



GULF RESEARCH PROGRAM

Progress Toward Human Health and Community Resilience in the Gulf of Mexico Region

Statement of Task

One of a 4-part repeating series of reports

- **Goal: Satisfy GRP's monitoring mandate and provide context/information to ongoing GRP programs**
- **Independent Study Committees**
 - **Long-Term Environmental Trends in the Gulf of Mexico**
 - **Progress and Opportunities Toward Decreasing the Risk of Offshore Energy Operations**
 - ***[this study]***
- **Capstone effort: Ensuring a Safe, Healthy, and Resilient Gulf of Mexico**
- **Repeat triennially, with appropriate shifts in emphasis, for the duration of the Gulf Research Program**



SOT: Assess progress toward health & community resilience in Gulf of Mexico

- **Review major efforts** (past or present), **common challenges**, and/or key priorities in HCR in Gulf of Mexico U.S. states
- Develop **an approach to assess** the progress of health and community resilience across the Gulf region over time – **for future studies**
- Consider **opportunities for significant progress** in improving health and community resilience across the Gulf region.
- Identify major **challenges or critical gaps** (e.g., in research, data/information, planning, policy) that could be addressed to advance HCR in the Gulf region
- Identify potential innovative or transformative approaches.



Starting Definitions

- ***Health***: state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.
- ***Resilience***: the ability to prepare and plan for, absorb, recover from, and more successfully adapt to adverse events.
- **Community resilience**: community capabilities that buffer it from or support effective responses to disasters.



Precipitating Event and Ongoing Stressors

- **Deepwater Horizon:** largest offshore oil spill in U.S. history; lingering impacts and disruptions
- **Persistent Challenges:** “poor health indicators; structural social inequity; an extractive economy; perils related to hurricanes and inland and coastal flooding; continued shoreline losses; and impacts of a changing climate” (NASEM 2019)
- **Climate change impacts:** Increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather & natural disasters; compounding disasters without time or resources necessary for full recovery
- **COVID19:** Exacerbated inequities, economic impacts from stay-at-home, mandatory distancing
- **Lack of capacity and resources:** Local governments, community organizations have limited resources for operations and community services



Your Study and Insights:

- Provide an initial basis and approach for assessing progress in health and community resilience across the Gulf of Mexico Region
- Follow-on studies will refer to this study to track progress and continue to provide advice
- GRP topical areas are interconnected – Health and Community Resilience is linked to offshore energy safety and environmental protection
 - Numerous environmental, social, and economic influences from the offshore energy industry's economy on human health and community resilience

