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Mississippi Oyster Cultch Restoration

General Project Description

For over a hundred years shell/cultch plants in Mississippi have proven to be successful in growing new and refurbishing damaged oyster cultch areas. The goal of the Mississippi Oyster Cultch Restoration project is to restore and enhance oyster cultch areas in the marine waters of the Mississippi Sound in Hancock and Harrison counties. The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) routinely surveys oyster cultch plant areas to identify potential enhancement and restoration opportunities. This project would restore and enhance approximately 1,430 acres of the oyster cultch areas within the Mississippi Sound. Cultch material (oyster shell, limestone or crushed concrete, or some combination thereof) would typically be deployed at a rate of 100 cubic yards per acre with adjustments for site conditions, as needed.

Resource Benefits and Relationship to Injury

Mississippi's Oyster Restoration project would restore injured oyster reefs and/or compensate for interim losses of such natural resources within the Mississippi Sound for impacts to oysters exposed to oil, dispersant, and/or response activities undertaken to prevent, minimize, or remediate oiling from the Oil Spill.

Methods and Results of Offsets Estimation

For the purposes of negotiations with BP in accordance with the Framework Agreement, the Trustees used widely accepted methodologies. A method called Resource Equivalency Analysis was used to quantify the restoration benefits estimated to be provided by this project ("Offsets"), resulting in expected production of oysters on cultch material over time. Offsets reflect estimated kilograms of oysters produced, and would be applied against oyster injuries in the Mississippi Sound injured by the Oil Spill as determined by the Trustees' total assessment of injury. A number of factors were considered in estimating oyster production, including, but not limited to, typical oyster production in the proposed project area, estimated project life span and the size of the project. Total estimated Offsets for Mississippi Oyster Cultch Restoration is 2.0 million Discounted Kilogram (Dkg) Years of oyster biomass (ash-free-dry-weight).

Estimated Costs

Total estimated project costs are $11million.

For more information, contact:

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Draft Phase I Early Restoration Plan

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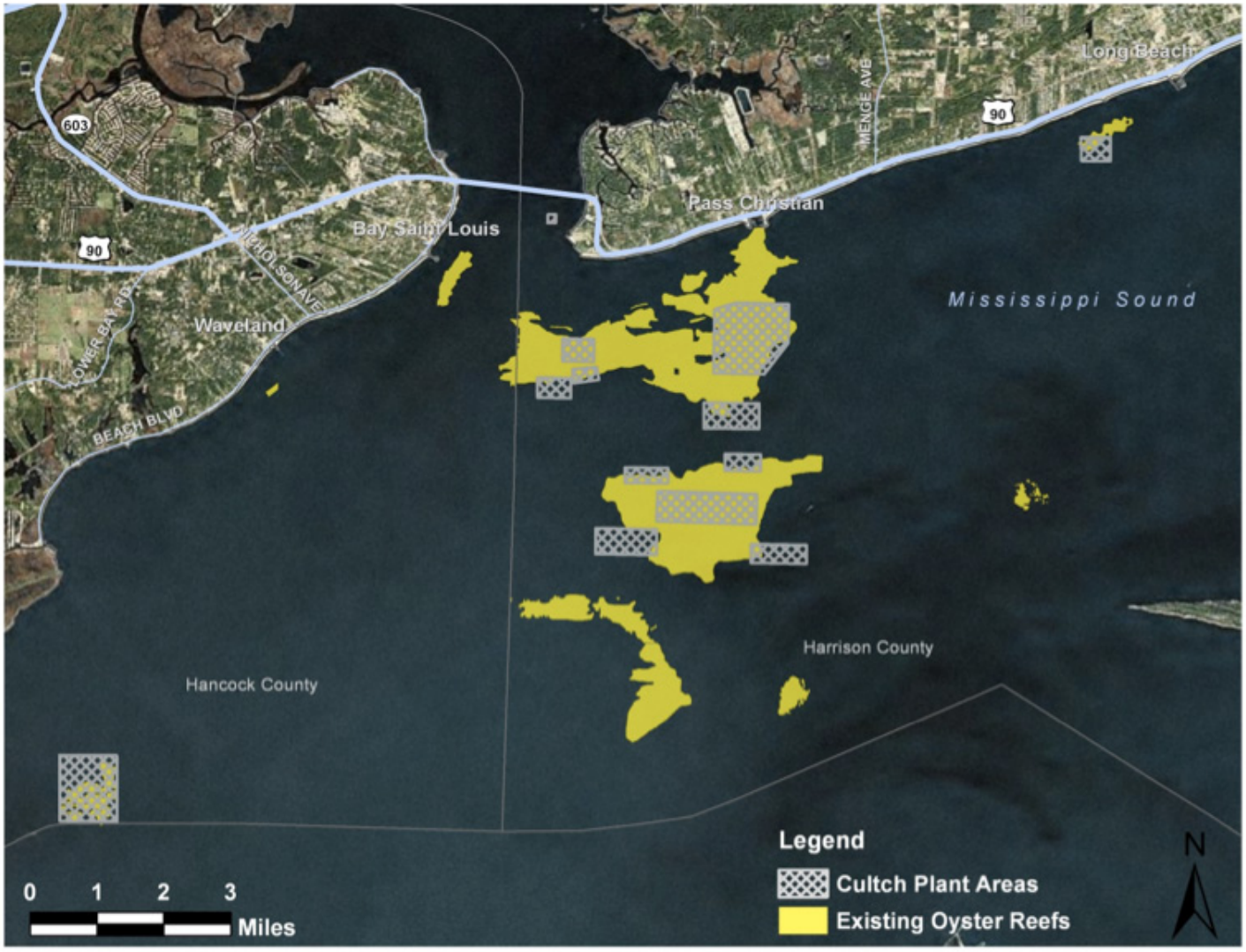

Mississippii Sound oyster growing areas in Hancock and Harrison counties.