



NFWF

Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund

RECIPIENT

The Conservation Fund

AWARD AMOUNT

\$4,507,000

PARTNERS

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission

Brevard County

LOCATION

Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge – Brevard & Indian River Counties

AWARD DATE

November, 2018

STATUS

Awarded

PROGRESS UPDATE

Project recently awarded. (February 2019)

FLORIDA

Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge Acquisitions

The Conservation Fund will acquire priority inholdings in the Archie Carr National Wildlife Refuge (ACNWR) to protect critical sea turtle nesting habitat. The targeted tracts contain undeveloped beach and dune habitats that are utilized by the largest nesting population of loggerhead and green sea turtles in North America. Conservation of these tracts will protect available nesting habitat for use by sea turtles and will minimize fragmentation, address protected landscape gaps, and reduce the risk of additional coastal armoring. The targeted parcels were prioritized using a ranking system established by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) the Florida resource agencies. Once acquired, all parcels will be transferred to USFWS for incorporation into the ACNWR.

The ACNWR was established to conserve threatened and endangered wildlife, especially sea turtles and their nesting habitat. It has the highest density of nesting loggerheads in the world, supporting between 8,000 to 20,000 nests annually. Many sea turtle species are long-lived and wide-ranging, and recent data shows that one quarter of the loggerhead sea turtles that nest in the ACNWR migrate to and forage in the West Florida shelf of the Gulf of Mexico for a significant part of their lives. Permanent protection of key sea turtle nesting habitat in the ACNWR will directly benefit these Gulf sea turtle populations. Acquisition of key habitat inholdings is specifically identified in the Deepwater Horizon Natural Resource Damage (NRD) Strategic Framework for Sea Turtle Restoration and the Endangered Species Act Recovery plans for loggerhead, green, and leatherback sea turtles. This effort has been identified by USFWS, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the State of Florida as one of the highest priority needs for sea turtle populations in the Gulf.



Credit | Dr. Blair Witherington



Above, a nesting loggerhead. Between 2013 and 2017, 83% of all loggerhead nests were laid in the Brevard County portion of the ACNWR.

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.