

Preferred Sea Turtle Restoration Projects

Texas Trustee Implementation Group

Draft Restoration Plan/Environmental Assessment #2:

The *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill caused significant injuries to sea turtles and their habitats, including species most often found in Texas: the loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*), Kemp's ridley (*Lepidochelys kempii*), green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), and hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*). Shoreline oiling and response activities resulted in mortality spanning through multiple life stages. On behalf of the public, the Texas Trustee Implementation Group (Texas TIG) is proposing to implement two alternatives (projects) in the Texas Restoration Area to restore and partially compensate for the injury to sea turtles. Summary descriptions of the proposed projects are provided below.

Lancha Sea Turtle Mitigation Plan

The Lancha Sea Turtle Mitigation Plan project would purchase a long-range vessel(s) for offshore patrols and enhance enforcement efforts to reduce sea turtle bycatch in state and federal waters along the Texas coast. Following vessel purchase(s), law enforcement would conduct patrols, remove illegal fishing gear, and apprehend illegal fishing vessels (primarily illegal vessels from Mexico known as lanchas). The project would reduce sea turtle injuries and mortality through improved compliance with state and federal fishery requirements. The estimated total cost of this project is \$8,400,000. The Texas TIG would provide \$2,200,000 of the total estimated costs.

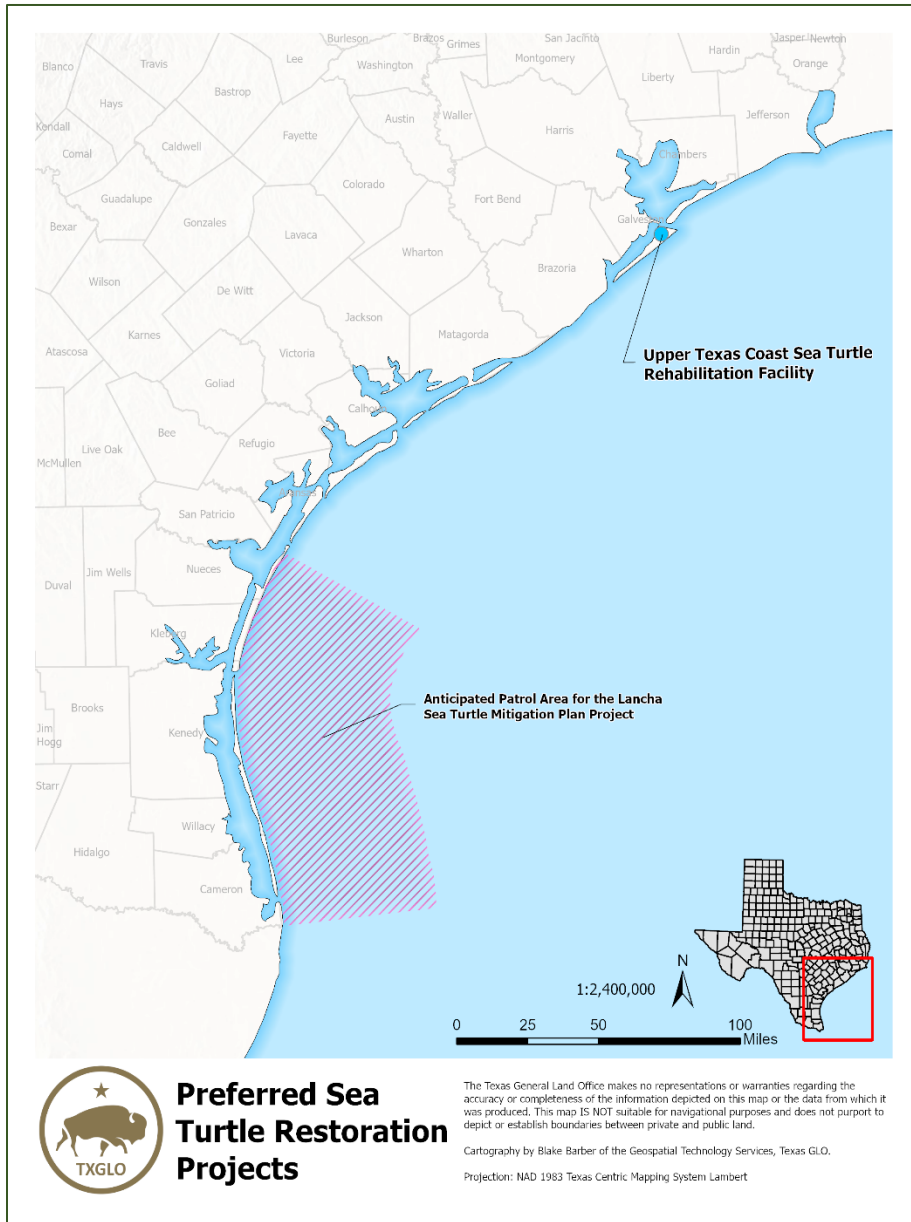
Upper Texas Coast Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Facility

The Upper Texas Coast Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Facility project would construct a new sea turtle rehabilitation facility and parking lot at Texas A&M University at Galveston on Pelican Island in Galveston, Texas. The facility would replace lost rehabilitation capacity and address a gap in the Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network resulting from the

impending closure of an existing rehabilitation facility. The project would expand regional rehabilitation coverage on the upper Texas coast. The estimated total cost of the project is \$10,500,000. The Texas TIG would provide \$2,500,000 of the total estimated costs.



Green sea turtles (Angela Sunley, Texas General Land Office).



Sea turtle undergoing rehabilitation (Gulf Center for Sea Turtle Research - Texas A&M University at Galveston).

Lancha Sea Turtle Mitigation Plan

Location: Southern Texas Coast
 Funding Amount: \$2,200,000

Upper Texas Coast Sea Turtle Rehabilitation Facility

Location: Galveston County
 Funding Amount: \$2,500,000

Total Funding Proposed: \$4,700,000

For additional project information, please see the Draft Restoration Plan/Environmental Assessment #2: Restoration of Wetland, Coastal and Nearshore Habitats; Nutrient Reduction; Oysters; Sea Turtles; and Birds at www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov/restoration-areas/texas.