



NFWF

Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund

RECIPIENTS

Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

AWARD AMOUNT

\$37,957,100

LOCATION

Fort Morgan Peninsula (AL)

AWARD DATE

November 2016

STATUS

Active

PROGRESS UPDATE

The Gulf State Park Gulf Highlands Management Plan is complete. Acquisition and management work is underway. (February 2019)

ALABAMA

Gulf Highlands Conservation Acquisition

This project proposes to acquire, conserve, and manage 113 acres with 2,700 feet of Gulf frontage beach/dune habitat – the largest, privately held, undeveloped beachfront parcel remaining in coastal Alabama. Protection of this key habitat would benefit nesting sea turtles, migratory birds and shorebirds, and allow its continued function as refuge for the endangered Alabama beach mouse. The quality and extent of the dune system contributes to the parcel’s unique ecological benefits. Acquisition and permanent conservation would also prevent the likely development on the property of a permitted residential condominium complex with associated amenities.

In addition to the direct acquisition cost, the project budget also includes funding to support future management and stewardship of these important coastal habitats; including, but not limited to, invasive species control, boundary postings, and human disturbance management via strategically placed dune walk-overs, fencing, and interpretive signage. Once acquired, the parcel will be deeded to the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, State Parks Division for long-term management and inclusion in their Ft. Morgan Parkway management area, with limited public access. Moreover, the parcel’s proximity to the Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge enhances both properties’ value as critical beachfront habitat for coastal birds, sea turtles, and the endangered beach mouse.



Gulf Highlands Dunes: Credit ADCNR



Alabama Beach Mouse: Credit USFWS



Coastal dunes under threat of residential development will be protected by this acquisition. This is critical habitat for the endangered Alabama beach mouse, pictured above.

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.