

President Obama Signs Executive Order Officially Forming Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force

EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson to oversee national transition from emergency response to coastal recovery in the gulf

WASHINGTON. – With an executive order in place setting up the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Task Force

to continue the recovery after the BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill, EPA Administrator and Task Force Chair Lisa P.

Jackson today started a series of meetings in the region to focus on the next steps.

“The president has made clear that he wants restoration plans to come from the gulf coast, and not be imposed

on the gulf residents by Washington. We’re counting on the people who know these areas best -- the people who

call the gulf home -- to shape our work,” Administrator Jackson explained during her meetings on Tuesday. “As

someone who grew up here, I know the ecosystem is the key to our future. Our economy, our health and our

culture are built on the coastline and the gulf waters. I know this, the president knows this, and we are going to

stand with you.”

Jackson was a key part of the Obama Administration’s immediate response efforts following the oil spill, and her

deep expertise in environment-related issues will be central in spurring actions that help to restore the region’s

ecosystem while providing important support for the economy.

President Obama today signed the executive order formally creating the task force. Its mission is to coordinate

efforts to implement restoration programs and projects in the gulf coast region. The task force also will coordinate

with the Department of Health and Human Services on public health issues and with other federal agencies on

ways to enhance the economic benefits that ecosystem restoration will bring to the region.

It will have five state representatives, appointed by the president upon recommendation of the governors of each

gulf state, along with one senior official each from many federal departments and agencies, including the departments of Defense, Justice, Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, and Transportation. The task force may also

include representatives from affected tribes.

The executive order follows the release last week of the long-term restoration proposal, written by Navy Secretary

Ray Mabus -- an aggressive plan that included a call for dedicated funds to support the gulf coast’s environmental

and economic recovery. Included in the Mabus report was a recommendation for Congress to authorize a Gulf

Coast Recovery Council to manage the overall restoration efforts in the gulf coast. The president created the task

force to enhance the coordination and implementation of important restoration efforts, even before Congress acts.

View the executive order: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/executive-orders>.