

# **Texas Planning State Expenditure Plan (PSEP) Administrative Update**

## **Project Title**

- Texas Planning State Expenditure Plan (PSEP)

## **Funding Amount**

- \$292,503.00

## **Duration of Project:**

- The start date in the current planning grant award is April 6, 2017; however, grant-related activities did not begin until July 1, 2017.
- The end date for the planning grant remains July 31, 2018.

## **Background**

The PSEP and PSEP grant (Step II) application submitted by Texas included a process that, with this update, will be changed to respond to the impact to parts of the Texas coastal area when Hurricane Harvey struck in August of this year. For expediency in securing much-needed funds the process to develop the State Expenditure Plan (SEP) will now not include several of the tasks listed in the PSEP approved by the RESTORE Chairperson on July 29, 2016. However, the development of the SEP will continue to include discussions with the state's elected officials, while offering meaningful public engagement including the opportunity for the public to comment on the draft SEP prior to its submission to the Council for approval.

The following tasks will not be required because of the updated and revised process:

- finalizing the Priorities Document;
- developing and posting a Request for Grant Applications;
- conducting grant workshops; and
- establishing an application review process.

The updated tasks list is presented below as part of the Scope of Work describing how Texas will move forward in developing its SEP to be submitted to the Council to acquire Spill Impact/Bucket 3 RESTORE grant funds. An amendment to the PSEP grant will be requested to reflect these changes.

## **Update on Process and Justification**

- As the devastating and long-range effects of Hurricane Harvey became known, Commissioner Baker determined that the state's development of its SEP must now focus on hurricane recovery (ecological and economic) and resiliency-related programs and/or specific projects that are eligible activities under the Spill Impact Component of the RESTORE Act (Bucket 3). In addition, it is crucial

that the development of the SEP proceed in an expedited manner to secure federal RESTORE grants funds as soon as possible.

- Texas will develop a SEP that may include both eligible programs and/or projects that address hurricane recovery (ecological and economic) and resiliency-related efforts. This SEP will be an effort to implement ecosystem restoration, mitigation and protection to reduce the risk of future flooding and/or address other ecosystem needs. These efforts will also concentrate on eligible programs and/or projects associated with recovery and resiliency efforts to respond to ecosystem and/or economic damages, including workforce and tourism-related needs, as a result of Hurricane Harvey. It may include resiliency-related planning programs.
- Texas will establish a process to identify Texas SEP eligibility requirements, including programs and/or projects that address the priorities for the state's Gulf Coast region. The identified programs and/or projects will comply with the eligibility requirements in the Spill Component of the RESTORE Act (33 U.S.C., section 1321(t)(1)(B)(i)(III) and the Council's Comprehensive Plan."

#### **Scope of Work**

- Texas' PSEP efforts will continue to seek to address the RESTORE Act's primary goals and objectives of restoring and protecting the ecology, environment and economy of the Gulf Coast region. This will include specific tasks to develop the state's SEP for submission to the RESTORE Council. The Texas SEP will focus on programs and/or projects addressing the ecological and economic recovery of the Texas Gulf Coast, including the effects of Hurricane Harvey, risk reduction efforts on disasters, as well as other related impacts.
- This update signals Texas's intention to develop a SEP that includes programs and/or projects. Below are examples of RESTORE-eligible activities that will be the focus of the Texas SEP. However, as the SEP is developed those programs and/or projects selected may likely be refined as additional or updated information becomes available.

The RESTORE Act outlines programs and projects eligible to receive Spill Impact/Bucket 3 grant funds. Below is the program/project eligibility list that will be considered in developing the state's SEP which will focus on ecological and economic restoration in response to Hurricane Harvey, as well as disaster prevention and preparedness.

- Restoration and protection of the natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches and coastal wetlands of the Gulf Coast region.
- Mitigation of damage to fish, wildlife, and natural resources.
- Implementation of a federally-approved marine, coastal, or comprehensive conservation management plan, including fisheries monitoring.

- Workforce development and job creation.
- Improvements to or on State parks located in coastal areas affected by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.
- Infrastructure projects benefiting the economy or ecological resources, including port infrastructure.
- Coastal flood protection and related infrastructure.
- Planning assistance.
- Promotion of tourism in the Gulf Coast region, including recreational fishing.
- Promotion of the consumption of seafood harvested from the Gulf Coast region.

**PSEP Tasks to Include:**

- #1 - Determine internal planning processes for developing the SEP.
- #2 - Identify possible eligibility requirements for Texas SEP activities, including the counties in which SEP funds could be expended, as well as eligible applicants.
- #3 - In coordination with the Office of the Governor (OOG), as well as working with the Governor's Commission to Rebuild Texas, begin to identify programs and/or projects for the SEP.
- #4 - Post on the web site the administrative update to the PSEP, which will include an explanation of the change in focus and process, as well as notification of the modified amendment to the PSEP grant award.
- #5 - Develop a draft SEP in compliance with the RESTORE Act, the Council's SEP Guidelines, and the direction of the OOG and the Commission to Rebuild Texas.
- #6 - Post draft SEP for public comment.
- #7 - Review and consider public comment.
- #8 - Draft SEP and submit to the RESTORE Council for approval.