Restoration Project for Oysters

The *Deepwater Horizon* (DWH) oil spill injured oysters along hundreds of miles of oiled shoreline. As a result of the DWH oil spill, direct oyster mortality and subsequent reproductive failure occurred. To help restore and partially compensate for the loss of DWH injured oysters, the Regionwide TIG will implement restoration activities that span across multiple jurisdictions and habitats in the Regionwide TIG's Final RP/EA 1. The oyster restoration project is described in more detail below.

Photo : Oyster reef. Credit: iStock

OYSTER RESTORATION PROJECT

In 2019, the Regionwide TIG compiled 5,149 project ideas submitted to the Trustee project portals and identified 295 that were specific to oysters. Following an extensive screening process, the Regionwide TIG selected one oyster alternative for implementation; see table below.

REGIONWIDE RESTORATION

Oyster Restoration Project in the Regionwide TIG Final RP/EA 1

Restoration Project	Project Description	Estimated Cost
Improving Resilience for Oysters by Linking Brood Reefs and Sink Reefs (Large-scale)	This project will construct oyster reefs at five sites across the Gulf of Mexico, on up to 30 acres per site at: (1) East Galveston Bay, TX; (2) Biloxi Marsh, LA; (3) Heron Bay, MS; (4) Mid-lower Mobile Bay, AL; and (5) Suwannee Sound, FL. The project aims to increase oyster abundance and restore resilience to oyster populations by increasing reef connectivity through larval transport and the construction of oyster reefs over a range of habitats and salinities. The project will create a network of high-vertical relief brood (protected) reefs that link to existing and/or created sink (harvested and/or protected) reefs through larval transport, as well as increase oyster population sustainability and oyster reef resilience.	$35.8 million

For additional details, please see the DWH Trustee website:
www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov/restoration-areas/regionwide