

Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council

August 20, 2015



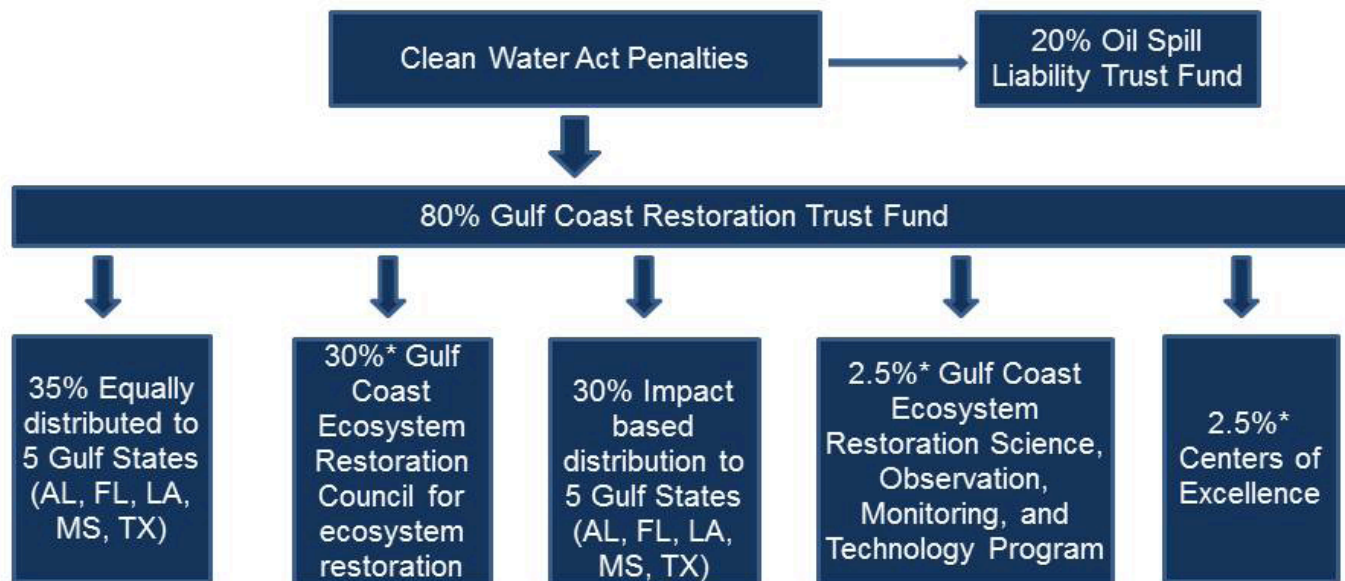
RESTORE Act

- Signed into law July 6, 2012
- Dedicates 80% of Clean Water Act civil & admin penalties resulting from Deepwater Horizon oil spill to the Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund
- Created the Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council with responsibility over 60% of the Trust Fund



Allocation of Funds

Allocation of Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund



***Supplemented by interest generated by the Trust Fund (50% to Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council, 25% to Science Program, 25% to Centers of Excellence)**



Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council

The 11-member RESTORE Council is comprised of:

- Governors from the five (5) affected Gulf States
- Secretary of the Department of Commerce (Chair)
- Secretary of the Department of Agriculture
- Secretary of the Department of the Army
- Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency
- Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security
- Secretary of the Department of the Interior



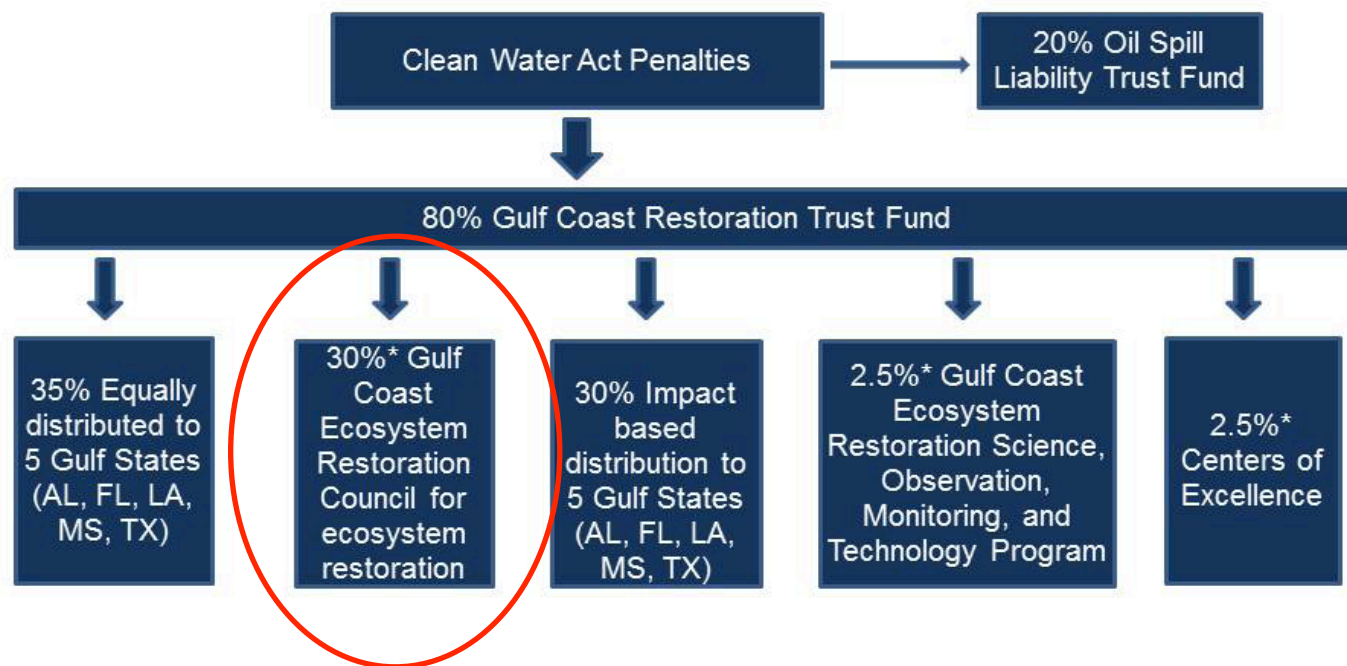
Funding

- **Settlement with Transocean for \$1 billion Clean Water Act civil penalties**
 - 80% or \$800 million plus interest is available in the Trust Fund
- **On July 2, BP announced Agreements in Principle with the US & Gulf States**
 - Provides for \$5.5 billion Clean Water Act penalty
 - Payable over 15 years
 - Terms are subject to a Confidentiality Order
 - Will not become final until a Consent Decree is negotiated, made available for public review & approved by the court



Bucket 2

Allocation of Gulf Coast Restoration Trust Fund



***Supplemented by interest generated by the Trust Fund (50% to Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council, 25% to Science Program, 25% to Centers of Excellence)**



Bucket 2 Requirements

- **Council to restore the Gulf “without regard to geographic location”**
- **4 Priority Criteria from the Act:**
 - Provide the greatest contribution to restoring & protecting the natural resources of the Gulf
 - Large-scale
 - Build upon existing coastal restoration plans or programs
 - Provide for long-term ecosystem resilience to areas most impacted by the DWH oil spill



Process for Project Selection

**August 2014: Council
invited Members to submit
up to 5 proposals each**

**50 proposals with 380
“Components” submitted**

**All proposals & “Context
Reports” posted on web**

Context Reports Evaluated Projects By:

- Eligibility
- Budget
- Consistency with the Act & Initial Comprehensive Plan
- Best Available Science
- Environmental Compliance



Focus & Emphasis Areas

Focus Areas

- **Habitat**
- **Water Quality**

Emphasis Areas

- **Foundational**
- **Sustainable**
- **Likely to succeed**
- **Benefits the human community**



Initial Draft Funded Priorities List (FPL)

- **Focus on 10 Key Watersheds**
- **Highly-Leveraged**
- **Lay the Groundwork for the Future by Supporting Large-Scale Planning Projects**
- **Foundational Restoration Investments**



Highly Leveraged Draft FPL

- If all Category 1 & 2 activities were fully implemented, this Draft FPL would build upon or leverage approximately **\$1.27 billion** additional restoration investments.
- That means that every \$1 the Council spends from Bucket 2 would build upon \$7 of prior, concurrent, or future investments.



Draft Funded Priorities List: Two Categories

Category 1

- Proposed for funding in final FPL
- Includes planning & on-the-ground restoration
- Applicable environmental laws addressed (e.g. NEPA)

Category 2

- Priorities for further review & potential future funding
- Additional analysis needed, including environmental compliance
- Have planning components in Category 1



Draft Funded Priorities List: Some Highlights

- **Conserve 9,400 acres of coastal habitat**
- **Plug 11 abandoned oil & gas wells**
- **Backfill 16.5 miles of abandoned oil & gas canals**
- **Eliminate the use of 16,000 pounds of fertilizer annually**
- **Reduce pollutant loads by 60,000 pounds annually**
- **Invest in Gulf-wide science, coordination, planning, & restoration training programs**



Our Partners Include

- NFWF
- NRDA Trustees
- CIAP
- CWPPRA
- Knobloch Foundation
- Migratory Bird Conservation Fund
- The Conservation Fund
- TNC
- GOMRI
- Audubon
- Wildlife MS
- Several Local Cities & Counties
- USM



Initial Draft FPL

10 Key Watersheds



Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council

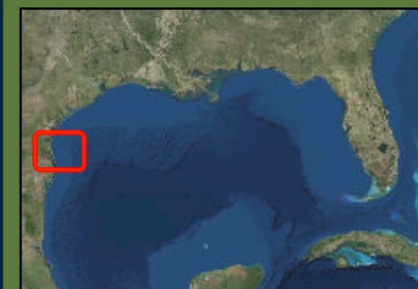
Laguna Madre Watershed

Restore, Protect, and Rebuild Projects

Laguna Madre

Gulf of Mexico

- Plug Abandoned Oil and Gas Wells (DOI_RESTORE_003_049-051_Cat1)
- Bahia Grande Wetland System Restoration (DOC_RESTORE_001_001_Cat1/Cat2)
- Bahia Grande Coastal Corridor (TX_RESTORE_001_000_Cat1)



Map Date: July 16, 2015





Laguna Madre

Why this is a Key Watershed

- Only hyper saline coastal lagoon in North America
- Supports rare & endangered species (e.g. Kemp's Ridley Turtle & Piping Plover) & fragile habitat

Ecological Stressors

- Habitat fragmentation from regional land uses
- Water quality/quantity & invasive species

Council Restoration Activities

- Land acquisition (co-funded with Knobloch)
- Hydrologic restoration of coastal wetlands
- Plugging abandoned oil & gas wells



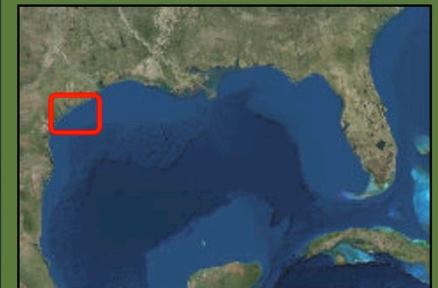
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Matagorda Bay Watershed

Restore, Protect, and Rebuild Projects



Matagorda Bay System Priority
Landscape Conservation
(TX_RESTORE_002_000_Cat1)



Map Date: July 16, 2015

Matagorda Bay



Matagorda Bay

Why this is a Key Watershed

- Biodiversity “hot spot” & diverse habitats
- Supports a wide variety of endangered species (e.g. whooping crane)
- Ecotourism industry

Ecological Stressors

- Development risk & potential habitat fragmentation
- Water quality & quantity

Council Restoration Activities



- Unique opportunity to conserve by land acquisition
- Adjoining leveraging with NFWF (Powderhorn Ranch)



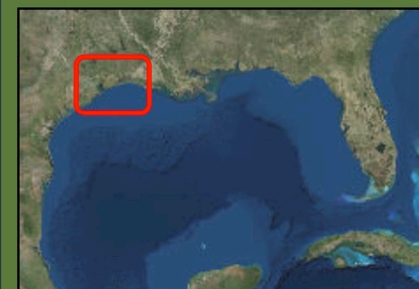
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Galveston Bay Watershed

Restore, Protect, and Rebuild Projects

-  Bayou Greenways
(TX_RESTORE_003_000_Cat1 /Cat2)
-  Texas Beneficial Use/Marsh Restoration
(TX_RESTORE_004_001-003_Cat1)

0 5 10 20 Miles
0 5 10 20 Kilometers



Map Date: July 16, 2015

Galveston Bay



Galveston Bay

Why this is a Key Watershed

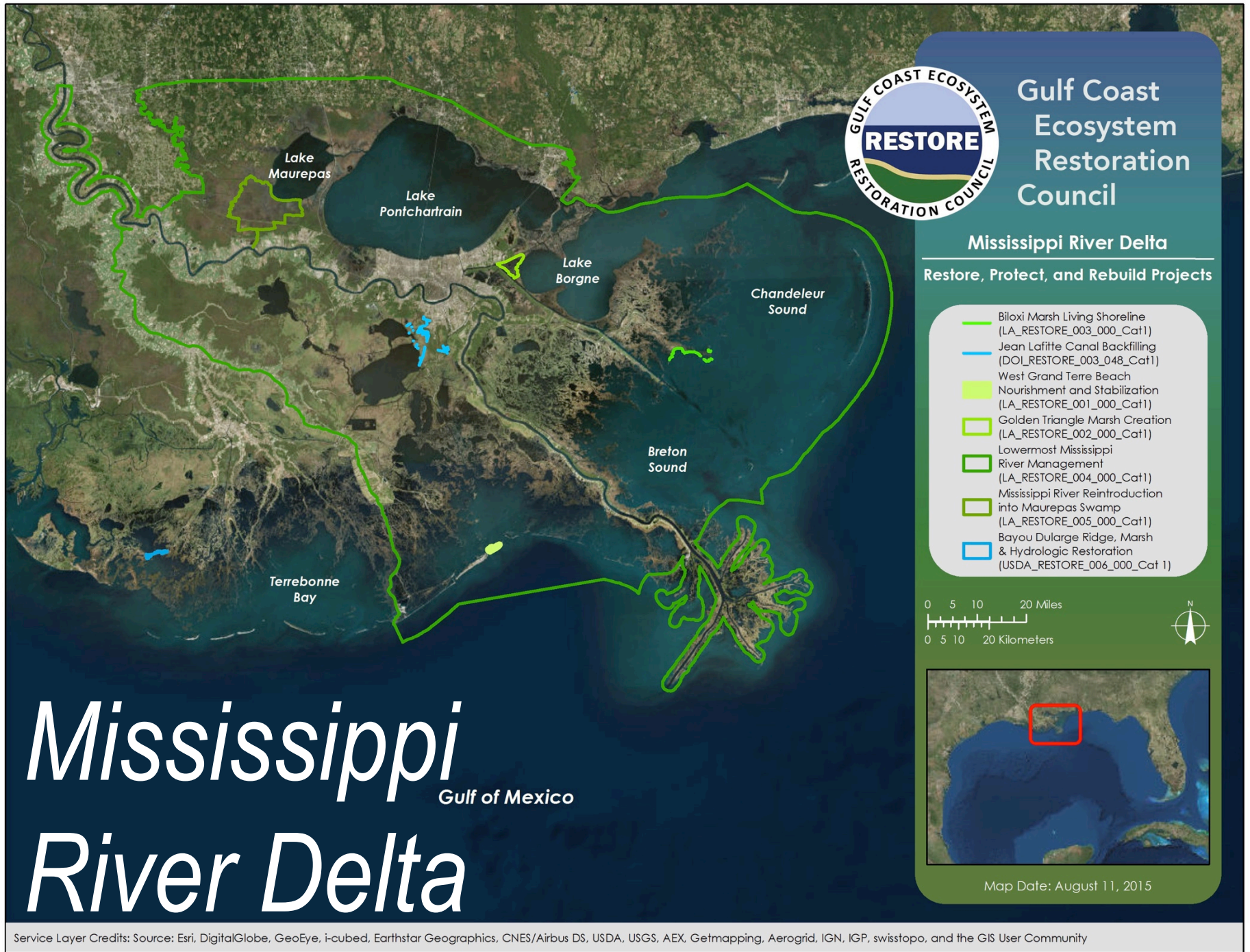
- 7th largest estuary in U.S.
- Supports migratory birds & threatened & endangered species
- Supports robust fishing

Ecological Stressors

- Coastal development
- Water quality & quantity

Council Restoration Activities

- Riparian buffers to support habitat & water quality restoration
- Planning for beneficial use of dredged sediment

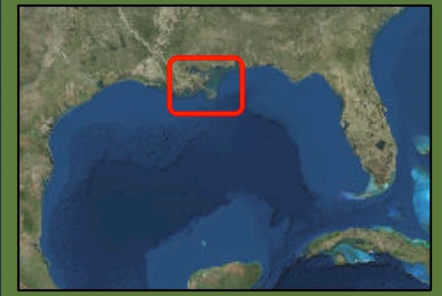


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Mississippi River Delta

Restore, Protect, and Rebuild Projects

- Biloxi Marsh Living Shoreline (LA_RESTORE_003_000_Cat1)
- Jean Lafitte Canal Backfilling (DOI_RESTORE_003_048_Cat1)
- West Grand Terre Beach
- Nourishment and Stabilization (LA_RESTORE_001_000_Cat1)
- Golden Triangle Marsh Creation (LA_RESTORE_002_000_Cat1)
- Lowermost Mississippi River Management (LA_RESTORE_004_000_Cat1)
- Mississippi River Reintroduction into Maurepas Swamp (LA_RESTORE_005_000_Cat1)
- Bayou Dularge Ridge, Marsh & Hydrologic Restoration (USDA_RESTORE_006_000_Cat1)



Map Date: August 11, 2015

Mississippi River Delta

Gulf of Mexico



Mississippi River Delta

Why this is a Key Watershed

- World's 7th largest delta
- One of the most productive estuaries in the world
- Critical role in the nation's energy & economic security

Ecological Stressors

- Land loss crisis (combination of factors)
- Hurricanes

Council Restoration Activities

- Build upon investments made by the state in its Coastal Master Plan
- Large-scale planning supports river diversion, marsh restoration, & barrier islands
- Study to support more holistic management of the Lower MS River



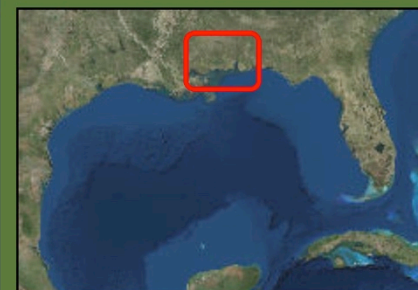
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Mississippi Sound Watershed

Restore, Protect, and Rebuild Projects

- Enhancing Opportunities for Beneficial Use of Dredge Sediments (MS_RESTORE_002_001-006_Cat1)
- Deer Island Beneficial Use Site (USACE_RESTORE_004_000_Cat1)
- Strategic Land Protection, Conservation, and Enhancement of Priority Gulf Coast Landscapes (MS_RESTORE_001_002_Cat1)
- SeaGrant Education and Outreach (MS_RESTORE_001_011_Cat1)
- The Mississippi Sound Estuarine Program (MS_RESTORE_003_000_Cat1)

0 5 10 20 Miles
0 5 10 20 Kilometers



Map Date: August 05, 2015

Mississippi Sound

Gulf of Mexico



Mississippi Sound

Why this is a Key Watershed

- Diverse estuaries, bays, bayous, tidal rivers & creeks
- Ecological diversity that support commercial & recreational fishing & a nationally important oyster industry
- Largest undammed river in Lower 48 (Pascagoula)

Ecological Stressors

- Habitat loss, fragmentation & water quality

Council Restoration Activities

- Connecting fragmented habitat (e.g. Grand Bay, DeSoto National Forest, Gulf Islands National Seashore)
- Beneficial use to create wetlands
- MS Sound Estuary Program
- Education & Outreach pilot

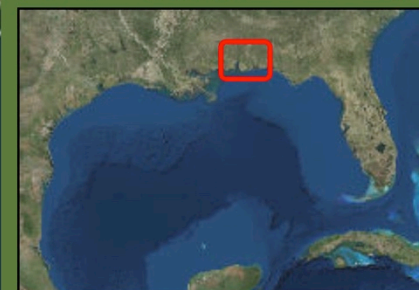


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Mobile Bay Watershed

Restore, Protect, and Rebuild Projects

- ▲ Alabama Living Shorelines Program (AL_RESTORE_004_001-003_Cat1/Cat2)
- ◆ Comprehensive Living Shoreline Monitoring (AL_RESTORE_004_004_Cat1/Cat2)
- Enhancing Opportunities for Beneficial Use of Dredged Sediments (MS_RESTORE_002_007-009_Cat1)
- Alabama SAV Restoration and Monitoring Program (AL_RESTORE_005_001-002_Cat1)
- ▭ Coastal Alabama Comprehensive Watershed Restoration Planning Project (AL_RESTORE_003_000_Cat1)
- ▭ Marsh Restoration in Fish River, Weeks Bay, Oyster Bay & Meadows Tract (DOC_RESTORE_001_006-008_Cat1/Cat2)
- ▭ Mobile Bay National Estuary Program (EPA_RESTORE_002_004_Cat1/Cat2)
- ▭ Upper Mobile Bay Beneficial Use Wetland Creation Site (USACE_RESTORE_005_000_Cat1)



Map Date: August 04, 2015

Mobile Bay

Gulf of Mexico



Mobile Bay

Why this is a Key Watershed

- Ranks 5th in the U.S. in biodiversity & 1st east of MS River
- Robust ecotourism-including coastal & deep sea fishing

Ecological Stressors

- Land-use conversion, shoreline hardening, invasive species, & water quality degradation

Council Restoration Activities




- Supporting the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program
- Watershed planning
- Living shoreline & SAV restoration & monitoring
- Beneficial use of dredged sediments to restore wetlands
- Marsh restoration

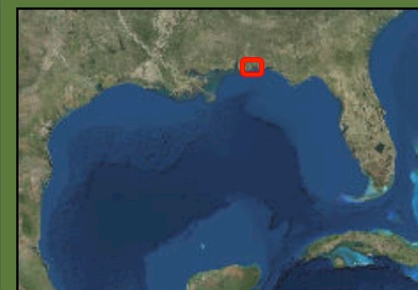


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Pensacola Bay Watershed

Restore, Protect, and Rebuild Projects

-  Pensacola Bay Living Shoreline - Phase I (FL_RESTORE_001_002_Cat1/Cat2)
-  Beach Haven - Joint Stormwater & Wastewater Improvement Project-Phase II (FL_RESTORE_001_004_Cat1)
-  Bayou Chico Contaminated Sediment Removal- Planning, Design, and Permitting (FL_RESTORE_001_005_Cat1)



Map Date: August 11, 2015

Pensacola Bay

Gulf of Mexico



Pensacola Bay

Why this is a Key Watershed

- Diverse habitats support more than 200 species of fish & shellfish, including rare, imperiled, or threatened plant & animal species

Ecological Stressors

- Urban development & water quality degradation resulting in decreased oyster habitat & harvest areas & SAV habitat

Council Restoration Activities





- Implement stormwater/wastewater projects
- Planning for contaminated sediment removal to improve water quality & habitats
- Living shoreline restoration



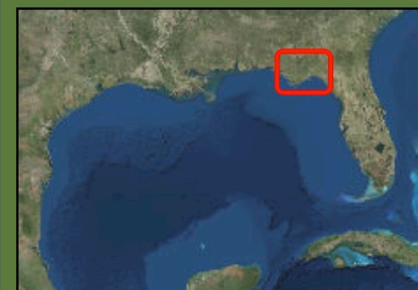
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Apalachicola Bay Watershed

Restore, Protect, and Rebuild Projects

-  Apalachicola Bay Oyster Restoration (FL_RESTORE_002_006_Cat1/Cat2)
-  Money Bayou Wetlands Restoration (DOC_RESTORE_001_009_Cat1/Cat2)
-  Apalachicola Watershed Agriculture Water Quality Improvement (FL_RESTORE_002_005_Cat1)
-  Tate's Hell Strategy 1 (USDA_RESTORE_002_001_Cat1/Cat2)

0 5 10 20 Miles
0 5 10 20 Kilometers



Map Date: August 04, 2015

Apalachicola Bay

Gulf of Mexico



Apalachicola Bay

Why this is a Key Watershed

- One of the most productive estuaries in the country, famous for its oysters
- Designated environmentally sensitive resource (e.g. NERR, Outstanding Florida Water, Florida Aquatic Preserve, & International Man & the Biosphere Program)

Ecological Stressors

- Water quality & quantity

Council Restoration Activities

- Working with participating landowners to improve water quality & quantity
- Hydrologic restoration of coastal wetlands & forest
- Oyster restoration building off of NRDA Early Restoration

Suwannee Watershed

Gulf of Mexico



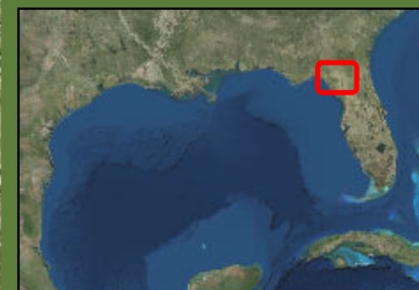
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Suwannee Watershed

Restore, Protect, and Rebuild Projects



Suwannee River Partnership Irrigation
Water Enhancement Program
(FL_RESTORE_003_003_Cat1)



Map Date: August 04, 2015



Suwannee Watershed

Why this is a Key Watershed

- Covers over 7,700 miles
- Big Bend Region includes one of the two largest contiguous seagrass beds in the U.S.
- Sustains premier FL scallop population & variety of wildlife

Ecological Stressors

- Water quality & quantity

Council Restoration Activities

- Working with private landowners to improve water management
- Activities will decrease fertilizer application & improve freshwater inflows

Tampa Bay

Gulf of Mexico



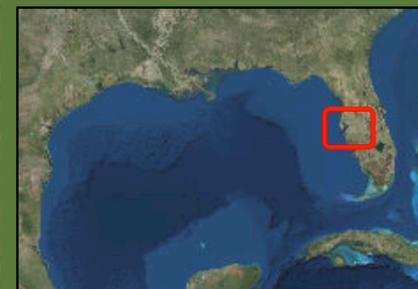
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Tampa Bay Watershed

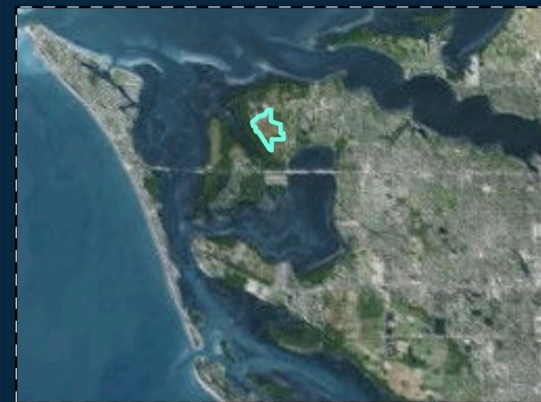
Restore, Protect, and Rebuild Projects

-  Palm River Restoration Project Phase II, East McKay Bay (FL_RESTORE_004_003_Cat1/Cat2)
-  Robinson Preserve Wetlands Restoration (DOC_RESTORE_001_011_Cat1/Cat2)
-  Tampa Bay National Estuary Program (EPA_RESTORE_002_005_Cat1/Cat2)

0 5 10 20 Miles
0 5 10 20 Kilometers



Map Date: July 16, 2015





Tampa Bay

Why this is a Key Watershed

- Largest open water estuary in FL at nearly 400 miles
- Supports manatees, wading birds, & over 200 species of fish

Ecological Stressors

- Urban development & stormwater runoff

Council Restoration Activities

- Supporting highly successful Tampa Bay NEP
- Habitat restoration, water quality improvement, & mitigation of erosion along the Palm River
- Hydrologic restoration of Robinson Preserve

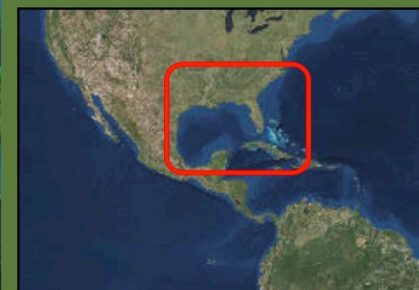


Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council

Gulf-wide Investments

Foundational Projects

- Council Monitoring & Assessment
Program Development
(DOC_RESTORE_002_001_Cat1)
- Strategic Conservation Assessment Framework
(MS_RESTORE_001_009_Cat1)
- GOMA Coordination (AL_RESTORE_002_001_Cat1)
- Gulf of Mexico Conservation
Enhancement Grant Program
(MS_RESTORE_001_005_Cat1/Cat2)
- Gulf of Mexico Habitat Restoration via
Conservation Corps Partnerships
(DOC_RESTORE_003_007_Cat1)
- Gulf Coast Conservation Reserve Program
(MS_RESTORE_001_007_Cat1/Cat2)
- Gulf of Mexico Estuary Program (GMEP)
(EPA_RESTORE_003_008_Cat1)
- Baseline Flow, Gage Analysis & On-Line
Tool to Support Restoration
(EPA_RESTORE_004_000_Cat1/Cat2)



Map Date: July 16, 2015

Foundational Gulf-wide Investments



Foundational Gulf-wide Investments

- **Gulf-wide grant program to address habitat & water quality/quantity**
- **Support science-based decision making:**
 - Planning tools to support habitat & water quality restoration
 - Restoration monitoring & coordination
- **Gulf Coast Conservation Corps Program:**
 - Equip local workforce with knowledge & skills to implement & manage restoration projects
 - Work with Federally-recognized Tribes to provide a tribal youth program



Next Steps

- **Hold Public Meetings in all Five Gulf States**
- **Take Public Comment on the Draft FPL**
- **Carefully Review Public Comment**
- **Make Changes to the FPL as appropriate**
- **Hold a Public Meeting to Vote on Approval of Final FPL**

Comments Due By: Sept. 28, 2015

Submit online: www.RestoreTheGulf.gov

Mail: Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council

Draft FPL Comments

Hale Boggs Federal Building, Suite 1117

New Orleans, LA 70130

Email: draftfplcomments@restorethegulf.gov

Thank You

For More Information Visit:
www.RestoreTheGulf.gov

