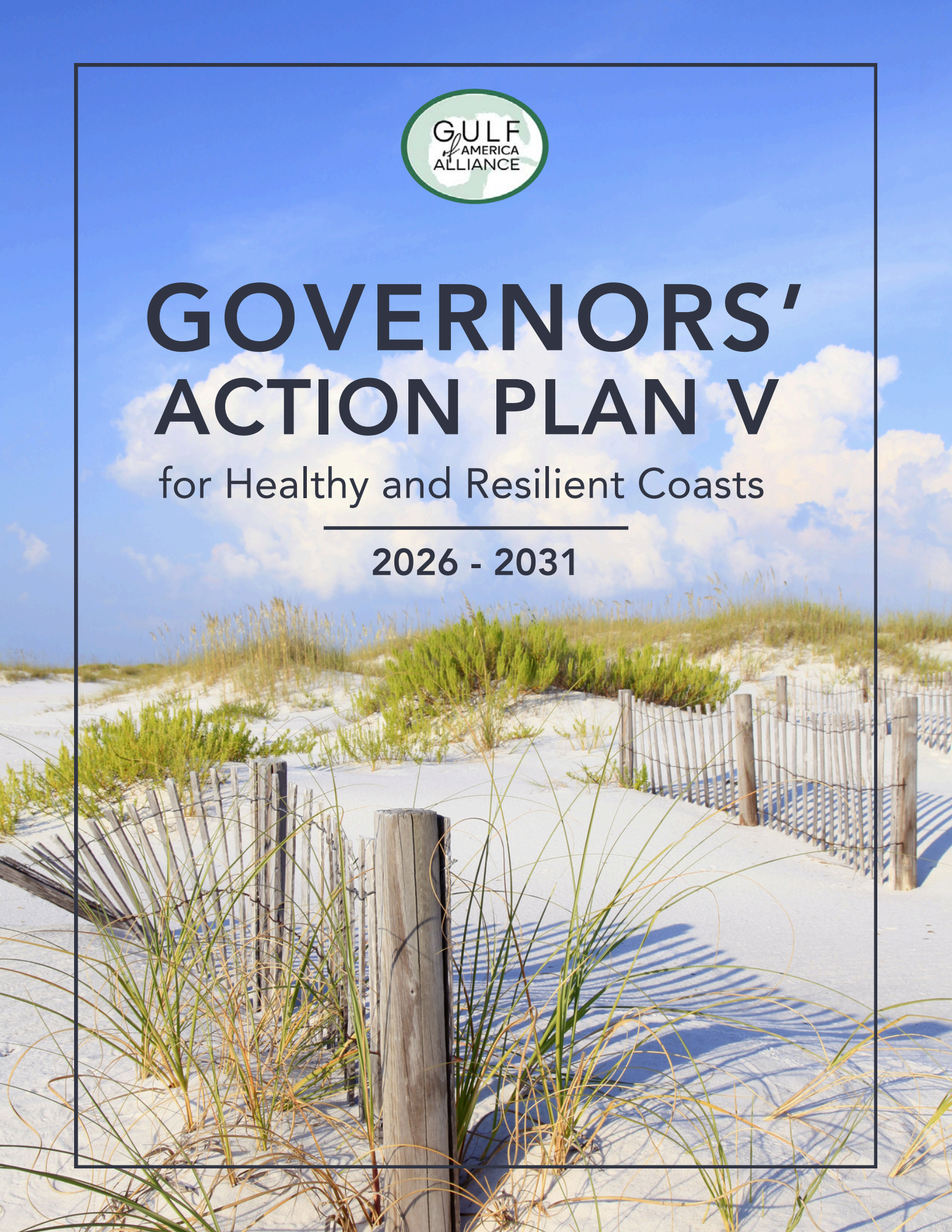


GOVERNORS' ACTION PLAN V

for Healthy and Resilient Coasts

2026 - 2031





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ALABAMA



Governor Kay Ivey

FLORIDA



Governor Ron DeSantis

LOUISIANA



Governor Jeff Landry

MISSISSIPPI



Governor Tate Reeves

TEXAS



Governor Greg Abbott

Governors' Letter

We, the Governors of the five U.S. Gulf states, know that healthy ecosystems are essential for healthy economies and thriving coastal communities. The people who live, work, and play on the Gulf Coast rely on our estuaries that provide plentiful seafood, white sandy beaches that beckon tourists, and offshore waters that are home to successful energy and maritime sectors.

Over 20 years ago, our predecessors created the Gulf of America Alliance and wrote the first *Governors' Action Plan* as a "dynamic starting point for effective regional collaboration." Each successive plan has further strengthened the Alliance and demonstrated the power of cooperating across geographic and organizational boundaries. While the Gulf region still faces many challenges, we have made great strides over the last two decades by addressing common issues, supporting innovative solutions, and increasing government effectiveness.

The *Governors' Action Plan V for Healthy and Resilient Coasts* is the fifth in this series of plans that provide a blueprint for addressing regional priorities in a voluntary and collaborative way. Each of us is vital to the Alliance's enduring legacy and responsible for guaranteeing its continued success.

Therefore, as the executives of the five Gulf states, we pledge our full support and call on other interested partners to join us in implementing the actions detailed in this *Governors' Action Plan V*.

Sincerely,

Kay Ivey
Governor Kay Ivey

Ron DeSantis
Governor Ron DeSantis

Jeff Landry
Governor Jeff Landry

Tate Reeves
Governor Tate Reeves

Greg Abbott
Governor Greg Abbott

Introduction

Recognizing that the economy and quality of life for citizens are intrinsically linked to the ecological health of the region, the governors of the five Gulf states developed a new concept for regional collaboration in 2004. Since its founding, the five U.S. Gulf states (Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas) have been the foundation of the Alliance, a partnership network dedicated to working on issues common to the Gulf region. The members include state and federal agencies, communities, academic organizations, businesses, and other non-governmental organizations in the region.

Mission & Goals

The mission of the Alliance continues to be: **to enhance the environmental and economic health of the Gulf region through increased regional collaboration**

The overarching goals of the Alliance are:

- **Providing forums for regional collaboration**
- **Developing resources to support regional priority issues**
- **Enabling strategic partnerships**
- **Implementing projects that address priority actions**

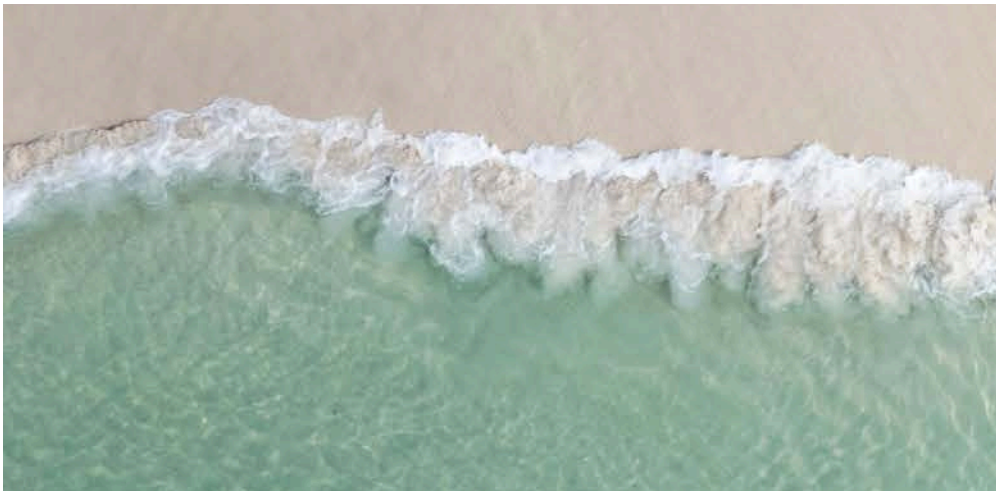
By focusing on priorities shared among the five Gulf states that benefit from a regional approach, the Alliance maximizes efficiency and reduces duplication. The Alliance's large network of partners, consisting of over 1,000 people, work collaboratively on teams, committees, and working groups to address priority issues in ways that a single entity cannot.

This *Governors' Action Plan V for Healthy and Resilient Coasts* is the fifth in a series and continues the Gulf states' joint commitment to address priority issues from a regional perspective. In this *Action Plan*, the Alliance's priority issues are:

- Enhancing **Coastal Community Resilience**
- Increasing stewardship through **Education & Engagement**
- Conserving and restoring **Habitat Resources**
- Improving the quality of **Water Resources**
- Decreasing the impacts of **Marine Debris**
- Improving the health of **Wildlife & Fisheries**

Continued leadership from the five Gulf states and strong collaboration with federal partners have been central to the success of the first four *Action Plans* and will be with this one as well. From 2026-2031, the Alliance will continue to depend on state leadership and federal cooperation to advance its mission through the implementation of the *Governors' Action Plan V for Healthy and Resilient Coasts*.

History



2003

Pew Oceans Report and U.S. Ocean Commission Report calling for regional collaboration

2004

Gulf Governors' Agreement and Call to Action

2006

Governors' Action Plan I

2009

Governors' Action Plan II

2010

Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative established as a result of the *Deepwater Horizon* Oil Spill

2012

Business Advisory Council formed



2015

Deepwater Horizon Project Tracker launched

2016

Gulf Star Program established

Governors' Action Plan III

2020

Embrace the Gulf campaign

2021

Governors' Action Plan IV

2022

Regional Ocean Partnerships federally authorized

2026

Governors' Action Plan V


"Coming together is a beginning,
staying together is progress, and
working together is a success."
- Henry Ford

Partnerships

States

Leadership from the five Gulf states forms the foundation of the Gulf of America Alliance and each state commits time and resources to its successful management by leading the Alliance Management Team and Priority Issue Teams. State scientists, technical experts, and resource managers work collaboratively to address regional matters of shared concern by participating in various teams, committees, and working groups.

Federal Agencies

The success of the Gulf of America Alliance is based on the dedication of the five Gulf states along with committed support from our federal partners. Many federal agencies are active in the Gulf and participate in the Gulf of America Alliance through the Federal Working Group and as liaisons on Priority Issue Teams.

Academia

The academic community is a critical partner for addressing Gulf priorities in the region by partnering on projects and as members of the Priority Issue Teams. In addition to expertise, innovation, and science capacities, universities educate the next generation of scientists, engineers, and business leaders required to sustain a healthy Gulf environment and economy.

Non-Governmental Organizations

Non-governmental organizations are also important to the work of Gulf of America Alliance. Many members of non-governmental organizations participate in the Priority Issue Teams and work together on Alliance-sponsored projects. These partners bring a strong link to local communities and a variety of skills, such as research and monitoring, project implementation, and communication.

Business and Industry

Business and industries represented in the Alliance play a vital role in the collaborative process. Their involvement in the Priority Issue Teams, Business Advisory Council, and Gulf Star Program strengthens a shared sense of stewardship of the Gulf and its resources and ensures that diverse perspectives are included in decision-making. Like all stakeholder groups, these partners provide essential insight and counsel, helping to foster the open and honest dialogue needed to achieve and sustain a healthy Gulf ecosystem.

International

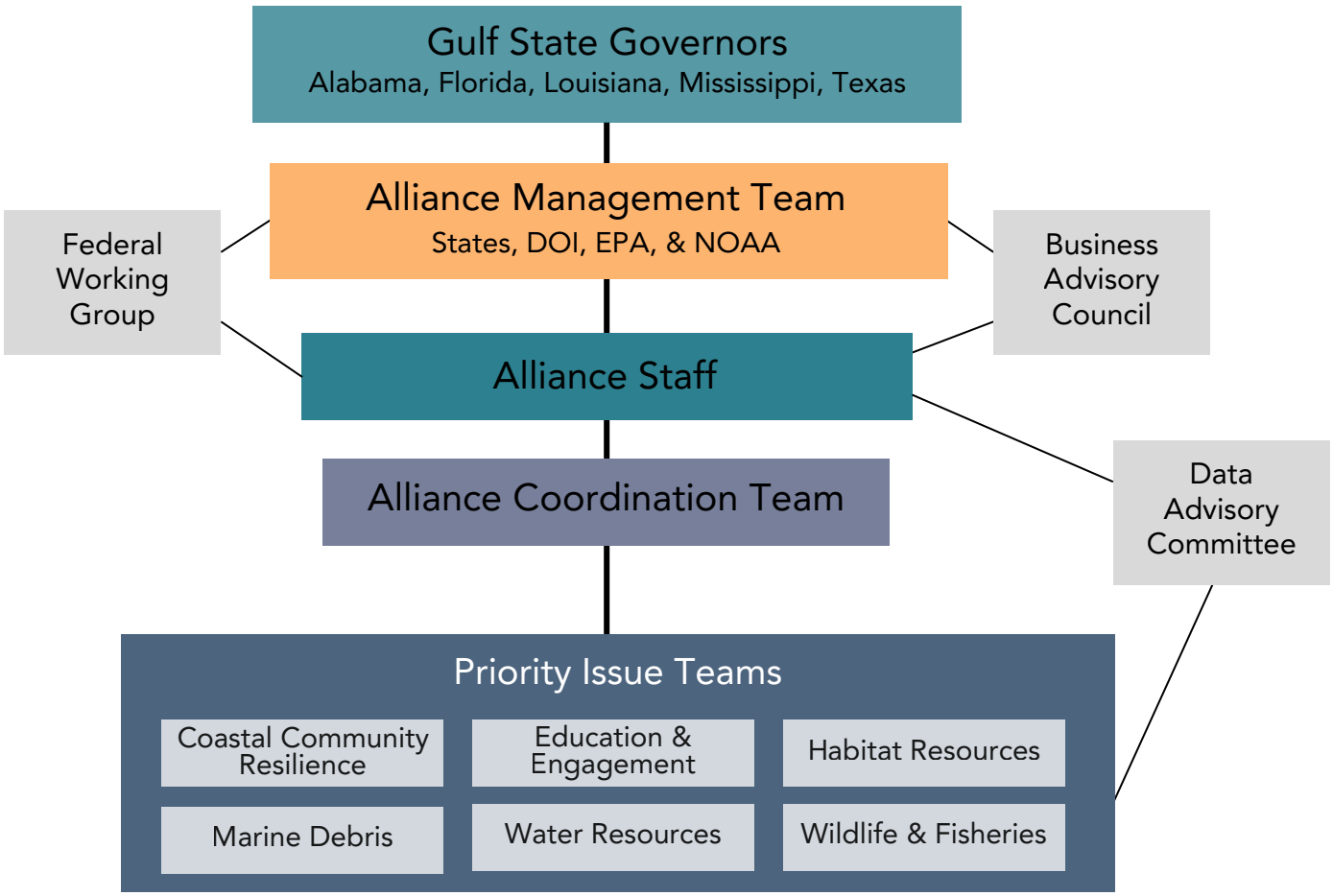
The Gulf of America Alliance recognizes that the five U.S. Gulf states are not the only residents of this important ecosystem. We will continue to seek opportunities to collaborate with our international neighbors to improve the health and productivity of this region.



Organization

The Alliance's governance structure was established by a constitution adopted when it was formed in 2004. While the organization has grown through the years, the basic structure has remained the same. In 2025, the Gulf of Mexico was officially renamed the Gulf of America and, thus, the Alliance adopted the name Gulf of America Alliance.

Today, the Alliance includes a small staff and several committees, working groups, and Priority Issue Teams dedicated to addressing the priority issues identified by the Gulf states as those that would benefit from a regional approach.



Alliance Management Team

The Alliance Management Team is comprised of representatives of the five Gulf state governors with federal agencies and other organizations serving in an advisory capacity.

Alliance Staff

Alliance Staff reports to the Alliance Management Team and administers the Priority Issue Team programs, facilitates the Federal Working Group, and coordinates the Business Advisory Council.

Alliance Coordination Team

The Alliance Coordination Team is comprised of representatives from each of the Priority Issue Teams, including state chairs, coordinators, and federal liaisons that meet on a regular basis to coordinate across the Teams and implement the vision of the Alliance Management Team.

Priority Issue Teams

Priority Issue Teams are the hallmark of the Gulf of America Alliance. These state-led Teams focus on well-defined issues and are key to our success. Participation in the Teams is open and voluntary. They are composed of region-wide partners who collaborate on a regular basis to achieve team objectives. Specific actions associated with addressing the priority issues are developed and implemented by the Team members. In this *Governors' Action Plan V*, the Alliance is addressing six priority issues:

- Coastal Community Resilience
- Education & Engagement
- Habitat Resources
- Marine Debris
- Water Resources
- Wildlife & Fisheries

Data Advisory Committee

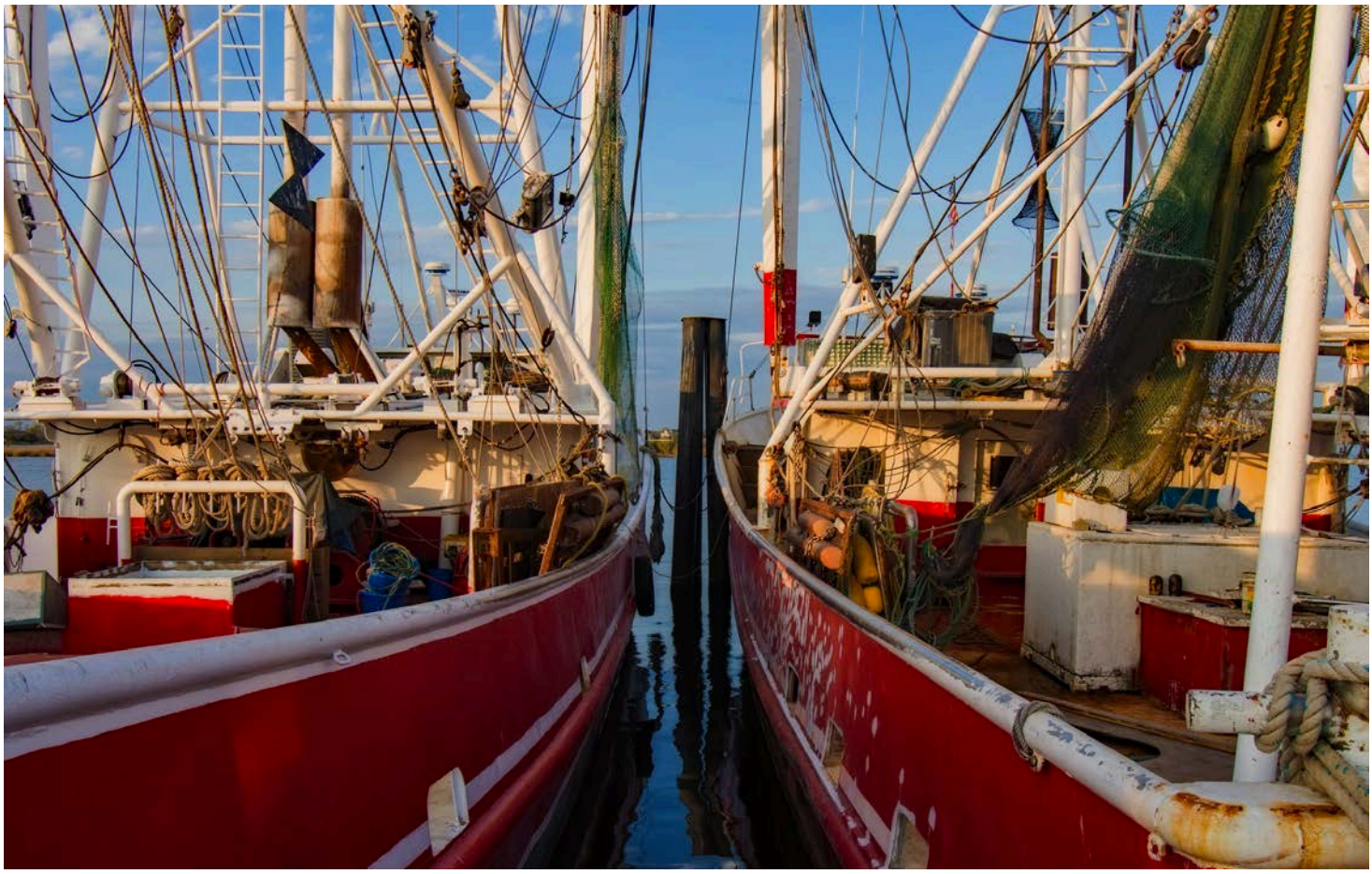
The Data Advisory Committee serves as a technical advisory body focused on recommendations for data governance – from security and metadata standards to archiving strategies – while deferring project-specific scientific oversight to individual Priority Issue Teams. The Data Advisory Committee is new for *Action Plan V*.

Federal Working Group

The Federal Working Group is comprised of federal agencies working in the Gulf region that bring diverse expertise and established experience to the Alliance.

Business Advisory Council

The Business Advisory Council provides advice and input to the Alliance from industries operating in and around the Gulf region.



Regional Ocean Partnerships

Regional Ocean Partnerships (ROPs) are voluntary intergovernmental organizations established by governors to collaboratively address ocean and coastal issues in large marine ecosystems.

Regional Ocean Partnerships have operated for two decades through many state and federal administrations and were formally authorized by Congress in 2022. The authorization language specifically calls on ROPs to serve as "intergovernmental coordinators for shared regional priorities" and "to receive Federal funding to conduct the scientific research, conservation, and restoration activities, and priority coordination on shared regional priorities."

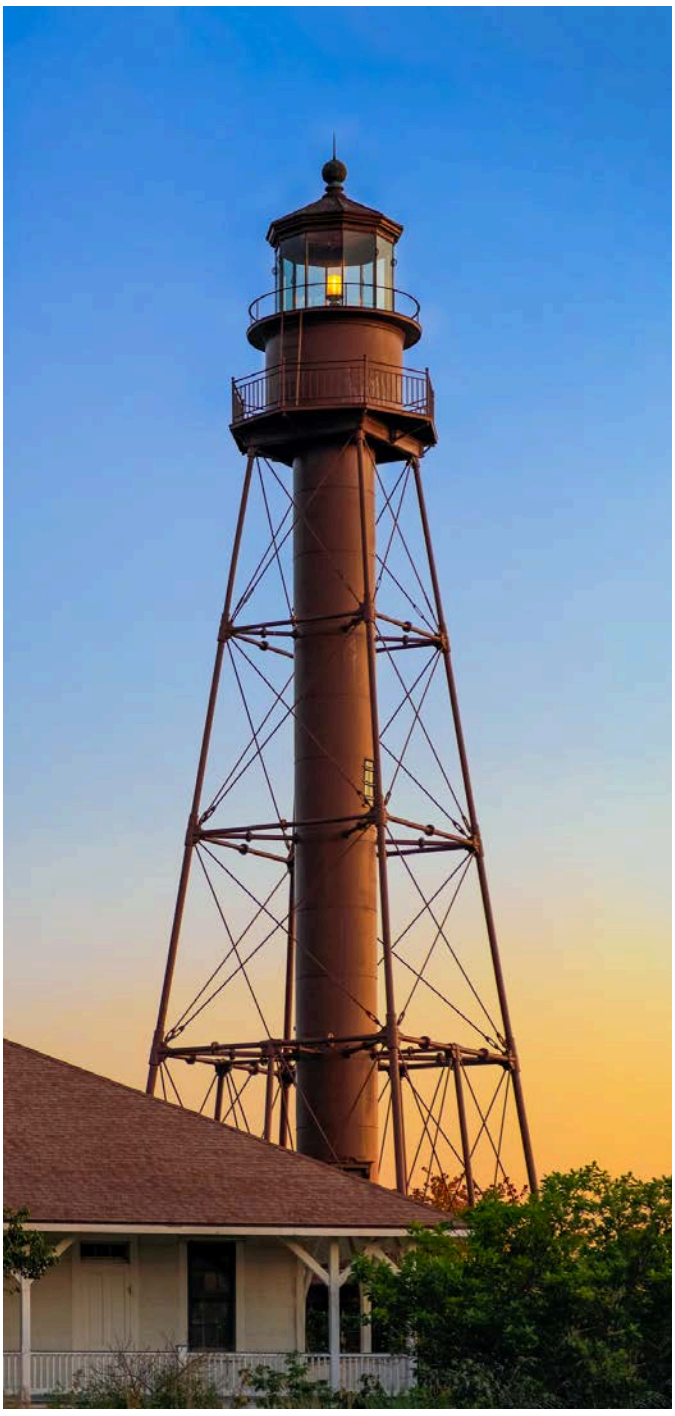
As of 2026, four ROPs are designated in the federal authorization:

- Northeast Regional Ocean Council
- Mid-Atlantic Regional Council on the Ocean
- Gulf of America Alliance
- West Coast Ocean Alliance

Regional Ocean Partnership Objectives

- Focus on issues that are priorities for that region, as identified by the member states
- Provide a voice for a wide variety of stakeholders, including state, federal, and tribal governments; academia; non-governmental organizations; and businesses
- Sustain intentional, efficient coordination and collaboration among regional stakeholders
- Leverage public and private funding to accomplish objectives that are common to multiple stakeholders across the region, which reduces duplication

Gulf Star Program



The Alliance's Gulf Star Program is a unique, public-private partnership that leverages contributions from agencies and businesses. Gulf Star partners include government agencies and leading corporations working together to support priority projects. The success of the Gulf Star Program is built upon the strength of the Alliance's collaborative formula and Gulf Star projects are made possible by the shared vision of our partners.

Over the years, the Gulf Star Program has become known for projects that provide foundational support for ecosystem health, stewardship, and community resilience. The Gulf Star Program provides funding for projects that support healthy beaches, clean waters, productive ecosystems, and thriving coastal communities. All projects in the Gulf Star Program accomplish actions identified by the Priority Issue Teams.

GULF STAR

GULF OF AMERICA ALLIANCE


"The Gulf... has long been and will continue to be a gift to humankind. It brings beauty into our lives and invigorates the human spirit."
- Jack Davis

Coastal Community Resilience



As coastal communities across the Gulf of America face increasing threats from hurricanes, flooding, and other natural and man-made hazards, the need for proactive and adaptive resilience strategies is urgent. The Coastal Community Resilience Team is responding by advancing a comprehensive approach that strengthens the built and natural environments while empowering communities and economies to thrive amid uncertainty.

The Coastal Community Resilience Team's focus areas and actions in this *Governors' Action Plan V* reflect expert input, innovative use of tools, and a collaborative vision for efficient and sustainable coastal resilience.

Team Goals

- Support communities in strengthening their infrastructure and planning systems to better withstand resilience challenges
- Strengthen resilience by helping communities safeguard natural resources and local heritage through ecosystem restoration and nature-based solutions
- Enhance community resilience through proactive risk management and sustainable development that promotes economic stability, business continuity, and insurance literacy and affordability



Focus Area 1: Resilience Strategies for the Built Environment

Help communities evaluate, prepare for, and adapt to challenges by strengthening the design, construction, and maintenance of buildings and infrastructure

Actions:

1. Incentivize and encourage resilient infrastructure design and development

2. Improve risk-informed planning by fostering knowledge sharing and collaboration

3. Promote and apply resilience tools and resources



Credit: Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant

Focus Area 2: Resilience Strategies for the Natural Environment

Support communities in strengthening and protecting natural resources to reduce the impacts of coastal hazards and preserve local heritage

Actions:

1. Strengthen community resilience to flooding by reducing coastal habitat loss

2. Restore natural habitats, expand land conservation, and support adaptation through nature-based solutions

3. Build capacity to educate and engage policy- and decision-makers

Focus Area 3: Resilience Strategies for Communities and the Economy

Develop proactive strategies to equip communities with risk management and insurance solutions by emphasizing sustainable development and policies to ensure long-term stability, adaptability, growth, and well-being for communities

Actions:

1. Build local government and community capacity for pre-disaster planning and post-disaster recovery

2. Promote economic stability by advancing business continuity planning

3. Promote community engagement and social support networks

4. Improve insurance literacy, affordability, and availability



Expected Outcomes

Through the implementation of this *Action Plan*, coastal communities will gain greater awareness of resilience knowledge, tools, and resources. As a result, communities will be able to make informed changes to local policies that strengthen long-term resilience and sustainability. More communities will adopt and apply self-assessment tools to identify and reduce coastal risks and vulnerabilities. Coastal economies and workforces will become stronger and more stable through the integration of business continuity planning and nature-based solutions. In addition, the implementation of this *Action Plan* will improve insurance literacy for both coastal residents and businesses, with the goal of improving insurance affordability.

Homes, businesses, and infrastructure face risks from coastal hazards like hurricanes, storms, and flooding. Communities that plan for both short- and long-term impacts are better able to recover from natural and man-made disasters. The Coastal Community Resilience Team is developing strategies and tools to improve access to resilience resources and knowledge that will increase community preparedness, response and recovery, and effective mitigation strategies.

Education & Engagement



Environmental literacy is the foundation for understanding the Gulf's ecological and economic value. The Education and Engagement Team works to advance Alliance priorities, foster a deeper understanding of the Gulf's value across the region, and supports educators with high-quality resources and professional development.

In this *Governors' Action Plan V*, the Education and Engagement Team increases environmental literacy and aligns educational initiatives with workforce needs to strengthen the coastal economy.

Team Goals

- Increase Gulf environmental literacy and stewardship through education and engagement
- Develop and strengthen career pathways to align education with workforce needs



Credit: The Florida Aquarium

Focus Area 1: Environmental Literacy

Build environmental literacy across audiences of all ages and types of events

Actions:

1. Provide active learning opportunities for students that promote stewardship of the Gulf and its watersheds

2. Maximize educational opportunities to raise awareness about Alliance priorities for educators, scientists, and other professional audiences

3. Engage public audiences through environmental outreach programs, resources, and media that promote Alliance messaging



Credit: © John Stanmeyer

Focus Area 2: Coastal Economy Career Pathways

Develop and strengthen career pathways to align education with workforce needs

Actions:

1. Collaborate with partners to develop project-based learning with transferable skills applicable to real-world challenges and current Alliance priorities

2. Raise awareness about jobs in the coastal economy through internships, mentorships, and technical skill-building opportunities that are tied to the Gulf and its watersheds



Expected Outcomes

The Education and Engagement Team's projects will provide educators with the tools, training, and support needed to implement high-quality Gulf-focused education in their classrooms while preparing students for careers in the Gulf region. These resources will also reach beyond students to professional audiences such as researchers, scientists, legislators, and realtors, fostering coastal stewards who can make science-based decisions about Gulf natural resources.

There is growing recognition that effective environmental education and workforce development require comprehensive training, support, and resources that align with state educational standards and the labor demands of an evolving coastal economy. Current approaches often lack the regional coordination and systematic implementation needed to ensure educational materials reach classrooms and communities effectively and create meaningful learning experiences.

Habitat Resources

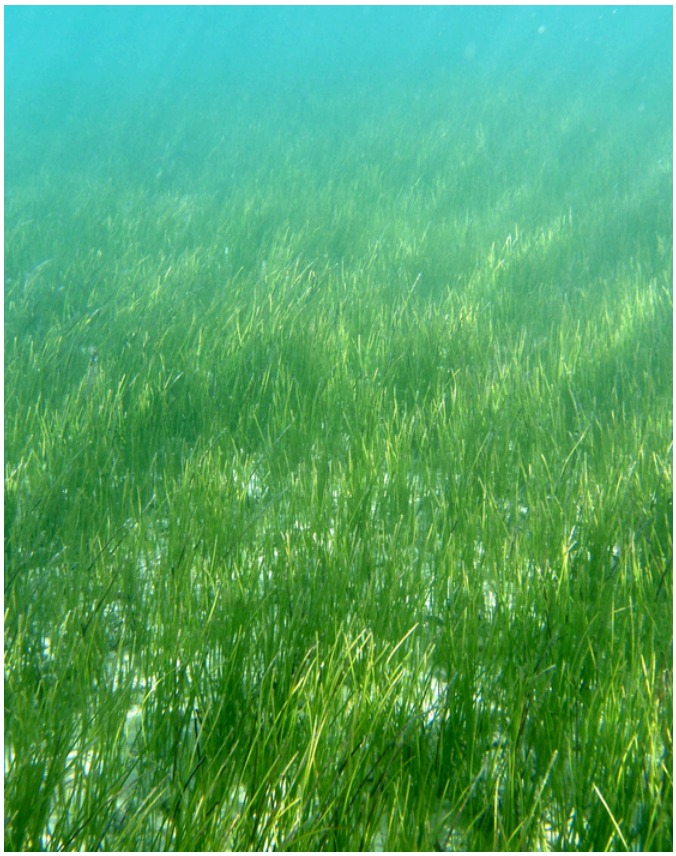


Natural resource managers and coastal stakeholders rely on current data, habitat assessments, and trend analysis to inform management decisions. The Habitat Resources Team provides accurate information and resources to support improved conservation and restoration planning, policies, and project implementation.

The Habitat Resources Team's focus areas and actions in this *Governors' Action Plan V* include the characterization, restoration, and management of priority habitats, working together to provide sustainable and effective ecosystem restoration and resources for resilient communities.

Team Goals

- Facilitate the exchange of information related to habitat assessment and restoration by identifying common issues and developing effective and efficient strategies and solutions
- Develop and share information and tools to plan and implement habitat management and restoration projects
- Advance the restoration of Gulf Coast habitats by updating regional sediment data and improving sediment management practices
- Identify areas where enhancing habitats also protects local communities and make that information accessible to stakeholders and managers



Focus Area 1: Assessment of Priority Habitats

Develop and share information on priority Gulf Coast habitats to improve disaster response and inform restoration

Actions:

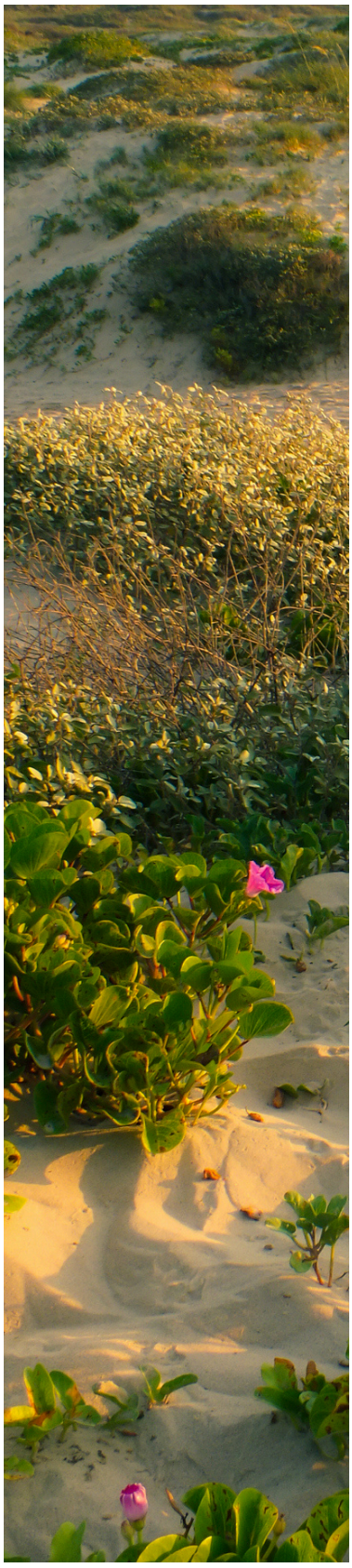
1. Support the conservation and restoration of priority habitats through data inventories, data collection, and mapping

2. Conduct and coordinate priority habitat status and trends analyses

3. Develop and promote common monitoring metrics to guide and inform the effectiveness of priority habitat restoration projects

4. Support priority habitat communities of practice

5. Support local and regional integrated planning through the application and development of habitat models



Focus Area 2: Restoration and Management of Priority Habitats

Develop, promote, and evaluate best practices that allow stakeholders to most effectively manage and restore priority Gulf Coast habitats

Actions:

1. Advance, coordinate, and communicate the development, use, and transfer of habitat restoration information to stakeholders

2. Form a community of practitioners who share information on lessons learned, performance metrics, source materials, comprehensive suitability tools, best practices, and restoration permitting

3. Plan and implement habitat management and restoration projects to achieve integrated, cross-resource benefits

4. Identify management challenges and solutions related to priority habitat change

Focus Area 3: Regional Sediment Management

Serve as a Gulf-wide coordination point for the development of information and tools that inform sediment resource management and facilitate discussions about challenges regarding the availability and allocation of Gulf sediment resources

Actions:

1. Develop tools and data to assist in the implementation of regional sediment management practices and the beneficial use of dredged materials

2. Educate coastal managers and the community on regional sediment management and beneficial use information

3. Conduct studies that facilitate sediment management

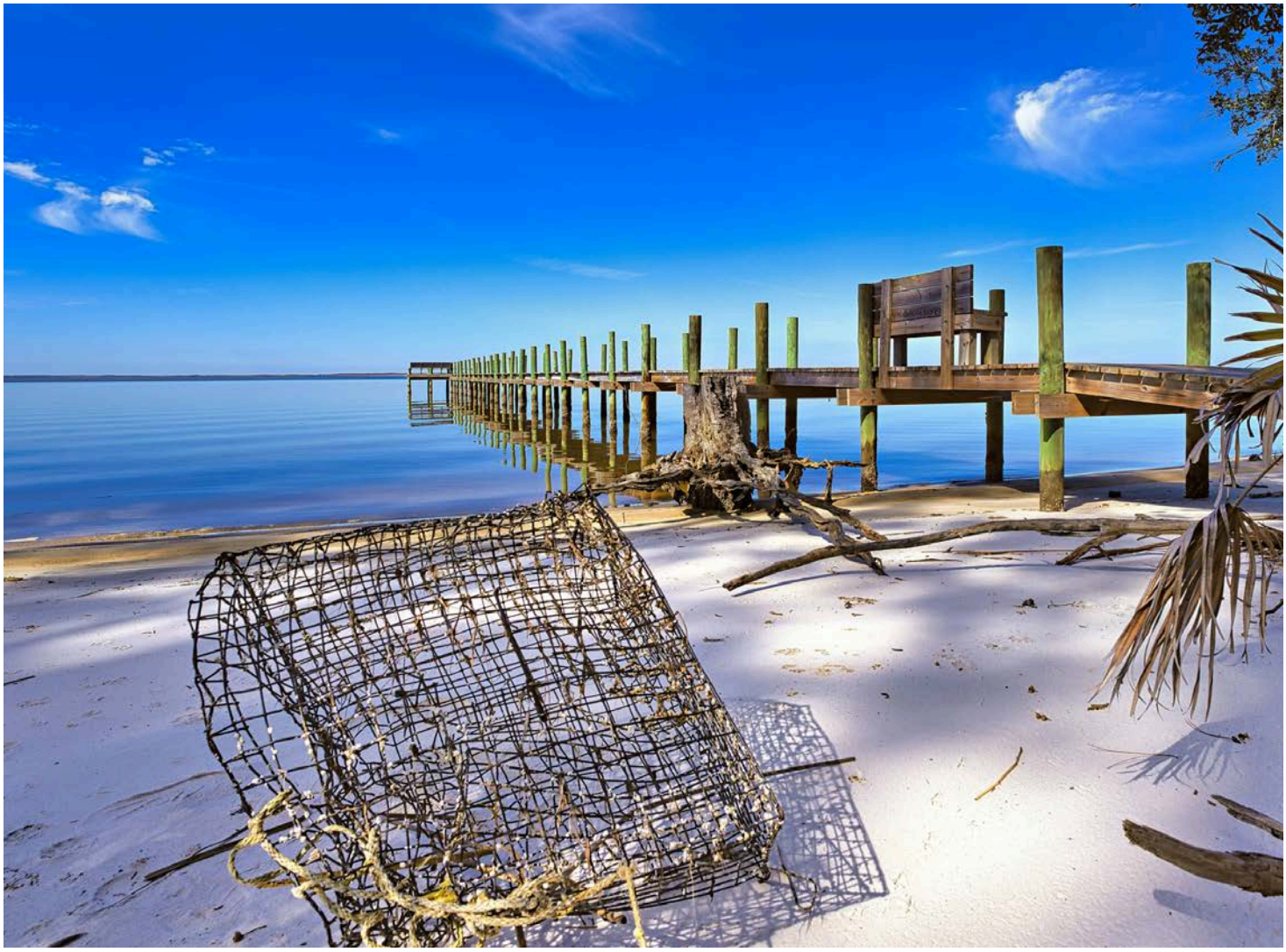


Expected Outcomes

The efforts of the Habitat Resources Team will lead to more informed and effective coastal management across the Gulf of America region. Stakeholders and resource managers will have improved access to consistent, regionally-relevant data and tools that enhance habitat assessment, restoration, and sediment management. This collaboration will streamline restoration planning and implementation, promote efficient use of resources, and strengthen policies that support sustainable ecosystems and resilient communities. Additionally, increased public awareness and education about the interconnected benefits of Gulf Coast habitats will foster broader engagement in conservation and restoration efforts.

A regional approach to habitat resource issues strengthens the effectiveness of natural resource management. By assessing and tracking habitat conditions, critical baselines can be established to guide effective coastal management. Promoting restoration and management best practices enhances resilience and protects coastlines from erosion and storms. Finally, efficiently managing sediment resources ensures balanced environmental and human needs across the region, supporting sustainable and cost-effective restoration efforts.

Marine Debris



Marine debris impacts ecosystems, marine life, navigation, and the economy of the Gulf of America and its watersheds. This debris is generated from multiple sources, including land-based debris (from inland and densely-populated coastal areas) and ocean-based debris (introduced through commercial and recreational activities). To effectively address marine debris in the region, the Marine Debris Team is developing coordinated responses and activities among stakeholders and organizations.

The Marine Debris Team's focus areas and actions in this *Governors' Action Plan V* reduce marine debris and mitigate its impacts through prevention, research, and removal efforts.

Team Goals

- Promote environmental stewardship and strengthen collaboration across the Gulf of America and its watersheds to prevent, reduce, and eliminate marine debris
- Improve research and communication to understand marine debris sources, impacts, and effective solutions, while providing accessible resources and tools
- Build capacity to remove marine debris and respond to emerging challenges, benefiting coastal ecosystems, water resources, communities, and the Gulf economy



Focus Area 1: Prevention

Prevent the introduction of marine debris and aquatic litter by raising awareness and improving stewardship in Gulf communities

Actions:

1. Emphasize the connection between economics, use of sustainable materials, and reduction of marine debris and aquatic litter

2. Establish coordinated marine debris resources and educate partners

3. Improve efforts to reduce local sources of marine debris through community action and awareness



Credit: Texas General Land Office

Focus Area 2: Research

Assess the impacts of marine debris and aquatic litter on ecosystems, human health, and Gulf economies through research and tracking

Actions:

1. Support volunteer-led projects focused on marine debris and litter

2. Increase the number and geographic coverage of marine debris and litter research projects

3. Support research on the impacts of marine debris and litter along with sustainable alternatives and/or preventive technology

Focus Area 3: Removal

Locate, remove, and dispose of marine debris and aquatic litter in the Gulf of America and its watersheds

Actions:

1. Track and communicate regional opportunities for removal of marine debris and aquatic litter

2. Support marine debris and aquatic litter removal opportunities with a focus on fishing and aquaculture industries

3. Support removal of marine debris and aquatic litter from watersheds to reduce downstream accumulation to the Gulf

4. Support and aid in the removal of abandoned and derelict vessels, as well as other large debris items

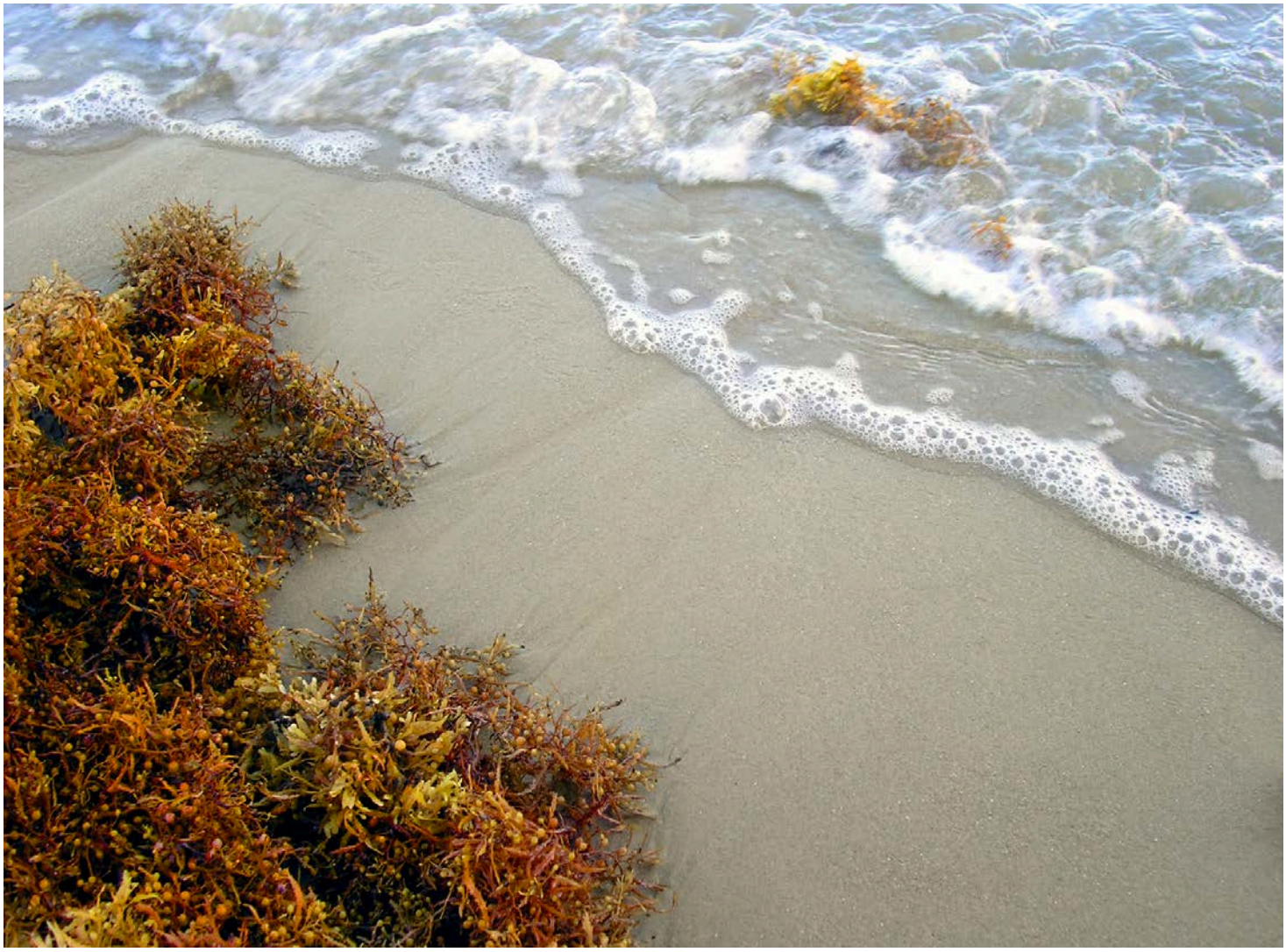


Expected Outcomes

A focus on prevention, removal, and research will provide direction in designing education and stewardship programs, improve preventative measures to reduce litter, and support solutions. Conducting multidisciplinary research will shape our understanding of the environmental and health effects of marine debris while providing insight for effective conservation and resource management. Overall, marine debris will be reduced in the Gulf of America and its watersheds, leading to improved ecosystems, human health, and coastal economies.

Marine debris and aquatic litter in the Gulf environment pose significant threats to natural resources, marine and coastal ecosystems, and the communities that depend on them. It is essential to continue efforts to better understand the sources and impacts of marine debris, as well as to remove and dispose of materials entering the environment. Strengthening these actions contributes to reducing the threats posed by marine debris.

Water Resources

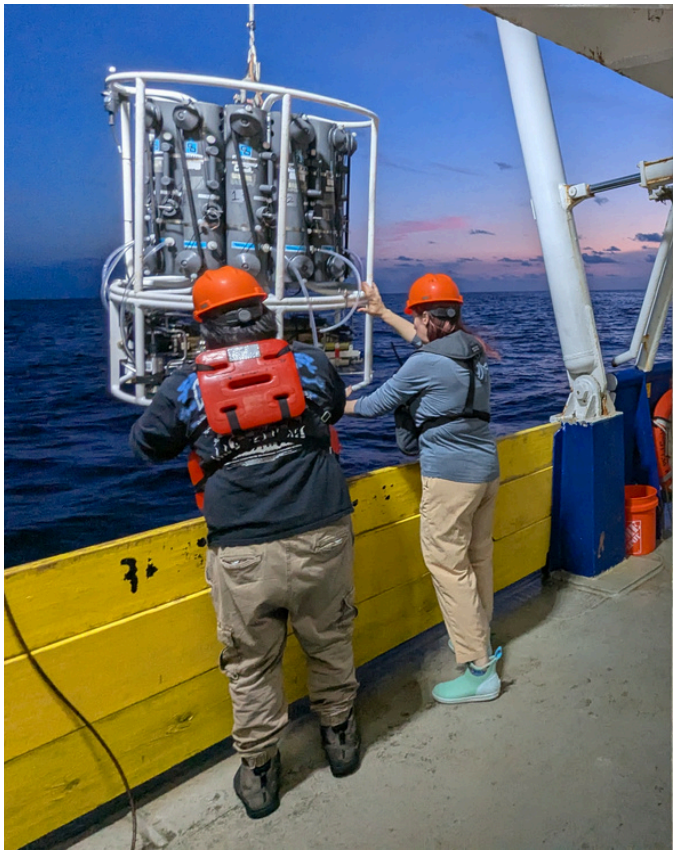


The Gulf of America provides a way of life for those who work, live, and play here and is the foundation for many of the nation's economic drivers, including energy, shipping, seafood, and recreation. These benefits depend on healthy water resources. The Water Resources Team enhances and sustains this vital natural resource by advancing our understanding of the relationship between water resources and stressors to water quality.

The Water Resources Team's focus areas and actions in this *Governors' Action Plan V* address threats to human and aquatic life and increase stewardship to protect and improve water resources.

Team Goals

- Protect water resources within the Gulf of America watershed by advancing innovative and improved science and technologies, supporting nature-based solutions, improving education and environmental awareness, and enhancing partnerships
- Identify, prioritize, and pursue data, information, and research needed to better address challenges caused by knowledge gaps and emerging issues
- Initiate and support activities to identify and understand the interconnectedness of water resources issues and how they contribute to healthy communities and a productive Gulf



Credit: Lucille Yoes

Focus Area 1: Human and Aquatic Health

Address impacts to human and aquatic health through improved assessment, prevention, control, and risk mitigation

Actions:

1. Support projects that assess, prevent, or control harmful algal blooms, pathogens, or contaminants
2. Support projects that monitor, address effects, and/or reduce nutrient pollution
3. Promote innovative monitoring tools and technologies to improve and protect water quality
4. Promote programs that identify the connection between healthy water resources and human use



Focus Area 2: Stewardship of Water Resources

Promote activities that emphasize the interconnectivity of water and its importance to healthy ecosystems, communities, and resilient economies, and encourage stewardship of water resources across interest groups and citizen-led initiatives

Actions:

1. Support initiatives that identify and address the sources and stressors related to water quality issues

2. Promote nature-based solutions that enhance water resource protection and restoration

3. Support effective communication, education, and accessible, accurate, and reliable information regarding water resources for all end users



Expected Outcomes

Through expanded partnerships and improved communication, natural resource managers and communities will gain greater knowledge of threats to Gulf waters, leading to actions that support healthier ecosystems and lower risks to human health. Increased public awareness of the economic and ecological value of water resources will foster stronger conservation efforts. Coordinated access to accurate water science data will support informed decision-making. Together, these efforts will enhance water resource management, promote innovation, and strengthen the resilience and stability of Gulf Coast communities and economies.

Monitoring, research, and coordinated response efforts within the Gulf of America and its watersheds identify and address threats such as harmful algal blooms, pathogens, and contamination from nutrient pollution, protecting both aquatic life and human health. By supporting collaborative, science-based projects that reduce pollutants and improve water quality, we strengthen the resilience of Gulf ecosystems, communities, and economies. Increased awareness and cooperation at local, regional, and Gulf-wide levels ensures the long-term protection and restoration of this vital resource for future generations.

Wildlife & Fisheries



The Gulf of America provides one third of the nation's seafood sustaining both commercial and recreational fisheries for shrimp, red snapper, oysters, crabs, and menhaden. The Gulf is also home to over 16,000 species of marine and coastal wildlife including marine mammals, sea turtles, and over 400 species of birds. The Wildlife and Fisheries Team provides tools and information that support decision-making for wildlife management, productive recreational fisheries, competitive commercial fisheries, and emerging areas of interest such as aquaculture.

The Wildlife and Fisheries Team's focus areas and actions in this *Governors' Action Plan V* emphasize assessing status and trends; identifying threats, and needs of priority wildlife species; and collaboration with other Alliance Teams to enhance ecological resilience.

Team Goals

- Understand and support diverse wildlife and fisheries populations to conserve and sustain natural capital for a resilient Gulf ecosystem
- Provide information concerning wildlife and fisheries to policy makers, managers, and other key stakeholders



Focus Area 1: Status and Trends

Provide tools and information on the status and trends, threats, and habitat linkages of wildlife and fisheries species to better support decision-making

Actions:

1. Identify focal species where the Team could enhance efforts to assess trends, threats, and/or habitat linkages

2. Prioritize research on status and trends, threats, and habitat linkages

3. Support the development, expansion, and refinement of priority short- and long-term monitoring programs



Focus Area 2: Collaboration

Collaborate with other Teams and partners to enhance ecological resilience by sharing knowledge and informing actions that impact wildlife and fisheries

Actions:

1. Provide information to key stakeholders on fish and wildlife issues, species requirements, and habitat needs

2. Engage key stakeholders in efforts to enhance ecological resilience through tools, data, and messaging

Focus Area 3: Species Conservation

Enhance efforts to protect and conserve wildlife and fisheries in the Gulf of America region

Actions:

1. Foster collaboration with key partners to address key conservation threats and management issues

2. Identify opportunities to protect and conserve priority species

3. Use data and information to address management needs and inform management practices



Expected Outcomes

Collaborative monitoring and assessment of wildlife and fisheries populations will enable natural resource managers to respond effectively to future changes. This approach promotes greater data and information sharing, resource leveraging, broader application of research results, enhanced opportunities for collaboration, and the use of standardized methodologies. It further supports alignment with existing efforts and expertise, while reducing duplication of efforts.

Together, Alliance partners conserve and manage wildlife and fisheries populations across geographic and jurisdictional boundaries. Healthy wildlife and fisheries depend on complex natural systems that warrant collaborative, informed management to enhance the benefits they provide for communities. Wildlife and fisheries management should be grounded in sound science, relevant, rigorous, and cost-effective. Management decisions should adequately reflect and address stakeholder values and needs.

Data Advisory Committee



Amid growing demands for accessible, high-quality data to inform Alliance Team projects and policy decisions, the Data Advisory Committee is new for this *Action Plan*. The committee will foster sustainable data management by providing targeted guidance on data discoverability and accessibility, ensuring that scientific insights from the Alliance's diverse Teams translate into actionable, region-wide benefits.

The Data Advisory Committee will serve as a technical advisory body, offering recommendations, best practices, and resources that support the Alliance's Priority Issue Teams without using prescriptive mandates. These activities will further strengthen the Alliance's position as a trusted source of scientific information, ensuring data from funded projects fuels collective progress for the Gulf's health.

Core Functions

- Coordinate the development of data products that support and enhance the Gulf Online Mapping Open Data platform
- Provide access to and support of the Data Managers Forum
- Review data management plans for Alliance-funded projects
- Promote "Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable" principles to enhance data quality and interoperability



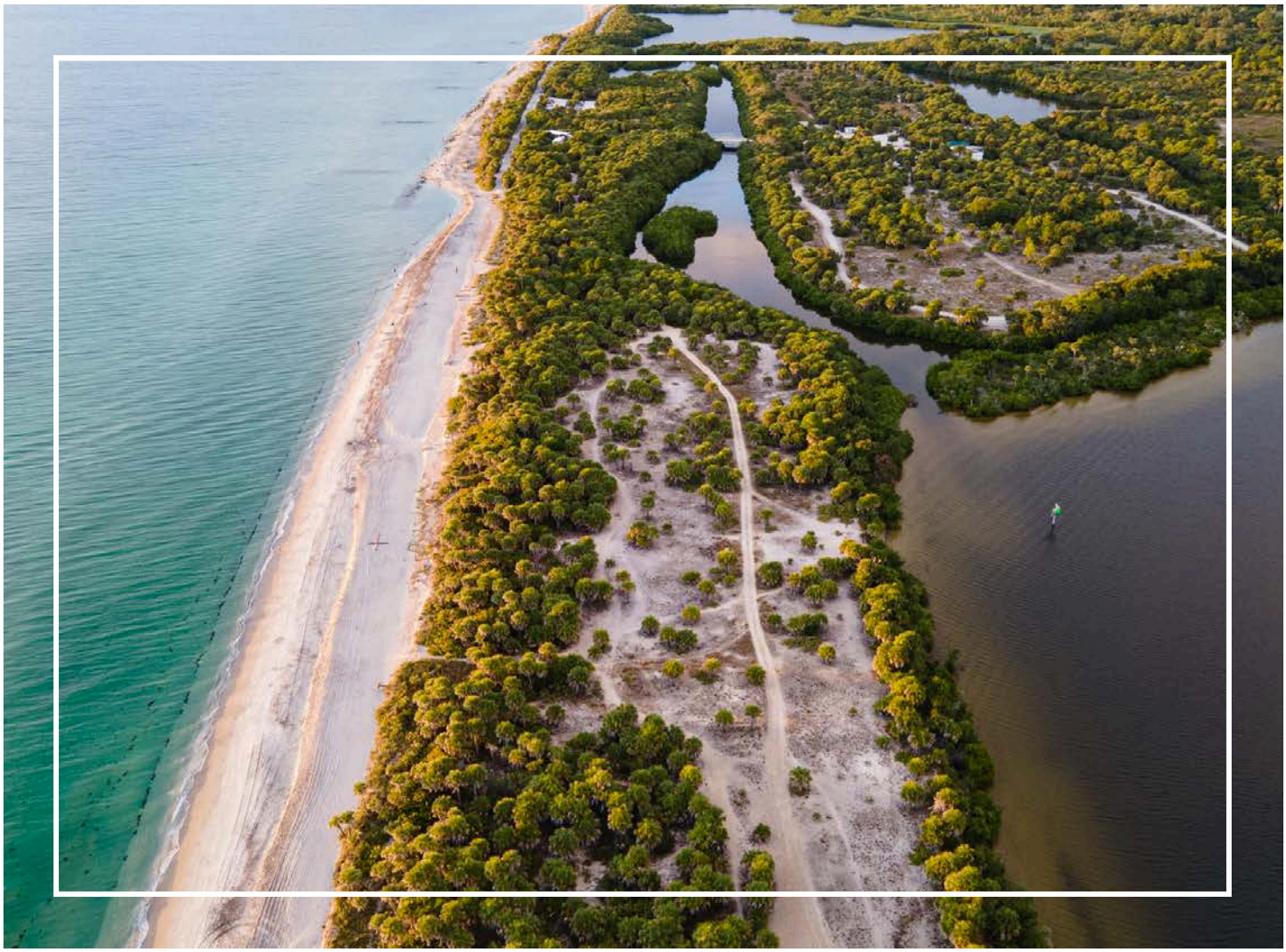
Path Forward & Charge

For over 20 years, the Gulf of America Alliance has cultivated partnerships that spark meaningful, lasting change. What began as a commitment to collaboration has matured into a trusted regional network - one that coastal communities, resource managers, and decision-makers rely on for sound science and forward-thinking solutions. Together, the partner organizations of the Alliance have strengthened community resilience, expanded access to critical data, and advanced the stewardship of the Gulf's habitats and living resources.

The commitment to a healthier Gulf, reflected in this *Governors' Action Plan V*, remains unwavering. This plan represents a truly collective vision - shaped by the five Gulf states, federal agencies, scientists, industry leaders, and non-governmental organizations. Every person and organization that contributed to this work plays an essential role in its success and forms a foundation for new partners to emerge as we move forward.



The efforts to support this *Governors' Action Plan V* transcend geographic and organizational boundaries, and the Alliance's partners are united by a shared purpose to protect and strengthen the ecosystems and economies that sustain the region. Collectively, the organizations dedicated to implementing the actions herein look forward to continuing this work, together, on behalf of the Gulf of America and those who live, work, and play along its shores.



Building Partnerships for a Healthier Gulf

GULF of AMERICA ALLIANCE

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