

Gulf of Mexico Alliance: The Federal Support Role and Regional Lessons Learned

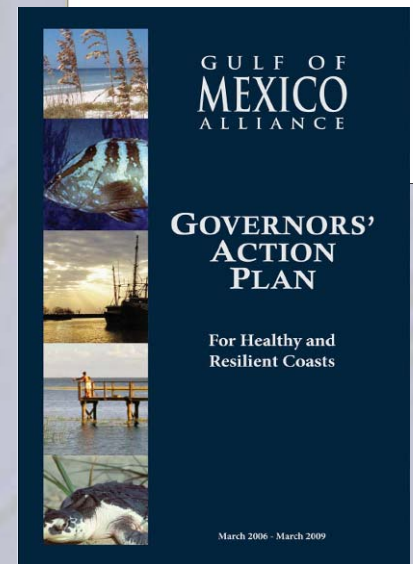
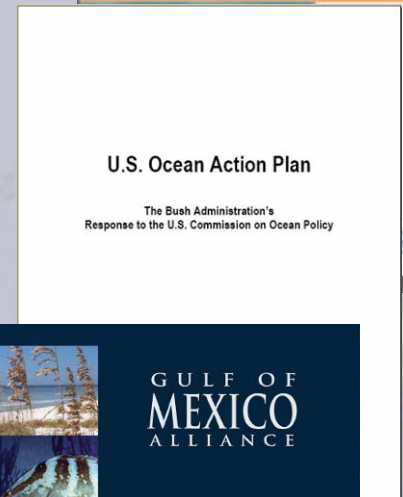


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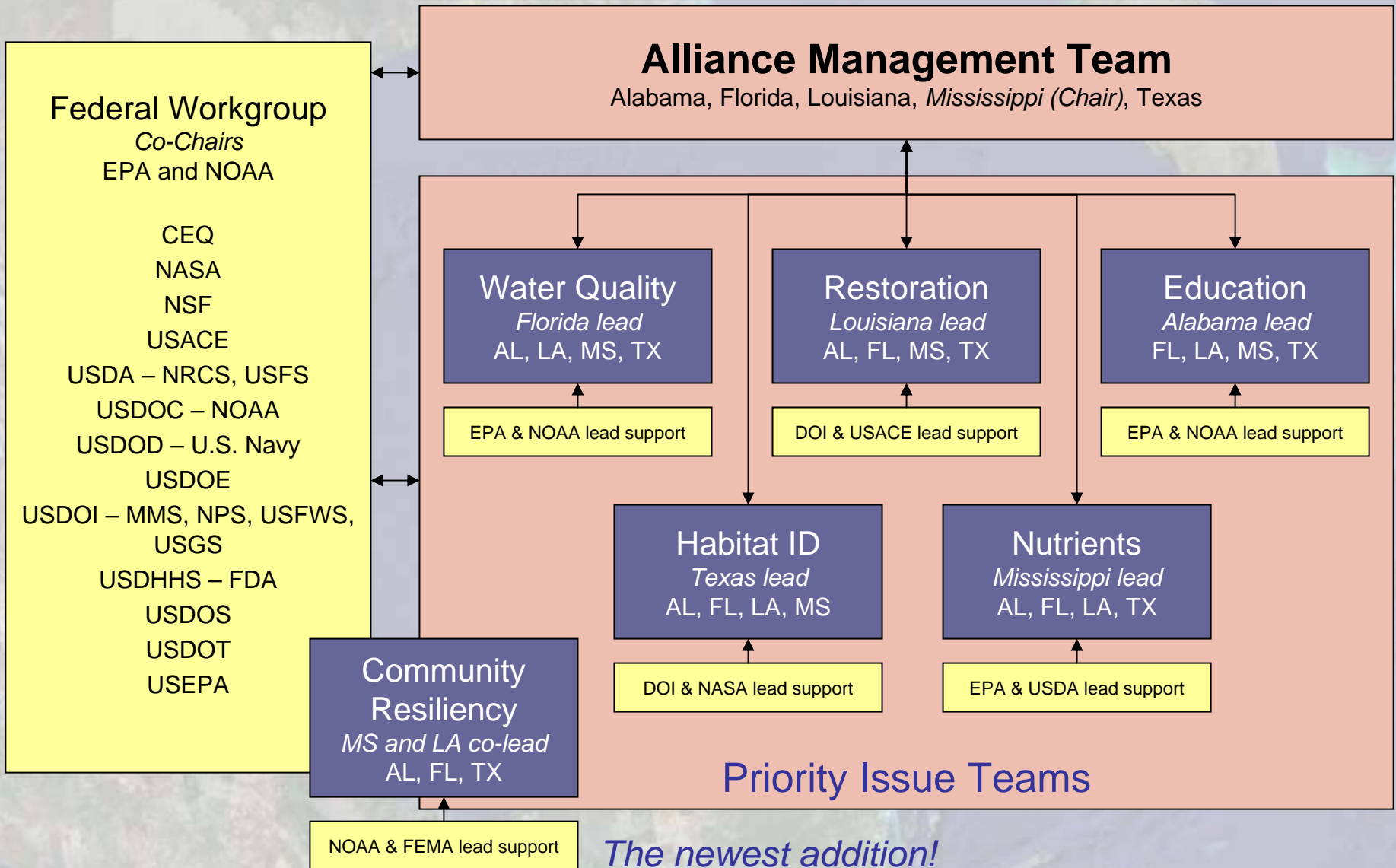
Coastal Zone 07

How the Federal Agencies Got Involved

- Page 11 of the U.S. Ocean Action Plan, Gulf of Mexico Regional Partnership
- CEQ directed EPA and NOAA to coordinate an integrated federal response to regional needs identified collaboratively by the 5 Gulf States
- NOAA Regional Collaboration
- The right thing to do
- The driver ... *Governors' Action Plan*



States Out Front ... Feds in a Support Role



Value of the Gulf of Mexico Alliance to Federal Partners

- A “working model” of regional ocean governance
- Strengthening relationships with state “customers”
- Increasing effectiveness of federal service delivery
- Increasing collaboration among regional organizations – GMF, NGI, GCOOS
- Supporting Gulf Coast recovery and contributing to more resilient coastal communities – protecting lives and livelihoods



Regional Governance Successes

- JOCI U.S. Ocean Policy Report Cards have recognized the Gulf Alliance as a bright spot in ocean initiatives
- FY08 President's Budget - \$5M for *Governors' Action Plan* projects
- It's all about the people ... annual "all hands" meetings to focus on *Governors' Action Plan*

Regional and State Ocean Governance Reform

2006

Grade: **A-**

Why is regional and state ocean governance reform important? Both Commissions recommended regional approaches to more effectively manage ocean and coastal resources across jurisdictional boundaries. The Commissions emphasized that regional governance mechanisms, and in many cases multi-state governance initiatives, are needed to achieve a more coordinated, ecosystem-based management approach for improving ocean and coastal health. Such mechanisms enable governments at all levels to work together to develop regional goals and priorities, improve responses to regional needs, and develop and disseminate regionally significant research and information. While the problems facing marine ecosystems must be addressed at the local level, to truly resolve the most pressing problems, additional tools and support that the federal government can provide are also needed. Multi-state and other regional governance mechanisms can strengthen the voice of regional stakeholders in communicating those needs to the federal government.

What was done in 2006 to address regional and state ocean governance reform? Over the last few years, ocean governance efforts have emerged in a number of regions and states. New initiatives or significant developments in 2006 include:

- Gulf of Mexico Governors' Action Plan for Healthy and Resilient Coasts
- Massachusetts Oceans Act (introduced but not passed)
- New York Ocean and Great Lakes Ecosystem Conservation Council
- Puget Sound Partnership
- Washington State Ocean Policy Work Group
- West Coast Governors' Agreement on Ocean Health

Other notable ongoing multi-state regional initiatives include:

- Chesapeake Bay Program
- Great Lakes Regional Collaboration
- Gulf of Maine Council on the Marine Environment
- Long Island Sound Study
- Northeast Regional Ocean Council

Ongoing state initiatives that continue to make strides include:

- Alaska Ocean Policy Cabinet
- California Ocean Protection Council
- Florida Oceans and Coastal Resources Council
- Hawaii Ocean and Coastal Council
- Oregon Ocean Policy Advisory Council

What remains to be done to improve the grade? Many regions and states are organizing from the "bottom up," but to fully address critical issues facing marine ecosystems, adequate support from and coordination with the federal government are also necessary. The federal government should develop a national framework to support regional approaches and collaboration, and more regions and states should develop and implement ocean governance mechanisms.

Some Lessons Learned

- Nice to have a solid “driver” for regional collaboration
 - Need the “why” for governmental partners
- State leadership requires ... well, state leadership
 - Success is dependent on a champion
- Organizational engagement is “personality-dependent”
 - Need the right people
- Build “regional trust” through an initial few, but significant, successes
- Regional collaboration begins with effective regional communication
 - So much to do here ... Gulf Alliance is a work in progress ...

Some Lessons Learned

- So, what can really be accomplished “regionally”?
 - Initial focus on transboundary issues where regional collaboration have a better than average chance to advance solutions
 - A majority of partners should benefit from the effort
 - Public engagement can be gained through appropriate messaging – how do these issues affect the regional economy and quality of life for residents?
 - The plan must be flexible and dynamic
- Inclusive participation is key
 - Capitalize on existing coordination and collaboration avenues
 - Do the work to be inclusive of stakeholders outside of government



Questions ...