



The Louisiana Marine Fisheries Enhancement, Research, and Science Center

Phase III Early Restoration

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Louisiana Marine Fisheries Enhancement, Research, and Science Center (“the Center”) will establish state of the art facilities to responsibly develop aquaculture-based techniques for marine fishery management. The project includes two sites (Calcasieu Parish and Plaquemines Parish) with the shared goals of fostering collaborative multi-dimensional research on marine sport fish and bait fish species; enhancing stakeholder involvement; and providing fisheries extension, outreach, and education to the public.

The primary location for the Center will be at a site near the north end of Lake Calcasieu, and south of the city of Lake Charles. The facility includes construction of a multi-purpose building and pond complex to be used for marine fisheries research, production, education, and outreach. The building will house multiple components including a visitor center, support space for staff and collaborating researchers, and a hatchery complex.

The hatchery complex will be focused on the production of spotted seatrout (*Cynoscion nebulosus*), red drum (*Sciaenops ocellatus*), and southern flounder (*Paralichthys lethostigma*). Fish produced at the Center will be marked and released in conjunction with the existing Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) marine fisheries monitoring program. This work will provide information on recruitment, survival, health, and movements of marine fish populations, which will be used to help develop and evaluate

strategies for the management of Louisiana’s saltwater sport fishery.

A satellite facility will be located in Plaquemines Parish, northwest of West Pointe à la Hache, and will serve as a research and demonstration facility for marine baitfish in support of recreational sport fishing. The species of fish proposed are the Gulf killifish (*Fundulus grandis*) and the Atlantic croaker (*Micropogonias undulatus*). At this site, the project will involve constructing a new hatchery building and renovating / reconditioning existing onsite facilities. The new hatchery building will house a staff office, crew support, and baitfish culture area with small-scale recirculating aquaculture systems to support research and demonstration of technology for live bait husbandry. Existing onsite facilities that were previously used for plant propagation will be renovated or reconditioned, including a Mississippi River water intake structure and pumping station, infrastructure components (e.g., water pipelines, access roads), and ponds for research, effluent treatment, and water storage.

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION CONTACT

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The facility will help develop and improve techniques for marine baitfish holding and production systems, which will be demonstrated and disseminated to improve access to live bait for recreational fishing in Louisiana.

Recreational fishing in Louisiana was negatively impacted by the spill. For example, widespread closures of areas where recreational fishing occurs were necessary. The objective of this restoration project is to help compensate for the loss of recreational fishing services resulting from the spill.

ESTIMATED COST

The estimated cost of the Louisiana Marine Fisheries Enhancement, Research, and Science Center is \$22,000,000.

