



NFWF

Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund

RECIPIENT

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

AWARD AMOUNT

\$5,309,000

PARTNERS

“Ding” Darling Wildlife Society

Lee County Conservation 20/20

Florida Forever

LOCATION

J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge

AWARD DATE

November 2019

STATUS

Awarded

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

Wulfert Bayous Bird Nesting Habitat Restoration

This project will restore and enhance 39 acres of wetlands and priority wading bird nesting habitat in Wulfert Bayous, a 68-acre parcel on Sanibel Island. The property is scheduled to be acquired by the end of the 2019 calendar year and will be managed as part of the adjacent Ding Darling National Wildlife Refuge (NWR). Proposed restoration activities will enhance a diversity of wildlife habitats on the property, improve water quality, and provide a corridor between the Ding Darling NWR and nearby protected lands. Restoration and enhancement of the Wulfert Bayous property following acquisition will include removal of invasive plants, enhancement of 16 acres of priority functional mangrove wetlands, restoration of 23 acres of filled habitat, and creation of mangrove bird nesting islands. Enhancement activities will create suitable nesting habitat for wading birds, including species of the type injured by the Deepwater Horizon oil spill: roseate spoonbills, white ibis, brown pelicans and multiple species of egrets and herons. Alligator basking areas will be created in wetlands adjacent to nesting habitat to provide natural predation protection for nesting birds.

Restoration and enhancement of Wulfert Bayous supports goals and objectives to conserve habitat and protect living coastal resources for the wading bird populations as stated in A Comprehensive Restoration Plan for the Gulf of Mexico, the Greater Everglades Ecosystem Restoration Plan, and the Southwest Florida Feasibility Study. The project was identified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as a high priority for restoring populations of wading bird species impacted by the oil spill.

This project will restore wetland and rookery habitat for wading birds like the Snowy Egret pictured on the right.



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