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Examples of Programs and Projects in the Gulf of Mexico (Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi) that would benefit from H.R. 4914, the Coastal Jobs Creation Act of 2010

The Coastal Jobs Creation Act of 2010 (H.R. 4914) is new legislation that will create jobs for fishermen and coastal communities as fish populations rebuild. The following are examples of key programs in Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi that could benefit from H.R. 4914:

Marine Debris Prevention and Removal

Launched in 2006 after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the Gulf of Mexico Marine Debris Project identified and mapped submerged marine debris that posed a threat to vessel traffic and fishing grounds. This work included the development of a Marine Debris Emergency Response Plan to assist in the planning, assessment, removal, and disposal or recycling of marine debris. This plan could be used as a basis for future marine debris removal programs that would be eligible for funding under H.R. 4914.¹

Cooperative Research Programs

The NOAA Southeast Regional Office conducts cooperative research programs with fishermen that would be eligible for funding under H.R. 4914, including:²

- Supporting fishermen to tag adult dusky and silky sharks in the Northern Gulf of Mexico to better understand their habitat utilization.
- Partnering with the Gulf Fishermen's Association in a finfish bycatch (capture of non-target ocean wildlife) survey.

Habitat Restoration Projects

The Gulf region has several habitat restoration projects that could benefit from H.R. 4914, including programs being implemented through the National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERRS) in Weeks Bay (Alabama) and Grand Bay (Mississippi). Projects that could be eligible for support in both these NERRs include marsh and oysterbed restoration initiatives.

Habitat restoration projects similar to those conducted with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 funding would also be eligible for funding under H.R. 4914. These projects include:³

- The Coastal Alabama Restoration project (Bayou la Batre), which focused on rebuilding oyster reef and natural breakwater structures along 1.5 miles of shoreline, ultimately protecting 19 acres of property.
- The Grande Isle Shoreline Restoration project, which built five acres of living shoreline along the Louisiana coastline, protecting 300 acres of vulnerable marsh habitat.
- The Mississippi River Tidal Marsh Restoration project (Myrtle Grove, Louisiana), which created 50 acres of intertidal marsh to support recreationally and commercially important fisheries, as well as reduce storm surge and flooding.

Gulf of Mexico Marine Mammal Stranding Centers

The Network of Marine Mammal Stranding Centers in the Gulf of Mexico would be eligible for funding under H.R. 4914. This network includes the Institute for Marine Mammal Studies in Mississippi and Alabama, and the Louisiana Marine Mammal and Sea Turtle Rescue Program, operated by the Audubon Nature Institute, Inc.

Ocean Observing Systems

H.R. 4914 authorizes funding for integrated ocean observations systems, such as the Gulf of Mexico Coastal Ocean Observing System (GCOOS). Funding for integrated ocean observation technologies will enhance real-time forecasting to improve maritime safety for recreational and commercial vessels, and will increase efforts to protect important marine resources. GCOOS is currently playing a critical role in oil spill-response support on many fronts, including using high frequency radar to measure surface current speed and direction in near real time to help track and predict the path of the oil. GCOOS is also integrating and coordinating information to support response efforts.

For more information, please contact:

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Please also visit our website for more resources at www.endoverfishing.org

¹ 2010. NOAA Marine Debris Program. Office of Restoration and Response. *Gulf of Mexico Marine Debris Project* url:

<http://marinedebris.noaa.gov/projects/gomdebris.html#plan>, accessed on May 11, 2010

² 2010. NOAA Southeast Regional Office. Projects Selected for Funding url: http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/grants/crp_selected_funding.htm , accessed on May 5, 2010

³ <http://recovery.commerce.gov/featured/167-million-recovery-act-funding-coastal-restoration-projects>