

A satellite image of the Gulf of Mexico region, showing the Gulf of Mexico, the Yucatan Peninsula, and parts of North and Central America. The image is oriented vertically, with the Gulf of Mexico in the center. The surrounding landmasses are shown in various shades of green, brown, and tan, indicating different vegetation and terrain types. The ocean is a deep blue color.

Gulf Research Program: Accomplishments and Next Steps

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GULF RESEARCH PROGRAM

National Academy of Sciences
National Academy of Engineering
Institute of Medicine
National Research Council



Gulf Research Program Overview

A 30-year, \$500 million program

- **Established and funded by the *Deepwater Horizon* criminal settlements** that the U.S. Department of Justice negotiated with BP (\$350M) and Transocean (\$150M). Funds accumulate over 5 years, must be spent within 30 years.
- **Directed to operate in three realms:**
 - Human health
 - Environmental protection
 - Oil system safety
- **Given three broad objectives:**
 - Research and development
 - Education and training
 - Environmental monitoring
- **Led by an Advisory Group** charged to articulate a vision, identify broad opportunities, and design a framework that leads to significant, long-term impact



Program Leadership

Dr. Barbara A. Schaal, NAS

Washington University, St. Louis
(CHAIR)

Dr. Donald F. Boesch

University of Maryland, Cambridge

Dr. Robert S. Carney

Louisiana State University

Dr. Stephen R. Carpenter, NAS

University of Wisconsin, Madison

Dr. Cortis K. Cooper

Chevron Corporation

Dr. Courtney Cowart

Sewanee: The University of the
South

Dr. Robert A. Duce

Texas A&M University, College
Station

Dr. Deborah Estrin, NAE

Cornell New York City Tech

Dr. Christopher B. Field, NAS

Carnegie Institution for Science

Dr. Gerardo Gold-Bouchot

Center for Research and
Advanced Studies at Merida

Dr. Lynn R. Goldman, IOM

George Washington University

Dr. Bernard D. Goldstein, IOM

University of Pittsburgh Graduate
School of Public Health

Dr. Thomas O. Hunter

Sandia National Laboratories
(retired)

Dr. Shirley Ann Jackson, NAE

Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Dr. Ashanti Johnson

University of Texas, Arlington

Dr. David M. Karl, NAS

University of Hawaii

Ms. Molly McCammon

Alaska Ocean Observing System

Dr. Linda A. McCauley, IOM

Emory University

Dr. J. Steven Picou

University of South Alabama

Dr. Eduardo Salas

University of Central Florida

Mr. Kerry Michael St. Pé

Barataria-Terrebonne National
Estuary Program

Dr. Arnold F. Stancell, NAE

Mobil Oil; Georgia Tech (retired)

Dr. LaDon Swann

Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant
Consortium; Auburn University

Mr. James W. Ziglar

Van Ness Feldman

Dr. Mark D. Zoback, NAE

Stanford University



Strategic Objectives

Draft strategic objectives:

- Support research, technology development, and information synthesis and assessment, that protects, restores, and improves environmental quality, oil system safety, public health, and community resilience in ocean and coastal oil- and gas-producing regions.
- Contribute to environmental protection and restoration through support of innovative and collaborative approaches to long-term environmental monitoring, including data analysis, interpretation, and application, in the Gulf of Mexico and other coastal regions.
- Foster capacity-building and the engagement, education, and training of scientists, engineers, health professionals, and offshore industry operating personnel prepared to deal with future issues at the energy-environment-people interface.



Learning the Landscape

- Three Advisory Group meetings with over 30 state, university, federal, health, industry and NGO speakers
 - New Orleans, LA
 - Washington, DC
 - Houston, TX
- Five state input meetings with ~125 Gulf stakeholders representing state, university, federal, health, industry and NGO perspectives
 - Mobile, AL
 - Thibodaux, LA
 - Tallahassee, FL
 - Long Beach, MS
 - Austin, TX
 - Two virtual meetings, the last with 100+ participants



Common Messages Heard

Research and development: R&D gaps and needs.

Education and training: K-12 to graduate school to job safety and more; must find focus.

Environmental monitoring: Currently fractured and project-driven. Offers a key opportunity.

Human health: Health is poor by national standards. Real improvements will take decades to address. Again, must find focus.

Oil system safety: Seeing significant investments by industry in the wake of *Deepwater Horizon*. What is our role?



2014 Next Steps

In 2014, the Gulf Research Program will

- Hold final Advisory Group meeting
- Prepare a “vision document”
- Continue community interactions
- Plan and hold three “opportunity analysis” workshops – education and training, public health, environmental monitoring
- Issue final vision document
- Announce first opportunities
- Continue planning major activities
- Transition from Advisory Group to Advisory Board



Education and Training: June 9-10

Framing Questions: What does the next generation Gulf of Mexico workforce look like? How do we educate and train these workers? How do we build capacity in the Gulf region's middle skilled workforce?

Environmental Monitoring: September 3-4

Likely focus: Assessing emerging priorities of a regional network of environmental monitoring programs and projects and strengthening our understanding of integral links between environment monitoring and maintaining ecosystem services

Public Health: September 22-23

Likely focus: Enhancing the resilience of Gulf communities to limit harms from future external stresses and disturbances and strengthening our understanding of integral links between the environment and human health