

2015 Gulf South Rising

Gulf South Rising 2015- Strategy Document

Vision: Seed a unified regional movement toward equity through coordinated actions and collaborative events led by frontline communities of the Gulf South in 2015.

Background: Gulf South Rising (GSR) acknowledges that there is a climate crisis. Frontline communities include residents living in coastal areas; neighborhoods near fossil fuel refining and toxic pollution; and, generationally marginalized communities of the region.

The extreme extraction of limited energy resources, the subsequent pollution, and the lack of corporate and government accountability has damaged the land, people and systems of democracy of the Gulf South. GSR acknowledges that the global climate crisis is rooted in economic theories that promote mass consumption of limited resources, laws that maintain inequity and social hierarchies and governance processes that limit civic participation.

Mission/Purpose: Gulf South Rising (GSR) is a regional movement of coordinated actions and events to highlight the impact of the global climate crisis on the Gulf South region (TX, LA, MS, AL, FL). Through collaborative events and actions around strategic dates in 2015 GSR demands a just transition away from extractive industries, discriminatory policies and unjust practices that hinder equitable recovery from disaster and impedes the development of sustainable communities. This year-long initiative 1) builds regional movement infrastructure; 2) connects and convenes frontline communities around collective healing and ecological equity; 3) advances regional efforts of indigenous tribal and land sovereignty; and, 4) shifts the regional narrative from resilience to resistance.

Principles: Jemez Principles of Environmental Justice (See pg. 8).

Values:

- Honor local, frontline leadership
- Transparency and accountability of processes
- Shared liberation

Slogan: Gulf South Rising: The seas are rising... and SO ARE WE!

#GulfSouthRising



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Goal 1: Build Regional Movement Infrastructure (Knowledge, Skills, Financial Resources)

Objective 1: (Knowledge) Offer 5 regional learning sessions that build the ability of local leaders to analyze root causes and strategize for equity using science, culture, art and law. Train regional pool of 25 leaders around:

1. Human and Civil Rights in Disaster and Recovery
2. Dismantling Structural Racism
3. Ecological Equity (Intersectional Oppression Analysis)
4. Just Transition
5. Climate Change and Coastal Adaptation

Objective 2: (Skills) Provide 5 regional training and learning sessions that build the ability of local leaders to replicate processes useful for positive change in Gulf South communities:

1. Direct Action Organizing
2. Issue Campaigns/Community Organizing
3. Legislative Advocacy
4. Participatory Research Process
5. GIS Mapping
6. On-line Fundraising
7. Social Media Campaigns
8. Community Meeting Facilitation

Objective 3: (Financial Resources) Develop 3 community-controlled funds that invest in alternative economic infrastructure rooted in renewable energy through art/culture events and year-long on-line fundraising.

1. Sustainability Fund
2. Rapid Response Fund
3. Legal Defense Fund

Goal 2: Connect & Convene Gulf South Frontlines Around Collective Healing and Ecological Equity

Objective 1: Support 4 regional strategy sessions that build regional alliances.

1. Gulf Gathering (Feb 27-28th- Biloxi, MS)
2. Leadership Summit (April 23-24th- Mobile, AL)
3. US Social Forum (June 24-29th- Jackson, MS)
4. Faith and Ecology Summit (May (tbd)- New Orleans, LA)

Objective 2: Host 3 localized Ecological Equity/ Just Transition Movement Assemblies.

1. Jefferson Parish, Louisiana- (March (tbd))
2. Orange Beach, Alabama- (April-6-10)
3. Hattiesburg, Mississippi-(May (tbd))

Objective 4: Support, amplify and connect frontline actions, highlighting current realities and legacy of resistance commemorating:

1. 1/12: 5yr Haiti Earthquake
2. 3/5-9: 50yr. Anniversary of Selma to Montgomery March - Selma, AL
3. 3/23: 10yr Anniversary of BP/Texas City Refinery Explosion
4. 4/20: 5yr Anniversary BP/Deepwater Horizon Explosion

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5. 4/30: 40yr Anniversary of End of Vietnam War
6. 5/23: 40yr Anniversary of Indochina Migration & Refugee Assistance Act (Vietnamese Boat People to the Gulf Coast)
7. 7/26: 25yr Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
8. 8/6: 50yr Anniversary of Voting Rights Act of 1965
9. 8/29: 10yr Anniversary Hurricane Katrina (K10)
10. 9/7-9: 450yr Anniversary St. Augustine Colonization, St. Augustine, FL
11. 9/24: 10yr Anniversary Hurricane Rita (R10)

Goal 3: Advance Regional Efforts of Indigenous Tribal and Land Sovereignty

Objective 1: Host 1 regional summit for Gulf South Indigenous Leaders.

Objective 2: Establish community-supported tribal relocation fund for coastal tribes.

Objective 3: Launch international campaign to support federal recognition for Gulf South tribes.

Goal 4: Reclaim Regional Narrative: From Resilience to Resistance

Objective 1: Create regional communications plan that:

1. Highlights the role that the Gulf South plays in the energy future and resistance legacy of the US.
2. Shifts the victimization and charity narrative of climate-based disaster zones toward shared liberation and global accountability.

Objective 2: Offer 1-3 Funder Briefings on frontline community recovery from 2005 and 2010 Gulf disasters.

1. Lessons from Recovery
2. Frontline Leadership
3. Investing in the South

Objective 3: Delegation of 25 frontline community leaders will attend the UN Climate Conference in Paris, France led by indigenous leaders from the Gulf South.



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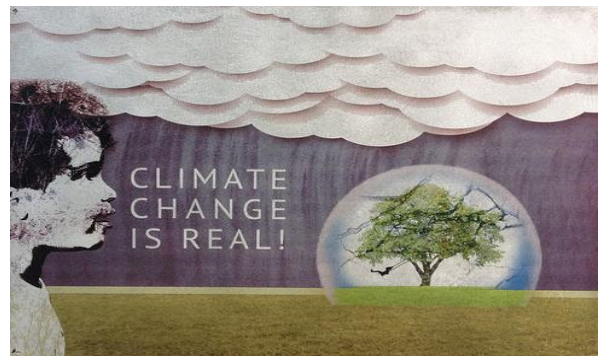
Gulf South Rising Communities: The Frontline of Resistance

Gulf South Rising: Open Source Organizing: Gulf South Rising is an open source organizing tool to connect the realities and shared liberation of all frontline communities in the region. Frontline communities located in Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas and standing for equity, justice and democracy are encouraged to use Gulf South Rising tags and slogans to amplify their work and struggles. When used by local leadership, Gulf South Rising will stand as the banner that amplifies the voices of frontline communities and defines the importance of the region to the rest of the US and the world.

Defining Frontline Communities: Frontline communities of the Gulf South include residents living in coastal areas; neighborhoods near fossil fuel refining and toxic pollution; and, historically marginalized communities of the region. For many, the status as a frontline community is connected to generational struggles against toxic targeting, social marginalization and economic oppression. These communities are often sacrifice zones for the region and generally include large populations of indigenous, African American, immigrant/refugee and poor people. Gulf South Rising honors the long-standing role of these communities on the frontline of generational struggles for the liberation of people and land they inhabit. For others, the status as a frontline community is a relatively new reality due to the rapidly changing climate - including the warming and rising of seas and the increase in extreme energy extraction. Gulf South Rising connects these communities around a regional reality.

Gulf South Rising Regional Calendar:

Events listed on the Gulf South Rising regional calendar will be led by individuals and organizations that have agreed to advance the goals to be accountable to principles/values of this document. An interactive calendar will contain the most updated information on events and actions led by local, frontline leadership.



Gulf South Rising Funding/ Fundraising:

Funds raised in 2015 will be designated and managed based on the following community agreements: (See Gulf South Rising Wish List).

1. Resources received specifically for 2015 operations, trainings and actions will go directly to specific anchor/host organizations or groups. Anchors agree to acknowledge of amount, source and expenditure in public accountability document (e.g. annual report; grant reports, etc.) OR at appropriate community spaces (e.g. Gulf South Rising regional meetings).
2. On-line and event fundraising dollars to support the vision of Gulf South Rising will be held in trust with not more than 8% being used for administrative fees. The funds will be transferred to a Gulf South Rising community commission that will develop guidelines and management strategies for the funds to be redistributed to frontline communities before December 1, 2016.
3. Non-financial donations will be housed with state GSR organizations or leaders. Such donations are the collective property of GSR frontline communities and are for use, free of charge, by the community in perpetuity.

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Allies of Gulf South Rising:

Allies of Gulf South Rising have the courage to see the truth and honor the leadership of the frontline communities leading this effort and agree to support the vision of this initiative by:

1. Support local Gulf South Rising frontline leadership by sharing resources and brokering access to national and international opportunity. Actively seek local leadership to speak for themselves. Offer support for positive long-term outcomes and support to the work of organizing and mobilization in the Gulf South.
2. Coordinate commemorative actions with local led-actions and events (see GSR regional calendar and event leads). Actively combine events, actions, resources, media to enhance the reality and demands from Gulf South frontline communities.
3. Credit the ideas, work and reach of local organizing efforts and regional leadership associated with Gulf South Rising. Act as a pass-through for resources better served on the frontlines.
4. Commit to long-term partnership and investment in the Gulf South Region. Acknowledge the power, creativity and leadership coming from the under-resourced Gulf south and proactively find ways to build local organizations while maintaining and building your own.
5. Redistribute the donations you receive by using images and stories of the Gulf South. Consider communities of the region true partners and offer no less than 50% of the donations your receive to grassroots groups tackling critical issues on the frontlines with little support.

Gulf South Rising Wish List:

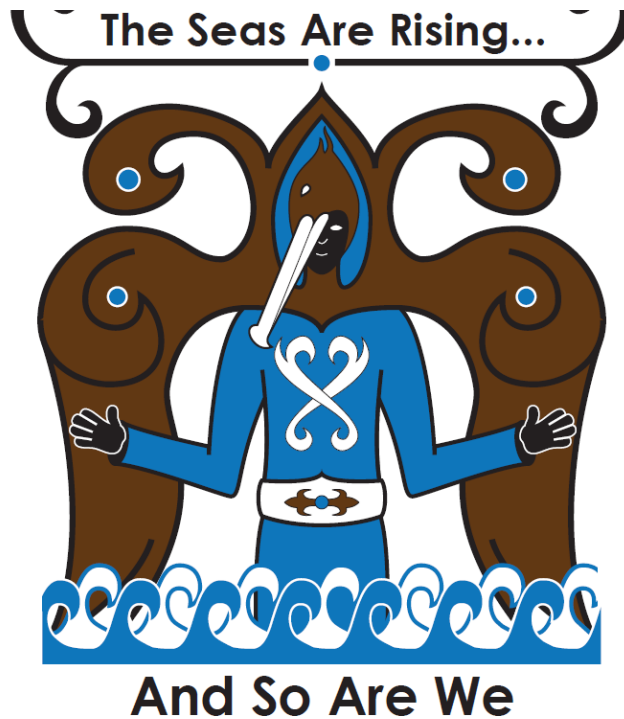
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| Direct Financial Support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise/offer \$300,000 to support staffing and operations costs for Gulf South Rising actions and events in 2015. • \$1million to establish non-denominational regional strategy and retreat space. • \$40,000 fellowships to support Gulf South justice leaders. • \$25,000 for travel and accommodations to indigenous leaders from across Turtle Island for healing activities and concert attendance surrounding August 29 events. • \$15,000 media support around Katrina Anniversary. |
| Indirect Financial Support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cover venue, catering or training costs (trainings, actions, events, etc.) • Cover travel costs associated with frontline community knowledge exchange (Alaska, Cuba, Haiti, Mexico, NYC/NJ). • Cover specialized training costs for GSR leaders. |
| Sponsorship/ Capacity Support | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absorb salary and or benefits of GSR organizer/trainer for 12 months. • Sponsor experienced staff to work for 3+ weeks in support of a frontline organization/community. • Sponsor non-profit tax professional/bookkeeper to support organizations in the region. |
| Accessing Organizational Relationships | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connect access to your organizational access to celebrities, entertainers, production specialist to events being planned by frontline communities. • Connect philanthropic priorities to work of Gulf South frontline communities. |
| Non-Financial Donations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Translation equipment (headsets; etc.) • 5 laptop computers • 5 wireless hotspots (6 months paid internet) • Renewable-energy powered Generator • Secure Webinar Platform for sole use of GSR • Secure Teleconference Platform for sole use of GSR • (3) Multi-passenger, handicapped accessible vehicles • Gas cards • Office supplies • Frequent flyer miles |

2015 Gulf South Rising

| 2015 Strategy Calendar | | |
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| Month- 2015 | Event | Lead Partners |
| January – Training MLK Day- 19 | 1/6: Mississippi Legislative Session Begins | |
| | 1/8: GSR Planning Meeting- Biloxi, MS | GSR |
| | 1/12: Haitian Earthquake- 5th Year Anniversary ACTION→ Regional Social Media Action | GCCLP, STEPS Coalition, Gulf Future Coalition, SMA, GNOORT |
| | 1/13: Texas Legislative Session Begins | |
| | 1/19: MLK Day: Community Rebuilding Atmore, AL | Linda Stallworth- resident of Atmore, AL |
| February – Training Lunar New Year-19-22 | 1/30-2/1: Summit: Extreme Energy Extraction Coalition - Biloxi, MS | Cherri Foytlin, Bridge the Gulf |
| | 2/22: Community Gathering: Vietnamese Lunar New Year Celebration | Khai Nguyen- MQVN,CDC |
| | 2/22: Community Gathering: Black History Month Event- Slidell, LA | Eric Harrison- GCCLP |
| | 2/26: Gulf South Rising Regional Planning Mtg.- Biloxi, MS | GSR |
| | 2/27-28: Summit: Annual Gulf Gathering- Biloxi, MS | Jayeesha Dutta- Gulf Future Coalition |
| 2/28: Public Forum: Safe School Environments - New Orleans, LA | Monique Harden- Advocates Environmental HR Dillard University | |
| March – Training | 3/3: Alabama Legislative Session begins Florida Legislative Session begins | |
| | 3/5-9: 50yr. Anniversary of Selma to Montgomery March - Selma, AL ACTION → Protest & Commemoration March | Ash-Lee Henderson- Southern Movement Alliance Adam Johnston- Alabama Rivers Coalition |
| | 3/6-7: Conference: Roots Legislative Training Camp- New Orleans, LA | D. Collins-Solidarity Project & Advocacy Network LA |
| | 3/6-7: Conference: WORK IN THE SOUTH: Dixie Cotton, American Steel, and a Hurricane Named Katrina, the Reinvention of Bondage” - NOLA | Erika Zucker- Workplace Justice Project- Loyola University College of Law |
| | 3/14: Conference: Allies for Racial Equity- New Orleans, LA | Rev. Vandiver- Center for Ethical Living& Renewal; 1 st UU Church of New Orleans. |
| | 3/23: 10yr Anniversary of BP/Texas City Refinery Explosion | |
| | 3/25-28 Conference: Annual Building Resiliency Workshop | Jeana Wiser- wiserjc@gmail.com |
| | 3/28-4/1: Protest March: Naples to Miami-Protect Big Cypress Nat’l Reserve Energy, Environment & Democracy - PMA- Louisiana | ancienttrees@hotmail.com SC- Delta Chapter; Divest TU, 350-LA, GreenArmy |
| | K10 Planning Meeting- LA | Colette Pichon Battle-GCCLP |
| | April – Planning Good Friday- 3 Easter- 5 Earth Day- 22 JazzFest-29-30 | 4/5: Mississippi Legislative Session Ends |
| 4/6-10: Gulf Guardian Retreat- Orange Beach, AL | | Colette Pichon Battle- GCCLP |
| 4/13: Louisiana Legislative Session Begins | | |
| 4/15: RALLY: Fight for 15- Xavier University-NOLA | | Nick Stracco- nstracco@tulane.edu |
| 4/16: RALLY: Louisiana Rising- Louisiana Capitol, Baton Rouge, LA | | Sandra Slifer- League of Women Voters- LA |
| 4/17-18: Cry U One Performance- Houston, TX | | Rebeca Mwase- Cry U One Ensemble |
| 4/17: Coastal Clean-up and Concert- Grand Isle, LA | | Drew Landry |
| 4/20: 5yr Anniversary BP/Deepwater Horizon Explosion ACTION→(tbd at Gulf Gathering) | | Gulf Future Coalition; GO Fish coalition Coalition of Vietnamese Fisherfolk and Families T.E.J.A.S and Clayton@350.org |
| ACTION → Crowd Source Campaign Launch ACTION→ Attend BP AGM meeting in London, England ACTION→ Barataria Bay Tar Ball rodeo- Grand Isle, LA | | |
| 4/22-24: Summit: Regional Leadership Summit – Mobile, AL | | Teresa Bettis- Center for Fair Housing |
| 4/30: 40yr Anniversary of End of Vietnam War | | |
| May – Planning May Day- 1 JazzFest-1-3 Mother’s Day- 10 | 5/1-2: Summit: Climate of Faith: the Moral imperative around climate change.- New Orleans, LA | Colette Pichon Battle- GCCLP Bayou Interfaith Shared Organizing- BISCO |
| | 5/1: Florida Legislative Session Ends | |
| | 5/9: Gulf South Rising Seafood Boil Fundraiser- Slidell, LA | Colette Pichon Battle- GCCLP |
| | 5/23: 40th Anniversary of Indochina Migration& Refugee Assistance Act (Vietnamese Boat People to the Gulf Coast) | Coalition Vietnamese Fisherfolk and Families MQVN,CDC |
| | K10 Planning Meeting- Bay St. Louis, MS | GCCLP Ya-sin Shabazz- Hijra House |
| • GFC Regional Action (tbd at Gulf Gathering) | Jayeesha Dutta- Gulf Future Coalition | |
| June – Planning Ramadan Begins- 17 Father’s Day- 21 | 6/1: Texas Legislative Session Ends | |
| | 6/11: Louisiana Legislative Sessions Ends | |
| | 6/15: Alabama Legislative Session Ends | |
| | 6/26-30: US Social Forum- Jackson, MS | Walda Katz-Fishman USSF Nat’l Planning. Cmt. |
| | • GFC Regional Action (tbd at Gulf Gathering) | Jayeesha Dutta- Gulf Future Coalition |
| K10 Planning Meeting- MS | Colette Pichon Battle- GCCLP | |
| K10 Planning Meeting- LA | Colette Pichon Battle- GCCLP | |
| July – | | |

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| <i>Planning</i> Independence Day- 4 | 7/24-26 5yr Anniversary Kalamazoo River Spill Solidary Action | Cherri Foytlin- Bridge the Gulf |
| | 7/26: 25th Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 | Alliance Institute |
| | • GFC Regional Action | Jayeesha Dutta- Gulf Future Coalition |
| August – <i>Execute</i> | 8/6: 50yr Anniversary of Voting Rights Act of 1965 | |
| | 8/24-29 Indigenous Gathering | Cherri Foytlin- Idle No More Gulf Coast |
| | 8/29: 10yr Anniversary Hurricane Katrina (K10) ACTION → Benefit Concert (NOLA) ACTION → Mass Convergence (NOLA & Gulfport) | GNOORT ; STEPS Coalition ; Gulf Future Coalition ; Idle No More-GC ; CVAFFF ; GRN |
| September- <i>Execute</i> | 9/7-9: 450yr Anniv. St. Augustine Colonization, St. Augustine, FL ACTION → Counter Demonstration | Resist 450@riseup.net Seminole Nation |
| | 9/19-20 Houma Nation Annual Pow Wow- Houma, LA | Bette Billiot, United Houma Nation |
| | 9/24: 10yr Anniversary Hurricane Rita (R10) | Bayou Interfaith Shared Organizing (BISCO) , |
| October- <i>Execute</i> | 10/24: Louisiana Election Day (Gubernatorial Elections) | |
| November- <i>Execute</i> | 11/3: Mississippi Election Day (Gubernatorial Elections) | |
| | 11/30: UN Climate Conference- Paris, France | Gulf South Rising Delegation (5 states) |
| December Rest/ Reflect/ Celebrate | 12/19: Houma Nation Holiday and Awards Banquet | Bette Billiot, United Houma Nation |
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Jemez Principles for Democratic Organizing Meeting hosted by Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice (SNEEJ), Jemez, New Mexico, Dec. 1996

Activists meet on Globalization. On December 6-8, 1996, forty people of color and European-American representatives met in Jemez, New Mexico, for the "Working Group Meeting on Globalization and Trade." The Jemez meeting was hosted by the Southwest Network for Environmental and Economic Justice with the intention of hammering out common understandings between participants from different cultures, politics and organizations. The following "Jemez Principles" for democratic organizing were adopted by the participants.

#1 Be Inclusive: If we hope to achieve just societies that include all people in decision-making and assure that all people have an equitable share of the wealth and the work of this world, then we must work to build that kind of inclusiveness into our own movement in order to develop alternative policies and institutions to the treaties policies under neoliberalism. This requires more than tokenism; it cannot be achieved without diversity at the planning table, in staffing, and in coordination. It may delay achievement of other important goals; it will require discussion, hard work, patience, and advance planning. It may involve conflict, but through this conflict, we can learn better ways of working together. It's about building alternative institutions, movement building, and not compromising out in order to be accepted into the anti-globalization club.

#2 Emphasis on Bottom-Up Organizing: To succeed, it is important to reach out into new constituencies, and to reach within all levels of leadership and membership base of the organizations that are already involved in our networks. We must be continually building and strengthening a base which provides our credibility, our strategies, mobilizations, leadership development, and the energy for the work we must do daily.

#3 Let People Speak for Themselves: We must be sure that relevant voices of people directly affected are heard. Ways must be provided for spokespersons to represent and be responsible to the affected constituencies. It is important for organizations to clarify their roles, and who they represent, and to assure accountability within our structures.

#4 Work Together In Solidarity and Mutuality: Groups working on similar issues with compatible visions should consciously act in solidarity, mutuality and support each other's work. In the long run, a more significant step is to incorporate the goals and values of other groups with your own work, in order to build strong relationships. For instance, in the long run, it is more important that labor unions and community economic development projects include the issue of environmental sustainability in their own strategies, rather than just lending support to the environmental organizations. So communications, strategies and resource sharing are critical, to help us see our connections and build on these.

#5 Build Just Relationships Among Ourselves: We need to treat each other with justice and respect, both on an individual and an organizational level, in this country and across borders. Defining and developing "just relationships" will be a process that won't happen overnight. It must include clarity about decision-making, sharing strategies, and resource distribution. There are clearly many skills necessary to succeed, and we need to determine the ways for those with different skills to coordinate and be accountable to one another.

#6 Commitment to Self-Transformation: As we change societies, we must change from operating on the mode of individualism to community-centeredness. We must "walk our talk." We must be the values that we say we're struggling for and we must be justice, be peace, be community.