



America's Energy Coast
Commerce and Infrastructure Task Force
Resolution
Presented: July 30, 2009
Biloxi, Mississippi

Conflicting Federal Policies Resolution

Whereas, the Gulf Region of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama, known as America's Energy Coast, which includes the seventh largest delta on earth, is unique from all other coastal regions of the United States because of both environmental and economic assets that benefit the entire nation. For example:

- Ninety percent of the domestic offshore oil and gas supply for the U.S is hosted by this region,
- Almost a third of the nation's oil and gas, both foreign and domestic, comes through this coast by tanker, barge or pipeline and is connected to 50% of the nation's refining capacity,
- The largest port system in the world by tonnage is located here, moving the nation's agriculture and goods to foreign markets and bringing in raw products for manufacturing,
- The Gulf Intracoastal Water Way is critical east-west navigation link for the nation,
- A third of the nation's fisheries outside Alaska are landed along this coast,
- It is home to the two largest flyways in North America for migratory waterfowl and songbirds,
- Its coastal wetlands serve as the nursery grounds for marine life in the Gulf of Mexico,

Whereas, storms are becoming more intense along the Gulf coast and causing greater damage further inland each year, threatening the nation's energy, navigation and vital transportation infrastructure;

Whereas, communities along the Gulf, whose infrastructure and populations support the energy and economic activities so vital to the entire nation are at tremendous risk, most with little or no protection from an encroaching Gulf of Mexico;





Whereas, indigenous and historical cultures and properties and way of life are threatened with decimation and even extinction;

Whereas, the loss and reduction of sediment to replenish wetlands due to engineering of levees, dams and locks along the Mississippi River, combined with subsidence and sea level rise, are impacting the Gulf coast and are a harbinger of what is to come of the rest of coastal areas of the U.S.;

Whereas, the coastal landscape is deteriorating along this coast – as much as 10 feet of beach a year in Texas, 17 square miles of coastal wetlands in Louisiana, and barrier islands along Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama;

Whereas, the Federal processes in place to address the restoration and protection of this vulnerable coastline are fraught with conflicting agency missions and policies;

Whereas, the Federal processes in place are expensive, cumbersome, slow, and without regard to the unique nature of coastal landscapes and functions in this region that directly benefit and impact the rest of the nation;

(Example: Average time is 30 years for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to complete a single large-scale river diversion project.)

Whereas, there is unprecedented urgency and scale of restoration and protection needed along this coastal region and, without taking immediate action, environmental, economic and energy sustainability are at risk for the entire nation;

Whereas, to address the urgency and actions required to achieve regional sustainability through policies, practices, and technology that will address community resiliency, ecosystem restoration, commerce and infrastructure, climate stewardship, and domestic energy security and development, and to fulfill the actions called for in the Accord for Sustainability and Action Framework for America's Energy Coast;

Therefore, be it resolved that through speaking with one voice, acting strategically, articulating and demonstrating the urgency, needs and solutions to sustainability, enlisting the help of private business and industry, governmental and non-governmental organizations, the overarching priority of America's Energy Coast is to aggressively seek the attention, consideration, and commitment of Congress and the Administration to resolve conflicting Federal policies and amend Federal procedures that slow and prevent progress to restore, rehabilitate, protect and sustain this region.

