



September 27, 2010

Honorable Ray Mabus
Secretary of the Navy
Office of the Secretary of the Navy
2000 Navy Pentagon
Washington, DC 20350

Dear Secretary Mabus,

I am writing on behalf of the Coast Builders Coalition in support of a robust plan to restore the Gulf Coast in the wake of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. I was in attendance as you addressed the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority in New Orleans in July and was very encouraged by your comments signaling a desire to return the gulf to a better state than it was before the spill and to look to restoration plans that have already been developed in order to accomplish this task. As an organization committed to a sustainable coast in Louisiana, it is my sincere hope that your recovery plan will be robust and actionable.

The Coast Builders Coalition would like to add its support to several suggestions for your recovery plan made by Louisiana representatives:

- 1) The dedication of Clean Water Act fines to gulf restoration. There is great concern the Clean Water Act fines related to the oil spill will go into the federal treasury and for expenses other than gulf coast restoration. Senator Landrieu, Congressman Scalise and Senator Vitter have all introduced legislation to dedicate 80 percent of associated Clean Water Act fines to a gulf restoration fund. This dedication is critical to ensure these fines can be used for important restoration on the gulf coast.
- 2) The Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act provides a funding source for gulf states to fund some coastal projects. However, the sharing of these funds is limited until 2017. Given the critical need for coastal funding at this time, the sharing of these revenues should start immediately. Senator Mary Landrieu has filed legislation, S. 3763, that would advance the sharing of these revenues.

3) An immediate investment from BP to begin addressing the Natural Resource Damage Assessment remediation actions through coastal wetlands restoration. The NRDA process will likely carry on for years and the fragile Louisiana coastline needs immediate attention. With a number of restoration projects ready to implement, BP funding could be quickly used for a number of high-impact projects. It will also be critical that there the executive branch demonstrate strong leadership and oversight throughout the NRDA process. The process includes so many different parties it could turn into a bureaucratic mess without proper leadership.

4) A commitment of funds to monitor and adapt any gulf restoration plans as necessary. The Gulf Coast is a dynamic ecosystem that will change during the course of the restoration. Restoration plans that are too rigid on the front end will not be as effective as those that are able adapt to changing conditions. Likewise, waiting too long to implement restoration efforts will doom fragile areas of the coast. Finding the right balance will require robust monitoring and coastal assessments that allow the long-term recovery to be very responsive to changing conditions. A commitment of planning, research and consulting dollars is critical to a successful recovery.

Thank you for the opportunity to share these ideas. As an organization made up of the companies that do the restoration and protection work along the Gulf Coast, it is our sincere hope your long-term recovery recommendations are less about plans and studies and more about seeing restoration happen quickly on the coast. Should we be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'St K' with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Scott Kirkpatrick
President