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# Foreword

By

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It is our pleasure to introduce this dedicated issue of *Shore & Beach* compiling scientific papers on the mitigative actions following the 2010 Deepwater Horizon (DWH) oil spill. This special edition highlights unprecedented efforts undertaken by all five Gulf Coast states. We commend all the scientists and engineers who not only worked on various projects and programs associated with DWH response and recovery but also chronicled their efforts in the form of these peer-reviewed scientific papers. Such documentation adds value to their hard work. We would also like to thank the editors and the editorial board of this dedicated issue, as well as the editor and managing editor of *Shore & Beach*. Without their collective dedication and hard work, this publication would not have been possible.

This dedicated issue provides a snapshot of progress in implementation of various restoration projects from DWH funds within various states around the northern Gulf of Mexico (GOM). We expect that the various papers herein will promote the most comprehensive and suitable restoration/mitigative technologies by documenting the experiences and lessons learned. We also hope that this will provide a reference and a resource for present and future practitioners in restoration science both within and outside of the Gulf of Mexico region.

The 2010 Deepwater Horizon rig explosion and oil spill was a human tragedy re-

sulting in the death or injury of 28 people. That fact should never be forgotten. It was also the largest environmental disaster in U.S. history. In the immediate aftermath and time since then, Louisiana’s coastal ecosystem and its citizens have faced catastrophic damage and adversity. The disaster presented many challenges not just for Louisiana but for our neighboring Gulf Coast states as well. It also highlighted the need for resilient coastal wetlands and an ecosystem that can protect coastal communities from the effects of unforeseen anthropogenic crises and natural disasters.

The impacts of the DWH oil spill continue to be felt today, and lessons learned have driven coastal planning initiatives in Louisiana and all of the Gulf Coast states. While the oil spill brought tragedy and loss, the penalties assessed to the responsible parties has provided a unique opportunity for coastal restoration efforts along the northern GOM. It has allowed our states’ planning efforts to turn from reactive to those that prioritize and implement strategically the use of funds for coastal restoration and sustainability projects. This has helped make plans for large-scale restoration initiatives a reality. While undertaking these projects, it is imperative that we continue to plan, implement, monitor, and adaptively manage these ecosystem restoration projects using the best available science.

In Louisiana’s Barataria Basin alone, which was Ground Zero for ecological impacts from the oil spill, the State of

Louisiana has completed construction of seven ecosystem restoration projects to mitigate the impact of the oil spill. These projects include several barrier island restoration projects, several large scale marsh creation projects, and a bird restoration project that will provide nesting habitat for birds that were severely impacted during the oil spill. It is fitting that the Barataria Basin which was so heavily oiled during the spill has been the location of the most extensive amount of ecosystem restoration to date.

Commensurate with the scale of the disaster, the financial settlements and governance structures associated with them are larger than any previous oil spill. It is important that the various settlement funds be well-coordinated and responsibly utilized to restore and enhance those resources that were injured. We believe that it is equally important that these actions be chronicled for the future, as this dedicated issue does, to ensure that knowledge is shared and lessons are learned for future generations. It is our sincere hope that as we continue to face challenges in the aftermath of the oil spill that we promote sound policies with utmost dedication and respect to our coast and communities.

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