Mississippi Restoration Area

July 2018

WHO WE ARE

The Trustee representatives for the Mississippi Restoration Area are:

- Gary Rikard, Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality
- Brian Spears, U.S. Department of the Interior
- Dan Van Nostrand, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- Ron Howard, U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Troy Pierce, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

RECENT ACTIVITIES

In the past year, we have been busy overseeing the continued engineering, design, construction, and monitoring of restoration projects, including the three projects approved in a July 2017 restoration plan. We are also beginning the planning process for our second restoration plan.

WHAT WE DO

Our work in the Mississippi Restoration Area focuses on living and coastal marine resources such as sea turtles, marine mammals, birds, and oysters. We also restore and conserve wetlands, coastal, and nearshore habitats. Restoration work also includes nonpoint source nutrient reduction to watersheds, partnerships to conserve habitats on federal lands, and enhancement of recreational uses.

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RESTORATION PROJECTS

	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	STATUS	ESTIMATED COST
RESTORE WATER QUALITY			
Upper Pascagoula River Water Quality Enhancement	This project in the Chunky-Okatibbee watersheds provides water quality improvements through the development and implementation of conservation plans and practices to reduce nutrient and sediment runoff into watersheds that affect coastal waters and the Mississippi Sound. It provides outreach and technical assistance to voluntary landowners within a 20,000-acre area. MDEQ, USDA, and EPA are implementing this project.	⟳	$4M
REPLENISH AND PROTECT LIVING COASTAL AND MARINE RESOURCES			
Mississippi Artificial Reef Habitat Project	This project provides valuable habitat for small crustaceans and mollusks as well as juvenile shrimp, crab, and oysters by restoring nearshore artificial reefs.	✓	$2.6M
Mississippi Oyster Cultch Restoration Project	This project enhances reefs within harvestable areas in the western Mississippi Sound. Crushed oyster shell and limestone placed over 1,430 acres of existing reefs provides a place for oyster larvae to attach and grow.	◉	$11M
RESTORE AND CONSERVE HABITAT			
Hancock County Marsh Living Shoreline Project	Located within the Hancock County Marsh Preserve, this project will construct up to 5.9 miles of living shoreline and approximately 46 acres of marsh, as well as 46 acres of subtidal oyster reef in Heron Bay. Anticipated outcomes are shoreline erosion reduction, creation of habitat for oysters and other secondary productivity, and protection and creation of marsh habitat. Additionally, the project helps protect the Hancock County Marsh ecosystem which includes freshwater, estuarine, marine, and submerged habitats. MDEQ and NOAA are implementing this project.	⟳	$50M
Restoring Living Shorelines and Reefs in Mississippi Estuaries	This project restores reef habitat through the placement of reefs and the use of living shoreline techniques including breakwaters in four bays. Over time, the breakwaters, intertidal and subtidal restoration areas will develop into living reefs that support marine reef habitat productivity. Breakwaters also reduce shoreline erosion and marsh loss.	⟳	$30M
Graveline Bay Land Acquisition and Management	The project includes acquiring and managing up to 1,410 acres of land within the existing Graveline Bay Coastal Preserve and adjacent lands in Jackson County, Mississippi. Restoration measures to enhance habitat connectivity and diversity include invasive species management, prescribed fire, access restriction, debris removal, and road repair and culvert placement. This project protects important contiguous lands and waters, and restores and manages the habitats for the benefit of wetlands, coastal and nearshore habitats and bird resources. MDEQ and the Department of the Interior are implementing this project.	⟳	$11.5M

⟳ In progress ◉ Monitoring/O&M ✓ Complete

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RESTORATION PROJECTS

	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	STATUS	ESTIMATED COST
RESTORE AND CONSERVE HABITAT *(cont'd)*			
Grand Bay Land Acquisition and Habitat Management	This project includes acquiring up to 8,000 acres and managing up to 17,500 acres of land within the boundaries of the Grand Bay National Wildlife Refuge, the Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, and the Grand Bay Savanna Coastal Preserve in Jackson County, Mississippi. Restoration measures may include invasive species management and prescribed fire. The primary objective is to protect important contiguous lands and waters in an effort to restore and manage those habitats for the benefit of wetlands, coastal and nearshore habitats and bird resources. MDEQ and the Department of the Interior are implementing this project.	⟳	$6M
PROVIDE AND ENHANCE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES			
Pascagoula Beach Front Promenade Project	Located immediately south of and parallel to Beach Boulevard along the Mississippi Sound, the project helps restore lost recreational uses of the shoreline by providing access to the beach with a 10-foot wide, 8,200-foot lighted pathway. Improvements may include shower stations, fire pits, pavilions, and other amenities that will be determined at final design.	⟳	$3.8M
Popp's Ferry Causeway Park Project	Visitors to Popp's Ferry Causeway Park will be able to fish, crab, and enjoy boardwalks and nature trails designed for viewing the waterfront and marshes. Improvements include roadway repair and lighting, a concession and bait stand, kayak rentals, and construction of fishing piers, boardwalks, and an interpretive center. The project gives the public access to enjoy fishing from piers.	⟳	$4.7M
Restoration Initiatives at the INFINITY Science Center	In May 2018, a ribbon cutting event was held to welcome the public to the new indoor exhibits, 3-D Theater and Global Observation Lab. This project increases appreciation and awareness of the Gulf of Mexico's natural resources by enhancing and expanding the state-of-the-art interactive science, education and interpretive research center that opened in May of 2018. Visitors to the INFINITY Science Center, located in southern Hancock County, gain increased access to coastal estuarine habitats, wildlife viewing areas and educational features including marsh ecosystems, Gulf species, and restoration monitoring.	⟳	$10.4M

⟳ In progress ◉ Monitoring/O&M ✓ Complete