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Consortium Board Elects 2015 Officers

At its meeting on January 21, the full Board unanimously reelected the Consortium's officers. Commissioner Grover Robinson (Escambia), Ms. Susan Latvala (Pinellas), and Warren Yegear (Gulf) were reelected as the Chair, Vice Chair and Treasurer, respectively. These three officers then elected the remaining two members of the Executive Committee, and again, reappointing Commissioner Sara Commander (Walton) and Commissioner George Neugett (Monroe). Accordingly, the Executive Committee for 2015 will remain the same as it was for 2014.

Board Hires Environmental Science Associates (ESA)

The Board took the final step in the process of securing consultant assistance for the Consortium's mission to develop the State Expenditure Plan for the Governor's submission on behalf of Florida to the Restoration Council, proposing the plan for Florida's use of the Spill Impact Component of the RESTORE Act. That final step was the approval of the ESA contract and the first task order under the contract. The first task order requires the drafting of the Planning State Expenditure Plan and the Planning Grant Application. The contract, its exhibits and Task Order #1 can be viewed on the Consortium's website [here](#).

Important Dates

**Executive Committee
Conference Call** Thursday,
March 19, 2015
4:00 p.m. ET

Gulf Consortium Meeting
Wednesday, March 25
10:00 a.m. ET
Department of
Environmental Protection
Carr Building
Tallahassee, FL

Independent Auditor Hired

At the Board's January 21 meeting, it also approved the contract of Warren Averett to conduct the statutorily-required independent audit of the Consortium's finances for Fiscal Year 2013/14. The audit report and opinion will be provided to the Consortium, no later than April 15, 2015. The contract can be viewed on the Consortium's website [here](#).

Planning State Expenditure Plan

The first step in the process for the Consortium's official development of the Florida State Expenditure Plan is the composition and drafting of what the Restoration Council is calling a "Planning State Expenditure Plan". Doug Robison, the project manager on behalf of the ESA consultant team provided the Board with a comprehensive presentation of the draft Planning SEP document and the proposed process for the Consortium's development of the final State Expenditure Plan. The entire process is anticipated to take close to two years to complete. The Planning SEP informs the Restoration Council of the Gulf Consortium's process for selecting the consultant team, the Consortium's proposed planning approach (which includes a process for goal setting, project nomination, project evaluation, and the development of the final State Expenditure Plan). The Planning SEP also contains information on financial management and conflicts of interest policies. The Governor will submit the Planning SEP to the Restoration Council. The Planning SEP will then be reviewed by Council staff and approved by the Chair. The Council's rules establish a 60-day time period for review and approval. At the January 21 meeting, the Board approved the transmittal of the draft Planning SEP to the Governor for his approval and submission.

Federal Partners

FAC staff met with Representative Gwen Graham early in January of this year. A follow up meeting is currently being planned for late February to

continue discussions on the Consortium's duty to develop Florida's State Expenditure Plan with her in Washington, D.C. and with her staff in Tallahassee. In addition, FAC staff is coordinate meetings with Senators Nelson and Rubio at the end of February to discuss the Consortium's progress on the development of the state expenditure plan. Meetings with other Florida delegation members are being requested, as well.

Upcoming Meetings

The Executive Committee of the Gulf Consortium is planning a telephonic/conference call meeting for Thursday, March 19 at 4:00 p.m., eastern. In addition, the full Board of the Gulf Consortium will be meeting on Wednesday, March 25 at 10:00 a.m., eastern, at the Department of Environmental Protection, Carr Building in Tallahassee, Florida.

Questions or Comments?

If you have any questions or would like more information on the Gulf Consortium please visit our website at www.FACRestore.com, or contact the Consortium's Director Ginger Delegal at gdelegal@fl-counties.com or (850) 922-4300.

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