

**ALABAMA GULF COAST RECOVERY COUNCIL
INTERNATIONAL TRADE CLUB
MOBILE, ALABAMA
October 3, 2013 - 3:00 P.M. CENTRAL TIME**

A meeting of the Alabama Gulf Coast Recovery Council was held at the time specified above at the International Trade Club, Mobile, Alabama.

Director James K. Lyons, Vice-Chairperson of the Council, presided over the meeting.

PRESENT:

Director James K. Lyons, Vice-Chairperson
David Perry, representing Governor Robert Bentley, Chairperson
Commissioner Tucker Dorsey, Baldwin County Commission Chairman
Commissioner Merceria Ludgood, Mobile County Commission President
Mayor Jeff Collier, Town of Dauphin Island
Mayor Sandy Stimpson, City of Mobile
Mayor Tim Kant, City of Fairhope
Mayor Tony Kennon, City of Orange Beach
Mayor Brett Dungan, City of Bayou La Batre

ABSENT:

Governor Robert Bentley, Chairperson
Mayor Robert Craft, City of Gulf Shores

COMMENTS:

Director Lyons (Council Vice-Chairperson):

"We do have a quorum present of the Council. We have seven members present with one new member. I would like to congratulate Mayor Brett Dungan, the new Mayor of Bayou La Batre, who is now officially a member of the Council. The Bayou will have somebody that will be representing them solidly for the next several years. Welcome. We will look forward to working with you in your new capacity. I know you have your hands full down in the Bayou, but you are going to contribute a lot to this organization."

AGENDA ITEM #I: APPROVAL OF AUGUST 15, 2013 MINUTES

Director Lyons:

"The minutes were e-mailed out to you earlier. Mayor Collier had three or four corrections that he made to those minutes, and they have been incorporated into the minutes. I would like to entertain a motion to approve the minutes. Motion was made by Mayor Collier and seconded by Commissioner Dorsey."

The motion passed unanimously by all members present.

AGENDA ITEM #II: UPDATE FROM COUNCIL WORK SESSION

Director Lyons:

"We are going to give you a little bit of an update...We did have a work session today and there are a lot of unknowns and a lot of process work to be done in that regard. We are going to update you very briefly on a few of the things that have been going on in regards to the Council."

a. Website revisions

Director Lyons:

“First, is the website. We do finally have our website, I think, up and functioning. It has been a work in progress. To top things off, the State was having IT problems which we think have all been worked out finally. I would like to call on our Executive Director, Eliska Morgan, to give us an update on what has happened with the website and what you can find on the website. We hope that in building it, that it will continue to build to be a tool that will assist you in understanding what the Council is doing and how we are operating and so forth, so Eliska...”

Eliska Morgan (Council Executive Director):

“We are happy to have the website up finally. Included on the website, which is www.restorealabama.org – you will find a brief summary of the Council, information on the Council, the progress they have made thus far, the MOU, the strategy map that we have and the Bylaws. We also have a Council tab that now does include all of our Council members with links to their websites. We have some FAQs, we have a resources tab; so it still is a work in progress, and we will be adding to it as we go along. But we are very happy that we have made it this far, and that some of the issues that the State has had with reference to their website have been cleared. My contact information is on there; our address is: 118 North Royal Street (Commerce Building-Sixth Floor), Room 603. So please come see me anytime; my number is on there and my e-mail address. I look forward to working with all of you. Thank you.”

Director Lyons:

“Thank you, Eliska.”

b. Application/scoring process

Director Lyons:

“Next item that I would like to talk about and I’ll update you a little bit is the application process. We have finally, we think, come up with a good draft of what we call, really not necessarily an application, but the name is a ‘project information sheet’ which will feed into the application process the essential information. We are going to put that out on the website and Eliska, I think, has told me that we can have it up there by Monday of next week. We would like to allow about thirty (30) days for comments on this application template. The template itself was taken with a little bit of input from some individuals around. Conservation has access to some of the application process forms that we use for some of the other, like NRDA and things like that, so it is sort of a compilation. The Restore Act is a little bit more complex, I think, than any of the others because of the diversity of uses that are allowed under the Restore Act, so it’s a fairly lengthy, I think, application; but, in any event, will be used as the feed document that we will use to start the process. So we would really sincerely appreciate your taking a look at the document when it gets up. We are not going to be accepting any applications at this time but as an exercise. Several of the members of the Council have volunteered to take projects that they are aware of and sort of go through and fill out the form. So I guess in the process of filling out a form you can determine where the deficiencies are or what needs to be changed or added or that sort of thing, so if anyone would care to do that so we can exercise it a little bit. We are still a good ways away from having any money. We are still a good ways away from having rules, so there are not any decisions pending any time soon. We are talking about months and months from now before any of that, but we do want to go ahead and get that part of the process established, so if anybody would take the time to take a look at it and exercise it and provide us with your input, we would sincerely appreciate it. In any event, we would like to have it back by

November 4th, I believe that is a Monday and would allow and give us about thirty (30) days for comments so if you could give us your comments by November 4th, we would sincerely appreciate that.”

c. Treasury Regs

Director Lyons:

“Next item on the agenda is the Treasury Regs, and I am going to ask David Perry to give us an update on the Treasury Regs.”

David Perry (Governor Bentley’s representative):

“Thanks, I’ll just give a brief update. Only 8 months after they were statutorily required to be released, we actually have draft regulations from the Treasury Department now. They are largely what we expected. It generally tracks the statute and doesn’t try to go much further than that. On the 35% allocation in Bucket One, the Treasury Department makes it clear that they will not be trying to substitute their judgment for the judgment of this Council in terms of subsidized decisions on how to spend the money. What they will do is make sure that the statute requirements are met in Bucket One. On Bucket Three, as in many of the Regs in general, Treasury kicked the can down the road and left a lot of details to be worked out later. For example, in Bucket Three, the amount that Alabama will get and this Council will have to work with will be determined by some complex calculations on the number of miles of oil shorelines and the distance of those miles of oil shorelines to the site of the spill; those will be worked out at a later date. We did get some clarification in some areas, but a lot of details have been left to be worked out later. Those Treasury Regs are available on our Council website www.restorealabama.org. You can go look at them there, and there’s a sixty (60) day comment period that closes, I believe, November 5th, so for those of you who are interested in reviewing the Regs, I would encourage you to go read them and encourage you to comment on them. You can comment on them either online or by mail. And while the comment period is open for sixty (60) days; that is not a guarantee that the Treasury Regs will become final at that time. The Treasury Department may take some more time beyond that, so we won’t know what the final Regs are for at least a few more weeks, if not a couple of months. But that’s a short version of the summary, and again they are available online, and you can find a link on the Council’s website. And I would encourage those of you who are interested to go read them and comment on any suggestions that you have for them.”

Director Lyons:

“Okay, thank you David.”

AGENDA ITEM #III: NEXT STEPS

Director Lyons:

“Next on the agenda is - Next Steps, and I’ll give you just a little bit of background for, at least, where my participation was. We were approached by the Corps of Engineers sometime back, and I think we had a meeting over here at my office with David, and I think a couple of the Council members and essentially their approach to us was they had this great body of work that they have been working on for several years, and it’s called the Mississippi Coastal Improvement Program, called MCIP. And a tremendous amount of modeling went into that study. And their idea and approach to us was that they could take some of that foundation research that they had done using the same group of scientists. Dr. Susan Reese would be the lead on it, but take some of that same information and extend it across the Alabama coast, at

the same time incorporating some bodies of work that have already had a tremendous amount of work put into them - the National Estuary Program CCMP, take the body of work done by the Coastal Recovery Commission, take all these together and provide us with sort of a planning tool. They have since been negotiating with the State and Department of Conservation, and I'm going to let Patti Powell give you just a little bit of an update and where that stands and what sort of work product we can expect out of that."

Patti Powell (Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, State Lands Division Director):

"Yes, what we have been discussing and a couple of reasons that have been so important, the ability to leverage all the modeling that had to be done in the Mississippi Sound, for MCIP, and for example these dynamic processes for artificial state boundary. So the Corps had to move on into Alabama waters and do some modeling. So it allows us the leverage and get a jump start on that. And that is just some of the unique specific capabilities that the Corps has. And we are very excited about that. And for some who may not be familiar with the work, it's not projects, it's planning. And it really transcends, not just the Restore Act, it goes in the State as a whole, and it's not oil spill related, it's needs related, and it transcends into everything that impacts this coast and the beginning of some comprehensive planning for that. The stage that we are at now is that everything is a process. After discussions with the Corps, the Governor has sent a letter formally requesting the Corps' participation in this effort, and so we hope to begin that and complete that before too long. And, in addition to building all the existing modeling and the existing bodies of water that you mentioned, there is also a full public outreach portion of that planning effort that will get underway. Again, being informed by prior things that we've heard, but very much focusing on this comprehensive planning, and so there will be more information on that. That is the stage that we are at so there are a couple of more steps to be completed but that has been formally initiated. And I do want to say from the DCNR perspective, how excited we are that this work is being done, and I want to thank the Governor for his vision and commitment on moving into this and getting something for Alabama like Mississippi has done. And so that's sort of where we are. And the end product again will be more of a planning document and not a project one."

Director Lyons:

"Thank you, Patti, and I believe when we had the first presentation by the Corps, I felt like it was an awfully good idea and very cost effective. And thanks to Governor Bentley for agreeing that the State is going to be footing the bill for the study, so this is not coming out of any Restore money. It's not that we can even get reimbursed for any money that we are spending today, but Governor Bentley has found the money within the State in order to get this done, and it's a real credit to him and his administration to take this step. And I think that it is going to be an important body of work that will help us not only really with the Restore Council but even really beyond the Restore Council. I think it is going to be a good body of work that will provide us some good long-range tools to help us do the right thing as we go forward."

AGENDA ITEM #IV: PUBLIC COMMENT, AS TIME ALLOWS

Director Lyons:

"We are going to go into our Public Comment period. We have (9) nine people signed up to speak, so we will go ahead and start in order."

Speaker #1: Stan Graves (Dauphin Island Property Owner)

"I thank you very much for giving me this opportunity to speak. My name is Stan Graves. I own two properties on Dauphin Island, and I am also a director, member of the Board of Dauphin Island Property Owners' Association, Board of Directors. I'm not speaking on behalf of the

Board, I'm speaking on my behalf, but I am representing and commenting on behalf of 2,800 property owners who have been affected by the oil spill, and I'm concerned because of some of the positions that the State Lands Division has taken in the past that I want to speak to. But I think that there are two critical points that need to be brought out. Number one, the Corps lawsuit has been settled since November 2009, and 1,700 property owners have given away their property rights – past, present and future. And anybody that buys their property is also affected by that settlement. The second key point, the membership of the POA deeded the West Surf Beach to the Town of Dauphin Island based upon the promise of future funding for shoreline restoration and beach stabilization, none of which has occurred to this point and time. This is primarily, in my opinion, based upon the position that the Lands Division has taken. Let me remind you what's critical about this position on the West Surf Beach. The deed stipulates that construction will begin within seven (7) years of the date of the deed, which is January 16, 2009. This Council needs to act now to provide the necessary funding for the Town of Dauphin Island to retain that public beach. Otherwise, it comes back to POA. Last month, or earlier in September, I sent a letter to Commissioner Guy and copied the Governor and Attorney General among others concerned with denial of funding based upon a continued reluctance and aversion to place sand on the Town of Dauphin Island's shoreline. I'm not saying private property. I'm talking about our shoreline and the Town shoreline. The private property is behind me. A copy of this letter and its package will be provided to the Council. The position that sand can't end up on private property is a false one based upon a meeting that I attended with Lisa Young and Ben Coffee, and Eliska was there with Jo Bonner, Congressman Bonner, to discuss several issues upon which we asked if we could find out if the position of the State Lands Division is true. That is, that sand cannot go on private property. The response from Fish & Wildlife is included in my address, and it was included in Commissioner Guy's, as well as an attorney and another e-mail from Bill Pearson, Fish & Wildlife, all of which said that sand can go on private property. In a nutshell, there is no restriction in using funds from damages under NRDA. The State of Alabama and the federal government may identify the need for a restoration project that could include implementation on private property since these funds do not originate from appropriated tax. The same is the condition on CIAP funding and that documentation, which I will share with you all and give to Eliska, as well as my comments, points that out. A study has been completed by our Coastal Engineer, the Town's Coastal Engineer, Scott Douglass, and all that is needed now is sufficient funds to begin construction. Dauphin Island is in a critical state, and look what's coming down the road, we don't know what's going to happen with 'Karen', and especially since steps were taken, it's critical, were taken to protect the Island from the oil spill and that steps taken at that time to protect the oil spill weakened the Island. This is probably the Town's only true opportunity to achieve its number one priority to restore the shoreline and stabilize the Island as an effective barrier island, as well as providing the important protection for Bayou La Batre, Coden and the Mobile shoreline. A healthy Dauphin Island is essential to protect and maintain the significant estuary resources of the Mississippi Sound shared by Alabama/Mississippi. To aid in this in the future, I would suggest that the State of Alabama look to Florida and enact a law similar to Florida's Statue 161.142 concerning public policy related to navigation inlets, specifically in construction and maintenance dredging. And thank you for your time, and I hope that this Council will provide the necessary funding for the Town of Dauphin Island to stabilize the shoreline and recover its public beach. Thank you."

Director Lyons:

"Thank you. Jack Gaines."

Speaker #2: Jack Gaines (Dauphin Island Property Owner)

"I'm going to be a little briefer than Stan. There are a couple of points that I would like to make. One, Dauphin Island has been the center of the oil and gas industry from Alabama since day one, since the first gas well was built. Millions, no, excuse me, billions of dollars have gone to the State, the federal government and the oil companies, and Dauphin Island has received very little of this largesse, in other words, the money flows to Montgomery, but it hasn't been flowing back. The money flows to Washington, it hasn't been flowing back. Of course, we don't expect to get anything from the oil companies, but it would be nice if they would take a little consideration of the effect that they have had on our local environment. And now, I'm going to speak for all of us retired guys. I retired at Dauphin Island to take advantage of the access of the ocean and the beaches and everything, and this oil spill took two (2) years out of my late life of my enjoyment of the environment there. I came to Dauphin Island because of what the environment had to offer. And we really deserve some consideration for that effect on all of us and our quality of life on Dauphin Island. Thank you."

Director Lyons:

"Thank you. Sam Mason."

Speaker #3: Sam Mason (Dauphin Island Property Owner)

"I guess you wonder why everybody from Dauphin Island is not down there batting down the hatches, but unlike the exercise of Gulf Shores and Orange Beach will go through this evening, we go through on a monthly basis down there. We have so much erosion, and we have to protect ourselves from every front. But I think about the last thing that I have to do tomorrow is roll in the grill and get the lawn chairs in, because all the other things have been done, because we do it on a monthly basis. And just wanted to plead with the Council and with all your hard work, just remember that I know that part of what I've heard before from the meetings is that you want to be fair and equitable, and on the surface that sounds great. Okay, but that oil spill was not fair. It touched some areas more than others. And some areas have lived with this oil and gas industry, just as they have said in the past from the previous talk. But we have gas lines going through the island and it's weakened the island as we've received with 'Katrina Cut', during Katrina. After Katrina, we had a gas rig sitting on our beach. It was found on the beach after the hurricane. Now, no telling what it did during the night. It probably surged in-and-out and wiped out the many houses in its area that are no longer there. We live with it on a daily basis. And again, in the last twenty-four (24) months, I know the Mayor has received a call from the Coast Guard on their flyovers, seeing gas bubbling up out near the Lighthouse. And these lines, the gas lines that Dauphin Island live with looks like a spider web out in the Gulf and several coming through the Island. They are getting to the point of thirty (30) years old. And it's very sad to know that over the years millions and millions of dollars have gone into the CIAP fund, but yet Dauphin Island is struggling. We are almost on the death bed. We have lost forty plus (40+) lots completely submerged under water. We have got at least half a dozen houses that the surf crashes under the house on a daily basis. And it's just sad to know that all of those millions and millions of dollars have bypassed Dauphin Island. Just want to plead with you that Dauphin Island's future is literally in your hands, and there is not going to be another opportunity to get the shoreline stabilization. You will vote for Dauphin Island's fate. I'll assure you, you and this committee's job, you will determine whether half of Dauphin Island will exist or not again. Thank you."

Director Lyons:

"Thank you. Is it Caroline Graves?"

Speaker #4: Caroline Graves (Dauphin Island Property Owner)

"I'm here to talk about the bias and the unjust treatment to Dauphin Island by the State of Alabama and the concealing of the BP projects of Alabama. More than ninety (90) percent of the oil and gas is produced in the Gulf, and the federal government receives approximately 4.5 billion dollars a year from it. Alabama has received multi-billions of dollars from oil and gas. All of those billions of dollars go to the State are from the gas pipelines; they go through Dauphin Island in Mobile County. All of the oil rigs off of the Alabama coastline can only be seen from Dauphin Island and Mobile County. Because Gulf Shores and Orange Beach have a fifteen (15) mile limit of no oil rigs south of Baldwin County, they do not want the site of the rigs to harm their economy or their private property values. Alabama has even arranged for the Corps of Engineers to have the sand bypassed to keep private properties from eroding away on the beaches near the entrance to the Little Lagoon and around the Perdido Pass in Baldwin County. Gulf Shores and Orange Beach haven't had any past impact whatsoever from the oil and gas industries and from the rigs of the gas pipelines. So Alabama is going beyond acceptable limits in showing its bias against Dauphin Island when Alabama is spending eighty-five (85) million dollars on a hotel with BP environmental money and is planning on giving over one (1) billion dollars to Baldwin County for the economics projects. Over the past thirty (30) years, the State of Alabama has purposely let Dauphin Island's property erode away by dredging the Mobile Shipping Channel, and now to add insult to injury, the State of Alabama puts the head of the Port Authority, Jimmy Lyons, on the committee for making these decisions for money going to Dauphin Island. Mr. Lyons wants all of the money coming to Mobile County for the Mobile Harbor. It's ironic that previously Mr. Lyons stated that Mobile Harbor had no affects whatsoever from the oil spill. America and the whole world will see the corruption in its purest form if the State of Alabama does not approve of giving the Town of Dauphin Island the full amount of the BP money for the beach restoration for the whole Island. And if the State of Alabama does not approve of Dauphin Island receiving the same amount of money as Baldwin Counties projects put in trust for the assurance and money to be put in trust for future beach restoration. This will offset the future impacts of the oil and gas in the Gulf and the State of Alabama and the Port Authority to destroy Dauphin Island by future dredging of the shipping channel. Thank you."

Mayor Tony Kennon (Council Member):

"Jimmy, I want to correct something, please. Orange Beach does not have any fifteen (15) mile jurisdiction on oil rigs whatsoever. We do not have a fifteen (15) mile jurisdiction or whatever you might have said that was, so we can't have oil rigs. We have nothing to do with that. Within three (3) miles of state water, we have no control beyond that."

Caroline Graves:

"I know. In 1990, you all went to the Governor, and the Governor contacted the Secretary of the Interior Abbott, and he put the limit, and it is in the Department of Interior's documentation."

Mayor Kennon:

"Well I would like to see it. I never heard of that."

Caroline Graves:

"Would you like to see that? Okay."

Mayor Kennon:

"Yes, I would."

Caroline Graves:

"Okay, I'll be glad to show you."

Director Lyons:

"Casi Calloway."

Speaker #5: Casi Calloway (Mobile Baykeeper Executive Director)

"Thank you. A couple of huge things also...I want to thank the Governor's Office for finding the funding and the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources for agreeing to put together a plan. I think you all heard me last time as I was up here complaining largely and loudly, and I'm going to keep on doing it until the cows come home about there not being a Citizen Advisory Committee. I am very excited about the opportunity to have some kind of technical or advisory review committee associated with a planning process and hope that that will be thorough and really strong and give the opportunity for the public to really invest in it, especially for the scientific community to be able to do a strong review of it. There are so many of us in the business and industry and environmental communities as well. It's one of the biggest reasons that we thought some type of advisory committee is important, because you do have people in this community who know a lot about what is happening. So there are a couple of small questions that I want to ask. The last time I checked the website there hadn't been any minutes posted to the website."

Eliska Morgan:

"They have all been posted. They all went up this morning."

Casi Calloway:

"Okay, perfect. I haven't checked in a little bit, but thank you. So the minutes are up from all of the last meetings? That's great to know. It sounds to me like on Monday you will have up this process for how project selection or project development will go forward. Can you talk a little bit about what the process will be to make comments? Will that be posted on the website, so if I want to make comments I can just e-mail them to you, to Eliska, in some kind of a format?"

Director Lyons

"We will have it on the website as to where and how...and I think, Eliska, you have an address where they can address the comments. Is that correct?"

Eliska Morgan:

"We will have that on there; the instructions will be on the website."

Director Lyons:

"With the form."

Casi Calloway:

"I think that will be really important to make sure that the public-at-large understands exactly how you can comment and where to go and find those comments. So then the second thing in talking about that...I think the next step that the public very much wants to know is who is going to review those projects once they get in there. It sounded to me, and it's just the way I heard it probably, but it sounded to me like in describing what this project...and I can't remember the exact wording used, but I mean the project selection, the project information. So the project information sheet, how will that be used to decide which projects will rise to the top? Who will review those projects once they go into that portal, and we still have a lot of questions about what those next steps are. How will the public be able to see, will we be able to see every project that goes in it or will we get to see the projects that are reviewed and found wanting or the projects that are seen as higher? How will the public have a role in that next step? So I am ever hopeful that we can move toward that. The last point again and again, we are a huge fan

and it is so easy, we will do that for you. A bunch of us in this room and a bunch of us that come to these meetings regularly will be a part of a Citizen's Advisory Committee or Technical Advisory Committee and do that for you. The last point that I want to make too is once those projects go in and once everything is up there, it kind of goes with the Treasury Regs. We have mentioned a number of times that a lot of concern that Alabama, because we haven't started collecting projects officially or formally, we aren't putting anything into the federal kitty of projects. And that is moving forward now, they have a list of how to, they have a definition of all the projects that are there. We do hope that you have incorporated that into the project information sheet to make sure that we are tracking what the Federal Regs look like or the Federal Restore Council looks like. But again, I want to... I know I'm a broken record, I'll not let the horse be dead just yet, but the Federal Treasury Regs, as well as the Federal Council, have agreed to establish some version of a Citizen Advisory Committee. I have heard from some of you that a Technical Advisory Committee is much more appropriately named, so I will change the name of it, but some groups of the community are ready. Because I begin my last point to reiterate that is if we don't have something like that, you all have to give us the tools to educate the community to know to come to these meetings. So thank you again so much. Again, I'm very excited about the planning process. Mobile and Baldwin County have long needed it, and we are excited to see that happen."

Mayor Kennon:

"I have a question for Casi. Would you be in favor of any Citizen Advisory Committee member would not be allowed to be any part of any group searching for funds?"

Casi Calloway:

"I mean, if that's the way you want to do it, I'm fine with that. I think you are pressed to find some folks that are engaged to do it but if that is what needs to happen, sure."

Mayor Kennon:

"I don't know how you would do it otherwise; it would be a conflict of interest in any other fashion."

Casi Calloway:

"You would probably run into losing a lot of the folks who want to engage, because stepping out and not being a part of the process and evaluation, you all do that all the time with your own businesses and your job as Council members or Mayors, so there is a lot of, I mean, conflict of interest is often..."

Mayor Kennon:

"A conflict of interest eliminates some of those participating."

Casi Calloway:

"Right."

Mayor Kennon:

"I don't know about the rest of you guys, but I'm just saying, I don't know how you are going to create any Citizen Advisory Committee with any great technical degree of knowledge that does not have a conflict of interest searching after dollars and if you open that can of worms, then you are going to bring in the economic side that's going to be right there with you trying to lobby for their dollars, and I see it as nothing but a money grab and knock down drag out between folks, and I think we can find something better."

Casi Calloway:

"I hear that, and I think you could find some solutions to that problem. And that's a very, very good valid concern. So I'll put my thinking cap on and see if I can come up with something else and look at some other places around project selection or Citizen Advisory Committee that have some type of conflict of interest protection clause. So thank you for that question."

Director Lyons:

"Jill Mastrototaro."

Speaker #6: Jill Mastrototaro (National Wildlife Federation Alabama/Mississippi Policy Specialist)

"Jill Mastrototaro with the National Wildlife Federation (NWF), and I am their Alabama/Mississippi Policy Specialist. I just wanted to congratulate all of you on the step forward of getting the website up and running and certainly, as Casi eluded to, having the Governor find the means to get the planning process underway. I think as you heard at many of these meetings, the sense for urgency that citizens of the community and the businesses have in terms of trying to get momentum behind restoration, because we recognize that these dollars will be coming very soon. We anticipate the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation dollars are going to be put to work very soon here on the ground in Alabama before the year is out, and we think that the planning process for an ALCIP, or whatever the acronym might be, in trying to leverage some of the existing body of work to get that process rammed up is a great step forward and NWF and our coalition partners, including Casi and many others in this room, want to provide a resource to you to help get people out to the meetings. Now that you do have a website, we can certainly promote that and also the comment period now out for the project information sheet. And so, moving forward we just extend again if there is any opportunity to help assist, recognizing that you do have very limited funds and capacity with which to do so. I would just share with you that I just had lunch over in Mississippi with a near complete stranger who opined for moving over to Alabama. There was a great article in the recent Lagniappe about the 'City by the Bay'. And I thought that was such a great vision to take away for me moving forward and looking at restoration and recovery for Alabama and what it presents, and the fact that there are people in other parts of the Gulf Coast that want to relocate here...what that means for tourism, business and community economy. So we recognize that what's good for the environment is good for business. And so we will continue to look for opportunities to make that argument and that connection and promote that in the restoration efforts moving forward. Thanks."

Director Lyons:

"Thank you, Jill. Avery Bates."

Speaker #7: Avery Bates (Organized Seafood Association of Alabama Vice-President)

"My name is Avery Bates. First of all, I'm glad you are able to meet our new Mayor. If I'm not there tonight at the party, my brother-in-law is in the process of having a heart attack, and I just got the call. On behalf of the commercial fishermen, we had a meeting Monday. Our reefs don't look that good, our launching ramps are just a disaster, and if you can't have proper access to water. We've got Harry Jemison's Launching Ramp. Come to find out they are redoing the contract, and they didn't cut out the boat ramps so we can add and improve those ramps. We've got to do something through the County. We've either got to get some kind of variance or some kind of clearance to cut the ramps out where presently everybody is launching except just a few on the south side. Both the recreation and commercial fishermen are in dire need for better access to water. It's a critical thing, especially with our check-in and check-out at one location. Mr. Crane like to tore out the whole axle of his trailer launching just a couple of