Flows to the RESTORE the Bay: 
Leveraging RESTORE Act Funds for Restoring the Freshwater Balance in Mobile Bay

In 2012, Congress passed the RESTORE Act which directs the Gulf Restoration Council to allocate funds from the Deepwater Horizon oil spill to “[p]rojects that are projected to make the greatest contribution to restoring and protecting the natural resources, ecosystems, fisheries, marine and wildlife habitats, beaches, and coastal wetlands of the Gulf Coast region, without regard to geographic location within the Gulf Coast region.” The Alabama Rivers Alliance is a non-profit conservation organization dedicated to the protection of the waters of the state of Alabama. Development of a comprehensive restoration plan for the Mobile Delta/Bay is an important component of ARA’s efforts to develop comprehensive water management policy for Alabama. Freshwater Flows are a critical component of the sustainable restoration of the Gulf Coast region. Unfortunately, there are significant gaps in the science for understanding the role of freshwater flows in Alabama generally and on the Mobile Bay in particular. This presentation will discuss opportunities under the RESTORE Act to conduct the investigations of freshwater flows in Alabama which are a prerequisite for successful restoration projects in the Gulf Coast region. It will also discuss how Alabama can leverage funds from the RESTORE Act to implement state and interstate comprehensive water management programs on the landscape scale.

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