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TO: Reviewer

FROM: Karolien Debusschere, Ph.D. *K.D.*
Deputy Coordinator
Oil Spill Coordinator's Office/Office of the Governor

DATE: June 19, 2001

RE: Request for public comment on and solicitation of restoration projects for the Proposed Louisiana Regional Restoration Planning Program (RRP Program)

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has published a Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) for the above referenced program (see enclosed Federal Register Notice). The purpose of the RRP Program is to develop an institutional framework and procedures that will enable the state and federal trustees to select and implement projects in Regional Restoration Plans (RRPs) that compensate the public and environment for losses of natural resources and services from unauthorized discharges of oil in a consistent and predictable manner. The purpose of the RRPs will be to identify, on a regional basis in the State of Louisiana, existing, planned, or proposed projects that may provide appropriate restoration alternatives for natural resources injured by oil spills and to enhance resolution of claims for natural resource damages caused by oil spills in a more expeditious and cost-effective manner.

The trustees seek public involvement in the development of the statewide RRP Program, RRPs and PEIS. Opportunities for public comment will be provided throughout the development of the RRP Program and RRPs. In order to begin the formal scoping process for the PEIS, the trustees are requesting input on the proposed RRP Program, as well as, comments on the enclosed "Public Review Document of the Louisiana Regional Restoration Planning Program." **Public meetings will be held during the month of July 2001** (see enclosed Federal Register Notice for dates, times, locations, and contact information.)

The trustees are also soliciting restoration projects for potential inclusion in the proposed RRPs. Restoration projects will be included in RRPs based on the selection criteria that will be developed as part of the RRP Program. Potential restoration projects can be submitted for consideration by using the enclosed "NRDA-RRP Restoration Project Information Sheet." When submitting, please include any additional information you may have on your project(s).

Enclosures