

US Department of the Interior

Adaptive Management and Technical Assistance in Support of Gulf Ecosystem and Economic Restoration

The US Geological Survey proposes a multidisciplinary program utilizing a collaborative approach with multiple partners to provide science-based technical assistance to Council-funded Gulf restoration projects. These projects will benefit from existing technical experts using a structured decision-making process to ensure that proposed and implemented restoration projects are sound and based on the best available scientific expertise and guidance and have the greatest chance to achieve Council goals and priorities. Our approach will be an overarching, adaptive management-based program that will be implemented over three phases in 10 years, and will integrate four critical layers of information in support of Gulf ecologic and economic restoration – adaptive management, monitoring, restoration project sustainability, and valuation of ecosystem services and economic impacts. The objectives of Phase I (this proposal, 3 years) are to: 1) establish a Gulf Restoration Adaptive Management and Technical Assistance Program (GRAMTAP) using an adaptive management framework to help design and execute technically sound and sustainable restoration projects; and 2) deliver local to regional-scale assistance including: guidance for consistent and integrated monitoring practices; tools to assess and increase restoration project sustainability; and valuation of ecosystem services and economic impacts. With this assistance readily available to all restoration projects, the Council can measure restoration impacts and demonstrate progress towards achieving their goals and objectives, as well as make science-based decisions leading to greater certainty and success with subsequent restoration projects.

Requested funding amount: \$8,713,000.