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## **Examples of Programs and Projects in Florida that would benefit from S. 3528, the Coastal Jobs Creation Act of 2010**

Senators Olympia J. Snowe (R-Maine) and nine original cosponsors introduced S. 3528, the “Coastal Jobs Creation Act of 2010,” on June 24, 2010. The Coastal Jobs Creation Act will create jobs for fishermen and coastal communities as fish populations rebuild. The following are examples of key programs in Florida that could benefit from S. 3528:

### **Marine Debris Prevention and Removal**

NOAA’s Marine Debris program has several projects taking place in Florida that could benefit from S. 3528, including an abandoned and derelict vessel removal program, monofilament fishing line removal and recycling program, as well as a derelict crab pot removal program. The Southeast Florida Marine Debris Reporting and Removal Program – a partnership of Florida state agencies, local dive shops, dive charter operators, scuba clubs and local divers -- operates clean-ups on the Florida reef off of Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, and Martin counties that could also benefit from S. 3528.

### **Cooperative Research Programs**

There are several cooperative research programs in Florida that could benefit from S. 3528. For example, Florida Sea Grant is working with fishermen to conduct research on the genetic origins of sharks landed by fishermen to help sustainably manage the shark fishery. The Gulf and South Atlantic Fisheries Foundation is working with fishermen from the Snapper-Grouper Vertical Hook and Line Fishery of the South Atlantic to improve information about the catch, bycatch (capture of non-target ocean wildlife), discards, and discard mortality for species in the snapper-grouper fishery.

### **Habitat Research, Preservation and Restoration Projects**

Florida has several habitat research, preservation and restoration projects that could benefit from S. 3528, such as the Threatened Coral Recovery and Restoration project in Florida and the Virgin Islands, which restores coral reefs by growing coral in seafloor nurseries and transplanting them to degraded reef sites;<sup>1</sup> and the Lost River Preserve Restoration project in St. Petersburg, FL, which rebuilt 43 acres of freshwater wetlands and restored native vegetation.<sup>2</sup>

In addition, the Florida Coastal Zone Management Program (Florida CMP) has the authority to fund a variety of habitat restoration projects through the Coastal Resource Improvement Program that are eligible for funding under S. 3528. Examples include programs to restore the intertidal oyster reefs in Mosquito Lagoon, which support fish nurseries by improving water quality and providing a shoreline buffer.

Opportunities for research and restoration that could benefit from S. 3528 are also available through the National Estuarine Research Reserve System (NERRS). Florida’s three NERRs include the Apalachicola NERR, the Rookery Bay NERR, and the Guana Tolomato Matanzas NERR. These programs work with local and state agencies, as well as universities such as Florida State University, University of Florida, University of South Florida, Florida A&M University and Auburn University, on projects aimed at restoring fisheries habitats.

### **Florida Marine Mammal Stranding Centers**

The Florida Network of Marine Mammal Stranding Centers runs projects through the Mote Marine Laboratory, Hubbs-SeaWorld Research Institute, and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission that could be eligible for funding under S. 3528. These programs range from increased collaborative capacity for response to strandings, to modifying and upgrading facilities to treat injured marine mammals.<sup>3</sup>

### **Ocean Observing Systems**

S. 3528 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.<sup>4</sup>

#### **For more information, please contact:**

Lee Crockett, Director of Federal Fisheries Policy, Pew Environment Group, (202) 552-2065, [lcrockett@pewtrusts.org](mailto:lcrockett@pewtrusts.org). Please also visit our website for more resources at [www.endoverfishing.org](http://www.endoverfishing.org)

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<sup>1</sup> <http://recovery.commerce.gov/featured/167-million-recovery-act-funding-coastal-restoration-projects>

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> 2010. NOAA Fisheries Office of Protected Resources. “2010 Prescott Proposals Received” url: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/health/prescott/proposals/received/2010.htm#fl>, accessed on May 7, 2010.

<sup>4</sup> <http://oceanservice.noaa.gov/news/features/may10/ooos-deepwater.html>