



NFWF

Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund

RECIPIENTS

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Suwannee River Water Management District

Northwest Florida Water Management District

PARTNER

Florida Department of Environmental Protection

AMOUNT

\$4,514,100

LOCATION

Florida Gulf Coast, with a particular focus on the Panhandle and Big Bend regions

AWARD DATE

April 2015

PROGRESS UPDATE

Seagrass Recovery Potential model is being development. 200 sites have been sampled for seagrass cover, species composition, and water clarity. LIDAR imagery in the Santa Rosa Sound should be completed in the near future. Final Restoration Strategy is expected to be completed by November 2017. Stakeholder and public engagement ongoing. (August 2017)

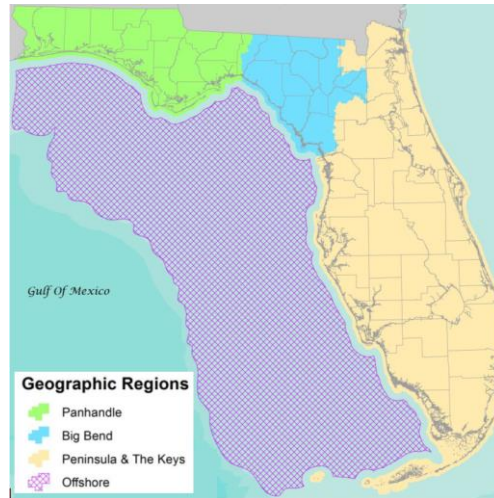
The Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund, administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), supports projects to remedy harm and eliminate or reduce the risk of harm to Gulf Coast natural resources affected by the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill. To learn more about NFWF, go to www.nfwf.org.

FLORIDA

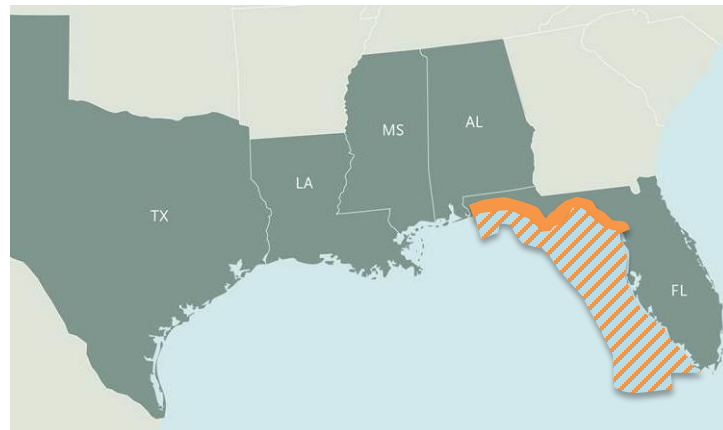
Florida Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund Restoration Strategy

This multi-component, multi-year project is an integrated planning effort that will serve as an overarching framework for restoring and conserving the natural resources of Florida's Gulf Coast through the Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund (GEBF). A significant component of the work involves estuary-based planning for six key watersheds in the Panhandle and Big Bend regions: Perdido, Pensacola, Choctawhatchee/ St. Andrew, Apalachicola/Chipola, Ochlockonee/St. Marks, and Suwannee. This project will identify and develop priority restoration projects for future funding consideration under the GEBF.

The effort will be coordinated by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, with technical assistance from the Northwest Florida Water Management District, the Suwannee River Water Management District, and FWC's Fish and Wildlife Research Institute. These partners will work together to assess existing plans and data sources to identify priority natural resource outcomes, update significant watershed planning done to date, complete assessments of seagrass habitat and living resource needs and carry out effective public engagement to aid in the identification of restoration priorities and projects.



This project provides Florida with an opportunity to establish a large-scale restoration strategy for the Gulf Coast, in particular for the Panhandle and Big Bend regions, which will produce recommendations for meaningful and measurable conservation outcomes, engage technical experts and key stakeholders, and ultimately lead to science-based, cost-effective activities which address injury to habitats and species affected by the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill.



This project will develop a prioritized restoration strategy for coastal habitats and living resources of the Florida Gulf Coast.