



In the decade since the Deepwater Horizon tragedy killed 11 men and greatly harmed the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem, Jefferson County has partnered with Texas and federal natural resource agencies that are committed to achieve landscape-scale coastal restoration.



Our common goal is to keep Texas' largest coastal marsh healthy and productive for future generations.

Together, we are getting it done with the huge step of completing twenty miles of beach and dune nourishment expected to begin later this year. During this time of national COVID-19 crisis, we are continuing the job of protecting lives, homes, livelihoods, and vitally important energy, trade and national defense assets from future hurricanes.

This Partners and Stakeholders Progress Report

addresses more than a dozen Jefferson County Deepwater Horizon coastal restoration projects that have either been completed or have been awarded \$152 million thus far.

The Jefferson County Commissioners Court

also recognizes the Texas and federal natural resource agencies for their dedication and skill along with many local and national stakeholders and County citizens for their steady support.

Jefferson County Judge Jeff R. Branick, April 20, 2020

Eddie Arnold, Precinct 1

Michael Sinegal, Precinct 3

Brent Weaver, Precinct 2

Everette 'Bo' Alfred, Precinct 4



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Table of Contents

Page 3	Thank yous to Staff Colleagues
Page 4	Grants and Funding by Project
Page 5	What others say...
Page 9	Maps – Fresh Water Siphons in Action
Page 10	Photos of What’s at Stake
Page 11	Supporters, State, Federal, Local, NGOs, Private Sector
Page 13	Documents: BP Settlement, GOMESA Resolution
Page 15	Media Soundbites and Partner Photos

Note: Most of this Deepwater Horizon 10th anniversary report addresses Jefferson County’s gratitude to Senior Government Agency, NGO and Industry leadership. The Commissioners Court also wishes to thank and recognize the local leadership and staff that roll up their sleeves and put their boots and raingear to carry-out “on the ground and in the water” work with us and conduct project show and tell field trips.

Among those valued colleagues are: Kelly Brooks, Kevin Frenzel, David Green, Ray Newby Texas GLO, Tim Cooper, Texas Chenier Plain NWR Complex, Douglas Head, McFaddin NWR, John Huffman, USFWS, Sheri Land, TCEQ, Tanner Johnson, Tom Kelsch, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Todd Merendino, Kirby Brown, Ducks Unlimited, Robin Riechers, Michael Rezsutek, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Salt Bayou Watershed Working Group, Richard Seiler, TCEQ, Texas Trustee Implementation Group, Jamie Schubert, NOAA, Buck Sutter, RESTORE the Gulf, Woody Woodrow, USFWS, Bill Worsham, LJA Engineering, Heather Young, RESTORE the Gulf.



The County also extends our appreciation to retired Jefferson County Director of Engineering Don Rao for his leadership and unique vision. In addition, we never forget the vital contributions of two trailblazer colleagues no longer with us, Jim Sutherlin, TPWD, and Patrick Walther, USFWS.

Salt Bayou & Texas Point & Berm & Siphons & GIWW & Other

Deepwater Horizon	Harvey/Maria	Multi-Source	GOMESA	Total
\$65,336,400	\$52,000,000	\$26,620,064	\$8,500,000	\$152,456,626

Keith Lake Fish Pass (done)	\$2,816,226
Jefferson County contribution from Sempra/Port Arthur LNG	\$625,000
Jefferson County contribution from Golden Pass	\$625,000
Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation	\$525,000
Texas General Land Office CEPR	\$1,041,226

Three Freshwater Siphons (two done)	\$16,340,238
Jefferson County	\$1,100,018 BP+Co. GOMESA \$
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)	\$5,186,400
Ducks Unlimited (two NAWCA grants)	\$1,690,000
Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation	\$363,820
U.S. Congress Hurricane Maria Supplemental	\$8,000,000 for 3 rd siphon

Clay Berm (done)	\$9,050,000
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service	\$3,000,000
Texas General Land Office CEPR	\$2,000,000
Jefferson County – CIAP	\$400,000
Ducks Unlimited	\$900,000
Hurricane Ike Disaster Recovery	\$2,750,000

McFaddin Beach and Dune	\$86,200,000
Texas GLO + Jefferson Co CEPR, CIAP (3 miles done)	\$9,500,000
NFWF Engineering	\$1,500,000
NFWF Construction	\$26,500,000
Texas Trustee Implementation Group NRDA	\$15,800,000
Texas Comm. For Environmental Quality RESTORE Bucket 1	\$10,400,000
U.S. Congress Hurricane Harvey Supplemental	\$14,000,000
Texas GLO GOMESA	\$8,500,000

GIWW Breakwaters + Water Control Structure	\$12,100,000
U.S. Congress Hurricane Harvey Supplemental	\$10,000,000
Texas GLO CEPR	\$2,100,000

Texas Point Beach Nourishment	\$30,000,000 \$10 M unfunded
U.S. Congress Hurricane Maria \$20 M	\$20,000,000

Beaumont River Bank Stabilization	\$5,400,000
RESTORE Bucket 3	\$5,400,000
Port Neches Boat Ramp Repair	\$550,000
RESTORE Bucket 3	\$550,000

Total	\$152,456,626
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What others say...

“The Chenier Plain is one of the most globally significant ecoregions that we have, really in all the western hemisphere... This is one of the most important areas for wintering waterfowl, and wading birds and shorebirds in all of North America, particularly important as a larval or nursery area for finfish and shellfish. And of course the marshes and dunes play a critically important role in the resilience of these communities as the first line of defense against storm surges ...

“Over decades the Chenier Plain has literally been nibbled to death by a thousand paper cuts. There are a myriad of challenges that are confronting this landscape... Within this six and a half-million acre landscape is some of the most valuable petrochemical infrastructure that we have in all of the United States. There’s no doubt that the stakes are high and certainly complacency is not an option.”

Carter Smith, Director, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Excerpts from PBS film “Protecting the Chenier Plain”

“For the last several years our groups have advocated that Texas invest its RESTORE Act dollars in projects that will render the “biggest bang for the buck,” as features of the Texas coast make the protection and restoration of its ecosystems critical to the overall health and resiliency of the Gulf of Mexico.

“The state has an unparalleled system of bays and estuaries that serve as nursery grounds for hundreds of species of fish and other marine life and that support valuable fisheries. The Texas coast is part of both the Central and Mississippi migration flyways, and is thus critical to hundreds of species of migratory birds... This draft MIP (Multiyear Implementation Plan) proposes several projects that meet our shared priorities, such as Shamrock Island Restoration, the Salt Bayou Watershed (**McFaddin NWR**), Bolivar Peninsula Nature Trail, the Texas Master Plan for Beneficial Use of Dredged Material, and the Lower San Bernard River Ecosystem...

“Funds allocated to Texas should be used effectively on high-priority protection and restoration needs. We believe further that restoration funds should support projects at the greatest scale practicable, rather than be divided up among many small, isolated projects, and urge that funds be allocated in a manner that leverages funding from other sources in order to get maximum value. “Opportunities exist to restore coastal systems and habitats that cross multiple jurisdictions through the pooling of resources and collaboration on large-scale projects. This is particularly true on the Chenier Plain (**McFaddin NWR**) that Texas shares with Louisiana...”

Audubon Texas, Ducks Unlimited, Environmental Defense Fund, Galveston Bay Foundation, Gulf Restoration Network, Houston Audubon, Houston Wilderness, National Wildlife Federation, Ocean Conservancy, Sierra Club Lone Star Chapter, Student Conservation Assn, Texas Conservation Alliance, The Nature Conservancy, Turtle Island Restoration Network

“On behalf of Ducks Unlimited (DU), I am pleased to comment in support of the RESTORE Bucket 1 Salt Bayou Watershed project and the NRDA 2017 Trustee Implementation

Group's (Texas TIG) McFaddin Beach and Dune Restoration project. Both projects will provide crucial funding towards the beach and dune restoration, which is the last phase of the Salt Bayou Watershed Project. As one of the groups that have helped develop a plan that will restore this ecosystem, we are excited that the merits of this effort and these projects have been recognized and are being considered for funding..."

Todd Merendino, Ph.D. Manager of Conservation, Ducks Unlimited TX/OK/NM

"It is a privilege for Ducks Unlimited Canada (DUC) to recognize the ambitious efforts the State of Texas is making for using Deepwater Horizon funding to achieve coastal ecosystem resiliency. No wildlife stand more to gain from your decisions than bird species that migrate between Texas and Canada annually, including waterfowl in the Central Flyway...It is with this background in mind that DUC respectfully submits public comments strongly supporting the proposed use of Texas' share of Deepwater Horizon restoration funds for the RESTORE Bucket 1 Salt Bayou Watershed Restoration Project and the McFaddin Beach and Dune Restoration Project."

Karla Guyn, Ph.D., Chief Executive Officer, Ducks Unlimited Canada

"The Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has supported the overall Salt Bayou Watershed Restoration Plan that includes this proposed beach and dune nourishment project as a major step in conserving Texas' largest contiguous coastal marsh. The good news is these measures can succeed for many decades if not a century if the plan is fully implemented and salt water intrusion into the marsh is controlled at acceptable levels.

"As you know, coastal marshes play a vital role in the productivity of the Gulf of Mexico ecosystem because they are the nursery for the vast majority of aquatic species in the Gulf. Just as few people understand the ecosystem contributions of marshes, fewer still grasp what we'll lose if these delicate systems crash and disappear due to preventable causes."

Larry McKinney, Ph.D. Executive Director
Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies

"What you've got is an outdoorsman's paradise down here in the middle of the largest refineries and chemical plants in the world." **John Durkay**, General Counsel, Industry of Southeast Texas

"This letter strongly supports the proposed RESTORE Bucket 1 grant of \$10 million for the Salt Bayou Water shed Restoration Plan's beach and dune nourishment phase. Jefferson County ' s coastal wetlands are known to be critical to a wide variety of birds, plants, insects, reptiles and animals that are also found in Big Thicket Preserve habitats."

Bruce Walker, Executive Director, Big Thicket Association

“This year’s recipient in the local/private citizen category is Jefferson County Judge Jeff Branick. After helping guide Jefferson County through the aftermath of Hurricane Ike as county attorney in 2008, Jeff Branick was elected county judge in 2010 in the shadow of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Since then, Judge Branick has strongly advocated using Deepwater Horizon restoration funds to restore and conserve the largest coastal marsh in Texas to benefit fish and wildlife populations and people,”

**DU Chief Conservation Officer Paul Schmidt
DU CEO Dale Hall and Judge Branick (right)**



“WMI strongly supports the Texas Multiyear Implementation Plan’s RESTORE Bucket 1 Salt Bayou Watershed (McFaddin NWR) proposed grant at \$10 million for beach and dune nourishment. Our fish and wildlife resources will benefit tremendously at both regional and continental levels from the maintenance of Texas’ largest contiguous coastal marsh...”

Jonathan Gassett, Ph.D. Southeastern Field Rep. Wildlife Management Institute

“As a resident of Southeast Texas, I strongly support the Salt Bayou/McFaddin project plans as proposed for public comment to restore the Chenier marsh system that suffered extreme degradation of the digging of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway in the 1930s, the digging of the fish pass from the Sabine Neches ship channel into the Keith Lake system in the 1970s, and the storm surges of hurricanes in 2005 and 2008...The coastal marsh system is critically important to Jefferson County and our entire region recreationally, ecologically, financially, and as a protective barrier.”

Rick Lewandowski, Director, Shangri-La Botanical Gardens and Nature Center

“The Gulf Coast Prairie Landscape Conservation Cooperative (GCPLCC) agrees with the RESTORE Act’s prioritization of landscape scale outcomes and multi-state projects, and although the Salt Bayou watershed is entirely within Texas, it forms a key part of the 6.5-million acre Chenier Plain eco-region in Southeast Texas and Southwest Louisiana.

“As part of the Chenier Plain, the conservation of the 139,000-acre Salt Bayou marsh supports America’s largest migratory waterfowl flyway. The Jefferson County coastal marsh is Texas’ largest contiguous marsh and also extremely important for Neotropical and other non-waterfowl migratory birds. Shorebirds, wading birds, and many aquatic species such as crab, shrimp and fish are highly dependent upon intact Salt Bayou coastal marsh habitat.

“...the human recreational benefit and ecosystem services derived from this coastal marsh are also significant and highly prized by thousands of waterfowl hunters, birders, recreational anglers, boaters and kayakers annually.”
Bill Bartush, Coordinator, Gulf Coast Prairie LCC

“It is my great professional privilege to represent the State of Texas at international birding tourism conventions for the past 15 years and I run a birder accommodation, outfitting, and guiding and tour business in Alamo, Texas. We serve nature tourists from over 40 countries.... I want to compliment all the state’s natural resource agencies that have been funding progress along the Texas coastal flyway in recent years...

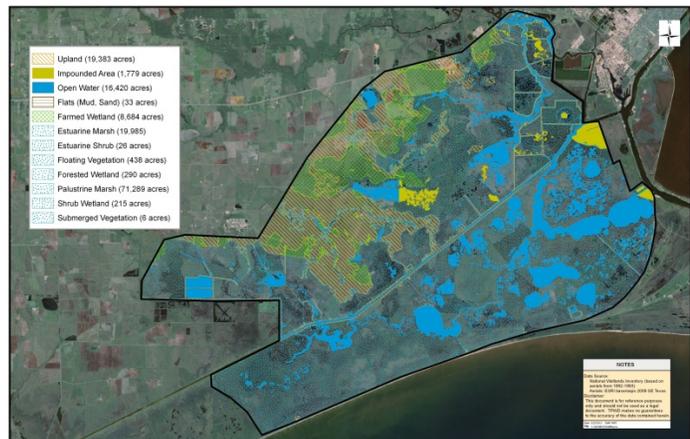
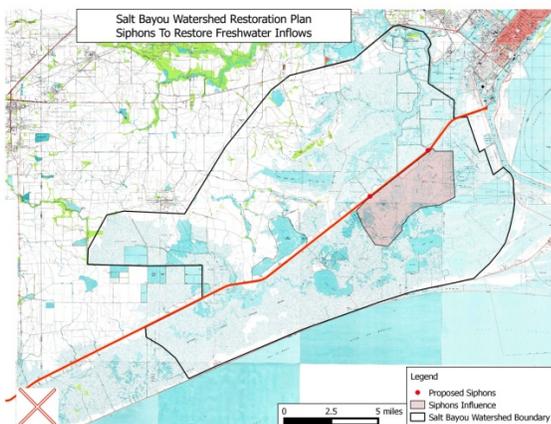
“Further, I salute Jefferson County’s persistent advocacy on behalf of Texas’ largest contiguous coastal marsh along its Gulf of Mexico coast because of the role that marsh plays in supporting stop-over resting and feeding habitat for millions of birds migrating across the Gulf and up our coast to and from the Upper Texas coast to the Caribbean, Central and South America...“In fact, the Texas coast is of critical importance to 75% of American bird species which utilize it for breeding, wintering, or migrating. The Texas coast has the world’s highest rate of songbird migrants recorded, according to reports from ongoing counts by researchers based at Texas A&M Kingsville.

“US birding tourism expenditures are \$107 billion, creating \$13 billion in local, state and federal tax revenue, while supporting 666,000 jobs. Since Texas offers the richest birding in the U.S., everything we do here to enhance bird resources increases our revenue share. The unique bird habitat and species of the Texas Chenier Plain are a key part of the habitat that birds utilize and birders visit..”

Keith Hackland, General Manager & Birding Guide, Alamo Inn



Mapping Jefferson County Deepwater Horizon Restoration



Three fresh water siphons will help maintain best water mixture

What's at Stake?



STATE & FEDERAL LEADERSHIP SUPPORT



Texas Governor Greg Abbott, Texas General Land Office Commissioner George P. Bush, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department Director Carter Smith, Texas Commission for Environmental Quality Director Toby Baker, Governor's Commission to Rebuild Texas Commissioner John Sharp, U.S. Senator John Cornyn, U.S. Senator Ted Cruz, U.S. Congressman Randy Weber, Secretary of Interior David Bernhardt, Assistant Secretary of Interior Susan Combs, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Directors Greg Sheehan and Aurelia Skipwith, Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Homeland Security, U.S. Coast Guard, National Oceanic and Atmospheric

Administration, U.S. Congress, Natural Resource Conservation Service, National Association of Counties' Gulf States Counties and Parishes Caucus, State Senator Brandon Creighton, State Representative Joe Deshotel, State Representative Dade Phelan.



STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

City of Beaumont, City of Bridge City, Chambers County, Chenier Plain Alliance, Calcasieu, Cameron and Vermilion Parishes, Drainage District No. 6, City of Groves, Jefferson County Commissioners Court, Lower Neches Valley Authority, City of Nederland, City of Orange, Orange County, Orange County Economic Development Corporation, Orange County Navigation and Port Commission, Orange County Water Control and



Improvements Districts No.'s 1 and 2, Orangefield Water Supply Corporation, City of Pinehurst, City of Port Arthur, Port of Beaumont, Port of Port Arthur, City of Port Neches, Sabine River Authority, Southeast Texas Regional Planning Commission, City of Vidor, City of West Orange

NON GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS

Audubon Texas, Backcountry Hunters and Anglers-Texas, Big Thicket Association, Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program, Coastal Conservation Association, Congressional Sportsmens Foundation, Dallas Safari Club, Ducks Unlimited-Texas, Ducks Unlimited- Canada, Environmental Defense Fund, Galveston Bay Foundation, Golden Triangle Audubon, Gulf Coast Prairie LCC, Gulf Restoration Network, Harte Research Center, Houston Audubon, Houston Safari Club, Houston Wilderness, Gulf Environmental Benefits Fund/National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Lamar University Earth and Space Sciences Department, Metropolitan League of Bass Clubs-San Antonio, Museum of the Gulf Coast, National Wildlife Federation, National Wild Turkey Federation-Texas, Ocean Conservancy, Plateau Land and Wildlife Management, Port Arthur Historical Society, Quail Coalition, Rebuild Texas Foundation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation-Texas, Safari Club International-Houston, Shangri-La Gardens and Nature Center, Sierra Club, SMART-Sensible Management of Aquatic Resources Team, Southeast Texas Clean Air & Water, Inc., Student Conservation Alliance, Texas Association of Bass Clubs, Texas Bighorn Society, Texas Black Bass Unlimited, Texas Foundation for Conservation, Texas Sportsmen's Association, Texas Wildlife Association, The Nature Conservancy, The Wildlife Society-Texas, Turtle Island Restoration Network, Wildlife Forever, Wildlife Management Institute.



BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

Texas Birding Association, Beaumont Convention and Visitors Bureau, Ecosystem Investment Partners, Golden Pass LNG, Golden Triangle Business Roundtable, Greater Beaumont Chamber of Commerce, Greater Port Arthur Chamber of Commerce, Gulf Intracoastal Canal Association, HDR, Industry of Southeast Texas, Jefferson Energy Companies, KT Maintenance, LJA Engineering, Orange County Economic Development Agency, Port Arthur Economic Development Corporation, Port Arthur LNG, Stream Company, Sportsmen's Supply.



Office of the Governor

GREG ABBOTT

July 2, 2015

Governor's Press Office: 512-463-1826

Amelia Chasse: Amelia.Chasse@gov.tx.gov

Texas Reaches Agreement on Deepwater Horizon Case

AUSTIN - Texas today announced an agreement in principle between BP Exploration and Production Inc. and the states of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, and the U.S. federal government. As part of the agreement, BP will pay \$20.2 billion in damages and penalties, with Texas receiving more than \$750 million. Upon agreeing to the terms, Governor Abbott issued the following statement:

"After five years, I'm proud to announce that Texas, along with the other Gulf States, has reached an agreement in principle with BP to resolve all the states' claims. This settlement will allow Texas to reinvest in the Gulf community and reinvigorate the economic and environmental health of the region."

Details of The Settlement:

- *BP will pay a total of \$20.2 billion in damages and penalties:*
 - *\$5.5 billion in Clean Water Act penalties.*
 - *This amount will fund projects in the Gulf-Wide RESTORE Act plan.*
 - *\$8.8 billion in Natural Resource Damages.*
 - *This is under the federal Oil Pollution Act.*
 - *\$4.9 billion in Economic Damages to the Gulf States.*
- *Texas will see a large amount of money that will be part of Texas' Gulf Restoration plan*



NEWS RELEASE

Date: July 26, 2017

Media Contact: Tim Richardson, consultant for Jefferson County

Phone: 202-352-1269 or email: trpr51@gmail.com

National Association of Counties adopts Jefferson County resolutions to maintain status quo for GOMESA and future oil spill settlements

Beaumont - The National Association of Counties annual conference in Columbus, Ohio (July 20-24) adopted two resolutions by Jefferson County Judge Jeff Branick. The first resolution urges Congress to maintain the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act's (GOMESA) revenue sharing provisions that benefit oil producing states, counties and parishes in Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. The second resolution opposes H.R. 732 that could restrict federal court settlement payments to coastal states, counties and parishes indirectly impacted by catastrophic pollution events such as the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

GOMESA was passed in 2006 and phase II of the act begins in 2017 extending until 2057. Under GOMESA Phase II, fifty percent of revenues consisting of bonus bid, rental, and royalty revenues, from leases in the Outer Continental Shelf's Western and Central Gulf of Mexico regions will be shared with Gulf Producing States (37.5%) and the Land and Water Conservation Fund (12.5%). GOMESA directs the funds for coastal environmental restoration projects.



Gulf Producing States (GPS) and their associated counties and parishes will divide funds from outer continental shelf (OCS) lease sales and production revenue according to formulas and geographic proximity to the leases and operating wells. At a minimum each GPS will receive 10% of the revenue shared with all GPS. For the first 40 years of GOMESA Phase II revenue sharing, the maximum amount available for sharing each year is \$500 million, after which there is no maximum sharing amount. GOMESA Phase II annual revenues will be highly variable and dependent upon the auction prices of leases and the prices of crude oil and natural gas from offshore wells.

The language of Jefferson County’s GOMESA approved resolution is: “The National Association of Counties (NACo) urges that Congress oppose the Administration’s FY 2018 budget request to eliminate GOMESA’s revenue sharing with eligible states, counties, parishes and boroughs and redirect the funds to the U.S. Treasury.”

Media Soundbites

Beaumont Enterprise Editorial January 6, 2019

“...The best natural defenses against a hurricane or tropical storm heading inland from the Gulf of Mexico are wide beaches or sand dunes — and preferably both. Yet both of those natural assets have waned along the region’s coastline in recent decades. At long last that is being reversed, in part due to settlement money Texas received from the Deepwater Horizon disaster in 2010 and resulting oil spill. Whenever state or federal funding is available for beach buildup, area lawmakers have to head for it like beachcombers competing for a prized shell. The McFaddin National Wildlife Refuge has benefited from a recent program, but it shouldn’t be the last one for the upper Gulf Coast. Communication with the Texas General Land Office is vital here.”

Port Arthur News *McFaddin Dune Project Bolstered by New Money* April 25, 2018

“Problems abound on the shoreline, not the least of which is erosion that’s averaging perhaps 9 feet a year but extends deeper in some places... Erosion

endangers the dunes that keep saltwater out of ecologically at-risk areas, endangering some aquatic plants and animals.

“When the plants die, the dunes become more at risk, exacerbating the shoreline’s decline. That’s why coastline supporters needed funding to bankroll the dune-and-berm project, which would restore to a total of 20 miles the beach dune ridge system, three miles of which are in place.”

Beaumont Business Journal, *RESTORE, Local Counties Vie for BP Funds.* February 2015

“As BP heads into the third week of a civil trial in which U.S. District Judge Carl Barbier will assess Clean Water Act fines pertaining to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010, Jefferson and Orange counties, along with their partners in the Chenier Plain Alliance, are poised to battle for their portions of the funds.

“Crucial wetlands and coastline in the Chenier Plain, an enormous coastal eco-region sprawling between Southwest Louisiana and Southeast Texas, are a priority for these counties, which plan to use BP funds to repair and revitalize these areas.”

The Examiner *Deepwater Horizon Restoration Accelerates in Jefferson County,* March 1, 2018

“The Texas Trustee Implementation Group in charge of Deepwater Horizon coastal restoration formally adopted its first plan for allocating Natural Resource Damages Act funds to restore natural resources injured by the 2010 oil spill. The plan contains a \$15.8 million grant for the McFaddin Beach and Dune restoration along Jefferson County’s Gulf of Mexico’s coast.”

Federal Emergency Management Agency “*Best Practices*”
April 2018

“A dollar spent on Chenier Plain restoration probably returns greater co-benefits than anywhere else on the Gulf of Mexico.”

American Wetland Foundation November, 2019

“Priceless natural assets have been devalued over time and strengthening our ecosystems to support our economy holds the key to restoring nature’s defenses. The new way forward is to ensure that home values are protected at a time when real estate is vulnerable to devaluation due to the negative stigma associated with rising waters and storms.”

Ducks Unlimited, *Saving the Chenier Plain* September/October 2018

“This large-scale effort is supported by a diverse partnership including Jefferson County, DU, TPWD, National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration, Texas General Land Office, Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation, Sempra Energy, Golden Pass LNG, Exxon Mobil, Coastal Conservation Association, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, North American Wetlands Conservation Council and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.”

Fish & Wildlife News, *Beach Restoration Project in Texas Provides Protection during Hurricane Harvey* Winter 2018

“A beach renourishment project at McFaddin National Wildlife Refuge in Jefferson County, Texas, which rebuilt a three-mile stretch of dunes, withstood the pounding of Tropical Storm Cindy about a month after it was finished in May and then the howling force of Hurricane Harvey in late August.”

Houston Chronicle, *Coastal marsh project shows signs of life* September 30, 2018

“A decade ago, it was a dying marsh. Its vegetation, evolved in a mostly-freshwater environment, was slowing being done in by saltwater creeping in from the adjacent bay system. With the vegetation losing its grip, the light, fertile organic soils on which it grew dissolved and was washed away with each tide change, taking with it the fuel that drove a fresh/intermediate marsh ecosystem unequalled in its productivity and its effectiveness as a natural speed bump blunting the force of the walls of water all too regularly driven inland by tropical storms and hurricanes....

“The rejuvenation of that tract of coastal marsh is just a part of the Salt Bayou Plan, one of the most ambitious, multi-faceted and, at \$95 million, expensive environmental rehabilitation projects ever undertaken in Texas. Those projects are funded in large part by penalties paid in the wake of the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill, one of nation’s most significant environmental disasters. And they are being imagined, designed, promoted and fought for by almost unheard of cooperative efforts of federal, state and local elected officials and agencies, private conservation organizations and businesses.”

PBS, *This American Land Protecting the Chenier Plain* August 2017

“We’re in the Houston, Port Arthur, and Beaumont area of Texas. Some 50+ percent of the nation’s oil that we produce here in the U.S., as well as our imported oil is refined here in this particular area. It is also home to a large military base.

Amidst all of this industrial complex is one of the most ecologically diverse and rich areas in North America. It’s called the Chenier Plain, and it stretches from the Houston area

all the way over to the Southwest portion of Louisiana, some 6.5 million-acres of wetlands and marshes.”

**Texas Tribune *The Texas Coastline is Slowly Disappearing.*
*Here’s how one community is coping***

January 2, 2018

“The banana water lilies that once filled Jefferson County started dying off years ago. The aquatic plants with their elegant white and yellow blooms used to pepper the 139,000-acre wetland in Southeast Texas – a hub for wildlife, boaters and commercial fisheries...

“Subsidence, sea-level rise and storm surges have all contributed to significant land loss, averaging four feet per year, along the state’s coastline according to the Texas General Land Office. In some places, more than 30-feet of shoreline disappears annually.

“The result?

“Ecologically sensitive areas near the coast, like the Salt Bayou marsh, are more prone to inundation by seawater, which kills off salt-sensitive aquatic plants and animals. With less space between sea and shore, it can also make neighborhoods and industry more vulnerable to hurricane storm surges...

“The problem has inspired a collection of strange bed fellows in Jefferson County. Local leaders, environmental activists and industry representatives are working together to execute a variety of projects – some bankrolled by BP oil spill settlement funds – to rehabilitate the marsh and protect the area’s industry complex.”



Photo by Shannon Tompkins, Houston Chronicle

Guidry News, Jefferson County Selects Contractor for Deepwater Horizon Coastal Marsh Project February 12, 2018

“Jefferson County Commissioner’s Court selected MK Constructors’ competitive bid totaling \$6,699,693.20 to construct and install two gravity flow siphons under the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW). Each siphon will transport fresh water from the north side of the canal into the Salt Bayou marsh on the south, or Gulf of Mexico, side of the canal. The manmade structures will reestablish some of the historic “sheet flow” of fresh water from the landward side of the GIWW to the Salt Bayou’s coastal marsh.

Quorum Report Texas could do best if Governor Abbott is allowed to operate with BP funds

May 18, 2015

“One of the strengths for Texas in the RESTORE Act is that it unified decision making authority in the Office of the Governor. The other four states have splintered authority, and each state is different. Only Texas has one voice, the Governor’s, recognized as the decision making entity.

“In addition, Texas should do best in the Gulf-wide project competition because of the richness of Texas’ coastal resources. The RESTORE Act specifies that funds will be awarded according to the “best available science” regardless of a project’s proximity to the spill site...

“In other words, if you have the critters and the other natural resources you can win. The federal chair in many cases is going to be pro-Texas because of the state’s significant natural resource advantages”

Horinko Group A Reader’s Guide to the RESTORE Act

August 20, 2012

“In short, Congress is now out of the RESTORE picture forevermore except for getting annual reports on RESTORE Act expenditures and outcomes. Further, the funds to be deposited in the Trust Fund have gained the coveted status of “no year money.”

“It bears repeating: Congress has no further role in appropriating or allocating RESTORE proceeds from the Clean Water Act and the money will stay in the Trust Fund until it is all spent.”



