

# SUPPORT THE \$1400 RESTORE ACT

## Recovering & Strengthening the Gulf Coast and the American Economy



### The Gulf Coast is a national treasure with unparalleled economic and natural resources.

Last spring's Gulf oil disaster was the latest assault on the region's ecosystems after years of degradation from human impacts and natural disasters like Hurricane Katrina. The continued environmental deterioration of the Gulf Coast poses a growing threat to ecosystems that support not only the regional communities and cultures, but also our nation's most critical energy, shipping, tourism, commercial seafood and other industries.

The Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunity, and Revived Economies of the Gulf States Act of 2011 (the "RESTORE Act") will invest fines by BP and the other parties responsible for the Gulf oil spill into the Gulf region. The RESTORE Act will help rebuild and strengthen the environment and support America's economic recovery.



#### What the RESTORE Act Does

Under current law, BP and others responsible for last year's oil spill will pay a Clean Water Act (CWA) penalty for each barrel of oil spilled into the Gulf.

*Without action from Congress, those penalties will go to unrelated federal spending, instead of repairing the area damaged by the spill.*

*BP's fines belong in the Gulf, where the damage was done.*

Two official reports on the spill – one conducted by Navy Secretary and former Mississippi Governor Ray Mabus, the other from the bipartisan National Commission on the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling – recommended that CWA penalties be dedicated to Gulf Coast restoration.

The RESTORE Act creates an essential framework to manage and finance the Gulf Coast recovery. Using 80% of the CWA penalties from the Gulf oil disaster, the RESTORE Act establishes a trust account to restore both the economic and environmental health of the Gulf Coast.

**A majority portion of these penalties (60%) will be allocated to the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council, to be spent in two ways:**

- Half of the funds will be used to implement the Council's comprehensive federal environmental plan.
- The other half will be distributed to the five Gulf States based on oil spill impacts and spent according to each individual state's plan, which will be consistent with the comprehensive federal plan.

**A smaller portion (35%) will be available to Gulf Coast states to be used within the impacted region for environmental and economic restoration.**

**The remainder (5%) will be dedicated to science and monitoring of Gulf Coast ecosystem restoration and fisheries.**

**50% of the accrued interest on the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund funds the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Science, Monitoring and Technology Program and Fisheries Endowment.**

# THE RESTORE ACT NOW IS THE TIME

## The Gulf Region is an Essential Part of the Nation's Economy

Recovery of the Gulf Coast is a national economic imperative. Many of the nation's key economic resources, and the underpinnings of economic production in states far beyond the Gulf Coast, depend upon the Gulf's fragile and threatened ecosystems. Restoring the Gulf will make the region more resilient, lessen the potential damage from future hurricanes and flooding, and create tens of thousands of jobs. A healthy ecosystem means a healthy economy, both regionally and nationally.



→ Gulf energy helps power America. Roughly a third of all domestic oil comes from the Gulf. Ports and other infrastructure supported by the environment are essential to keeping that industry functioning.



→ Shipping and exports from across the country rely on a healthy Gulf. The Gulf region is home to 10 of our nation's 15 largest ports by tonnage.



→ The nation's seafood industry relies on healthy seas in the Gulf. The Gulf produces roughly 40% of all commercial seafood in the lower 48 states.



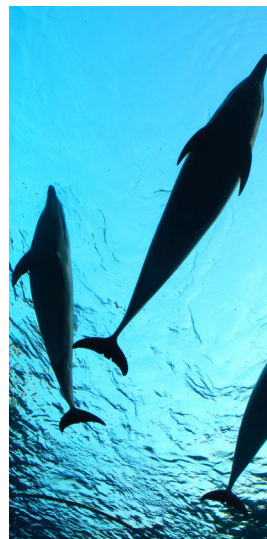
→ Tourism depends on the natural wonders of the Gulf. Restaurant, hotel, and other hospitality workers are part of the Gulf's \$34 billion per year tourism industry.

## The Restore Act – A Unique Opportunity for Restoration.

**All Restore Act projects would be funded by penalties from BP and others responsible for last year's oil spill.**

Direct payments through both the Gulf Coast Claims Facility and the Natural Resources Damage Assessment (NRDA) process are focused on addressing impacts of the spill. The RESTORE Act is therefore critical to addressing long-term, ecosystem-wide degradation that has left the Gulf Coast vulnerable to repeated disasters.

The RESTORE Act will renew the environmental and economic health of Gulf Coast resources our nation cannot afford to lose.



## Action by Congress Has Voter Support Nationwide.

A recent national survey\* showed that **83% of likely voters** support a proposal to designate fines paid by BP and other parties responsible for the Gulf oil disaster toward restoration of the Gulf Coast and the Mississippi River Delta.

It's also an issue that cuts across partisan lines, with support from:

90% of Democrats

84% of Independents

76% of Republicans

Strengthening the environment of the Gulf region will make it stronger and more resilient, so it will continue to be the backbone of our nation's economy, and a safe home for the communities that make it a national treasure.

**This is a priority we can all agree on.**

\* The bipartisan survey was conducted by Lake Research Partners and Bellwether Research and Consulting in April 2011.

