



NFWF

Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund

RECIPIENTS

City of Gulf Shores

AWARD AMOUNT

\$12,511,400

PARTNERS

Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources

LOCATION

Gulf Shores, Alabama

AWARD DATE

November 2016

STATUS

Active

PROGRESS UPDATE

Acquisition of the Erie Hall and Leary properties is complete. The wetland delineations and the jurisdictional determinations in the habitat monitoring plan are complete. Remaining deliverables are underway. The plan is expected to be completed in the fall of 2019. (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.

ALABAMA

Bon Secour - Oyster Bay Wetland Acquisition Project

This acquisition project will protect and restore approximately 836 acres of diverse coastal habitat in the City of Gulf Shores. The tidal marshes, maritime forests, and freshwater swamps located in this project area are important habitat for many species of conservation significance including threatened and endangered species such as the Alabama red-bellied turtle and the eastern indigo snake, and various wading birds. The tidal wetlands and swamps serve as a nursery for commercially important shellfish and finfish and play a crucial role in the water quality and ecological function of the Oyster Bay, Bon Secour and Little Lagoon watersheds. The properties will be protected in perpetuity for conservation purposes, and a comprehensive habitat management plan will be developed and implemented. Restoration and management actions will include fire management, invasive species removal, improving hydrologic connectivity, and native vegetation plantings.

These acquisitions will be occurring within the boundaries of the City of Gulf Shores, one of the fastest growing communities in south Alabama, and will eliminate the likely risk of future development.

In addition, these acquisitions will expand existing preserved lands, including an adjacent unit of the Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge and other city- and county-owned conservation lands.



Coastal marsh habitat in the Bon Secour NWR. Credit iStock



The target parcels include important coastal marsh habitat that will be protected in perpetuity and be open to the public for passive recreational use.