



NFWF

Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund

## MISSISSIPPI

# Artificial Reef and Habitat Enhancement: Barrier Island Reefs

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR), in conjunction with Mississippi Gulf Fishing Banks, manages 15 large areas permitted for the construction of artificial reefs in Mississippi's state waters and the adjacent federal waters. This project proposes to create five new artificial reefs using 500-1000 fabricated reef structures. These structures will be deployed in the four permitted reef creation zones in state waters near Mississippi's barrier islands. The barrier island artificial reef zones were established in the 1980's and existing reefs consist of concrete rubble, concrete culverts, and bay balls.

Existing reefs are known to support juvenile reef fishes, including gag grouper, lane snapper, and gray snapper. The proposed reefs will be constructed from materials that are designed to provide optimal habitat for those juvenile reef fishes. The project is expected to benefit reef fish populations because juvenile reef fishes rely on shallow-water structured habitats for protection and forage, and these habitats are limited in availability. After growing to a defensible size, these reef fishes will migrate to reefs in offshore waters where they live as adults.



Credit | David Reeves

This project would benefit juvenile gray snapper, pictured above, and other reef fishes that were impacted by the DWH oil spill through the creation of artificial reef structures.

## AT A GLANCE

### RECIPIENT:

Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR)

### AWARD AMOUNT:

\$3,125,000

### PARTNERS:

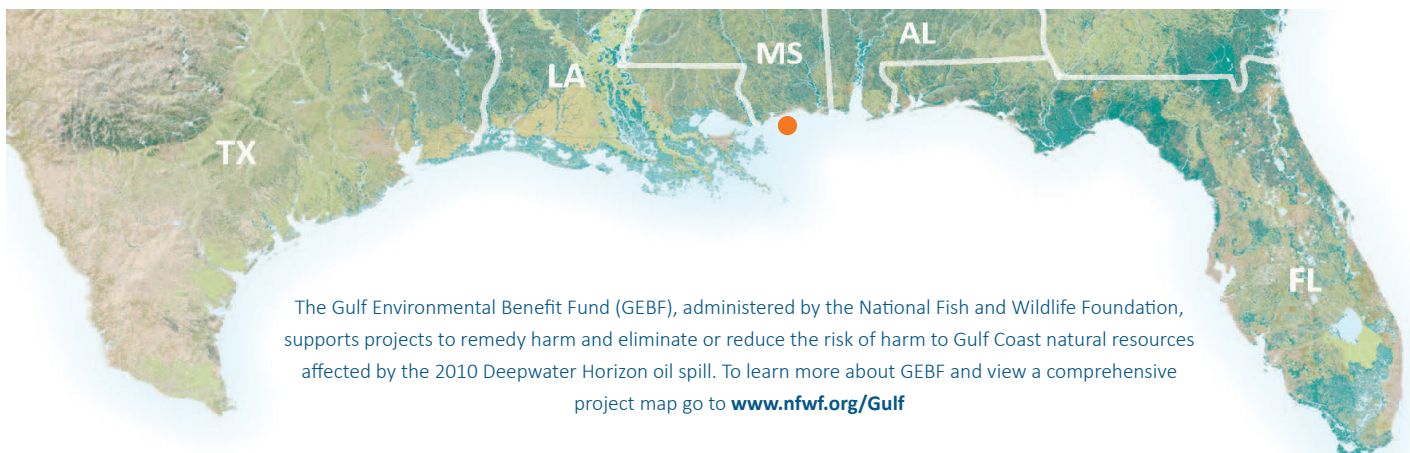
Mississippi Gulf Fishing Banks

### LOCATION:

Mississippi Sound, North of the Barrier Islands

### AWARD DATE:

November 2021



The Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund (GEBF), administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, 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 GEBF and view a comprehensive project map go to [www.nfwf.org/Gulf](http://www.nfwf.org/Gulf)