



NFWF

Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund

RECIPIENT

Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality

AWARD AMOUNT

\$2,676,700

PARTNERS

Mississippi Department of Marine Resources

Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks

LOCATION

Hancock, Harrison and Jackson counties

AWARD DATE

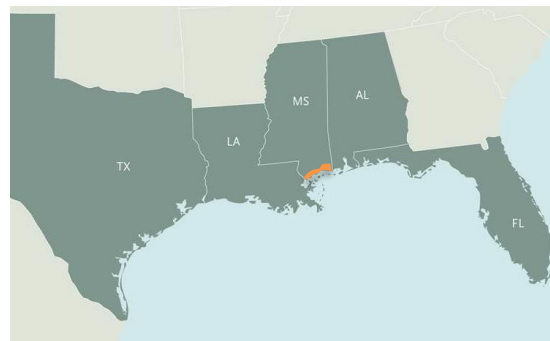
November 2014

MISSISSIPPI

Invasive Species Management on Coastal State Land

This project will enhance the habitat value of state lands in coastal Mississippi through improved management of invasive species, expanding on a 2013 Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund award to address invasive species management on land within Mississippi's Coastal Preserves Program. Under this proposal, similar work will be undertaken within two state parks (Buccaneer and Shepard) and Ward Bayou Wildlife Management Area (WMA), as well as additional coastal preserve lands not included under the first award. Work to control persistent invasive species includes prescribed burning, mechanical and chemical control of invasive vegetation, and feral hog control. All three aspects of management are important for the revitalization of these coastal habitats and the improvement of their functioning relative to the ecological integrity of priority bays and bayous.

Consistent with Mississippi's desire to restore and maintain the ecological function of landscape-scale coastal habitats, this project focuses on improving significant coastal marsh and transitional upland habitat through the control and eradication of non-native and invasive plant species and the improved tidal connectivity of these habitats to the Mississippi Sound. Mississippi's coastal wetlands, as well as adjacent upland habitats, like wet pine savanna and pitcher plant bogs, are among the most biologically productive and ecologically diverse natural systems within the state. Mississippi's protected lands are significant fish and wildlife habitat for neotropical migratory birds and shorebirds as well as resident marsh birds, wading birds, and land birds. The maritime forest and pine uplands provide important nesting and roosting area for birds and buffer surrounding marsh habitat.



This project leverages earlier investments to expand invasive species management in important Mississippi coastal habitats.



The Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund, administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), supports projects to remedy harm and eliminate or reduce the risk of harm to Gulf Coast natural resources affected by the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill. To learn more about NFWF, go to www.nfwf.org.