DWH Open Ocean Fish Restoration

Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission Meeting

March 12, 2020

Today's Agenda

- Open Ocean TIG Restoration Plan 2.
- Restoring Open Ocean Fisheries Resources – Project Next Steps
- Questions and Answers.

Open Ocean Restoration

Goal: Replenish and Protect Living Coastal and Marine Resources

NRDA Trustees' Governance Structure

Trustee Implementation Groups (TIGs)

Texas
Trustees for Texas
Federal Trustees

Louisiana
Trustees for Louisiana
Federal Trustees

Mississippi
Trustees for Mississippi
Federal Trustees

Alabama
Trustees for Alabama
Federal Trustees

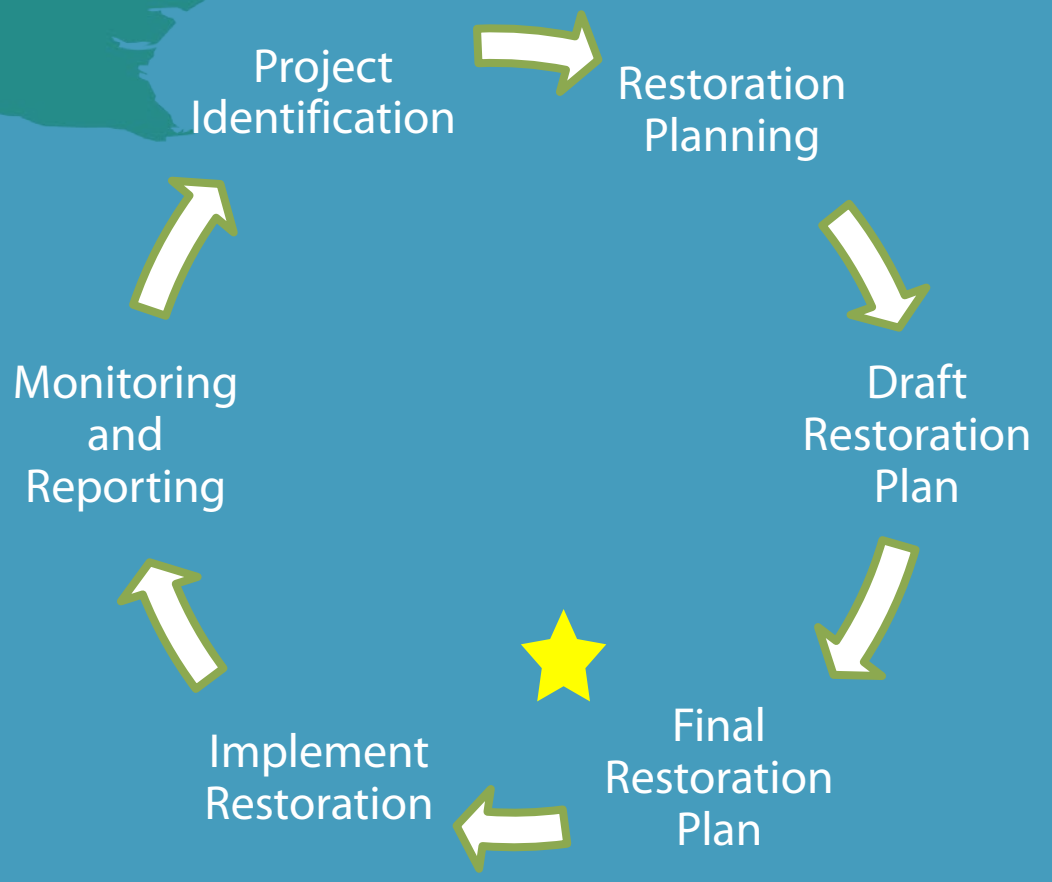
Florida
Trustees for Florida
Federal Trustees

Regionwide
All Trustees

Open Ocean
Federal Trustees

Unknown Conditions and Adaptive Management
All Trustees

Open Ocean Restoration Plan 2



- ***May 2019:*** Released draft Restoration Plan 2.
- ***May – August 2019:*** Held public meetings and received comments.
- **August – November 2019**: Considered and incorporated comments.
- **December 2019:** Released Final Restoration Plan 2 selecting 18 projects totaling almost $226 million.

Fish and Water Column Invertebrates

- Oceanic Fish Restoration Project, $20M **(in progress).**
- Restoring for Bluefin Tuna via Fishing Depth Optimization, $6.1M
- Better Bycatch Reduction Devices, $17.1M
- Reduction of Post-release Mortality from Barotrauma, $30M
- Communication Networks and Mapping Tools to Reduce Bycatch—Phase 1, $4.4M

Photo: © Jay Fleming

Sea Turtles

- Identifying Methods to Reduce Sea Turtle Bycatch in the Reef Fish Bottom Longline Fishery, $290K
- Reducing Juvenile Sea Turtle Bycatch Through Development of Reduced Bar Spacing in Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs), $2.2M
- Developing Methods to Observe Sea Turtle Interactions in Gulf of Mexico Menhaden Purse Seine Fishery, $3M.
- Gulf of Mexico Sea Turtle Atlas, $5.7M
- Developing a Gulf-wide Comprehensive Plan for In-water Sea Turtle Data Collection, $655K
- Long Term Nesting Beach Habitat Protection for Sea Turtles, $7M

Project Highlight: Engagement With Industry

Improved and increased fisheries stakeholder engagement:

- Project 1: Reducing Juvenile Sea Turtle Bycatch Through Development of Reduced Bar Spacing in Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs).
- Project 2: Better Bycatch Reduction Devices for the Gulf of Mexico Commercial Shrimp Trawl Fishery.
- Project 3: Developing Methods to Observe Sea Turtle Interactions in Gulf of Mexico Menhaden Purse Seine Fishery

Marine Mammals

- Reduce Impacts of Anthropogenic Noise, $8.9M
- Reduce and Mitigate Vessel Strike Mortality, $3.8M
- Reducing Impacts to Cetaceans during Disasters by Improving Response Activities, $4.2M
- Compilation of Environmental, Threats, and Animal data for Cetacean Population Health Analyses

Mesophotic and Deep Benthic Communities

- Mapping, Ground-truthing, and Predictive Habitat Modeling, $35M
- Habitat Assessment and Evaluation, $52
- Coral Propagation Technique Developm $16.9M
- Active Management and Protection, $20
- Projects phased - 1-2 year implementati planning, 7-8 year duration

Fish and Water Column Invertebrates

Reduction of Post-release Mortality from Barotrauma

- Distribute FDDs and other tools, promote their use & educate recreational fishermen on best handling practices
- Monitor changes in use of release devices and handling methods
- Improve release mortality estimates for reef fish

Reduction of Post-release Mortality from Barotrauma

- Release Mortality Symposium – Oct 2019
- Research Priorities from the council workshop participants
- Stakeholders, engagement strategy and key requirements

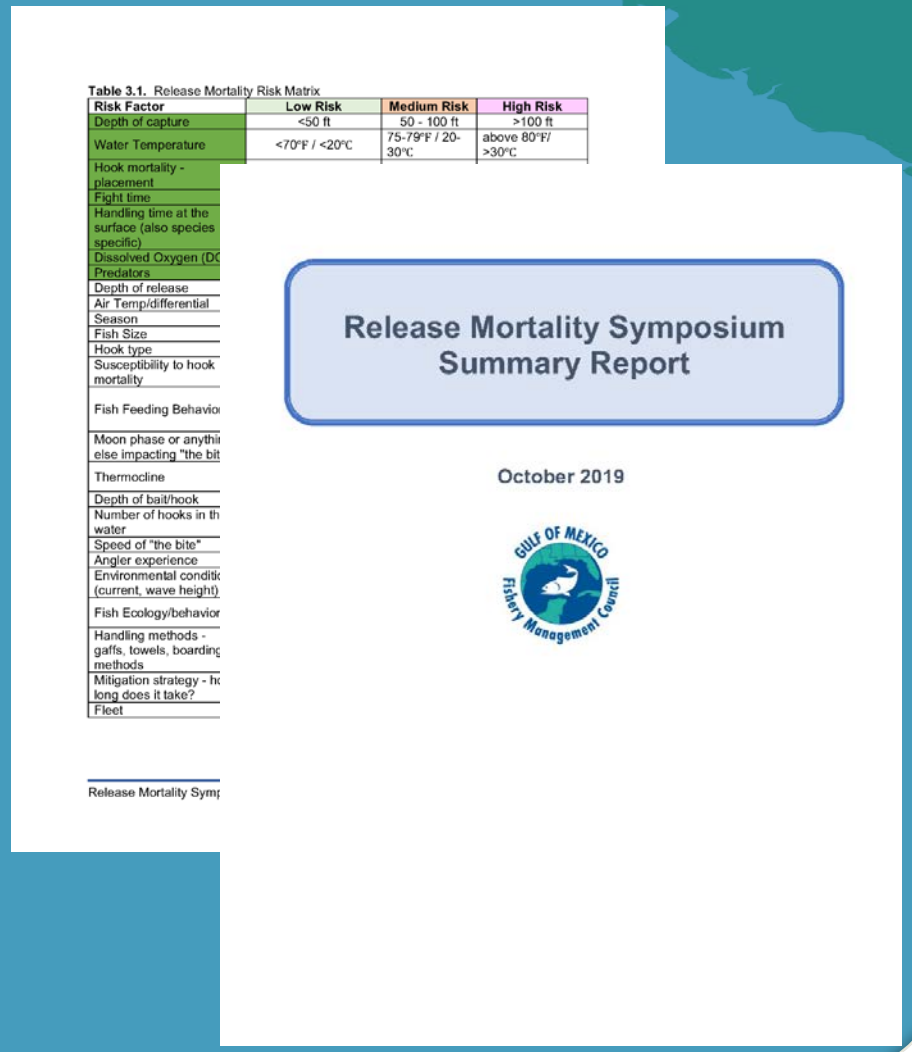


Table 3.1. Release Mortality Risk Matrix

Risk Factor	Low Risk	Medium Risk	High Risk
Depth of capture	<50 ft	50 - 100 ft	>100 ft
Water Temperature	<70°F / <20°C	75-79°F / 20-30°C	above 80°F/ >30°C
Hook mortality - placement			
Fight time			
Handling time at the surface (also species specific)			
Dissolved Oxygen (DO			
Predators			
Depth of release			
Air Temp/differential			
Season			
Fish Size			
Hook type			
Susceptibility to hook mortality			
Fish Feeding Behavio			
Moon phase or anythi else impacting "the bit			
Thermocline			
Depth of bait/hook			
Number of hooks in th water			
Speed of "the bite"			
Angler experience			
Environmental conditi (current, wave height)			
Fish Ecology/behavior			
Handling methods - gaffs, towels, boarding methods			
Mitigation strategy - ho long does it take?			
Fleet			

Release Mortality Symp

Release Mortality Symposium Summary Report

October 2019

Better Bycatch Reduction Devices

- Identify new advances in BRD technology
- Validate the effectiveness of improved BRDs
- Maximize the use of better BRDs through outreach and incentives
- Maximize restoration benefits through dockside BRD training

Photo: © Jay Fleming

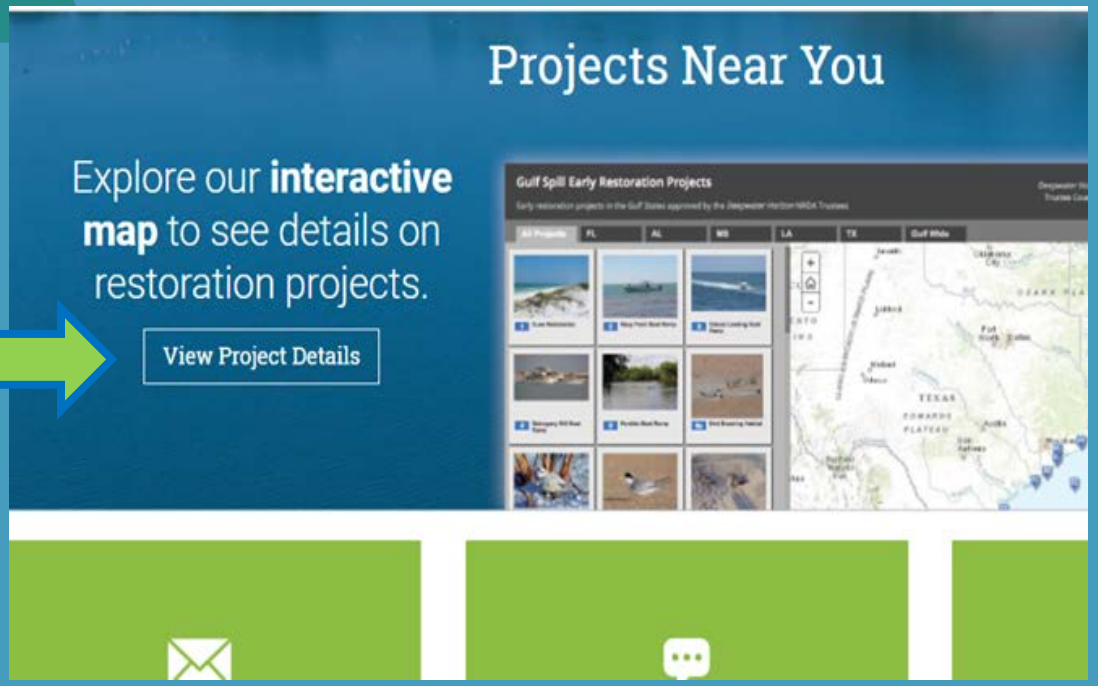
For More Information

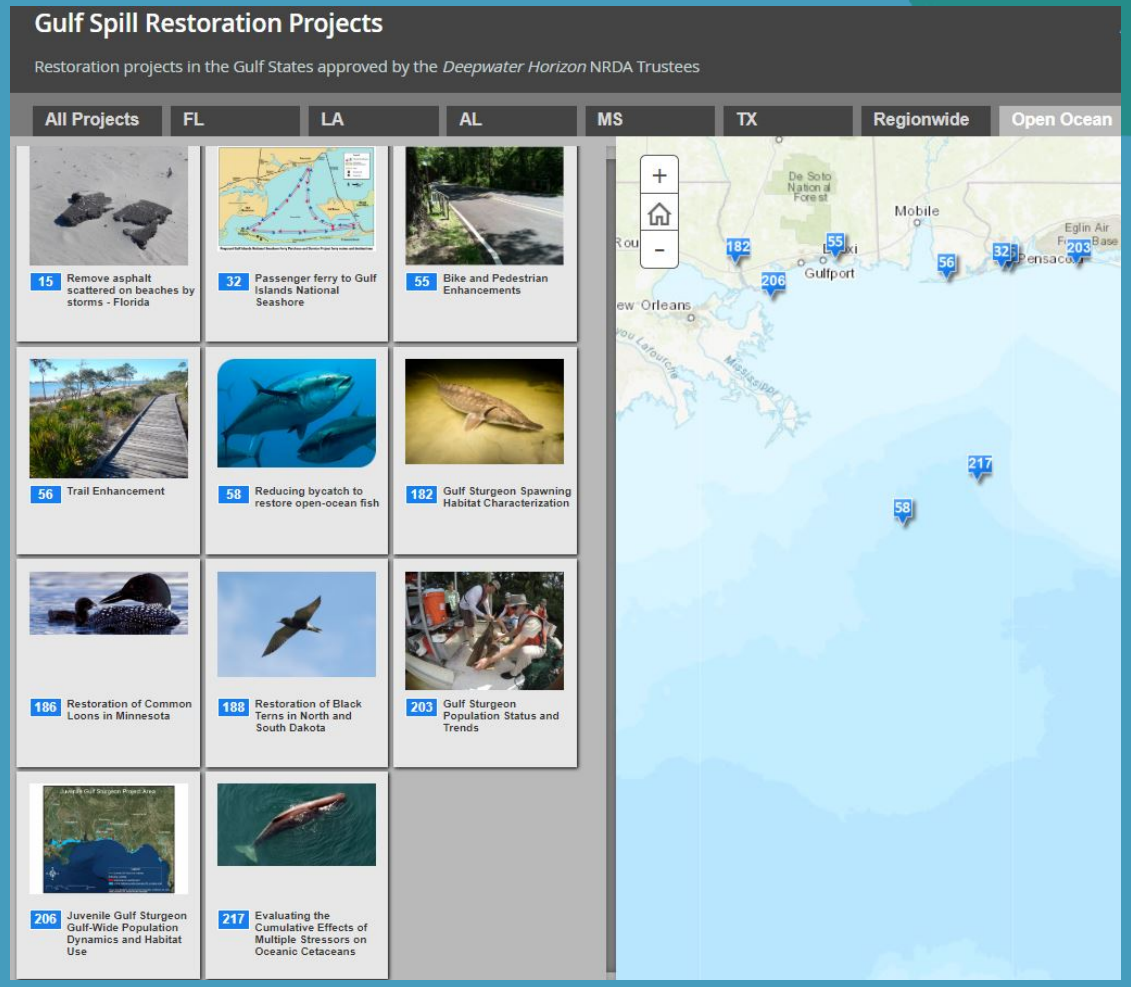
Website, Interactive Map

Where to Find More Information

www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov

How to Access Open Ocean Project Information





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Questions?

Thank you

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