Open Ocean Restoration Area

Draft Restoration Plan 1/Environmental Assessment
Birds Restoration Type

Photo: Black terns. Credit - Marie Read.

Photo: Common Loon. Credit – FWS.

Birds Restoration Type

The Open Ocean Trustee Implementation Group released its *Draft Restoration Plan 1/Environmental Assessment: Birds and Sturgeon* in October 2018. The projects selected for inclusion in the reasonable range of alternatives for birds utilize the following restoration approaches identified in the *Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill Final Programmatic Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan and Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement*:

- Restore and conserve bird nesting and foraging habitat.
- Establish or reestablish breeding colonies.
- Prevent incidental bird mortality.

In screening projects for the Draft Restoration Plan 1 under this restoration type, Open Ocean Trustee Implementation Group Trustees considered the following Trustee goals:

- Restoring lost birds by facilitating additional production and/or reduced mortality of injured bird species.
- Restoring or protecting habitats on which injured birds rely.

In addition, the Trustees prioritized project ideas for bird species injured in the greatest numbers by the spill for which DWH restoration projects have not yet been undertaken (common loons, American white pelicans and black terns). At least several thousand individuals of these species were lost due to DWH-caused mortality or lost productivity. These species breed and spend substantial time outside of the Gulf of Mexico.

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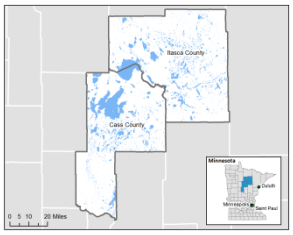
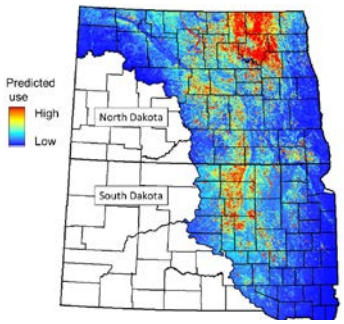
Bird Projects Proposed for Implementation in Draft Restoration Plan 1

PROJECT NAME	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	ESTIMATED COST
REPLENISH AND PROTECT LIVING COASTAL AND MARINE RESOURCES – BIRDS		
Restoration of Common Loons in Minnesota	The objective of this project is to reduce mortality and increase reproductive success of common loons at breeding, nesting, and migration staging locations in Minnesota by focusing on restoration activities that include acquisition and/or easements of lakeshore loon nesting habitat, enhancement of loon productivity by providing artificial nesting platforms in targeted lakes and engaging Minnesota lake associations in loon conservation activities, and, reduction of loon exposure to lead-based fishing tackle.  *Waterbody Location in Cass and Itasca Counties, MN.*	$7,520,000
Restoration of Black Terns in North and South Dakota	This proposed project would protect palustrine emergent wetland habitat and adjacent upland grassland habitat to enhance and improve breeding site selection (i.e., occupancy) and foraging conditions for black terns in more than 30 counties in North and South Dakota located in the Prairie Pothole Region. Conservation easement agreements would be implemented on a voluntary basis with participating landowners as part of ongoing U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service conservation programs in those states.  *Map: Example of HAPET Predicted Use of Landscapes by Black Tern in ND and SD.*	$6,250,000

For additional information, contact:

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