

MENU FOR MARINE RESTORATION



Ocean Conservancy

Start a Sea Change

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Restoring regional prosperity, security, and quality of life on the Gulf Coast will require an ecosystem-wide approach including restoration of our **coastal and marine environments**.

As decision-makers begin choosing restoration priorities and projects in the Gulf of Mexico, we must make sure the Gulf's marine environment is restored and enhanced to fully support the businesses and industries that rely on our marine resources and drive our Gulf economy. That is why Ocean Conservancy and the Gulf of Mexico University Research Collaborative (GOMURC) convened a panel of experts to identify a list of top restoration projects and approaches. The workshop represents a critical effort to integrate local stakeholders from the fishing industry and science community into Gulf restoration.

“We must seize the opportunity to fully restore the people, economy and environment of the Gulf Coast, including the marine environment where the BP oil disaster occurred,”

—Bethany Kraft, Director of Ocean Conservancy's Gulf Restoration Program

The Recipe

The Menu for Marine restoration highlights important restoration options for **ocean habitats, fishery resources, marine wildlife and related human uses**. It calls for robust, long-term science and monitoring to understand the full impacts of the BP oil disaster, to support

restoration decision-making and to gauge our success in enhancing our economically vital marine resources.

In addition to increased monitoring for commercially and recreationally important finfish species, sea turtles and marine mammals, the expert panel also

recommends direct, on-site restoration, such as removing marine debris from sensitive habitats and facilitating sea turtle recovery. Indirect, off-site restoration, such as investments in science and technology and protection of sea floor habitats, will also play a major role in the restoration process.

The *Menu for Marine Restoration's* focus on marine environments is meant to complement the significant coastal wetland restoration planning and implementation efforts already underway, and to serve as a menu for making investments in the restoration of marine resources.



Red Snapper
Credit: Greg McFall, NOAA

The Ingredients

More than 65 marine restoration options were ranked for ocean habitats, fishery resources, wildlife and human uses. The list below is not comprehensive, but provides an overview of the types of important restoration options. More a complete listing, please visit: <http://www.oceanconservancy.org/our-work/fisheries/gulf-framework-update.html>

Ocean Habitats

- re-establish, create and protect oyster reefs
- protect and re-establish seagrass beds
- explore, identify and map ecologically and economically important areas
- reduce land-based sources of pollution
- restore injured coral
- remove marine debris

Human Uses

- establish a permanently-funded, long-term, Gulf-wide ecosystem monitoring, ocean observation, research and model program
- conduct baseline and annual socioeconomic studies of fisheries
- enhance and expand cooperative research program with recreational and commercial fishermen
- promote tourism and outdoor recreation opportunities and programs

Fishery Resources

- supplement existing, and develop new, fisheries independent surveys to collect abundance and life history data
- invest in understanding acute and chronic effects of oil and dispersants on fish and invertebrate species
- develop a large scale fish DNA & smart tagging program to improve stock assessments
- invest in new and selective fishing gear
- explore management options to protect spawning stocks of bluefin tuna
- Collect and synthesize existing data needed to undertake ecosystem assessment in the Gulf

Wildlife Populations

- develop large-scale tagging program for sea turtles, seabirds and marine mammals
- expand and improve wildlife stranding networks and response capacity
- gather baseline data for sea birds, sea turtles and marine mammals
- support long-term live capture/release health assessment studies
- assess impacts of low level exposure of oil, oil products and chemical dispersants on wildlife
- protect and expand existing bird and turtle nesting beaches