



NFWF

# Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund

**RECIPIENT**

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

**ORIGINAL AWARD AMOUNT**

\$840,000

**CLOSED AWARD AMOUNT**

\$840,000

**LEVERAGE**

\$2,500,000

**PARTNER**

Coastal Conservation Association Texas

**LOCATION**

East Bay of Galveston Bay, TX

**AWARD DATE**

November 2013

**STATUS**

Closed

**PROGRESS UPDATE**

Construction of approximately 50 acres of oyster reef was completed at two separate reef systems within the project area, exceeding goals by nearly 20 acres. Early monitoring has shown that total oyster abundance on the new reefs is currently well above the abundances recorded at natural oyster reefs in Galveston Bay. The project is now closed and was completed on budget. (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](http://www.nfwf.org).

**TEXAS**

## Oyster Reef Restoration in East Bay

Project will add thirty acres of suitable cultch material to a planned 130 acre reef restoration project at Middle Reef, Pepper Grove and Hanna’s Reef to provide settling substrate for oyster larvae and promote reef growth. The project includes post-construction monitoring to evaluate the success of the project. Leveraged funds include \$2 million from the Coastal Impact assistance Program and \$500,000 from the Coastal Conservation Association. This project is located in the East Bay of the Galveston Bay Estuary.

Galveston Bay has lost over 5,000 acres (16%) of its historical oyster reefs. In addition, the average density of oysters on remaining reefs has been reduced by over 90%. Loss of both area and density of oysters represents a significant issue for water quality in Galveston Bay, as the reduced oyster population now filters 97% less water. This contributes to higher nutrient concentrations and turbidity within the bay system. The oyster reefs are still recovering from Hurricane Ike. The Gulf’s oyster production is still recovering from impacts associated with the Deepwater Horizon oil spill that has resulted in increased harvest pressure on Texas oysters. This project will provide a source population for continued oyster recovery and the ecological services they provide. These services include water filtration, habitat for commercially and recreationally important fish, and protecting shorelines from erosion by stabilizing sediments and dampening wave action.



The addition of 30 acres of suitable oyster cultch will provide essential substrate for continued oyster recovery in eastern Galveston Bay.