

Texas Restoration Area

June 2021



WHAT WE DO

Our work in the Texas Restoration Area focuses on restoring wetlands and other coastal habitats and reducing nonpoint source pollution. We are also restoring wildlife injured by the spill, including oysters, birds, and sea turtles.



WHO WE ARE

The Trustee representatives for the Texas Restoration Area are:

- Johanna Gregory Belssner, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Angela Sunley, Texas General Land Office
- Michael Cave, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality
- Erin Chandler, U.S. Department of the Interior
- Jamie Schubert, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- Ron Howard, U.S. Department of Agriculture
- Doug Jacobson, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

RECENT ACTIVITIES

In the past year, the Trustee representatives have overseen the continued engineering, design, and construction of restoration projects. In October 2020, the Texas Trustee Implementation Group (Texas TIG) requested project ideas for consideration for their second restoration plan. Accomplishments include beginning construction on the Bahia Grande Hydrologic Restoration and Galveston Island State Park Beach Redevelopment projects. In addition, funding provided through the Sea Turtle Early Restoration Project helped Texas respond to the largest sea turtle cold-stunning event recorded in the modern era. Additional projects from early restoration and the 2017 Restoration Plan are in progress, and information can be found in the table on the following pages.

Texas Restoration Area

RESTORATION PROJECTS

	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	STATUS	ESTIMATED COST
REPLENISH AND PROTECT LIVING COASTAL AND MARINE RESOURCES			
Texas Rookery Islands	This project restores and protects three rookery islands in Galveston Bay and one in East Matagorda Bay at the Big Boggy National Wildlife Refuge. Restoration increases the amount of available nesting habitat and enhances habitat quality for colonial waterbirds, such as pelicans, gulls, and herons. Islands are protected by expanding island size, establishing vegetation, and building protective features such as breakwaters.		\$20M
Sea Turtle Early Restoration Project	This project includes complementary components that address threats to sea turtles on nesting beaches and in the marine environment: (1) Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle Nest Detection and Enhancement; (2) Enhancement of the Sea Turtle Stranding and Salvage Network; and (3) Enhancement of Texas Fisheries Bycatch Enforcement.		\$20M
Oyster Restoration Engineering	This project includes planning, engineering and design, and permitting for future restoration of nearshore oyster reefs and the rehabilitation of oyster reef habitats buried by sediment in the Galveston Bay system. Results will be used to develop location-specific engineering, design, and environmental permitting documents to prepare one or more oyster restoration projects for implementation.		\$309K
RESTORE AND CONSERVE HABITAT			
Bird Island Cove Habitat Restoration Engineering	This project includes engineering and design for the restoration and conservation of wetlands and coastal habitats in Galveston Bay. This phase investigates ongoing issues associated with habitat degradation and develops strategies to protect and restore existing estuarine habitats.		\$206K
Essex Bayou Habitat Restoration Engineering	This project includes engineering and design for the restoration and conservation of coastal and nearshore habitats. This project will enhance understanding of the factors that contribute to high salinities within Essex Bayou and the Slop Bowl Marsh system and develop solutions to create a more stable estuarine system.		\$372K
Dredged Material Planning for Wetland Restoration	This project identifies priority locations and develops the engineering designs needed to obtain permits for the beneficial use of dredge material at eight marsh restoration sites along the Texas coast.		\$1.9M
McFaddin Beach and Dune Restoration	This project places sand along approximately 17 miles of Gulf shoreline in northeastern Texas, providing important ecological benefits to the interior marshes of the McFaddin National Wildlife Refuge. This project funds about \$15 million of the estimated \$84 million total project cost. The Texas TIG funding will support planting propagation coordination, beach nourishment, dune restoration, and monitoring.		\$15.9M
Bessie Heights Wetland Restoration	This project restores wetlands in the Bessie Heights Marsh located within the Lower Neches Wildlife Management Area in Orange County, Texas. It will restore coastal wetlands utilizing beneficial use dredged material from the federally managed Sabine-Neches Waterway and other sources. Up to 900 acres of intertidal marsh are expected to be restored.		\$4.9M
Pierce Marsh Wetland Restoration	This project beneficially uses dredged material to create up to 150 acres of viable, vegetated wetland habitat in West Galveston Bay for a variety of plants, fish, birds, and other wildlife.		\$3.1M

 In progress  Monitoring/O&M  Complete

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RESTORATION PROJECTS

	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	STATUS	ESTIMATED COST
RESTORE AND CONSERVE HABITAT (cont'd)			
Indian Point Shoreline Erosion Protection	This project constructed 2,800 linear-feet of segmented breakwaters to protect 50 acres of critical seagrass, coastal marsh, lagoons, and associated upland habitats along the northwest shoreline of Corpus Christi Bay.		\$2.2M
Bahia Grande Hydrologic Restoration	This project enlarges and stabilizes a pilot channel that increases tidal flow into the Bahia Grande, a secondary bay system of the lower Laguna Madre, restoring the system's natural tidal exchange and creating habitat for a variety of fish, shellfish, and migratory waterfowl. Construction is currently underway and expected to be completed in Fall, 2021.		\$5M
Bahia Grande Coastal Corridor Habitat Acquisition	This project acquires approximately 1,300 acres of tidal wetlands, thorn scrub, and coastal prairie that will be conveyed to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to be managed as part of the Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge.		\$2.2M
Follets Island Habitat Acquisition	This project acquires approximately 300 acres of wetland and coastal habitat located between the beachfront and the Drum Bay system just north of Freeport. It also conserves dune, coastal strand prairie, and marsh habitats.		\$2M
Mid-Coast Habitat Acquisition	This project acquired approximately 693 acres of habitat near East Matagorda Bay, preserving an area that serves as a protective buffer to estuarine and bay waters. The land has been conveyed to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and will be managed as part of the Texas Mid-Coast National Wildlife Refuge Complex in Matagorda County, Texas.		\$2M
Laguna Atascosa Habitat Acquisition	This project acquired approximately 1,682 acres of beach, dune, and tidal habitats on South Padre Island, Texas. The land has been conveyed to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and will be managed as part of the Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge.		\$5.4M
PROVIDE AND ENHANCE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES			
Freeport Artificial Reef Project	This project enhanced an existing artificial reef in the Gulf of Mexico, approximately six miles from Freeport, Texas. Pre-designed concrete pyramids were placed in open areas of the 160-acre permitted reef site at a water depth of 55 feet, improving recreational fishing and diving opportunities. Construction and placement of the concrete pyramids is complete.		\$2.1M
Galveston Island State Park Beach Redevelopment	This project includes building multi-use campsites, tent campsites, dune access boardwalks, equestrian facilities, and restroom and shower facilities on the beach side of the park. Project planning is complete and construction began in October 2020.		\$10.7M
Matagorda Artificial Reef Project	This project created a new artificial reef site in the Gulf of Mexico, approximately 10 miles from Matagorda County. Concrete pyramids were placed at a water depth of 60 feet, restoring oyster reef habitat and enhancing recreational fishing and diving opportunities. Construction and placement of the concrete pyramids is complete.		\$3.2M
Mid-Upper Texas Coast Artificial Reef	This project created a new artificial reef site in the Gulf of Mexico, about 67 miles south-southeast of Galveston. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department acquired a 371 linear-foot cargo carrier, the Kraken, which was cleaned and then sunk in waters approximately 135 feet deep. Best management practices were used. The project enhances recreational fishing and diving opportunities.		\$1.9M
Sea Rim State Park Improvements	This project constructed two wildlife viewing platforms (Fence Lake and Willow Pond), one comfort station, and one fish cleaning shelter at the Sea Rim State Park, located southwest of Port Arthur in Jefferson County.		\$510K

 In progress
  Monitoring/O&M
  Complete