



# NFWF

# Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund

### RECIPIENT

Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources/ Marine Resources Division (MRD)

### AWARD AMOUNT

\$22,499,000

### PARTNERS

Alabama Wildlife Federation

Coastal Conservation Association-Alabama Chapter

Alabama Reef and Restoration Foundation

University of South Alabama

Dauphin Island Sea Lab

Auburn University

### LOCATION

Dauphin Island, Alabama

### AWARD DATE

November 2018

### STATUS

Active

### PROGRESS UPDATE

Project recently awarded. (February 2019)

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](http://www.nfwf.org).

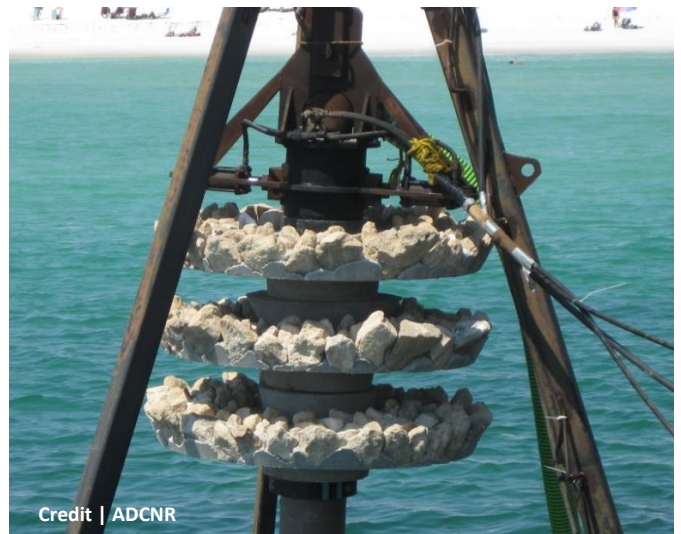
## ALABAMA

# Alabama Artificial Reef and Habitat Enhancement Plan – Phase II

This project will build on phase I of the plan to construct and enhance artificial reef habitat in Alabama’s coastal waters. Alabama's artificial reef system provides habitat for economically important reef fishes and provides a marine environment, allowing fish populations to flourish. Over time, subsidence, storm damage, and other factors have caused deterioration of many of the state’s existing artificial reefs. Phase II of the project aims to continue to increase connectivity between habitats used by fish in early and adult life through creation or enhancement of inshore, nearshore, and offshore reef habitats. Analysis of phase I response monitoring suggests increases in the abundance of red snapper on artificial reefs post deployment. Future analysis will include examination of responses in biomass, other species of interest, and the overall marine community.

Habitat enhancement is vital to increased survivorship of many species. Alabama’s Marine Resources Division has a significant record of success with respect to the deployment of artificial reef structures in state and federal waters off the Alabama coast. Previous investments have resulted in improvements to fisheries and expanded recreational opportunities.

The overall scope of Alabama’s reef habitat enhancement program is significant, with phase I enhancing nearly 110,000 acres of habitat for reef fishes and phase II anticipated to enhance up to 160,000 acres of habitat. Additional outcomes include an increase in abundance and diversity of a wide variety of reef-associated organisms and a more robust connection between the inshore, nearshore, and offshore reef habitats.



Credit | ADCNR



Above, juvenile fish shelters attached to a fiberglass pile that will be embedded in a concrete slab and lowered to the seabed.