



NFWF | Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund

FLORIDA

Enhanced Assessment for Recovery of Gulf of Mexico Fisheries – Phase II

This project was a continuation of the previously funded (2013) reef fish assessment work in Florida and was complementary to 2014 projects in Alabama and Mississippi. The project funded the second phase of a five-year study to implement a significant expansion of the collection of data on both catch effort and stock assessment in the Panhandle and eastern Gulf of Mexico. The data was used to assess the recovery of reef fish stocks in association with restoration efforts implemented in response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, improve and expand single-species stock assessments for managed fish species, and foster improved ecosystem-based assessment and management capabilities.

Gulf of Mexico fisheries, particularly red snapper, have historically been subject to overfishing, causing periods of significant decline in stocks. While current stock assessments show an improving fishery, more work clearly remains to be done. The largest single impediment to effective management of Gulf of Mexico reef fisheries such as red snapper is the lack of sound data related to both catch effort and stock assessment. The completed work was widely recognized by state and federal resource agencies, conservation organizations and commercial and recreational fishing interests as being an extremely critical step needed to improve management of red snapper and other reef fisheries to ensure their sustainability.



The future management of red snapper and other important reef fish populations were significantly informed by this project.

AT A GLANCE

RECIPIENT:
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

AWARD AMOUNT:
\$2,493,847

PARTNERS:
NOAA

LOCATION:
Florida Panhandle and West Florida Shelf

AWARD DATE:
November 2014

STATUS:
Closed

PROGRESS UPDATE:
Expanded data collection and analysis for Phase II is complete. Lessons learned helped guide future GEBF fisheries monitoring work in Florida. The project is now closed. (September 2016)



The Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund (GEBF), administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, 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 GEBF and view a comprehensive project map go to www.nfwf.org/Gulf