

COORDINATION OF GULF OF MEXICO ALLIANCE ECOSYSTEMS & ASSESSMENT PRIORITY ISSUE TEAM

FINAL REPORT

A PUBLICATION (OR REPORT) FUNDED BY A TEXAS COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM GRANT
APPROVED BY THE TEXAS LAND COMMISSIONER PURSUANT TO NATIONAL OCEANIC AND
ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION AWARD NO. NA12NOS4190164.



Texas General Land Office Contract No. 15-080-000-8745

Award Period: October 1, 2014 – September 30, 2015

Awardee: Gulf of Mexico Alliance

FINAL REPORT

Project Name: Coordination of GOMA's Ecosystems & Assessment Priority Issue Team

GLO Contract No: 15-080-000-8745

Award Period: October 1, 2014 – September 30, 2015

Overview:

The Gulf of Mexico Alliance (GOMA) is a Regional Ocean Partnership that is organized into six Priority Issue Teams (PITs) composed of representatives from each of the five Gulf States and their federal partners as well as representatives from academia, industry, and NGOs. From 2009 to 2014, the PITs included: Water Quality, Habitat Conservation and Restoration, Ecosystems Integration and Assessment, Nutrients and Nutrient Impacts, Coastal Community Resilience, and Environmental Education. In November 2014, the Alliance Management Team utilized input gathered by GOMA's PITs and made slight changes to GOMA's priorities. These priorities were reflected in a "Regional Collaborative Blueprint" which is a pre-cursor to the next Governors' Action Plan III. The existing PITs were tweaked and two new PITs were formed:

- Water Resources (a combination of the Water Quality and Nutrients PITs),
- Habitat Resources (a combination of the Ecosystems and Habitat Conservation PITs),
- Education and Engagement,
- Coastal Resilience,
- Wildlife and Fisheries, and
- Data and Monitoring.

Each PIT is facilitated by a coordinator who ensures that the team meets on a regular basis to work on projects respective to their priority issue. Support for PIT coordination is accomplished via sub-awards to organizations that are currently performing the PIT coordination function. Specifically, the state of Texas supports coordination for the former Ecosystems Integration and Assessment Pit, which is now functioning as the new Wildlife and Fisheries PIT.

PROJECT OUTCOMES

#1 - Collaboration among all Gulf States, federal partners, NGOs participating in the EIA PIT activities, within GOMA

Description of the task – During the award period, GOMA contracted with Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies (HRI) to conduct specific duties associated with the coordination of the former Ecosystems Integration and Assessment Team, whose name was changed to "Wildlife & Fisheries Priority Issue Team" by the Alliance Management Team in late 2014. The new Wildlife & Fisheries PIT took over many of the same issues that the former Ecosystems PIT was charged with.

Accomplishments - GOMA and HRI worked with Helen Young (Texas General Land Office) and Robin Riechers (with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department) to lead the new Wildlife & Fisheries Team, including coordinating conference calls and developing a steering committee comprised of representatives of each of the five Gulf States and three Federal Liaisons. The steering committee was established by February 2015 and includes the following state and federal representatives:

- Robin Riechers and Mark Lingo, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Chair
- Jeffery Marx, Louisiana Department of Natural Resources
- Ali Leggett, Mississippi Department of Marine Resources
- Karon Aplin, Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
- Amber Whittle and Ryan Moyter, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
- Chris Pease, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Steve Giordano, NOAA Fisheries Service
- Jerry Boos, EPA Gulf of Mexico Program

During the spring 2015 time period, GOMA, the HRI coordinator, and the steering committee actively sought members to participate in an inaugural team meeting in June and join full-team conference calls leading up to the in-person meeting. In order to encourage a wide range of participation in the team, GOMA and HRI conducted a “Get to Know GOMA webinar” on March 18, followed by a team-only coordination call in April.

Also, the Team Coordinators participated in training designed to effectively coordinate and facilitate the Team. Those training opportunities included:

- March 3-5, 2015 – Team Coordinator Training in Ocean Springs, MS
- March 13, 2015 – “Water Words that Work” webinar training part 1
- March 17, 2015- “Water Words that Work” webinar training part 2
- June 15, 2015 – Meeting Facilitator Training in Biloxi, MS

The team formed very quickly after the initial announcement that the team was taking a new name and would incorporate species objectives in addition to the ecosystem assessment objectives. Approximately 45 people were in attendance at the in-person meeting held June 16-18, 2015 in Biloxi, Mississippi. The participating members of the new team included state and federal agencies as well as several NGOs and academics. A copy of the team attendance is provided in Attachment A. A reception was hosted for the new Wildlife & Fisheries Team by the Institute for Marine Mammal Studies in Gulfport, Mississippi, as part of the team meeting on the evening of June 17, 2015. Over 30 people were in attendance at the reception. The members of the new Wildlife & Fisheries PIT are a good mixture of members of the former Ecosystems PIT, members of the Habitat PIT, and new members.

During the in-person meeting, the team developed goals and objectives for inclusion into the next *Governors' Action Plan for a Healthy and Resilience Gulf Coast*. In doing so, they naturally formed three working groups that continued to collaborate after the in-person meeting to refine the action steps that will be necessary to achieve the objectives established during the meeting.

#2 - Project monitoring associated with the facilitation and implementation of integrated Gulf-wide ecosystem assessments

Description of the task - Because the team is just getting started, the primary project of the team is to formalize the team structure and develop goals and objectives related to Gulf-wide ecosystem and species assessments. In addition, the team identified and applied for funding for an initial team project to begin accomplishing the established goals and objectives.

Accomplishments – Team goals, objectives and action items have been developed and are currently being reviewed by GOMA Management Team for inclusion into the next *Governors' Action Plan for a Healthy and Resilient Gulf Coast*. As part of the team's agenda for their in-person meeting in June, the team received presentations identifying various ecosystem and species assessment efforts in the region. The team also hosted two follow-up webinars to further clarify some of the information. From these efforts, the team was able to get a clear picture of the status of ecosystem component assessment and they used this information to identify needs and gaps, which became part of the team's objectives and action items for Action Plan III.

After Management Team review, the *Action Plan* will be submitted to each of the Gulf State governors for signature. It is expected to be finalized by January/February 2016. A copy of the near-final draft Wildlife & Fisheries Team objectives for the *Action Plan* is attached to this report as Attachment B.

In addition to establishing goals and objectives for the new team, GOMA assisted the team in the development and preparation of a grant proposal to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Gulf Coast Conservation Grant Program. The project's scope and budget was developed by Texas and other members of the Wildlife & Fisheries steering committee. The proposal was drafted and circulated for review by all steering committee members, and GOMA submitted the proposal to NFWF on March 26. Unfortunately, GOMA was notified in August that the proposal was not selected for funding. NFWF explained that, while the proposal was very worthy, NFWF was looking to fund on-the-ground restoration projects instead of data synthesis project. A copy of the NFWF application is provided in Attachment C of this report.

#3 - presentations at GOMA and PIT meetings or copies of the presentations

Description of the task - During the PIT's in-person meeting, GOMA and HRI facilitated the members in presenting briefings to highlight their organization's wildlife and fisheries priorities and obtain feedback or guidance from team members regarding regional efforts.

Accomplishments – The programs presented at the in-person meeting included:

- Presentations by each of the five Gulf States identifying their individual state priorities, how and where their data is collected, and opportunities for collaboration on needs that are not being met
- Landscape Conservation Cooperatives Gulf Coast Vulnerability Assessment
- Ecosystem data management from GoMRI program
- NOAA RESTORE Act Science Program's data plan
- National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's data approach
- The Nature Conservancy's Migratory Species Assessment
- Migratory Bird Monitoring program
- Marine Mammal Commission's efforts to identify programs in the region

Two of the team's working groups held follow-up webinars after the in-person meeting, including:

- Q&A Session with The Nature Conservancy about their Migratory Species Assessment
- The Ocean Conservancy's Habitat Mapping project

Copies of the presentations are published on GOMA's website at <http://www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org/tools-and-resources/meeting-materials/>.

#4 - Highlights of PIT accomplishments, current activities, and future steps

Description of the task – GOMA's new Wildlife & Fisheries PIT accomplished much during its inaugural year. It's not easy to get people assigned from all five Gulf States and three federal agencies to develop a strategic plan for a revised PIT, but this new team did just that.

Accomplishments – As mentioned above, the former Ecosystems Integration and Assessment PIT was tweaked to become the new Wildlife & Fisheries Team. The new team carried over many of the former team's objectives and added some additional ones as well.

This type of PIT change has not happened in the history of GOMA, so it was uncharted territory and GOMA worked closely with HRI and Texas to ensure a smooth transition to a new and effective team. Through a series of steering committee meetings and webinars, the team took shape and nearly 50 people were in attendance at the inaugural in-person meeting. Some people weren't able to attend the in-person meeting and their PIT roster contains nearly 100 people who want to remain on the team's email list and participate when they can. It is a huge accomplishment to consider that the team went through a major transformation and is now nearly 100 people strong. Attachment D contains a copy of the current member list.

Another major accomplishment of the Wildlife & Fisheries PIT is that in a few short months, they were able to organize a steering committee and develop an agenda for their team meeting that allowed them to establish goals and objectives. These goals and objectives were further refined into actions that will be included in the next *Action Plan*.

And lastly, another accomplishment of the new Wildlife & Fisheries PIT is that they were able to identify a funding opportunity and quickly organize to develop a project scope and budget for it. Although the proposal was not funded, the steering committee was proactive in addressing some of the identified priorities early on in the formation of the team.

Currently, the team is developing a full list of project concepts to help them to achieve the objectives outlined in their chapter of the next *Action Plan*. This project concept list will be helpful when funding opportunities are presented. More frequent and more applicable funding opportunities are expected in 2016.

Future steps for the Wildlife & Fisheries PIT include seeking funding for projects that will accomplish the goals of the team. The team is expected to continue to host full-team conference calls every other month, with steering committee calls in between. The next in-person meeting is scheduled for June 2016 in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

ATTACHMENT A

PIT TEAM MEETING ATTENDANCE

**Gulf of Mexico Alliance
Wildlife & Fisheries PIT
2015 ALL HANDS REGISTRATION LIST (6/12/15)**

First Name:	Last Name:	Company / Agency / Organization
Karon	Aplin	Alabama Marine Resources Division
Bill	Bartush	Gulf Coast Prairie LCC, USFWS
Tripp	Boone	USEPA
Gerard	Boos	USEPA Gulf of Mexico Program
Laura	Bowie	Gulf of Mexico Alliance
Michael	Brainard	MDMR
Bob	Clevenstine	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Bridget	Collins	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)
Vicki	Cornish	Marine Mammal Commission
Melanie	Driscoll	National Audubon Society
Cynthia	Edwards	Gulf Coast Prairie LCC
Kristine	Evans	GCPO LCC/Mississippi State University
Katy	Gerard	Harte Research Institute
Steve	Giordano	DOC NOAA NMFS
Judy	Haner	The Nature Conservancy - Alabama
Jared	Harris	MS Department of Marine Resources
Peter	Hoar	Perch Environmental
Tamar	Hogan	USFWS
Rob	Holbrook	East Gulf Coastal Plain Joint Venture
Shannon	Holbrook	US Fish and Wildlife Service
Stacey	Horstman	National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration/NOAA Fisheries
William	Kiene	NOAA - Office of National Marine Sanctuaries
Allison	Knight	Harte Research Institute
Jessica	Koelsch	National Wildlife Federation
Alison	Leggett	MS DMR Coastal Preserves Bureau
Mark	Lingo	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Jessica	Mallindine	BOEM
Jeffrey	Marx	LDWF
Ryan	Moyer	Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Chris	Pease	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service/ Gulf Restoration Program
Ed	Penny	MS Dept of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks
Jonathan	Pitchford	IMMS
Pamela	Plotkin	Texas Sea Grant
Eric	Pulis	IMMS
Kristin	Ransom	TBG @ NOAA Office for Coastal Management
Kate	Rose	NOAA NCEI
Ashford	Rosenberg	Audubon Nature Institute's Gulf United for Lasting Fisheries
Mark	Schexnayder	LDWF
Kathy	Shelton	Museum of Natural Science MS Dept of Wildlife Fisheries and Parks
Moby	Solangi	IMMS
Brian	Spears	USFWS
William	Vermillion	Gulf Coast Joint Venture
Linda	Walker	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Troy	Wilson	US Fish & Wildlife Service

Dorothy

Zimmerman Florida Sea Grant

ATTACHMENT B

PIT CHAPTER IN THE DRAFT

GOVERNORS' ACTION PLAN FOR HEALTHY AND RESILIENT COASTS

GOVERNORS ACTION PLAN III
FOR HEALTHY AND RESILIENT COASTS

WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES

The Gulf of Mexico is the ninth largest body of water in the world and is home to over 15,000 species of marine wildlife. From its extensive salt marshes, bays and estuaries, coral reefs, and deep waters found off the continental shelf, the Gulf provides habitat and sustenance to all components of the ecosystem. Many of the species are both recreationally and commercially important including shrimp, red snapper, oysters, crabs and menhaden. It is also home to 29 marine mammal species, five species of sea turtles, and supports over 400 species of birds that depend on the Gulf region for breeding, migrating, and wintering.

The Gulf of Mexico Alliance Wildlife and Fisheries Team will focus on identifying gaps in existing research and restoration efforts; work with other Alliance Teams to integrate wildlife and fisheries data, information and priorities; and coordinate and support regional efforts to protect and conserve Gulf wildlife and fisheries.

TEAM GOALS

- Work to understand and support diverse wildlife and fisheries populations to sustain a resilient Gulf of Mexico ecosystem
- Inform conservation and policy decision makers through collaboration with the other Gulf of Mexico Alliance teams

FOCUS AREAS

Status and Trends

Provide tools and information regarding the status and trends, threats, and habitat linkages of wildlife and fisheries species to better support decision-making across the Gulf of Mexico region

Actions

- Compile and synthesize existing information regarding status and trends, threats, and habitat linkages of wildlife and fisheries species to identify key data gaps
- Prioritize research and monitoring needs based on proven methods and identified key data gaps
- Identify priority short and long-term monitoring programs
- Identify and characterize linkages among focal species and their habitats

Why Do This?

Effective resource management is dependent on access to data resources and on the ability

to design and implement future data collection efforts in a rational and cost effective manner.

Expected Results

Status and trend results should help develop baseline conditions that will direct research and monitoring activities and inform management decisions. Wildlife and Fisheries managers will have a better understanding of wildlife and fisheries populations and an ability to improve future management.

Collaboration

Collaborate with other Gulf of Mexico Alliance teams and partners to share knowledge and inform actions that impact wildlife and fisheries

Actions

- Establish communication with other teams as well as regional restoration efforts related to wildlife and fisheries priorities
- Work with the Education and Engagement Team to translate data and information into easily understood formats for multiple audiences
- Work with the Habitat Team to develop information and tools for the planning and implementation of habitat related projects
- Work with the Data and Monitoring Team to coordinate monitoring to provide a better understanding of wildlife and fisheries population status

Why Do This?

Wildlife and fisheries management does not occur in a vacuum and as such it is vital that we collaborate with the other Gulf of Mexico Alliance teams, state and federal partners, non-governmental organizations, and other conservation minded groups.

Expected Results

By collaborating with others, we expect to reduce duplication, leverage assets, and improve the flow of information between groups.

Conservation

Support and enhance efforts to protect and conserve wildlife and fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico

Actions

- Identify relevant Gulf-wide conservation issues and coordinate planning
- Identify key areas for conserving priority species, focusing resources on where the greatest results can be achieved
- Engage key partners that work with wildlife and fisheries, and assist them to overcome

institutional barriers

- Identify multi-jurisdictional needs and act as a broker to align projects to find economic and ecological benefits
- Utilize data and information to inform management practices and priorities that support conservation needs.

Why Do This?

Wildlife and fisheries populations do not begin and end at state and national borders. To effectively conserve and manage Gulf of Mexico species that have economic, cultural, or aesthetic values, there needs to be coordination across political boundaries.

Expected Results

Wildlife and fisheries management is founded in solid science and meets stakeholder needs. Partners comprehensively manage wildlife and fisheries across state and federal boundaries.

ATTACHMENT C

PIT PROPOSAL TO NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION RFP



EasyGrantsID: 49207

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation – Gulf Coast Conservation Grants Program 2015, Full Proposal

Title: Habitat-Dependent Species Literature Catalog – First in a Series: Estuarine Salt Marsh

Organization: Gulf of Mexico Alliance

Grant Information

Title of Project

Habitat-Dependent Species Literature Catalog – First in a Series: Estuarine Salt Marsh

Total Amount Requested	\$ 152,000.00
Matching Contributions Proposed	\$ 152,000.00
Proposed Grant Period	09/01/ 2015 - 08/30/ 2017

Project Description

This project proposes to develop a catalog of habitat-dependent species literature and this is the first in a series, starting with those associated with estuarine salt marsh habitat across the Gulf of Mexico. Salt marshes were prioritized by the project partners as they are currently the most common habitat type in need of conservation and restoration across the Gulf region. Future sectors to the catalog will/may include beach/dunes, barrier islands, mangroves, freshwater marsh, pine savanna, etc...

Project Abstract

Conservation Need and Context:

There is a widespread desire among resource managers to have accurate, downscaled habitat-dependent species information to inform strategic conservation and restoration decisions. Conservation techniques are continuously improving, providing managers a diverse set of tools predicting species response to conservation management and/or restoration. However, the vast availability and rapid pace of publications challenges resource managers to identify the most appropriate management technique that will have an impact on the most species.

Solution:

The project partners envision developing a digital catalog of habitat-dependent species literature, starting with those associated with estuarine salt marsh habitat across the Gulf of Mexico. Salt marshes were prioritized by the project partners as they are currently the most common habitat type in need of conservation and restoration across the Gulf region. Future sectors to the catalog will/may include beach/dunes, barrier islands, mangroves, freshwater marsh, pine savanna, etc...

Deliverable:

The deliverable from this project is a comprehensive categorized bibliography that provides easily accessible supporting documentation to inform conservation planning. This foundation of cataloged information will help resource managers maximize the benefits to the greatest number of species.

Organization and Primary Contact Information

Organization	Gulf of Mexico Alliance
Organization Type	Non-profit Corporation 501(c)(3)
Organization Web Address	www.GulfofMexicoAlliance.org
Organization Phone	



NFWF

EasyGrantsID: 49207

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation – Gulf Coast Conservation Grants Program 2015, Full Proposal

Title: Habitat-Dependent Species Literature Catalog – First in a Series: Estuarine Salt Marsh

Organization: Gulf of Mexico Alliance

Street Line 1

Street Line 2

City, State, Country, Postal Code Ocean Springs, Mississippi, North America - United States

Region (if international)

Organization Congressional District District 4 (MS)

Primary Contact

Position/Title

Street Line 1

Street Line 2

City, State, Country, Postal Code

Mrs. Laura Bowie

Executive Director

Gulf of Mexico Alliance

1151 Robinson Street

Ocean Springs, Mississippi, North America - United States, 39564

Region (if international)

Phone and E-mail

228-215-1246 x ; laura.bowie@gomxa.org

Keywords

Conservation Action; Major Habitat Type; Species

Sub-keywords

Action - Education & Awareness; Action - Land/Water Management; Action - Species Management; Coastal - Estuaries and Bays; Species - Amphibian; Species - Bird; Species - Invertebrate; Species - Mammal

Other Keyword(s)



EasyGrantsID: 49207

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation – Gulf Coast Conservation Grants Program 2015, Full Proposal

Title: Habitat-Dependent Species Literature Catalog – First in a Series: Estuarine Salt Marsh

Organization: Gulf of Mexico Alliance

Project Location Information

Project Location Description	This project is intended to compile and catalog habitat-dependent species from all five Gulf States. The project will be conducted primarily from the Gulf of Mexico Alliance headquarters office located in Ocean Springs, MS in District 4.
Project Country(ies)	North America - United States
Project State(s)	Alabama; Florida; Louisiana; Mississippi; Texas
Project Congressional District(s)	District 4 (MS)

Permits and Approvals

Permits/Approvals Description:

Permits/Approvals Status:

Permits/Approvals Agency-Contact Person:

Permits/Approvals Submittal-Approval Date:



NFWWF

EasyGrantsID: 49207

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation – Gulf Coast Conservation Grants Program 2015, Full Proposal

Title: Habitat-Dependent Species Literature Catalog – First in a Series: Estuarine Salt Marsh

Organization: Gulf of Mexico Alliance

Reviewer Type:

Reviewer Name:

Organization

Position/Title:

Street Line 1:

City, State, Country, Postal Code: ,,,

Region (if international):

Phone and E-mail:



EasyGrantsID: 49207

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation – Gulf Coast Conservation Grants Program 2015, Full Proposal

Title: Habitat-Dependent Species Literature Catalog – First in a Series: Estuarine Salt Marsh

Organization: Gulf of Mexico Alliance

Salaries

	Units	Cost Per Unit	Total
GOMA Project Manager - 15% time	0.15	\$60,000.00	\$9,000.00

Total Salaries			\$9,000.00
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GOMA will maintain records related to the proposal process; arrange for sub-awards or sub-contracts with agencies or organizations proposed to implement the tasks identified in the proposal; maintain records of grant funding status; coordinate with GOMA partners to ensure tasks are properly implemented; and manage the preparation of and submittal of semi-annual progress and financial reports.

For this project, it is anticipated that approximate 15% of the GOMA Project Manager’s time will be spent maintaining records and attending meetings associated with the project at a value of \$8,550, including salaries and fringe.

Benefits

	Units	Cost Per Unit	Total

Total Benefits			\$0.00

Equipment

	Units	Cost Per Unit	Total

Total Equipment			\$0.00

Contractual Services

	Units	Cost Per Unit	Total



EasyGrantsID: 49207

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation – Gulf Coast Conservation Grants Program 2015, Full Proposal

Title: Habitat-Dependent Species Literature Catalog – First in a Series: Estuarine Salt Marsh

Organization: Gulf of Mexico Alliance

	Units	Cost Per Unit	Total
Literature Search and Digital Catalog Development	1	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00
Project Meetings	4	\$5,000.00	\$20,000.00
Outreach: Series of webinars	1	\$5,000.00	\$5,000.00

Total Contractual Services			\$125,000.00
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GOMA intends to sub-award or contract various aspects of this project to partner organizations that are either currently providing these types of services or have the expertise in the field. Several of the partners in this project are also members of the Gulf Coastal Plains and Ozarks Landscape Conservation Cooperative (GCPO LCC). The GCPO LCC has recently completed a similar project for species dependent upon open pine habitat. The project partners intend to inquire if the GCPO LCC is interested in partnering to conduct this review for species dependent upon salt marsh habitats. If they are not interested or able, the project partners intend to engage a consultant to complete the literature review.

Supplies and Materials

	Units	Cost Per Unit	Total

Total Supplies and Materials			\$0.00
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Printing

	Units	Cost Per Unit	Total

Total Printing			\$0.00
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Travel

	Units	Cost Per Unit	Total
Project Meetings	4	\$1,250.00	\$5,000.00



EasyGrantsID: 49207

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation – Gulf Coast Conservation Grants Program 2015, Full Proposal

Title: Habitat-Dependent Species Literature Catalog – First in a Series: Estuarine Salt Marsh

Organization: Gulf of Mexico Alliance

Total Travel			\$5,000.00
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GOMA’s Program Manager will assist with project implementation by attending project meetings. Project meeting locations will be at various locations throughout the region and will be determined by the Project Advisory Panel in conjunction with other meetings of opportunity. For estimating purposes, the travel costs associated with this effort are approximately \$1,250 per meeting, with two meetings per year of the project for a total of \$5,000.

Indirect Costs

	Units	Cost Per Unit	Total
GOMA's indirect rate of 10% applied to total project costs of \$130,000	1	\$13,000.00	\$13,000.00

Total Indirect Costs			\$13,000.00
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GOMA does not have a negotiated indirect rate, but instead claims the de minimus value of 10% in accordance with OMB Federal Register §200.414(f).

Other

	Units	Cost Per Unit	Total

Total Other			\$0.00
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Budget Grand Total			\$152,000.00
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EasyGrantsID: 49207

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation – Gulf Coast Conservation Grants Program 2015, Full Proposal

Title: Habitat-Dependent Species Literature Catalog – First in a Series: Estuarine Salt Marsh

Organization: Gulf of Mexico Alliance

Matching Contributions

Matching Contribution Amount:	\$152,000.00
Type:	In-kind
Status:	Pledged
Source:	GOMA Wildlife and Fisheries Team Steering Committee
Source Type:	Non-Federal
Description:	Each of the members of the Project Advisory Panel will dedicate expertise and approximately 10% of their time to the project. The value of the time devoted to the project by the Panel members is estimated to be \$152,000 for two years.

Total Amount of Matching Contributions	\$152,000.00
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NFWF

EasyGrantsID: 49207

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation – Gulf Coast Conservation Grants Program 2015, Full Proposal

Title: Habitat-Dependent Species Literature Catalog – First in a Series: Estuarine Salt Marsh

Organization: Gulf of Mexico Alliance

Activities and Outcomes

Funding Strategy: Capacity, Outreach, Incentives

Activity / Outcome: GCCGP - Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance - # people reached

Description: Enter the number of people reached by outreach, training, or technical assistance activities

Required: Recommended

people reached - Current: 0.00

people reached - Grant Completion: 100

Notes: The project partners anticipate reaching approximately 100 people by the outcomes of this project, including state resource managers in all five Gulf States, federal agency personnel working in the region, NGO conservation partners in the region, and possibly consultants that develop conservation and restoration plans.



NFWF

EasyGrantsID: 49207

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation – Gulf Coast Conservation Grants Program 2015, Full Proposal

Title: Habitat-Dependent Species Literature Catalog – First in a Series: Estuarine Salt Marsh

Organization: Gulf of Mexico Alliance

The following pages contain the uploaded documents, in the order shown below, as provided by the applicant:

A-133 Audit
Board of Trustees, Directors, or equivalent
Full Proposal Narrative
GAAP audited financial statements
IRS Form 990
Statement of Litigation
Project Map

The following uploads do not have the same headers and footers as the previous sections of this document in order to preserve the integrity of the actual files uploaded.



NFWF

Full Proposal Project Narrative

Project Title: Habitat-Dependent Species Literature Catalog – First in a Series: Estuarine Salt Marsh

Project Sponsors: Gulf of Mexico Alliance Wildlife & Fisheries Priority Issue Team

Project Contact: Gulf of Mexico Alliance
Laura Bowie
1151 Robinson Street
Ocean Springs, MS 39564
228-215-1246
Laura.Bowie@gomxa.org

Project Duration: 24 months

Project Cost: \$143,000 – requested funding
\$151,000 – required match
Total = \$299,500

1. **Activities:** Elaborate on the primary activities that will be employed through the grant. Explain how these activities are expected to lead to the outcome(s). Describe how these activities relate to established plans (management, conservation, recovery, etc.) and priority conservation needs in the specific project location.

Goals and Priorities:

This project contributes to the *Support Critical Gaps in Gulf Coast Conservation* goal of the Gulf Coast Conservation Grants Program. This catalog will be organized into suites of species groups which will assist resource managers to get the most “bang for their buck” when developing their conservation or restoration plans. For example, if restoring a particular salt marsh area will benefit multiple species, rather than one or two species, restoration planning can be tailored to incorporate multiple benefits rather than singular species benefits.

Project Objectives:

1. Conduct a literature survey and develop a digital catalog of published and unpublished publications and reports of species-dependent information related to salt marsh habitats
2. Synthesize the acquired information for applicability/transferability to resource managers during project planning
3. Inform the conservation and restoration community on the availability of the information.

Project Activities:

Task 1: Develop a Project Advisory Panel

Partners on this project include the Steering Committee for the new GOMA Wildlife and Fisheries Team who collectively determined the priority need for this project as well as the scope, method, and budget. Members of the Steering Committee include ecologists and natural resource scientists from natural resource agencies in all five Gulf States and three federal agencies:

State Representatives	Federal Representatives
Robin Riechers, Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept	Jerry Boos, US EPA
Jeff Marx, Louisiana Dept of Natural Resources	Chris Pease, USFWS
Ali Leggett, MS Dept of Marine Resources	Steve Giordano, NOAA
Mike Brainard, MS Dept of Marine Resources	
Karon Aplin, AL Division of Marine Resources	
Amber Whittle, FL Fish and Wildlife Commission	

This same Steering Committee is committed to serving as the Project Advisory Panel, who will prioritize conservation management practices on which to focus, ensuring that the review is informative to the most common types of estuarine salt marsh conservation. The Project Advisory Panel will also provide initial recommendations of starting points for the literature review. It is anticipated that the Project Advisory Panel will meet quarterly via conference call or an in-person meeting of opportunity to review progress and provide feedback.

Task 2: Identify Habitat-Dependent Species Literature and Publications

Partners will contract a full time employee or graduate student to compile and summarize available literature, reports, and publications relative to species that are dependent upon estuarine salt marsh habitats throughout the Gulf region. The project partners on this proposal are associated with well-developed networks of specialists and stakeholders to guide the compilation of information to ensure that it is accurate and complete. The contractor will assemble the findings in an annotated bibliography categorized by species groups, such as birds (guilds), shellfish, reptiles, amphibians, benthic organisms, marine fisheries, marine mammals, etc....

Throughout the literature review there will be evaluation and direction given by the Project Advisory Panel to ensure completeness and relevance of the review. After summarizing research from the initial suite of sources, the compiled bibliography will be reviewed by a variety of stakeholders to help identify gaps in coverage and recommendations for synthesis. This will include meetings for the Project Advisory Panel as well as the full GOMA Wildlife and Fisheries Team to allow members to comment and provide feedback and identify any gaps.

Task 3: Develop a Digital Catalog

The collected information will be transformed from the literature survey into an online, open-access catalog. This will provide public access to the information that can be beneficial to informing conservation and adaptive management plans.

The catalog will display inventoried publications, reports and literature cataloged by species groups, such as birds (guilds), shellfish, reptiles, amphibians, benthic organisms, marine fisheries, marine mammals, etc.... This

will provide the user with an analysis tool to quickly identify multiple species benefits and to inform the full ecology of salt marsh habitats. The digital catalog will provide users with searchable metadata. As determined by the Project Advisory Committee, the catalog may be an add-on to the existing GOMA website (<http://www.gulfofmexicoalliance.org>) or it may be a stand-alone website.

Task 4: Synthesize the acquired information

Once the salt marsh-dependent species information is collected and organized in the digital catalog, the Project Partners will oversee the synthesis of acquired information into conservation/restoration-focused descriptive accounts of species to habitat relationships. The intention is to provide research-based factual information in an easy to digest format for incorporation into conservation planning documents (ie. percent of marine fisheries species utilizing salt marsh during their life cycle, for x acres of salt marsh gained there is potential to reclaim x species, focusing salt marsh restoration during x season will benefit x species, etc.). This effort will also provide obvious gaps in the information to be used as guidance for future research efforts.

Task 5: Outreach to restoration practitioners

The results of this project will be widely anticipated by the five Gulf State resources agencies and others in the region. The project team will partner with the Gulf of Mexico Coastal Training Program (<http://www.gulfalliancetraining.org/>) to develop an outreach plan for the first series of habitat-dependent species information so that practitioners who use the information during conservation planning will have it. The outreach materials that will be developed for this project will stem directly from the outputs:

- The comprehensive collation of relevant literature, publications, and reports categorized by species groups will be compiled and synthesized into an online digital catalog.
- The digital catalog will be used to develop targeted webinars for conservation practitioners

2. **Outcome(s):** Elaborate on the outcome(s) summarized previously in the application; discuss what makes this outcome(s) achievable and important.

Project Outcomes:

The project outcomes include:

- (1) The comprehensive collation of relevant literature, publications, and reports categorized by species groups. A literature review and synthesis for estuarine salt marsh species responses will inform analyses used to evaluate effects of different types of conservation management.
- (2) An online digital catalog of the compilation of species literature and reports will be categorized by species groups, such as birds (guilds), shellfish, reptiles, amphibians, benthic organisms, marine fisheries, marine mammals, etc....
- (3) Targeted webinars for conservation practitioners to demonstrate the usefulness of the catalog and available relevant information necessary to maximize the species benefits of targeted conservation and restoration.

3. **Tracking Metrics:** Indicate how the project will monitor/assess progress on the metrics selected previously in the application. Please note any challenges or limitations anticipated with tracking the metrics.

Partners on this project include the Steering Committee for the new GOMA Wildlife and Fisheries Team who collectively determined the priority need for this project as well as the scope, method, and budget. They are dedicated to the success of the project as a primary objective of the new Team. This same Steering Committee is committed to serving as the Project Advisory Panel, who will prioritize conservation management practices on which to focus, ensuring that the review is informative to the most common types of estuarine salt marsh conservation. The Project Advisory Panel will also provide initial recommendations of starting points for the literature review.

Project success will be monitored by project meetings of the Advisory Panel. It is anticipated that the Project Advisory Panel will meet quarterly via conference call or an in-person meeting of opportunity to review progress and provide feedback.

4. **Project Team:** List key individuals and describe their qualifications relevant for project implementation.

Proven Partnership:

Many of the partners on this project have worked collaboratively in the past as part of the GOMA Ecosystems Integration and Assessment Priority Issue Team. This team was responsible for developing the Wetlands Status and Trends report (citation), which is a series of reports documenting the status of emergent wetlands in each state. This same successful approach will be taken to develop a series of catalog sectors for habitat-dependent species information for priority restoration habitats in the Gulf region. This project is the first in a series of catalog sectors to be developed.

Function of Project Partners:

Most of the partners in this project have a history of working together as members of GOMA’s Priority Issue Teams and Landscape Conservation Cooperatives. Using these existing relationships and networks of expertise, the project team will develop a thorough literature survey that is applicable to salt marsh conservation and restoration across the Gulf.

Partners on this project include the Steering Committee for the new GOMA Wildlife and Fisheries Team who collectively determined the priority need for this project as well as the scope, method, and budget. Members of the Steering Committee include ecologists and natural resource scientists from natural resource agencies in all five Gulf States and three federal agencies:

State Representatives	Federal Representatives
Robin Riechers, Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept	Jerry Boos, US EPA
Jeff Marx, Louisiana Dept of Natural Resources	Chris Pease, USFWS
Ali Leggett, MS Dept of Marine Resources	Steve Giordano, NOAA
Mike Brainard, MS Dept of Marine Resources	
Karon Aplin, AL Division of Marine Resources	
Amber Whittle, FL Fish and Wildlife Commission	

This same Steering Committee is committed to serving as the Project Advisory Panel, who will prioritize conservation management practices on which to focus, ensuring that the review is informative to the most common types of estuarine salt marsh conservation. The Project Advisory Panel will also provide initial recommendations of starting points for the literature review.

The following briefly describes the roles and functions of each project partner:

Laura Bowie, Gulf of Mexico Alliance (GOMA) – Ms. Bowie will administer the proposed project, overseeing the project implementation, managing sub-contracts, monitoring project progress, and reporting project progress and financial progress to NFWF.

Robin Riechers, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) – Mr. Riechers serves as the Chair of GOMA's Wildlife and Fisheries Priority Issue Team and leads the Priority Issue Team's Steering Committee which is comprised of representatives of all five Gulf States, as well as USFWS, NOAA and EPA. This steering committee will serve as the Project Advisory Committee and Mr. Riechers will preside over the meetings of the Advisory Committee.

Ali Leggett and Mike Brainard, Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) – Ms. Leggett and Mr. Brainard serve as Mississippi representatives to the GOMA Wildlife and Fisheries Team steering committee and will provide expert guidance and oversight to the project as it will directly inform restoration planning in coastal Mississippi.

Jeff Marx, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) – Mr. Marx serves as a Louisiana representative to the GOMA Wildlife and Fisheries Team steering committee and will provide expert guidance and oversight to the project as it will directly inform restoration planning in coastal Louisiana.

Karon Aplin, Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR) – Ms. Aplin serves as an Alabama representative to the GOMA Wildlife and Fisheries Team steering committee and will provide expert guidance and oversight to the project as it will directly inform restoration planning in coastal Alabama.

Amber Whittle, Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC) – Ms. Whittle serves as a Florida representative to the GOMA Wildlife and Fisheries Team steering committee and will provide expert guidance and oversight to the project as it will directly inform restoration planning in coastal Florida.

Chris Pease (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), Jerry Boos (Environmental Protection Agency) and Steve Giordano (NOAA) – serve as federal representatives to the GOMA Wildlife and Fisheries Team steering committee and will provide expert guidance and oversight to the project.

5. **Other (Optional):** Provide any further information important for the review of this proposal.

Milestone Chart:

Accomplishment	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8
Project Advisory Panel is established and project kickoff Meeting is held								
Contractor or graduate student is hired to conduct inventory of available literature, reports, and publications								
Inventory of literature, reports, and publications is compiled								
Project Advisory Panel monitors project progress and provides guidance for availability of information and information synthesis								
Online digital catalog is developed								
Conduct workshop to review literature inventory and digital catalog								
Topical webinars are conducted								





NFWF

Statement of Litigation

Instructions: Save this document on your computer and complete. The final narrative should not exceed two (2) pages; do not delete the text provided below. Once complete, upload this document into the on-line application as instructed.

Litigation: In the space provided below, state any litigation (including bankruptcies) involving your organization and either a federal, state, or local government agency as parties. This includes anticipated litigation, pending litigation, or litigation completed within the past twelve months. Federal, state, and local government applicants are not required to complete this section. If your organization is not involved in any litigation, please state below.

The Gulf of Mexico Alliance is not currently, nor has ever been, involved in any litigation.



CONTACT INFORMATION

Alliance Management Team State Board Members

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ATTACHMENT D

CURRENT PIT MEMBER LIST

**Gulf of Mexico Alliance
Wildlife & Fisheries PIT Master List
9/30/2015**

First Name:	Last Name:	Company / Agency / Organization	Contact Information
Melanie	Allen	Brunini Law Firm	
Karon	Aplin	Alabama Marine Resources Division	
Lauren	Averill	Gaea Consultants	
Elizabeth	Barber	Barber & Mann, Inc.	
Bill	Bartush	Gulf Coast Prairie LCC, USFWS	
Robert	Bendick	The Nature Conservancy	
Tripp	Boone	USEPA	
Gerard	Boos	USEPA Gulf of Mexico Program	
Laura	Bowie	Gulf of Mexico Alliance	
Michael	Brainard	MDMR	
Will	Brantley	Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources	
Justin	Brooks	Mississippi Farm Bureau Federation	
Robin	Burns	NOAA Office for Coastal Management - Gulf Region	
Bob	Clevenstine	U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	
Bridget	Collins	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)	
Vicki	Cornish	Marine Mammal Commission	
Todd	Davison	NOAA Office for Coastal Management	
Melanie	Driscoll	National Audubon Society	
Cynthia	Edwards	Gulf Coast Prairie LCC	
Kristine	Evans	GCPO LCC/Mississippi State University	
Elizabeth	Fetherston	Ocean Conservancy	
Ryan	Fikes	National Wildlife Federation	
Amanda	Fuller	National Wildlife Federation	
Katy	Gerard	Harte Research Institute	
Steve	Giordano	DOC NOAA NMFS	
Bob	Gisiner	International Assoc of Geophysical Contractors	
Larissa	Graham	Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant	
Judy	Haner	The Nature Conservancy - Alabama	
Jared	Harris	MS Department of Marine Resources	
Phillip	Hinesley	AL. Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources	
Peter	Hoar	Perch Environmental	
Tamar	Hogan	USFWS	
William	Hogarth	Florida Institute of Oceanography	
Rob	Holbrook	East Gulf Coastal Plain Joint Venture	
Shannon	Holbrook	US Fish and Wildlife Service	
Stacey	Horstman	National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration/NOAA Fisheries	
Wesley	Kerr	USDA/NRCS	
William	Kiene	NOAA - Office of National Marine Sanctuaries	
Allison	Knight	Harte Research Institute	
Jessica	Koelsch	National Wildlife Federation	
Robert	Kroger	Covington Civil and Environmental	
Alison	Leggett	MS DMR Coastal Preserves Bureau	
Mark	Lingo	Texas Parks and Wildlife Department	
Kelly	Lucas	Mississippi Department of Marine Resources	
Dr. Kumar	Mahadevan	Mote Marine Laboratory	
Jessica	Mallindine	BOEM	
Jeffrey	Marx	LDWF	
Jill	Mastrototaro	National Wildlife Federation	

Gulf of Mexico Alliance
Wildlife & Fisheries PIT Master List
9/30/2015

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Wayne	Miller	City of Gulfport / Public Works	
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Brian	Moore	Audubon	
Ryan	Moyer	Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	
David	Muth	National Wildlife Federation	
Tyler	Ortego	Wayfarer Environmental Technologies	
Chris	Pease	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service/ Gulf Restoration Program	
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Ruth	Perry	Shell Exploration & Production Company	
Brandon	Pike	ECO RESTORE Restoration Contractors	
Jonathan	Pitchford	IMMS	
Pamela	Plotkin	Texas Sea Grant	
Jon	Porthouse	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	
Eric	Pulis	IMMS	
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Jessie	Ritter	National Wildlife Federation	
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Ashford	Rosenberg	Audubon Nature Institute's Gulf United for Lasting Fisheries	
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Moby	Solangi	IMMS	
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Gwen	White	US Fish and Wildlife Service	
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