

# Proposed 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 is proposing to implement restoration activities that span across multiple jurisdictions and habitats in the Regionwide TIG's Draft RP/EA 1. The proposed project that would help restore oysters injured by the spill is described in more detail below.



Photo : Oyster reef. Credit: iStock

## **PROPOSED 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 identified two oyster alternatives, of which one is preferred (i.e., proposed for funding in the Draft RP/EA 1); see table below.

# PROPOSED REGIONWIDE RESTORATION

## Preferred Oyster Restoration Project in the Regionwide TIG Draft RP/EA 1

Restoration Project	Project Description	Estimated Cost
Improving Resilience for Oysters by Linking Brood Reefs and Sink Reefs (Large-scale)	This project would 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 would 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

## PUBLIC INPUT

The Regionwide TIG's Draft RP/EA 1 is available for public review from March 22 through May 6, 2021. We encourage you to submit comments on the proposed oyster project described above, or any other proposed projects described in the Draft RP/EA 1, during the 45-day comment period. Comments may be submitted during the comment period in three ways:

1. During the virtual public meeting on April 15, 2021
2. Online: <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/RWTIGRP1>
3. By mail: Hard copy addressed to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, P.O. Box 29649, Atlanta, GA 30345

To be considered, mailed comments **must be postmarked on or before the comment deadline** specified in the *Federal Register* and on the DWH Trustee website.

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

For additional information, contact:

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