

**Gulf of Mexico Program  
Joint Policy Review Board/Management Committee  
Meeting Summary  
New Orleans, LA**



**March 18, 2004**

<b>Organization:</b>	<b>Policy Review Board Member:</b>	<b>Present:</b>	<b>Absent:</b>
<b>EPA</b>	Stan Meiburg (Alternate Federal Chair)	X	
<b>Louisiana</b>	Vacant(State Chair) Dugan Sabins,(Alternate)	X	
<b>Alabama</b>	Barnett Lawley		X
<b>Florida</b>	Jerry Brooks (Alternate)		X
<b>Mississippi</b>	Phil Bass (Alternate)	X	
<b>Texas</b>	Vacant		
<b>HHS</b>	George Hoskin	X	
<b>DOC</b>	Spencer Garrett (Alternate)		X
<b>USDA</b>	Homer Wilkes		X
<b>DOI</b>	Columbus Brown (Alternate)	X	
<b>DOT</b>	Vacant		
<b>DOD</b>	Bob Stender (Alternate)	X	
<b>NASA</b>	Ron Magee (Alternate)		X
<b>CAC</b>	Robert Crowe	X	
<b>CAC</b>	Brian Grantham	X	
<b>BAC</b>	Mike Lyons	X	
<b>GRN</b>	Cynthia Sarthou (Alternate)	X	
<b>CSCA</b>	Joel Yelverton (Alternate)	X	
<b>AFBF-GC</b>	Ron Harrell (Alternate)		X

Organization:	Management Committee Member:	Present:	Absent:
EPA	Myron Knudson, Alternate for Federal Co-Chair	X	
	Bryon Griffith	X	
Texas	Bruce Moulton (State Co-Chair)	X	
Alabama	John Carlton	X	
Florida	Lynn Griffin	X	
Louisiana	Dugan Sabins (Alternate)	X	
Mississippi	Barry Royals (Alternate)		X
Mississippi	Vacant (Soil & Water Conservation Commission)		
Texas	Larry McKinney (TX Parks & Wildlife Dept)		X
HHS (FDA)	Tom Herrington (Alternate)	X	
DOC (NMFS)			X
USDA (NRCS)	Homer Wilkes		X
DOI (USGS)	Gary Brewer	X	
DOI (FWS)	Columbus Brown	X	
DOD (USN)	Robert Stender (Alternate)	X	
DOD (COE)	Bob Bosenberg (Alternate)		X
DOD (USAF)	Vic Verma	X	
CAC	Casi Callaway		X
CAC	Jim Kachtick	X	
BAC	Flinda Hill	X	
GRN	Cynthia Sarthou, alternate for Deborah Dawkins	X	
CSCA	Joel Yelverton	X	
AFBF-GC	Ned Meister	X	
Fisheries	Ron Lukens		X
TNC	Keith Ouchley	X	
GSCZ	Vacant -		
NEPs	David Yeager	X	
NASA	Ron Magee		X

**1. Roll Call - Welcome and Introductions of the Board**

Stan Meiburg, Alternate Federal Co-Chair, welcomed the Committee on behalf of Jimmy Palmer.

**2. Overview of Meeting Agenda & Objectives/Status Review of Follow-Up Action Items**

Bryon Griffith paid tribute to Bill Holland, a long-time member of the Gulf of Mexico Program staff who passed away in February, and dedicated the accomplishments of the day to Bill.

Mike Lyons, Business Advisory Council representative, reported on the Congressional Briefing that the Council sponsored in Washington, DC, on February 11, 2004, to inform Congressional members about the Gulf of Mexico Program. He was very pleased with the briefing and encouraged regarding support for the Executive Order and the Program. The Board thanked the Business Council for sponsoring the briefing, the first for the Gulf Program, and the support expressed by the Council to members of Congress

**3. FY 2003 Program Accomplishments**

Bryon Griffith presented an informational overview of the Gulf of Mexico Program Workplan with the goals and objectives that have been endorsed by the Policy Review Board and Management Committee from FY 2000 - FY 2003. The purpose of the overview was to keep the Committees informed on the results of the projects and the accomplishments of the Program.

**4. Executive Order Status/Update**

Bryon Griffith presented a chronology of the progress and status of the Gulf of Mexico Executive Order (EO) The EO was scheduled to be forwarded to the EPA Administrator by the end of March and will be briefed by the Assistant Administrator for Water and Bryon Griffith in June. After the Administrator signs the Order, it will be sent to the Office of Management and Budget for review.

**5. Briefings on Emerging Initiatives**

Bryon Griffith briefed the Board on the Coastal America Business Plan/Enterprise Model and the Gulf Program's participation as the Regional Implementation Team for Coastal America. The Plan is being developed to improve the coordination of the Federal Coastal Programs, increase corporate involvement in Coastal Programs, and to improve public understanding of coastal and marine issues. The Model calls for identifying relevant regional priorities, establishing Regional Goals, Objectives, and Subobjectives; correlating partnership authorities and programs; and preparing Regional cross-cut budget initiatives.

**6. White House Views - Coastal Priorities**

Kameran Onley, Associate Director, Council on Environmental Quality informed the Board on the role of the Council. The Council advises the President on

environmental issues. Overall, on a national scale, air and water quality are improving. There are healthier conditions using newer technologies. The focus should center on (1) results, (2) sound science, (3) innovation and technology, (4) collaboration for local solutions, and (6) stewardship by nongovernment entities. Economic growth goes hand in hand with environmental progress.

#### **7. U.S. Ocean Commission Report (Governance Briefing)**

Dr. Frank Muller-Karger, who served on the U.S. Ocean Commission, addressed the Board, informing them as to the process for the preliminary Commission Report which is to be released on April 20, 2004. The Commission consisted of 16 members and spanned over two and a half years to conclude. All the Commissioners agree that the U.S. needs a new integrated management mechanism to treat ocean resources as interrelated and interdependent ecosystem components, rather than as a collection of isolated fragments managed independently from each other as practiced today. Dr. Muller-Karger said the Commission will recommend a National Ocean Policy Framework that creates a more effective and coordinated federal management system. The existing federal structure will need to be strengthened to be more effective, less redundant and better suited to a balanced ecosystem-based management approach. Local, regional, tribal and state organizations need a more active role in managing the nation's oceans and coasts. The Commission will recommend strengthening regional management and participation and propose solutions that transcend political boundaries. There are clear linkages among the oceans, the atmosphere, the land, and human activities. Ocean management has to be tied to land management. It is through education that things are going to change.

#### **8. Gulf of Mexico States Accord – Binational Partnerships**

Gary L. Springer, Executive Director for the Gulf of Mexico States Accord (GOMSA), made a presentation to the Board on "Integrating the Gulf of Mexico Border." GOMSA, established in 1995, consists of 11 Gulf of Mexico member states. GOMSA initiatives are (1) economic sustainability which includes the red tide research initiative; (2) Gulf of Mexico tourism corridor; (3) trade and tourism; and (4) transportation, the Short Sea Shipping, a more efficient movement of goods. The context for dealing with the U.S. has changed and U.S. economic problems are deeply affecting its trading partners. The Gulf of Mexico is a common sustainable resource. Some next steps are to build the Congressional Caucus for the Gulf of Mexico; establish a parallel Gulf of Mexico Program in Mexico, secure funding for the red tide initiative, and map out crosscurrents and synergies between the two countries.

#### **9. White Water to Blue Water Initiative**

Bryon Griffith, Gulf of Mexico Program Office, informed the Board about the White Water to Blue Water Summit on Sustainable Development partnership. A conference is to be held in Miami on March 22-26, 2004. White Water to Blue Water is based on the

conclusion that sustainable development in the Wider Caribbean region is not possible without integrated watershed and marine ecosystem-based management. The process is designed to create and expand as many partnerships as possible. The themes for the conference are (1) integrated watershed management; (2) marine ecosystem-based management; (3) sustainable tourism, and (4) environmentally sound marine transportation. The Gulf of Mexico Program will participate in the conference.

#### **10. Gulf Hypoxia - Implementation Plan Status Report**

Larinda Tervelt, Gulf of Mexico Program Office, gave a presentation to the Board on The status of the Hypoxia Action Plan. The goal is to reduce the Gulf of Mexico hypoxic zone to less than 5,000 square kilometers by 2015 and to aim for a 30% reduction in nitrogen discharges to the Gulf of Mexico. Implementation actions are to support development of sub-basin committees, monitoring of the hypoxic zone, point and non-point source innovations, watershed initiative targeting, and an awards program. The strategies include: reduce nitrogen loads with a focus on sources; coordinate program efforts such as SRF, 319, NPDES, etc.; and use innovative options and ideas such as pollutant trading. Some other opportunities are coordinating with Industry-Led Solutions and Green Lands, Blue Water.

#### **11. Industry-Led Solutions Workshop**

Dr. Larry Beran, Texas Institute of Applied Environmental Research (TIAER), addressed the Board about a national strategy to assist producers in addressing Clean Water Act issues. This is a proactive approach to ensure effective, scientifically sound water quality policies that meet the unique needs of agriculture and maintain the economic viability of the industry. An Industry-Led Solutions Workshop I was held in January 2000; Workshop II was held in January 2001, Workshop III was held in November 2002. Recommendations include developing an environmental certification program for agriculture; invest in the science to support results based policy programs, and develop a constituency to support new programs. An Industry-Led Solutions: Gulf of Mexico Workshop was held in November 2003 which applied the solutions methodology to a regional issue - hypoxia in the Gulf of Mexico. Action items were to establish a federal commission on agriculture and the environment; establish environmental baselines; and prepare a concept paper. The next workshop will be held in June 2004 and will expand to include municipalities and industry.

#### **12. FY 2004 Program Workplan Overview/PRB Endorsement and Proposed Addition of Choctawhatchee Basin as Priority Area**

Gloria Car, Gulf of Mexico Program Office, presented the FY 2004 Gulf of Mexico Program Objectives, Subobjectives, Annual Performance Goals and the expected performance results. The Board unanimously endorsed the FY 2004 Workplan. Twenty-five projects totaling \$2.2M were funded in FY 2004 with the majority of the funding for Objective 1- Water Quality and Objective 3- Habitat. The FY 2005 projects have been selected and the FY 2006 process is underway with preproposals due May 30, 2004. The State Meetings will be held in the June - August timeframe, and FY 2006 project selection by November 30, 2004.

In October 2003, the Executive Director for the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance presented justification to the Management Committee for the Gulf of Mexico Program to designate

and include the Basin as a Priority Area within the framework of the Program's Workplan. The watershed is a multi-state waterbody which is 5,350 square miles covering 9 counties in Alabama (58%) and 6 in Florida, and Choctawhatchee Bay is 129 square miles. The Bay, designated as a critical habitat by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, provides a natural habitat for the Gulf Sturgeon and is a conduit to a significant breeding area. The eastern portion of the Bay is bordered by Florida's fastest growing county, Walton County. The single largest landowner adjacent to the Bay is the US Air Force. There are numerous public and private organizations that promote ecosystem management and sustainability in the Basin. The Bay has candidate impaired waterbodies due to elevated coliform from stormwater. Florida DEP supports the inclusion of Choctawhatchee Basin as a GMP Priority Area. The Management Committee unanimously endorsed that the Basin become a Priority Area, and sent the recommendation to the Policy Review Board. The Board unanimously endorsed the Management Committee's recommendation.

## **12. Roundtable Discussion/Wrap-up and Next Steps**

Jean Westbrook, CAC member from Louisiana, addressed the Board regarding the Louisiana landloss and requested that the Board support funding for this initiative.

Brian Grantham, CAC Chair, addressed the Board regarding the GMP Executive Order. The CAC will contact the Gulf State Governors requesting letters of endorsement.

**ATTACHMENT A**

**Follow-up Action Item Summary  
Policy Review Board/Management Committee Meeting  
March 18, 2004**

ACTION REQUESTED	LEAD(s):	STATUS:1.
1. Letter should be sent to Choctawhatchee Bay Alliance regarding the PRB endorsement for inclusion as a Priority Area.	GMPO	
2. Mercury Advisory- Letter should be sent from MC to PRB explaining the finding of the Project Team and the recommendations. Obtain review and feedback with GSMFC Develop package to send to the State Authorities.	GMPO	
3. Send final version of Executive Order to PRB/MC members.	GMPO	

Attachment B  
**Gulf of Mexico Program**  
**Joint**  
**Policy Review Board/Management Committee**  
**Meeting**

*Homewood Suites*  
*901 Poydras Street*  
*New Orleans, LA*

**DRAFT AGENDA**  
**Thursday, March 18, 2004**

**8:30**      **Welcome and Introductions**  
*Jimmy Palmer, EPA Regional Administrator, Region 4, Atlanta*

**8:40**      **Overview of Meeting Agenda & Objectives**  
**Status Review of Follow-up Action Items**  
*Bryon Griffith, Gulf of Mexico Program Office*

**9:00**      **FY 2003 Program Accomplishments**  
*Bryon Griffith, Gulf of Mexico Program Office*

**Purpose:** Informational

**9:30**      **Executive Order Status/Update**  
*Bryon Griffith, Gulf of Mexico Program Office*

**Purpose:** Informational

**10:00**      -----      **Break** -----

**10:45**      **Briefings on Emerging Initiatives**  
  
**Purpose:** To receive briefings and updates on issues and initiatives pertinent to the Gulf of Mexico.

**PEW Commission Report - White House Views**  
*Kameran Onley, Associate Director - CEQ*

**U.S. Ocean Commission Report (Governance Briefing)**  
*Dr. Frank Muller-Karger, Commissioner*



- 12:00**      **Lunch**
- 
- 1:00**      **U.S. Mexico Gulf Programs Integration - Gulf of Mexico States Accord**  
*Gary L. Springer, Executive Director - GOMSA*
- 1:30**      **White Water to Blue Water Initiative**  
*Patrick Cotter, EPA/Office of International Activities*
- 2:00**      **Gulf Hypoxia - Implementation Plan Status Report**  
*Larinda Tervelt, Gulf of Mexico Program Office*
- Industry-Led Solutions Workshop**  
*Dr. Larry Beran, Texas Institute of Applied Environmental Research (TIAER)*
- 2:30**      **FY 2004 Program Workplan Overview/PRB Endorsement and  
Proposed Addition of Choctawhatchee Basin as Priority Area**  
*Bryon Griffith, Gulf of Mexico Program Office*
- 2:45**      **Roundtable Discussion/Wrap-up and Next Steps**
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- 3:00**      **Adjourn**

**Attachment C**  
***GULF OF MEXICO PROGRAM***  
***Policy Review Board and Management Committee Meeting***  
***March 18, 2004***

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