



NFWF

Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund

**RECIPIENTS**

Audubon Texas

**AWARD AMOUNT**

\*\$323,300

**LOCATION**

Matagorda Bay

**AWARD DATE**

November 2015

**STATUS**

Active

**PROGRESS UPDATE**

Conceptual designs have been drafted for five rookery island locations and two reports were completed: 1) Island Siting and Design, and 2) Review of Biological Factors. The post-Harvey recovery effort is near completion pending sign and platform installation. (January 2019)

**TEXAS**

# Matagorda Bay Rookery Island, Feasibility Study and Alternatives Analysis

This project will evaluate potential options for protecting and enhancing colonial waterbird rookery islands within the 350 square mile Matagorda Bay system. Of the 16 historically active nesting sites in Matagorda Bay only 6 remain today and only two provide significant nesting opportunities for bird populations: Lavaca Bay Spoils and Sundown Island. The results of this project will provide a detailed guide for future conservation investments that would protect and enhance colonial waterbird populations in the region by enhancing resiliency and sustainability of their critical nesting habitat.

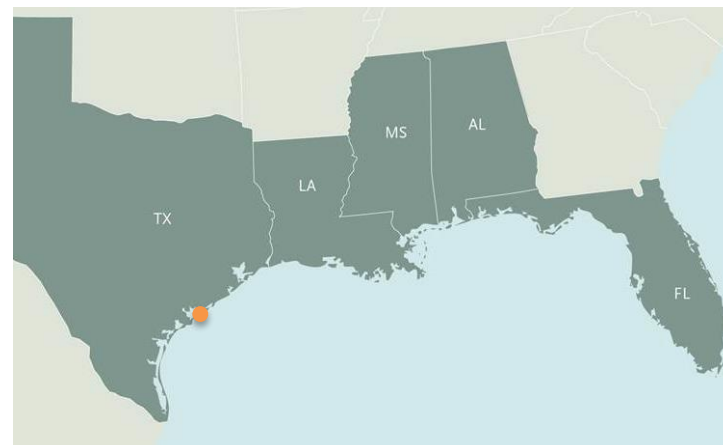
The Matagorda Bay system is the third largest estuarine system along the vast Texas Coast. The bay provides critical feeding and nesting areas for numerous bird and marine species. This project will provide a much needed analysis of the optimal investments for a sustainable bird population. Additionally, it will complement and enhance an existing network of public and private conservation efforts along the Texas mid-coast including the Aransas National Wildlife Refuge.



Oystercatcher | Credit: Gulf Coast Bird Observatory



Brown Pelicans | Credit: Gulf Coast Bird Observatory



The potential creation of additional rookery island locations in Matagorda Bay will increase productivity, while lessening the chance of a catastrophic event eliminating all Matagorda Bay nesting sites.

**\*Project was amended in November 2017 to add \$73,300 for additional assessments following Hurricane Harvey** 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).