



NFWF

Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund

RECIPIENT

Ducks Unlimited

AWARD AMOUNT

\$1,249,534

LEVERAGE

\$1,285,206

PARTNERS

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

Natural Resource Conservation Service

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

LOCATION

Mid-Coast and Chenier Plain, TX

AWARD DATE

November 2013

STATUS

Closed

PROGRESS UPDATE

Long-term wetland restoration enrollment was completed and nearly doubled the project goal, totaling 5,239 acres. 23,282 acres was enrolled in shallow water flooding program, also exceeding the initial project goal. The project is now closed. (August 2016)

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.

TEXAS

Gulf Coast Migratory Waterfowl Habitat Enhancement

This project will create freshwater wetland habitat on private lands in the Texas Chenier Plain and Mid-Coast to address habitat deficits in this important migratory bird region of the coast. Building on the success of the 20-year Texas Prairie Wetlands Program, as well as the Migratory Bird Habitat Initiative launched in 2010, this project will establish a minimum of 5,000 additional acres of permanent wetlands and enroll over 22,000 acres of agricultural lands to be flooded seasonally to support migratory waterfowl, shorebirds and waterbirds. Past experience has demonstrated that landowner interest in these programs currently exceeds available resources to meet the demand. Funds will be leveraged with grants from the Natural Resource Conservation Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Texas Parks & Wildlife Department.

The Gulf Coast Joint Venture estimates there is an outstanding 107,000 acre deficit in freshwater wetland habitats within the Texas Chenier Plain and Mid-Coast region necessary to meet the foraging needs of the 15.5 million migratory waterfowl that overwinter in this region. Moreover, the impacts of ongoing drought in east Texas have limited the ability of farmers to plant rice, thus exacerbating the problem. Rice farming provides an opportunity to flood fields on a seasonal basis to offset some of the habitat deficit. With less available water, fewer acres of rice have been planted and fewer acres

have been flooded. Large areas have been left without active management and now serve as reservoirs contributing to the spread of non-native vegetation. This project would address up to 20% of the habitat needs of the area, and ensure active management of lands that may otherwise convert to non-productive, non-native habitats.



The creation and restoration of freshwater wetland habitat on private lands will support increased populations of migratory waterfowl, shorebirds and waterbirds.