NFWF | Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund

ALABAMA

Restoration & Enhancement of Oyster Reefs in Alabama

RECIPIENT
Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources – Marine Resources Division

AMOUNT
$3,750,000

LOCATION
Mobile Bay and Mississippi Sound, AL

AWARD DATE
November 2013

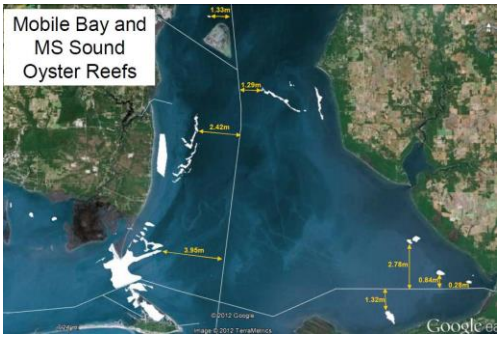
STATUS
Monitoring

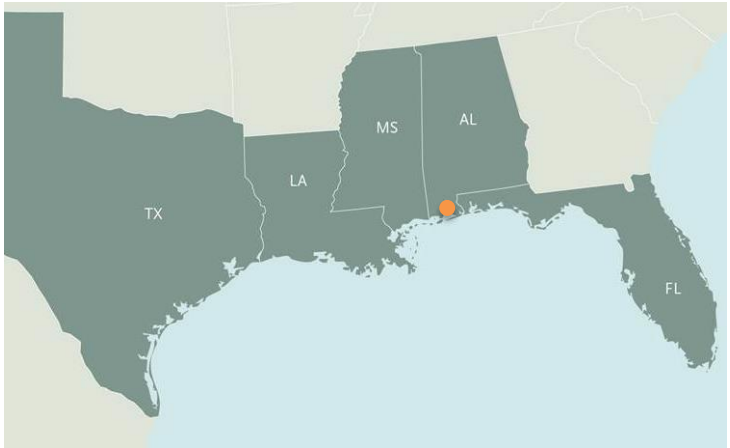
PROGRESS UPDATE
Surveys of cultivated sites have been completed and data is being analyzed. Final reports anticipated in 2019. (February 2019)

Upon completion this project will restore 600 acres of oyster reefs in Mobile Bay, Mississippi Sound and Bon Secour Bay by enhancing the quantity and quality of cultch material currently available upon existing oyster reefs and potential new reef sites. Prior to project implementation there was roughly 2200 acres of viable oyster reef in coastal Alabama. Through the planting of 50,000 cubic yards of new cultch material, dissemination of seed oysters and cultivation of existing reef beds, this project will increase Alabama's oyster reefs by nearly 30 percent. To ensure the sustainability of this project over time, this project will utilize a variety of monitoring techniques to prioritize reef location sites, quantify oyster density, assess overall reef health and inform harvest strategies.

Oyster reefs in coastal Alabama have been severely degraded due to impacts from erosion and sedimentation, drought, predation, and harvesting. These impacts were magnified by direct exposure to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill and related cleanup efforts.

Due to its scale and geographic distribution, this project represents a significant investment in the restoration of Alabama's oyster reefs and the ecological services they provide. These services include water filtration, habitat creation for invertebrates and vertebrates, improvements to commercially and recreationally important species and shoreline protection and stabilization.





Oyster reef restoration remains a high priority for the state of Alabama, which will gain an additional 600 acres of oyster reefs through the completion of this project.

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.**