage the use of funds from the recently passed RESTORE the Gulf Coast Act to create local job and training opportunities, strong communities, and long-term economic health by investing in the restoration of the Gulf's wetlands, oyster reefs and barrier islands.

Gulf Coast ecosystems are an important economic driver for our state and our regional economy, helping us to provide critical services and products needed to drive job creation, including:

- Production of 1.3 billion pounds of seafood annually — with a dockside value of \$661 million;
- Supporting the largest remaining wild oyster harvest in the world;
- Attracting more than 23 million recreational fishing trips annually; and
- Providing more than 600,000 jobs and \$9 billion in wages annually in tourism and recreation.

Healthy wetlands, barrier islands and oyster reefs also mitigate the impacts of hurricanes and other extreme weather events on our communities and other coastal assets. The annual losses associated with these events are currently estimated at approximately \$17 billion.

Thanks to the resources made available through the RESTORE Act, there is an unprecedented opportunity to restore the Gulf, to strengthen our traditional industries, create new economic mobility and accelerate emerging markets centered on environmental restoration. Coastal restoration projects will create new business for a wide variety of firms in the engineering, construction, transportation, and manufacturing sectors, generating demand for more workers across these sectors. As a result, there will be new opportunities for employment of Gulf Coast residents, which will increase as innovative technologies are developed and exported out of the region. Further, the restoration of the Gulf of Mexico will draw more visitors to our beaches and towns, promote thriving fisheries, and make our communities more resilient in the face of future storms and sea level rise.

These benefits can only be realized with a significant investment of RESTORE Act funds into ecosystem restoration projects. A recent study conducted by Mather Economics estimated that investing these oil spill penalty funds into ecosystem restoration projects could create 77,453 new jobs over 50 years. We, therefore, encourage you to invest a substantial amount of the oil spill penalty funds from the RESTORE Act into these types of projects, which will reap the maximum benefits for the long-term prosperity of our region.

Additionally, we believe it is good public policy for firms involved in ecosystem restoration projects to work in partnership with government and workforce development stakeholders to increase their abilities to prepare and hire qualified local, low income and disadvantaged workers. Those of us that may be involved in these projects stand prepared to partner with the State to identify the necessary skills-sets and training programs to prepare our

state's workforce to conduct future restoration projects and find new economic opportunities. We encourage the State to invest a portion of the RESTORE Act funds that will be allocated to the State for this new challenge.

We look forward to working with you toward a more vibrant, productive future for the Gulf of Mexico and the region's restoration economy. Thank you for your consideration of this request, and please let us know if we can provide additional information or assistance.

Sincerely yours,

E.L. "Skip" James
Director of Transportation
Aillet, Fenner, Jolly & McClelland, Inc.
Shreveport, LA

Harry Simmons
President
American Beach and Shore Protection Association
Washington, DC*

Gordon C. Robertson
Vice President
American Sportfishing Association
Arlington, VA

Valsin Marmillion
Managing Director
America's Wetland Foundation
New Orleans, LA

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CEO
American Vibracore Services, Inc.
Del Ray Beach, FL

Karen Fraley
Manager/Naturalist
Around the Bend Nature Tours LLC
Sarasota, FL

Doug Robison
Senior Vice President, Water and Environment
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Tampa, FL *

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President and CEO
Marathon Boat Yard Marine Center
Marathon, FL

Shawn Hiester
President
Marine Conservation Partners
Jacksonville, FL

Ted Martin
President and CEO
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Jeffrey D. May
Operations Manager
Michael Baker Corp
Biloxi, MS*

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Vice President
Mike Hooks, LLC
West Lake, LA

Captain Thomas Becker
President
**MS Gulf Coast Charter Boat Captains' Association;
T & D Charters**
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MRD Associates, LLC
Destin, FL

James Muller
Principal
Muller & Associates, Inc.
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Nathan Smith
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Metairie, LA

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Covington, LA

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Quest Ecology Inc.
Wimauma, FL

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South Central Industrial Association
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Southern Way Seafood Wholesale;
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**Woodring Enterprises, Inc. dba The Bait Box, Caloosa
Wholesale, Woodring Marina**
Sanibel, FL

John Brawley
Senior Marine Systems Ecologist
Woods Hole Group
East Falmouth, MA*

Bruce French
Senior Project Manager
York Risk Services Group
Tallahassee, FL*

Gary Young
Owner
**Young's Native Plants LLC; Antioch Island Ventures
LLC**
Vancleave, MS

* Indicates offices in more than one Gulf state.

##

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Governor, State of Florida
400 S Monroe St
Tallahassee, FL 32399

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##

CC: Members, Gulf Coast Consortium

Gary Young
Owner
Young's Native Plants LLC; Antioch Island Ventures LLC
Vanceleave, MS

Edward L. MacDonald
President
Z-Aire Corp
Captiva, FL

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Governor, State of Louisiana
P.O. Box 94004
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

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East Falmouth, MA*

Bruce French
Senior Project Manager
York Risk Services Group
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Young's Native Plants LLC; Antioch Island Ventures LLC
Vanceleave, MS

* Indicates offices in more than one Gulf state.

##

CC: Garret Graves, Chair, Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority

February 19, 2013

The Honorable Phil Bryant
Governor, State of Mississippi
P.O. Box 139
Jackson, MS 39205

Dear Governor Bryant,

We write as the entrepreneurs and professionals who represent a cross-section of the industries that see a healthy Gulf Coast as a key to driving private sector job growth and our state's future prosperity. We represent companies and associations who welcome the nation to enjoy our seafood, one of a kind culture and world-class fisheries, beaches and tourist destinations, as well as the wide spectrum of firms poised to conduct future ecosystem restoration projects. As such, we encourage the use of funds from the recently passed RESTORE the Gulf Coast Act to create local job and training opportunities, strong communities, and long-term economic health by investing in the restoration of the Gulf's wetlands, oyster reefs and barrier islands.

Gulf Coast ecosystems are an important economic driver for our state and our regional economy, helping us to provide critical services and products needed to drive job creation, including:

- Production of 1.3 billion pounds of seafood annually — with a dockside value of \$661 million;
- Supporting the largest remaining wild oyster harvest in the world;
- Attracting more than 23 million recreational fishing trips annually; and
- Providing more than 600,000 jobs and \$9 billion in wages annually in tourism and recreation.

Healthy wetlands, barrier islands and oyster reefs also mitigate the impacts of hurricanes and other extreme weather events on our communities and other coastal assets. The annual losses associated with these events are currently estimated at approximately \$17 billion.

Thanks to the resources made available through the RESTORE Act, there is an unprecedented opportunity to restore the Gulf, to strengthen our traditional industries, create new economic mobility and accelerate emerging markets centered on environmental restoration. Coastal restoration projects will create new business for a wide variety of firms in the engineering, construction, transportation, and manufacturing sectors, generating demand for more workers across these sectors. As a result, there will be new opportunities for employment of Gulf Coast residents, which will increase as innovative technologies are developed and exported out of the region. Further, the restoration of the Gulf of Mexico will draw more visitors to our beaches and towns, promote thriving fisheries, and make our communities more resilient in the face of future storms and sea level rise.

These benefits can only be realized with a significant investment of RESTORE Act funds into ecosystem restoration projects. A recent study conducted by Mather Economics estimated that investing these oil spill penalty funds into ecosystem restoration projects could create 77,453 new jobs over 50 years. We, therefore, encourage you to invest a substantial amount of the oil spill penalty funds from the RESTORE Act into these types of projects, which will reap the maximum benefits for the long-term prosperity of our region.

Additionally, we believe it is good public policy for firms involved in ecosystem restoration projects to work in partnership with government and workforce development stakeholders to increase their abilities to prepare and hire qualified local, low income and disadvantaged workers. Those of us that may be involved in these projects stand prepared to partner with the State to identify the necessary skills-sets and training programs to prepare our state's workforce to conduct future restoration projects and find new economic opportunities. We encourage the State to invest a portion of the RESTORE Act funds that will be allocated to the State for this new challenge.

We look forward to working with you toward a more vibrant, productive future for the Gulf of Mexico and the region's restoration economy. Thank you for your consideration of this request, and please let us know if we can provide additional information or assistance.

Sincerely yours,

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CC: Trudy Fisher, Executive Director, Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality

February 19, 2013

The Honorable Rick Perry
Governor, State of Texas
P.O. Box 12428
Austin, TX 78711

Dear Governor Perry,

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