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PROSPECTUS

- What: 2011 State of the Gulf of Mexico – Summit II
Hosted by the Harte Research Institute (HRI)
- When: December 4-8, 2011
- Where: Omni Galleria Hotel, Houston, Texas
- Partners: Gulf of Mexico Foundation, Gulf of Mexico University Research Collaborative,
International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), The Gulf of Mexico Alliance,
and The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
- Participants: Up to 400 representatives from universities; state and federal agencies; private businesses;
and nongovernmental organizations from the U.S., Mexico, Cuba and internationally, all with
interests in the future of the Gulf of Mexico

2011 State of the Gulf of Mexico Summit

The Harte Research Institute, an endowed research component of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi dedicated to sustainable use and conservation of the Gulf of Mexico, hosted the first State of the Gulf of Mexico Summit¹ in 2005 in Corpus Christi, Texas.

The Deepwater Horizon oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in spring 2010 has brought new urgency to reconvening the Summit in 2011. The diversity of public and private actors working on conservation and recovery in the Gulf and the very broad range of issues involved (including loss of wetlands, hypoxia, coastal resiliency, ecosystem health, marine protected areas, international cooperation, oil spill recovery, and social and economic recovery) suggests a strong need for a platform to develop a shared vision of a healthy Gulf. The 2011 State of the Gulf of Mexico Summit will provide this platform, allowing government, NGO and academic experts to share knowledge and lessons learned and to formulate a roadmap for restoring the Gulf.

The Summit will be preceded by a number of events and processes that will inform the Summit on the most current authoritative technical and scientific on key Gulf topics, including in July 2011 at the one-year anniversary of the capping of the Deepwater Horizon well.

¹ More than 400 participants attended the 2005 State of the Gulf of Mexico Summit, including governors of both Mexican and U.S. Gulf of Mexico states. A significant outcome of the 2005 Summit was the formalization of The Gulf of Mexico Alliance, leading to the development of the first *Governor's Action Plan for a Healthy and Resilient Coast* adopted by all U.S. Gulf states in 2006.



The 2011 State of the Gulf of Mexico Summit and preliminary events aim to:

- Develop a shared vision of a healthy and resilient Gulf of Mexico and a roadmap to achieving its long-term recovery.
- Identify criteria to evaluate the health of the Gulf, using these to create matrixes that map progress in addressing issues that threaten the abundance and diversity of living resources and healthy ecosystems in the Gulf of Mexico.
- Provide a platform to initiate implementation of the Gulf restoration plan developed by President Obama's Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Taskforce due for release in October 2011.
- Evaluate mechanisms to promote marine and coastal protection and restoration.
- Share lessons learned and experiences with international partners in and adjacent to the Gulf of Mexico and elsewhere to promote international cooperation in oil spill response, restoration, conservation and ocean management, and to enhance effective future joint actions on ecosystem issues.

Key outcomes will include:

- A process for developing a *Report Card on the State of the Gulf of Mexico* as a mechanism to monitor progress of the various public and private sector recovery initiatives related to the BP oil spill and recovery of the Gulf of Mexico's ecosystems and natural resources.
- A Gulf of Mexico recovery and conservation roadmap, identifying the steps necessary to achieve a healthy Gulf for the U.S. and for international cooperation with countries that border the Gulf.

About the Host and Partners (as of March 1, 2011)

Harte Research Institute (HRI) for Gulf of Mexico Studies <http://www.hartheresearchinstitute.org/> is an endowed research component of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi dedicated to sustainable use and conservation of the Gulf.

Gulf of Mexico Foundation (GMF) <http://www.gulfmex.org/> promotes conservation and preservation of the Gulf through voluntary and cooperative stewardship by individuals, communities, and economic enterprises in the U.S. and Mexico.

Gulf of Mexico University Research Collaborative (GOMURC) is a university based research consortia, representing major marine oriented research organizations in the Gulf states working together on critical matters for the Gulf.

International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) <http://www.iucn.org/> is the world's oldest and largest global environmental network, a democratic membership union of governments, NGOs, and scientists working in over 160 countries for pragmatic solutions to the world's most pressing environment and



development challenges. IUCN's Commissions on Ecosystem Management, Species Survival, Protected Areas, Environmental Law and Communication and Education have established an Inter-Commission Gulf of Mexico Working Group to contribute to Gulf restoration efforts. <http://www.iucn.org/about/union/commissions/>

The Gulf of Mexico Alliance <http://gulfofmexicoalliance.org/> is a partnership of the U.S. Gulf states of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas dedicated to increasing regional collaboration to enhance the ecological and economic health of the Gulf of Mexico.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) <http://www.nature.org/> is a leading conservation organization working internationally to protect ecologically important lands and waters for nature and people, addressing conservation threats at the largest scale.

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