

Stakeholder Engagement to identify Monitoring and Adaptive Management Data Needs for the Deepwater Horizon NRDA Open Ocean TIG's Restoration Program

The *Deepwater Horizon* (DWH) Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) [Open Ocean Trustee Implementation Group](#) (TIG) is seeking input from stakeholders on the identification and prioritization of information needed to facilitate restoration for injured resources within the Open Ocean TIG. This workshop will include an overview of the Open Ocean TIG's restoration goals, current restoration priorities, and potential approaches for evaluating Open Ocean TIG restoration outcomes. Participants will be asked to provide input on the data needed to best inform planning, implementation, and evaluation of Open Ocean TIG restoration activities for fish and water column invertebrates, mesophotic and deep benthic communities, sea turtles, marine mammals, birds, and sturgeon injured by the DWH Oil Spill, as well as data needed to inform restoration at the ecosystem level.

Background:

In 2016, the state and federal [DWH Natural Resource Trustees](#) reached a settlement for natural resource damages caused by the DWH Oil Spill. The settlement provides the Trustees up to \$8.8 billion dollars to restore natural resources that were injured by the spill as well as the ecological services these resources provide. This money is allocated among eight trustee implementation groups (TIGs): one TIG for each Gulf state, a region-wide TIG, an open ocean TIG, and a TIG to address unknown conditions in the future. Each TIG is responsible for planning and implementing restoration in their restoration area, with the Unknown Conditions TIG addressing issues that were unanticipated or unknown at the time of settlement. The settlement funds are allocated by restoration area to implement an integrated restoration portfolio that includes a substantive focus on restoring Gulf of Mexico coastal habitats, improving water quality in priority watersheds, replenishing and protecting living coastal and marine resources, and enhancing recreational use opportunities. This integrated portfolio acknowledges the ecosystem scale of the injury. Restoration is guided by the DWH [Programmatic Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan and Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement](#) (PDARP/PEIS), a document that establishes broad goals for restoration of the resources injured by the DWH oil spill.

As part of the PDARP/PEIS, the Trustees committed to a robust monitoring and adaptive management framework to facilitate restoration planning, implementation, and evaluation. Adaptive management is a form of decision making where adjustments are made to restoration actions based on observed outcomes. Adaptive management requires appropriate data to plan restoration activities, evaluate restoration progress and, if necessary, adjust actions to meet restoration goals. The purpose of this workshop is to obtain input on the data necessary for the Open Ocean TIG to plan, implement, and evaluate restoration for the six resource types for which it is responsible: 1) fish and water column invertebrates, 2) mesophotic and deep benthic communities, 3) sea turtles, 4) marine mammals, 5) birds, and 6) sturgeon. Additionally the Open Ocean TIG seeks input on data necessary to inform restoration at an ecosystem level.

Logistics:

Seating for this workshop is limited. **Please RSVP [at the Eventbrite link](#) by January 21** if you would like to attend. Attendees will be asked to participate in small breakout groups to identify data needs for each of the six Open Ocean TIG resource types mentioned above.

This workshop is free to attend and is open to non-conference attendees, but all workshop-only attendees must also register with the conference. If you will not be registering to attend the conference itself or any of the other workshops, we will provide you with the appropriate conference registration code after you RSVP. All workshop-only attendees will still need to check-in at the conference registration desk when they arrive to receive a badge that will provide them access to this workshop.

Draft Workshop Agenda

- I. Introduction to the Open Ocean TIG and Open Ocean MAM needs (1:00 - 1:20 pm)
- II. Question and answer session (1:20 -1:30 pm)
- III. Resource Type data needs (breakout groups and report outs) (1:30-2:45 pm)
- IV. (2:45 - 3:00 pm break)
- V. Cross-resource and ecosystem data needs (breakout groups and report outs) (3:00 - 4:10 pm)
- VI. Wrap-up (next steps and feedback opportunities) (4:10 -4:30 pm)