


From: Secretary of the Interior/SIO/OS/DOI 
To:

Date: Friday, October 22, 2010 03:36PM

Subject: Secretary's Priority Message - Delegated Authority for the NRDAR Activities Associated with the Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill

October 22, 2010

Memorandum

To: All Department of the Interior Employees

From: Secretary /s/

Subject: Delegated Authority for the NRDAR Activities Associated with the Gulf of Mexico Oil Spill

As the Department moves forward with the National Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration (NRDAR) activities to address the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, I would like to reaffirm my commitment to meet the unprecedented scientific and technical challenges posed by this oil spill. To assist me with this undertaking, I have asked Mr. Tom Strickland, Assistant Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks, to serve as the Lead Department Official for the overall Gulf of Mexico restoration effort and the NRDAR case activities. Additionally, Ms. Cindy Dohner serves as the Department's Authorized Official (AO) for the Department's NRDAR activities, and is helping to fulfill this commitment. Pursuant to the Departmental Manual, the AO is the Department official delegated with the authority to act on behalf of the Secretary to conduct NRDAR activities.

The Departmental Manual sets forth the responsibilities of the AO when developing NRDAR claims. These responsibilities include the development of a unified Departmental position on NRDAR activities in consultation with Department bureaus, offices, and the Office of the Solicitor. Accordingly, the AO has convened a Department Case Team, which is comprised of dedicated staff from each of the affected bureaus and the Solicitor's Office, who will coordinate the case for DOI under the oversight of the AO. This Team will ensure there is proper coordination and review of all information and/or requests regarding this NRDAR case.

For example, the AO is responsible for all budgetary matters associated with the NRDAR case and ensures that NRDAR activities are conducted under sound financial management. These responsibilities include ensuring accountability, reporting disbursements and the expenditure of all funds used to determine injury, assessing damages, and plan and implementing restoration. Therefore, the AO will be the primary contact for all financial related matters, such as funding requests, documentation of expenditures, billing packages, fund status reporting, and all questions related to work and studies funded through the NRDAR process. By working through the Case Team, DOI bureaus will submit NRDAR financial documentation directly to the AO, who will consolidate such information for DOI. By maintaining sound financial management and coordination of NRDAR activities with other Departmental employees, the AO plays a critical role in fulfilling my commitment to implement a successful NRDAR for the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

As the Department proceeds with the NRDAR case activities, I ask that you continue to provide the necessary support to assist the AO in meeting the responsibilities as set forth in the Departmental Manual.

Thank you for the important work that you are doing to assist Assistant Secretary Strickland and our Team implement a successful NRDAR to restore natural resources injured by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.