

Preferred Wetland, Coastal, and Nearshore Habitat Restoration Projects

Texas Trustee Implementation Group Draft Restoration Plan/Environmental Assessment #2

The *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill significantly impacted natural resources and disrupted ecological services along hundreds of miles of the Gulf of Mexico shoreline, injuring nearly all types of nearshore ecosystem habitats. On behalf of the public, the Texas Trustee Implementation Group (Texas TIG) is proposing to implement four alternatives (projects) in the Texas Restoration Area to restore and partially compensate for the loss of wetlands, coastal and nearshore habitats. Summary descriptions of the proposed projects are provided below.

Bahia Grande Channel F Hydrologic Restoration

The Bahia Grande Channel F Wetland Restoration project would restore natural freshwater flow to the Laguna Larga in the upper Bahia Grande System and enhance 800 acres of wetlands and shallow open waters within the Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge, near Brownsville, Texas. The project would continue efforts to restore the system's natural hydrology, creating habitat for fish, shellfish, wildlife, and waterfowl. The estimated total project cost is \$2,400,400. The Texas TIG would provide \$1,500,000 of the total estimated costs.

Bird Island Cove Habitat Restoration – Construction

The Bird Island Cove Habitat Restoration – Construction project would protect and enhance estuarine marshes and coastal habitat at the mouth of Ostermayer Bayou, in West Galveston Bay, Galveston County, Texas. Rock breakwaters would be constructed to increase the productivity and longevity of up to 170 acres of estuarine marsh complex (marsh, sand flat, and protected shallow water) and create hard-structure habitat for fisheries species. If flotation channels are needed to support site access during construction, then dredged material would be beneficially used

for marsh restoration. The estimated total project cost is \$7,500,000. The Texas TIG would provide \$5,000,000 of the total estimated costs.

Bahia Grande Channel F Hydrologic Restoration

Location: Cameron County
Funding Amount: \$1,500,000

Bird Island Cove Habitat Restoration – Construction

Location: Galveston County
Funding Amount: \$5,000,000

Follets Island Habitat Acquisition Phase 2

Location: Brazoria County
Funding Amount: \$3,300,000

Galveston Island Habitat Acquisition

Location: Galveston County
Funding Amount: \$1,120,000

Total Funding Proposed: \$10,920,000

Follets Island Habitat Acquisition Phase 2

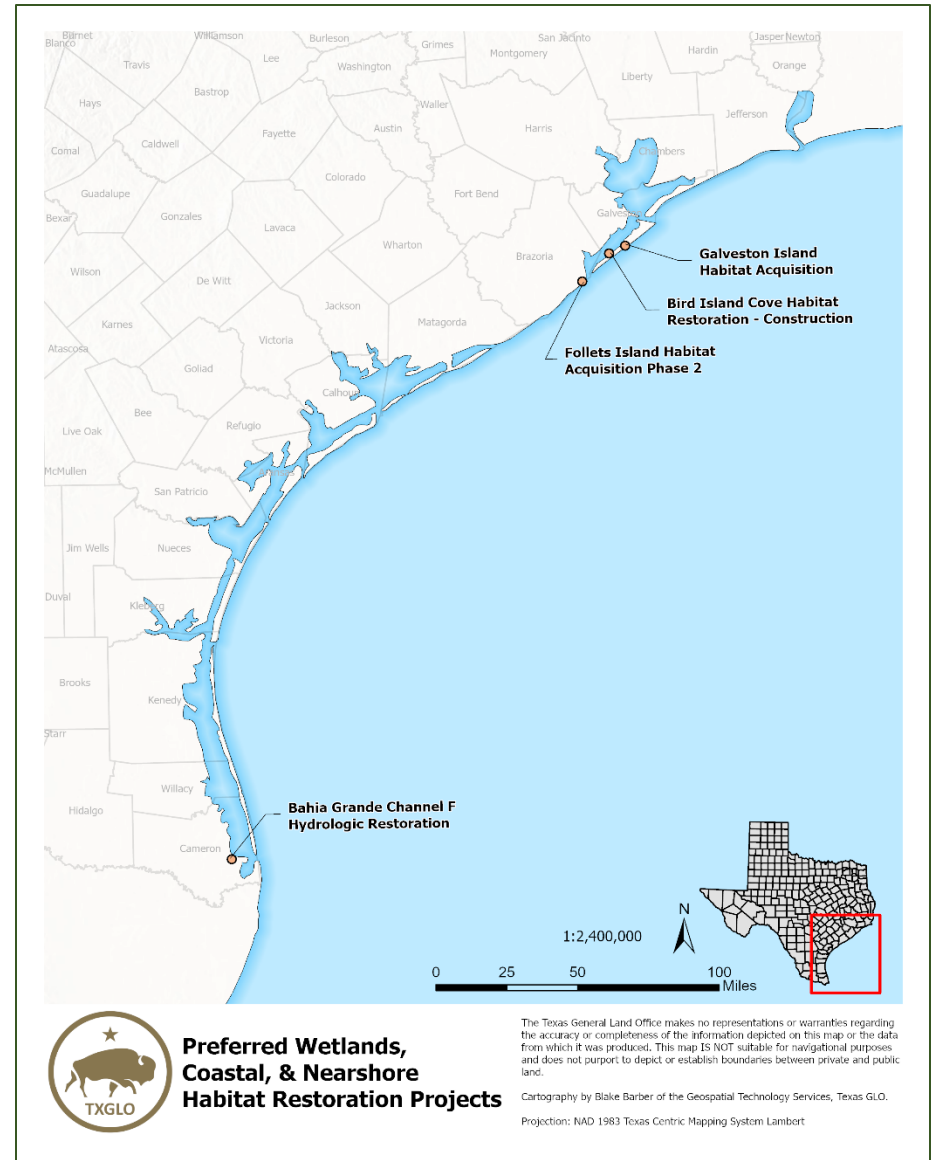
The Follets Island Habitat Acquisition Phase 2 project would conserve in perpetuity approximately 350 acres of wetland, coastal, and nearshore habitats on Follets Island, Texas. Tracts would be purchased through fee-simple acquisition and transferred to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for long-term management and inclusion in the Follets Island Coastal Management Area. The project would protect ecological services of dune, coastal strand prairie, and marsh habitat. The estimated cost of this project is \$3,300,000.

Galveston Island Habitat Acquisition

The Galveston Island Habitat Acquisition project would protect in perpetuity 142 acres of barrier island habitat adjacent to Starvation Cove and Mentzel Bayou on Galveston Island in Galveston County, Texas. The property contains coastal, wetland, and upland habitats, including breeding and foraging grounds and migratory stopover habitat. Following purchase, a conservation easement would be placed on the tract. The estimated total project cost is \$6,120,000. The Texas TIG would provide \$1,120,000 to support land acquisition costs.



Intertidal marsh in Galveston Bay, Texas (Woody Woodrow, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).



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 online at www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov/restoration-areas/texas.