

# May 10, 2022 Florida Trustee Implementation Group Webinar Script and Q&A Session

## Presentation Script

### **Slide 1: Florida Coastal Access Project Draft Phase V.4 Restoration Plan Public Webinar**

#### **Speaker: Lena Flannery**

Message in the chat: “Welcome to the Florida Trustee Implementation Group Early Restoration Phase V.4 webinar. We will get started shortly.”

Hello and welcome! My name is Lena Flannery. I’m a contractor with DOI and will be providing an overview of the webinar features and facilitating our public participation. The purpose of today’s webinar is to provide information on the Florida Trustee Implementation Group’s Early Restoration Phase V.4 Draft Restoration Plan and Supplemental Environmental Assessment, and to receive your comments. Thank you for taking the time to join this presentation. In the next few days, we will post this presentation to the Florida page of the Trustee website, [www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov](http://www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov). That link is in the chat and we’ll also provide it again at the end of the presentation. Also for your reference we have uploaded two factsheets in the “Handouts” section of the webinar interface.

Message in the chat: “Today’s presentation and a transcript will be made available on the Trustee website at [www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov](http://www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov) within a few days following the webinar.”

### **Slide 2: Webinar Participation**

#### **Speaker: Lena Flannery**

Hopefully, you are now logged into the webinar and connected via audio (either by computer or phone). You should be able to see the control panel on the right-hand side of your screen.

Note that you may need to click the orange arrow to expand it. Just a reminder that all attendees are muted automatically.

After today’s presentation there will be a Question-and-Answer session followed by a formal public comment period.

If you have a question for one of the Trustee representatives, please enter it at any time during today's presentation.

Please use the "Questions" box in the user interface to submit those questions.

Now I will now pass the presentation on to Dianne Ingram.

### **Slide 3: Today's Agenda**

#### **Speaker: Dianne Ingram**

Thank you, Lena. This is Dianne Ingram and I represent the Department of the Interior on the FL TIG and will present the next portion of this meeting. Please note that the link to the draft plan and fact sheets is provided at the bottom of this slide.

Today's agenda will begin with background on the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill Natural Resource Damage Assessment process, more commonly referred to as NRDA, and the FL Trustee Implementation Group (or FL TIG). As part of the NRDA process, Trustees undertake restoration planning, including drafting restoration plans for public review and comment, followed by implementation of approved restoration projects.

Today, we will be discussing the FL TIG's Draft Early Restoration Phase V.4 Restoration Plan and Supplemental Environmental Assessment, which builds on previous phases of the Phase V Early Restoration project. This webinar will include an overview of the planning timeline, screening process, and the reasonable range of alternatives considered in the plan.

As we have discussed, after presentation of the plan, there will be a virtual question and answer session, followed by a formal public comment session. During the public comment session, attendees will be able to submit formal comments which will be included in the Administrative Record for this plan and will be addressed by the FL TIG in the final plan. Additional details will be provided during that portion of the webinar.

Finally, we will review the public commenting process following the webinar and next steps for this draft plan.

[Message in the chat:](https://gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov/2022/04/trustees-seek-public-comment-draft-restoration-plan-continuing-florida-coastal-access) "The Draft Phase V.4 RP/SEA and factsheets can be found at [gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov/2022/04/trustees-seek-public-comment-draft-restoration-plan-continuing-florida-coastal-access](https://gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov/2022/04/trustees-seek-public-comment-draft-restoration-plan-continuing-florida-coastal-access)"

#### **Slide 4: What is NRDA?**

**Speaker: Dianne Ingram**

What is NRDA? NRDA is a mandatory legal process – based on the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 – that the federal agencies and affected states implement after an oil spill.

It is a process that the trustee agencies use to assess the degree to which natural resources and the services they provide may have been injured by an oil spill and response activities.

Trustees then determine how to compensate the public through on-the-ground restoration activities. The goal is to restore injured resources to the condition they would have been in had the spill not occurred and provide compensation for interim losses of resources and those services provided by the injured resources.

#### **Speaker 5: NRDA Process**

**Speaker: Dianne Ingram**

Through NRDA, the trustees develop the public's claim for natural resource damages against the parties responsible and seek restoration or compensation for the harm done.

When we say injury, we not only mean the environmental injuries caused by the oil spill and associated response activities but also the affect those injuries had on the public use and enjoyment of the many natural resources across the Gulf.

Therefore, it is important to remember that NRDA not only assesses ecological injury, but also the loss of recreational use of those resources because of the spill.

Following the assessment of the injury, the NRDA process includes restoration planning (generally to determine what needs to be done to restore the natural resources), determining the cost of those needed restoration activities, and finally, assessing and seeking monetary damages to pay for restoration.

#### **Slide 6: DWH Settlement**

**Speaker: Dianne Ingram**

The 2016 *Deepwater Horizon* settlement included \$8.8 billion in damages to be paid by BP over 15 years to address the natural resource damages and loss of use caused by the oil spill. This included approximately \$1 billion already committed for early restoration

projects. The FL TIG continues to implement its early restoration and other post-settlement restoration projects in the Florida Restoration Area.

In addition, the trustees set aside an additional \$700 million for adaptive management and unknown conditions. These funds will address currently unknown conditions that may be uncovered in the future.

In conjunction with the settlement, the trustees also prepared a Programmatic Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan, more commonly referred to as the PDARP, which presented the trustees' injury assessment and considered the environmental impacts of the proposed restoration alternatives at a programmatic level. The draft plan we are presenting today contains specific restoration projects that are consistent with the goals and objectives outlined in the PDARP for restoring natural resources and the services they provide.

## **Slide 7: Trustee Council Structure**

### **Speaker: Dianne Ingram**

The *Deepwater Horizon* Settlement also formally established the Trustee Council Structure. This graphic shows the post-settlement structure of the *Deepwater Horizon* NRDA Trustee Council, which now serves in an oversight role.

The settlement and associated legal documents established Restoration Areas, one for each Gulf state as well as for the Open Ocean and Regionwide Restoration Areas.

Restoration Area-specific TIGs conduct the work to develop restoration plans and implement approved projects within their respective Restoration Areas.

## **Slide 8: Florida TIG**

### **Speaker: Dianne Ingram**

As a reminder, for Florida, the TIG is composed of state and federal agencies, including Florida DEP, Florida FWC, DOI, EPA, NOAA, and USDA. Representatives from these agencies work together to ensure that the pre- and post-settlement restoration goals of the Trustees are met, and are with us today in this meeting.

## **Slide 9: DWH Settlement – FL TIG**

**Speaker: Dianne Ingram**

Pursuant to the DWH settlement, the total FL TIG allocation of restoration funds is approximately \$680 million, which is spread over 5 programmatic restoration goals and includes funds allocated during Early Restoration. Moving clockwise around the figure:

- You will see that Restore and Conserve Habitat has been allocated about \$38 million, shown in dark blue
- Next is Restore Water Quality, which has been allocated \$335 million, shown in orange
- Replenish and Protect Living coastal marine resources has been allocated about \$93 million, shown in green
- Provide and Enhance Recreational Opportunities has been allocated about \$184 million, shown in red
- And finally, Monitoring and Adaptive Management and Administrative Oversight has been allocated \$30 million, shown in light blue

## **Slide 10: Restoration Type Allocation**

**Speaker: Dianne Ingram**

Here is another way to look at the FL TIG allocation (taken from the TIG's second post-settlement restoration plan). I'd like to draw your attention to the 9 Restoration Types outlined in blue to which funds are allocated in the Florida Restoration Area.

In addition to the total FL TIG settlement funds, this table also shows how the funds have been allocated so far for restoration planning and activities, early restoration projects, and projects selected in the FL TIG's post-settlement restoration plans shown to the right of the blue box.

For this plan, we are proposing projects under the Provide and Enhance Recreational Opportunities Restoration Goal and Restoration Type shown on the next to last row in the table.

Now, we will move on to the draft plan portion of the presentation where Lisa Robertson with Florida DEP will present the plan, including the planning timeline, screening process, and the preferred alternative proposed by the FL TIG.

## **Slide 11: Florida Coastal Access Project**

**Speaker: Lisa Robertson**

Thank you, Dianne. This is Lisa Robertson with Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

I will begin with some background. The Florida Coastal Access Project was initiated during the fifth and final phase of what was early restoration to partially compensate for recreational use losses in Florida that resulted from the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill. The project is intended to enhance public access to surrounding natural resources and to increase recreational opportunities.

This project is being implemented in multiple phases. The FL TIG has completed three phases of the Florida Coastal Access Project.

We will briefly review and provide an update on the first three phases, which were approved in 2016, 2018, and 2019, respectively, and then present the project alternative proposed for this fourth phase, described in the draft Phase V.4 Restoration Plan being discussed today.

Message in the chat: "Project factsheets are available at <https://www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov/2022/04/trustees-seek-public-comment-draft-restoration-plan-continuing-florida-coastal-access?>"

## **Slide 12: Florida Coastal Access Project**

**Speaker: Lisa Robertson**

Approximately \$46.5 million has been allocated for land acquisition and improvements to enhance recreational uses as part of the Florida Coastal Access Project.

The project has been accomplished via acquisition and/or enhancement of coastal parcels in the Florida Panhandle through a partnership with the Trust for Public Land (TPL). TPL oversees the acquisition and construction, if applicable, and then donates the property to the relevant city or county for operation as a public park.

## **Slide 13: Florida Coastal Access Project**

**Speaker: Lisa Robertson**

This map highlights the current Phase V project locations (shown in orange) and the locations of the reasonable range of alternatives evaluated in this plan (in purple), which includes Little Redfish Lake Addition and the proposed Dickerson Bay addition (circled).

## **Slide 14: Florida Coastal Access Project**

**Speaker: Lisa Robertson**

The first three phases of the Florida Coastal Access project included the acquisition and/or improvements to 6 coastal properties along the Florida Panhandle and cost approximately \$46.5 million.

Acquisition of the coastal parcels and, as applicable, the construction of recreational amenities has been completed for the six locations. The Island View Park was substantially completed in August 2018 but was destroyed by Hurricane Michael on October 10, 2018. Franklin County, the owner of Island View Park, is seeking Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reimbursement to reconstruct the amenities.

## **Slide 15: Draft Phase V.4 RP Timeline**

**Speaker: Lisa Robertson**

Let's begin with an overview of the planning milestones of the FL TIG in developing this Phase V.4 draft plan.

- On January 24 of this year, the FL TIG posted a public notice on the trustee website indicating that the TIG was initiating restoration planning.
- Subsequently on April 18, the plan's notice of availability was posted in the federal register and on the trustee website.
- In addition to this public webinar, the FL TIG is hosting an in-person public meeting this Thursday, May 12 at the Panacea Community Center to provide an additional opportunity to collect public comments.
- The public is encouraged to review and comment on this draft plan during the ongoing public comment period, which will end on May 20, 2022.

## **Slide 16: Draft Phase V.4 RP/EA Screening**

**Speaker: Lisa Robertson**

As part of planning for the Florida Coastal Access Project, the trustees identified potential alternatives from many sources, including but not limited to: project submissions to the state project portal; and Gulf restoration reports, research, management plans, and related efforts. FDEP and FWC also hosted public meetings to inform the public of the Early Restoration process, and during those meetings, solicited ideas that could be implemented as part of Early Restoration.

When identifying potential Early Restoration projects, the Trustees only considered projects within the geographic area of Escambia – Wakulla Counties, which represents the area that was impacted by the response and cleanup activities related to the DWH oil spill. This process led to the selection of the alternatives considered in each phase of the Florida Coastal Access Project.

To select the specific alternatives for consideration in this phase, the FL TIG evaluated the compiled list of proposals for properties for potential acquisition and assessed the willingness of property owners to sell; the cost; political and civic conditions; approximate property value, size, and configurations; habitat conditions; and proximity to existing parks.

Screening led to the development of a reasonable range of alternatives considered in this Phase V.4 Restoration Plan, including the Little Redfish Lake Addition and the preferred Dickerson Bay Addition.

#### **Slide 17: Draft Phase V.4 RP/EA Non-Preferred Alternative**

**Speaker: Lisa Robertson**

The Little Redfish Lake Addition is the TIG's non-preferred alternative. This alternative would involve acquiring approximately 7 acres of coastal inholdings for incorporation into Grayton Beach State Park. The cost of this alternative is approximately \$4.7 million.

#### **Slide 18: Draft Phase V.4 RP Preferred Alternative**

**Speaker: Lisa Robertson**

Based on the results of project screening and evaluation, the FL TIG identified implementation of the Dickerson Bay Addition as the preferred alternative for this fourth phase of the Florida Coastal Access Project.

This alternative includes the acquisition of a coastal parcel, a private inholding within the approved St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge boundary in Wakulla County, Florida. Minor recreational enhancements would be conducted at the site, including the enhancement of a parking area, the installation of boundary signs and a gate, and marine debris removal. The project would cost approximately \$685,000.

Thank you for your attention, I will now turn the rest of the meeting over to Lena Flannery.

## **Slide 19: Question and Answer Session**

### **Speaker: Lena Flannery**

We will now move into the question-and-answer portion of the webinar. This is your chance to ask a question of trustee representatives that they will do their best to answer. Note that questions and answers will not be included in the Administrative Record or be considered in the development of the plan. However, during the formal comment session following this Q&A, you will have the chance to provide comments that will be included in the Administrative Record and considered for the plan.

## **Slide 20: Questions**

### **Speaker: Lena Flannery**

We've been collecting your questions along the way and we're going to paraphrase some of them, or combine similar themes to try to answer as many questions as possible.

Remember, if you still have a question at this point, you can plug it into the "Questions" box at the bottom of the GoToWebinar control panel (where the green arrow is pointing on this slide).

We'll take a few moments to give you time to enter any additional questions before we begin. Next, we'll pass them on to someone on our team that can best respond. We may not get to all of the questions, but we'll try to get to as many as possible.

[See [Summary of Questions and Answers](#) for the Q&A portion of the webinar.]

Thank you participants for submitting such great questions and thanks to the Trustee representatives for being ready to answer as many as we could.

## **Slide 21: Public Comment**

### **Speaker: Lena Flannery**

We will now move into the Public Comment portion of the webinar. The FL TIG will not be verbally responding to comments during today's webinar. However, a chapter will be included in the final plan that summarizes the comments received, responses, and how the plan was revised based on any comments. Comments will also become part of the Administrative Record for this plan.

## **Slide 22: Public Comment**

### **Speaker: Lena Flannery**

When you registered, you were asked if you wanted to make a comment during today's webinar. If you signed up to provide comments, then you should have received an email with your number and the speaking order.

If you did not sign up to speak but would like to do so, please type your name in the Questions box. Again, if you would like to make a comment but did not make that known during registration, please type your name in the Questions box at this time.

As a reminder, we will unmute you when it is your turn to speak. If you have called in using a phone and are planning to speak, you must enter your individual audio PIN. Please note that this PIN is different than the access code. However, if you are using Computer Audio, you do not need a PIN.

Please note, if you do not want to make a comment on the webinar today, there are other ways to submit comments which we will describe on the next slide.

[There were no public comments made during this webinar.]

We will continue now to provide additional information on the public comment process, including the comment deadline, and next steps.

## **Slide 23: Submit Your Comments**

### **Speaker: Lena Flannery**

In addition to this webinar, there are other ways to provide comments. Comments can either be:

- Submitted electronically via the Florida page of the trustee website,
- Submitted by mail to the address on the slide, or
- Submitted during the in-person public meeting this Thursday.

All comments must be received by Friday, May 20, 2022. No matter how your comments are submitted, they will all receive equal consideration in the plan.

## Slide 24: In-Person Public Meeting

### Speaker: Lena Flannery

There will also be an in-person public meeting this Thursday for those who may want to attend and give a public comment. Note that the Florida TIG will be providing the same presentation during this meeting. Spread the word to friends and neighbors!

Message in the chat: “The Draft Phase V.4 RP/SEA and factsheets can be found at [gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov/2022/04/trustees-see-public-comment-draft-restoration-plan-continuing-florida-coastal-access?](https://gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov/2022/04/trustees-see-public-comment-draft-restoration-plan-continuing-florida-coastal-access?)”

## Slide 25: Next Steps

### Speaker: Lena Flannery

Again, the public comment period for this plan will close on May 20, 2022.

The FL TIG will then review and consider all comments received and finalize the plan.

Projects selected by the FL TIG in the final plan will then proceed to implementation.

## Slide 26: Thank You!

### Speaker: None

## Summary of Questions and Answers

**Question:** What was the primary reason the TIG chose Dickerson Bay over Little Redfish Lake Addition?

**Response [from Lisa Robertson]:** For the Florida TIG, it really came down to the cost of the two alternatives. As part of the Oil Pollution Act, cost-effectiveness of the alternatives is considered. The estimated cost for acquiring the 7-acre Little Redfish Lake Addition is \$4.7 million. The estimated cost for acquiring the 114-acre Dickerson Bay addition is \$675,000. While both parcels would enhance public access to natural resources for recreational purposes by providing additional lands along the coast of the Florida Panhandle, the Dickerson Bay Addition is more cost-effective given the size of the parcel.

**Question:** How quickly could this project be implemented?

**Response [from Lisa Robertson]:** The Trust for Public Lands holds an option to acquire the property until August 2022. TPL would purchase the parcel prior to this time, then transfer the property to St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge. The Refuge anticipates completing the recreational enhancements at the site within one year of the transfer.

**Question:** Where is the public in-person meeting again?

**Response [from Dianne Ingram]:** We do have an in-person public meeting scheduled for this plan, it will be held this Thursday, May 12 at the Panacea Community Center, at 115 Otter Lake Road, Panacea FL. We will cover the same information as presented in this webinar today. The Open House portion is from 5:30 – 6:00 p.m. ET followed by the meeting from 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. ET. You can find this information in the fact sheet found in the link in the chat and it will be shown on a slide at the conclusion of this meeting.