



Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council
New Orleans, LA 70130

March 4, 2019

Mr. Toby Baker
Executive Director
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 13087
Austin, Texas 78711-3087

Dear Mr. Baker:

As Chair of the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council, I am pleased to approve the Texas State Expenditure Plan submitted pursuant to the Spill Impact Component of the *Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities, and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act of 2012*, 33 U.S.C. §1321(t) and note (RESTORE Act).

This approval is based on the finding from the council's Executive Director, Ben Scaggs, that the SEP is complete and meets all requirements contained in the RESTORE Act, the U.S. Department of the Treasury's implementing regulations (31 C.F.R. Part 34) and the council's SEP guidelines. On behalf of the council, I commend Texas for developing a SEP that will help address ecosystem impacts from Hurricane Harvey and advance the cause of Gulf Coast ecosystem restoration.

The council is committed to ensuring an efficient and effective process for funding the activities in the SEP. Approval and disbursement of funding for specific activities in the SEP will be done through the grant process and standards established in 2 C.F.R. Part 200. Please note that funds for implementation of an activity in the approved SEP will be disbursed only after grant approval and verification of compliance with all applicable federal environmental and other laws. Council staff are available to assist Texas with this grant process to help ensure that it proceeds as expeditiously as possible.

Once again, I applaud Texas on the development of a thoughtful and effective SEP. Our collective efforts under the RESTORE Act will help to ensure the long-term health and resilience of the Gulf Coast ecosystem.

Sincerely,

Andrew R. Wheeler
Chair