

## The "RESTORE Act"

### *Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act*

#### ➤ **Gulf Oil Spill Restoration:**

***"Passage of the RESTORE Act represents a huge step forward for North and Northwest Florida and the many coastal communities still fighting to recover from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Impacted Gulf communities will now receive much-needed relief while eliminating federal bureaucracy."*** Rep. Steve Southerland, II

After working with colleagues from districts that were similarly impacted by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill to introduce the RESTORE Act in the House, Southerland continued the fight for congressional approval as the only Gulf Coast HOUSE member on the RESTORE Conference Committee. The measure received approval from the full House and Senate on June 29, 2012 and signed into law by the President on July 6, 2012.

#### **The "RESTORE the Gulf Coast Act" will:**

➤ ***Create the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund and dedicate Clean Water Act penalties to be paid by the responsible parties to the restoration of the Gulf Coast ecosystem and economy.***

Under current law, the Clean Water Act gives the federal government the authority to fine responsible parties after an oil spill, but these penalties are not returned to the place where the injury occurred. The RESTORE Act will correct this and will establish the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund, to which 80% of all civil penalties paid in connection with the Deepwater Horizon spill will be directed.



➤ ***Provide needed resources to Gulf Coast Communities to start recovery by allocating:***

○ ***35% Directly to Impacted Counties from Funds divided in equal shares to the five Gulf Coast States, Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, Florida and Texas.*** The money can be spent on environmental projects, job creation and training, flood protection, tourism promotion and infrastructure such as ports. For Florida: 75 percent will go directly to the 8 impacted counties, 25% to all other Florida Counties.

○ ***30% Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council, funds to be used for the development and implementation of a comprehensive restoration plan, created by a federal/state Gulf Coast Restoration Council with all Gulf States represented on the Council.*** (The five Gulf states' governors and six federal officials from the Interior, Commerce, Agriculture departments, the Army, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Coast Guard.) Funds will be spent on big ecosystem projects with broad impact. The Council sunsets once funds are completely expended.

○ ***30% According to an Impact Driven Formula and disbursed to the Gulf Coast States according to plans submitted by the Gulf Coast States and approved by the Council.*** 30 percent of the money will be allocated to states based on a formula that approximates how badly each was damaged by the oil spill. (Formula based on average oiled shoreline, proximity to the spill, and average population in coastal counties, with a minimum of 5 percent.) States can spend the money on environmental projects, job creation and training, flood protection and tourism promotion.

○ ***5% Establishes Gulf Coast Centers of Excellence - 2.5 percent of the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund to be allocated to the States for research within the Gulf Coast region and 2.5 fisheries habitat.***