Gulf of Mexico Community-based Restoration Partnership

Request for Preproposals
For Projects in the Gulf of Mexico and the U.S. Territories of the Caribbean
(Submittal Deadline: August 6, 2008)

The Gulf of Mexico Community-based Restoration Partnership (GCRP) invites preproposals for its citizen-driven habitat restoration projects. The partnership is seeking to fund on-the-ground activities throughout the Gulf of Mexico and the U.S. Territories of the Caribbean which restore marine, estuarine, and riparian habitats benefiting living marine resources and provide educational and social benefits by significantly involving the community.

The GCRP is a multi-year, regional partnership between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Community-based Restoration Program (CRP), the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) Gulf of Mexico Program - Gulf Ecological Management Sites (GEMS) Initiative, and the Gulf States and Caribbean territories. The purpose of this partnership is to strengthen the conservation efforts of the CRP and GEMS by supporting on-the-ground restoration activities and fostering local stewardship of ecologically significant areas.

Project Specifications:

Preproposals will be accepted for projects that involve restoration, creation, or enhancement of coastal habitats. Caribbean and Gulf of Mexico proposals will be evaluated separately, and for Gulf of Mexico projects, priority will be given to projects which are located within GEMS sites (**Appendix A**).

All projects must:
- Result in **on-the-ground** habitat restoration;
- Provide significant, long-term **benefit to "NOAA Trust Resources**" (please see the following section);
- **Involve the local community** through an educational or volunteer component tied to the restoration activities;
- Provide a **1:1 nonfederal match** to the partnership cash contribution (please see the "Funding" section); and
- Include a mechanism to **monitor and evaluate** the success/failure of the project (please see the "Minimum Monitoring/Evaluation Requirements" Section).

The preferred project duration is one year, with projects beginning January 1, 2009. However, projects of shorter duration and projects taking up to 18 months for completion, but only requiring one year of funding, will also be considered.

On-the-ground restoration projects will be given priority. Funding may also be provided for studies, workshops, or other such work elements which directly support actual and measurable habitat improvement and/or public education about the project. Recognizing that restoration is a multi-faceted effort, funding for projects involving limited pre-implementation activities, such as engineering and design and short-term baseline studies, will be considered. However, funding for such activities will be limited to 15% of the total

project cost. Projects consisting solely of engineering and design components will be considered. Deliverables for engineering and design projects are to include, but are not limited to, engineering designs/plans, reports summarizing the biological and hydrologic data collected in the construction area, a draft of completed permit applications, and synthesized comments from those who review the engineering design.

Preproposals emphasizing a single component, such as only outreach or program coordination are discouraged, as are applications that propose to expand an organization's day-to-day activities, or that primarily seek support for administration, salaries, overhead, and/or travel.

NOAA Trust Resources:

NOAA trust resources and the habitats that support them serve as the focus of this partnership. **Applicants must demonstrate that habitat restoration will result in a benefit to NOAA trust resources.** These include living marine resources and their habitats such as:

- Commercial and recreational fishery resources (marine fish and shellfish and their habitats);
- Anadromous species (fish, such as sturgeon, that spawn in freshwater and then migrate to the sea);
- Endangered and threatened marine species and their habitats;
- Marine mammals, turtles, and their habitats;
- Marshes, mangroves, seagrass beds, coral reefs, and other coastal habitats; and
- Resources associated with National Marine Sanctuaries and National Estuarine Research Reserves.

Funding:

Preproposals will be evaluated and selected by the GCRP steering committee, which consists of Gulf of Mexico Foundation staff, NOAA, US EPA Gulf of Mexico Program, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and natural resource agency technical staff from each of the Gulf States and Caribbean territories. Subject to available funding, approximately $275,000 is available for Year 2009 projects. Project funding levels will typically fall within the range of $20,000 - $50,000. The Partnership seeks to provide approximately $35,000 to each state or territory assuming projects meeting the selection criteria are identified.

All projects **must** provide a 1:1 match of the grant amount. Matching funds **cannot be federal dollars**. Matching funds can be cash and/or in-kind, including one or more of the following:

- In-kind donations, such as materials and earthmoving equipment;
- Technical assistance for restoration site selection, design, and evaluation;
- Land (purchased or put under easement during the project period);
- Workforce support or other in-kind services, especially those that promote citizens' hands-on involvement;
- Local stewardship and monitoring to sustain and evaluate the success of the restoration over time.

Additional federal funding or other contributions may be included in the project description to demonstrate that the project is part of a larger restoration effort. However, such federal contributions may not serve as matching contributions to the GCRP funds.

Minimum Monitoring/Evaluation Requirements:

Projects funded by the GCRP are required to evaluate the success of the habitat restoration efforts. The purpose of the monitoring is to detect early signs that the restoration is or is not on track, to gauge how well a restoration site is functioning, and to evaluate the ecological health of specific coastal habitats both before and after completion.

NOAA has established standard monitoring protocols to guide the evaluation of habitat restoration projects. A manual, "Science-Based Restoration Monitoring of Coastal Habitats," was developed in accordance with the Estuary Restoration Act of 2000, Title I of the Estuaries and Clean Waters Act of 2000. This guidance manual provides technical assistance, outlines necessary steps and provides tools for the development and implementation of sound scientific monitoring of coastal restoration projects. **Appendix B** outlines the framework for preparing an effective monitoring plan. (**Please note** that this monitoring plan is not required for the **pre**proposal submission, but will be required for all GCRP applicants invited to submit full proposals.)

Preproposal Requirements:

Preproposals must be **received by August 6th, 2008** and should be no more than two (2) pages in length. Preproposals must include all of the information requested and be formatted as shown in **Attachment A**. Projects that meet the minimum partnership requirements will be invited to submit full proposals (approximate submittal date: September 25, 2008) that will more fully describe the activities to be accomplished and will include a specific timeline, a monitoring plan, and a detailed budget. Applicants invited to submit full proposals may be required to include a letter of support from an appropriate organization. Final projects will be selected for funding following review by the GCRP Steering Committee.

Preproposal Submission:

Applicants **must** submit one hard copy and one digital copy (MS Word compatible with photos as low resolution .jpg files) via e-mail or compact disk (CD). The digital copy, whether submitted via e-mail or a mailed disk must be **received** by the due date. Hard copies (prints) submitted via regular mail or courier must be postmarked by the due date. Please do not submit materials via fax.

Please submit materials to:
Gulf of Mexico Foundation
Attention: Community-based Restoration Partnership
PMB 51, 5403 Everhart
Corpus Christi, Texas 78411
e-mail: gmf@gulfmex.org

For questions about the application process, please contact:

Dr. Quenton Dokken, Executive Director, Gulf of Mexico Foundation
or Ryan Fikes, Project Coordinator, Gulf of Mexico Foundation at:
(361) 882-3939, gmf@gulfmex.org, or www.gulfmex.org.

For technical assistance, please contact the resource manager in your area:

GCRP STATE/TERRITORY POINTS OF CONTACT			
State	**POC**	**Phone**	**Email**
Texas	Ms. Kendal Keyes	(361) 825-3245	kendal.keyes@tpwd.state.tx.us
Louisiana	Mr. Greg DuCote	(225) 342-5052	gregory.ducote@la.gov
Mississippi	Ms. Rhonda Price	(228) 374-5000 ext. 5098	rhonda.price@dmr.state.ms.us
Alabama	Mr. Carl Ferraro	(251) 621-1216	Carl.ferraro@dcnr.alabama.gov
Florida	Mr. Larry Nall	(850) 245-2094	larry.nall@dep.state.fl.us
Puerto Rico	Mr. Craig Lilyestrom	(787) 999-2200 ext. 2615	craig.lilyestrom@drna.gobierno.pr
U.S. Virgin Islands	Mr. Nick Drayton	(340) 719-8590	ndrayton@oceanconservancy.org

GCRP FEDERAL POINTS OF CONTACT			
Region	**POC**	**Phone**	**Email**
TX	Kris Benson	(409) 766-3699	Kris.Benson@noaa.gov
LA	Cheryl Brodnax	(225) 578-7923	Cheryl.Brodnax@noaa.gov
MS, AL & FL (Panhandle to Tampa Bay)	Leslie Craig	(727) 551-5786	Leslie.Craig@noaa.gov
FL (Tampa Bay South) **&** Caribbean	Daphne Macfarlan	(727) 824-5384	Daphne.Macfarlan@noaa.gov
FL (Tampa Bay) **&** Caribbean	Sean Meehan	(727) 824-5330	Sean.Meehan@noaa.gov

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

USEPA Gulf of Mexico Program/Gulf Ecological Management Sites Program:
http://www.epa.gov/gmpo/gem2.html

NOAA Restoration Center Community-based Restoration Program:
http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration/projects_programs/crp/index.html

Gulf of Mexico Foundation:
http://www.gulfmex.org/

Appendix A
Gulf Ecological Management Sites (GEMS)

Alabama – 11 sites

Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge
Cat Island
Grand Bay National Wildlife Refuge
Grand Bay Swamp Bioreserve
Lillian Swamp
Mobile-Tensaw River Delta
Orange Beach Maritime Forest
Perdido River Corridor
Robinson Island
South Mon Louis Island Salt Marsh
Weeks Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve

Florida – 46 sites

Alligator Harbor Aquatic Preserve
Apalachicola Aquatic Preserve
Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve
Big Bend Seagrasses Aquatic Preserve
Boca Ceiga Bay Aquatic Preserve
Caloosahatchee National Wildlife Refuge
Cape Haze
Cape Romano-Ten Thousand Islands
Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuge
Charlotte Harbor Buffer Preserve
Chassahowitzka National Wildlife Refuge
Cockroach Bay Aquatic Preserve
Coupon Bight
Crystal River Buffer
Crystal River National Wildlife Refuge
Egmont Key National Wildlife Refuge
Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve & Buffer
Ft. Pickens Aquatic Preserve
Gasparilla Sound-Charlotte Harbor
Great White Heron National Wildlife Refuge
Island Bay National Wildlife Refuge
J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge
Key West National Wildlife Refuge
Lemon Bay
Lignumvitae Key
Lower Suwannee National Wildlife Refuge
Matlacha Pass
Matlacha Pass National Wildlife Refuge
National Key Deer National Wildlife Refuge
Passage Key National Wildlife Refuge
Pine Island National Wildlife Refuge
Pine Island Sound
Pinellas County Aquatic Preserve
Pinellas National Wildlife Refuge
Rocky Bayou Aquatic Preserve
Rookery Bay Aquatic Preserve
Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve
St. Andrews Bay Aquatic Preserve
St. Joseph Bay Aquatic Preserve & Buffer
St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge
St. Martins Marsh Aquatic Preserve
St. Vincent National Wildlife Refuge
Ten Thousand Islands National Wildlife Refuge
Terra Ceia Aquatic Preserve
Yellow River Marsh Aquatic Preserve

Louisiana – 37 sites

Atchafalaya Delta & Swamp Basin
Atchafalaya Delta Wildlife Management Area
Baptiste Collette Marsh
Barataria Bay
Bayou Bois Piquant Crevasse Swamp
Bayou Mauvais Bois
Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge
Big Branch Marsh National Wildlife Refuge
Big Oak Island
Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge
Chandeleur Islands (Breton National Wildlife Refuge)
Hackberry Beach
Honey Island Swamp
Isles Dernieres
Jean Lafitte National Historic Park
Johnsons Bayou
Lacassine National Wildlife Refuge
Little Pecan Island
Mandalay National Wildlife Refuge
Marsh Island
Petit Bois
Peveto Beach
Queen Bess Island

Cheniere Au Tigre
Cote Blanche Salt Dome
Dahoon Savannah
Delta National Wildlife Refuge
East Jetty Woods
Fearman Lake Marsh (LA Wildlife Refuge)
Grande Terre Island
River Pines Plantation
Rockefeller Wildlife Refuge and Game Preserve
Sabine National Wildlife Refuge
Shell Keys National Wildlife Refuge
Timbalier Island and East Timbalier Island
Weeks Island
White's Kitchen

Mississippi – 21 sites

Bayou LaCroix
Bayou Portage
Bellefontain Marshes
Biloxi River Marshes
Cat Island
Davis Bayou
Deer Island
Escatawpa River Marshes
Grand Bay (incl. National Wildlife Refuge)
Grand Bayou
Graveline Bay
Hancock County Marshes
Horn Island (Gulf Islands National Seashore)
Jourdan River
Mississippi Sand Hill Crane National Wildlife Refuge
Old Fort Bayou
Pascagoula River Marshes
Petit Bois Island (Gulf Islands National Seashore)
Round Island
Ship Island (Gulf Islands National Seashore)
Wolf River Marshes

Texas – 24 sites

Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge
Aransas National Wildlife Refuge
Armand Bayou Coastal Preserve and Nature Center
Candy Abshier Wildlife Management Area
Christmas Bay Coastal Preserve
Clive Runnels Family Mad Island Marsh Preserve
Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary
Freeport Liberty Ship Reef Complex
Guadalupe Delta Wildlife Management Area
Laguna Atascosa National Wildlife Refuge
Laguna Madre
Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuge
Matagorda Island Wildlife Management Area
McFaddin National Wildlife Refuge
Murphree Wildlife Management Area
Mustang Island State Park
North Deer Island Sanctuary
Padre Island National Seashore
Scenic Galveston Inc. Nature Preserve
Sea Rim State Park
Shamrock Island Management Complex
South Bay Coastal Preserve
Texas Point National Wildlife Refuge
Welder Flats Coastal Preserve

For more information on each state's GEMS program visit the following websites:

Alabama - http://www.sarpc.org/gems/index.html
Florida - http://www.dep.state.fl.us/coastal/programs/gems.htm
Louisiana - http://www.dnr.state.la.us/crm/coastmgt/gems/cmdgems.ssi
Mississippi – http://www.dmr.state.ms.us/Coastal-Ecology/GEMS/Gems-Home.htm
Texas - http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/landwater/water/conservation/txgems/index.phtml

For direct links to all of these websites, go to – http://www.gulfmex.org/gems.htm

Sound Research for Successful Restoration

Why Monitor?

The Estuary Restoration Act (ERA) of 2000 directed NOAA to develop restoration monitoring protocols for all ERA-funded projects. NOAA's Restoration Center (RC) has embraced this mandate and will expand it to cover all NOAA-funded restoration projects. By requiring quantitative monitoring of hundreds of NOAA projects, and collectively analyzing results, we have the potential to improve restoration success nation-wide. Without this evaluation process we cannot learn from our successes or correct our failures.

Getting Started

To grow the Restoration Center's research efforts, quantitative monitoring is required on 25 percent of the 2005-funded projects, 50 percent of 2006 projects, and 75 percent of 2007 projects. NOAA's RC relies on local partners to monitor their restoration projects. Many of these groups are well versed in research techniques and have been monitoring for years – others are relatively new to the monitoring process. To assist both these groups, RC technical staff are available to work directly with partners to help them develop and implement sound monitoring plans.

Shared Knowledge, Shared Success

NOAA's Restoration Center strives to share research results with the larger restoration community through seminars, publications, our website (http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration/), and direct relationships with hundreds of grantees. Knowledge gained through the RC's applied research approach is based on hundreds of real world examples from around the country. Applying this knowledge leads to superior restoration techniques and healthier habitats and ecosystems. Together, we can use the results of these evaluation efforts to close the loop between today's monitoring information and tomorrow's restoration actions.

Monitoring Helps Us:

- *Determine* which restoration techniques produce the best results and why.
- *Maximize* restoration efficiency and cost effectiveness
- *Define* which factors are the best indicators of success.
- *Suggest* appropriate timeframes for determining success.

Volunteers conduct a transect survey of a restored oyster reef to evaluate project success.

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www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration

DEVELOPING A MONITORING PLAN

Four main steps are required to develop an effective monitoring plan – a plan that meets NOAA's minimum monitoring requirements.

Step 1. *Develop at least one broad **goal** for the project.* This goal identifies the project's general intent.

Step 2. *Develop at least two quantifiable **objective statements** related to the goal.* These statements specify what you hope to achieve during the project period. One objective should relate to structure, which is how the habitat looks. The other objective should relate to function, which is how the habitat works.

Step 3. *For each objective, identify a **parameter** to monitor.* These parameters are measured before and after the restoration to determine if the objectives were achieved.

Step 4. *Define a **target** value for each parameter.* These targets represent the expected outcomes at the end of the project period (short-term goals). Falling short of a target does not mean that a project has failed, rather, that we need to further examine this type of project to improve the applied techniques.

What if the project "fails"?

The goal of monitoring and evaluation is to learn from project results. If a project misses its targets, it demonstrates a need to improve restoration techniques and helps prioritize research efforts.

How to define a target? To determine a target, first identify the ideal condition for each selected parameter (the **reference** value). Reference values may be obtained either directly from a reference site or from literature. Using the reference value, the current understanding of the restoration site, and the effectiveness of other similar restorations, estimate a realistic improvement to be achieved at the end of the project period (the **target**). Habitats can take decades to become fully restored; therefore, it is not expected that the restoration project will achieve the reference value during the short project period.

Monitoring Plan Example

Goal
-Restore a degraded salt marsh to a healthy state.

Objectives
-Increase the abundance of native salt marsh vegetation (structure).

-Improve the marsh's ability to provide habitat for desired fish species (function).

Parameters
-Percent cover of native species (structure).

-Population size of the desired fish species (function).

Targets
-Greater than 40% cover of native plant species (structure).

-10% increase in the desired fish population utilizing the salt marsh (function).

Working Together

NOAA Restoration Center staff can provide assistance to individuals interested in developing a monitoring and evaluation plan for their restoration project. More information on regional staff can be found at www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration/contact.html. The Restoration Center also offers an online monitoring planner, which can be found at www.habitat.noaa.gov/restoration/rmp/PUBLICSITE/index.cfm .

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www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration

Attachment A
Preproposal Format

Please submit the following information using this format and these headings. Add the required information after each heading.

I. Applicant Information
1. Organization:
2. Address of organization:
3. Organization web page address:

II. Project Contact
1. Project manager(s):
2. Title(s):
3. Address of contact (if different from above):
4. Phone number:
5. Fax number:
6. E-mail address:

III. Project Information
1. Project name:
2. Project start date:
3. Project end date:
4. Project location (state/island/territory, county/parish, city):
5. If a Gulf of Mexico project, is project located within a GEMS (see Appendix A)?
6. Land ownership (public/private):
7. Type(s) of habitat (marsh, reef, seagrass bed, etc.):
8. NOAA Trust Resource(s) expected to benefit from restoration (common and scientific name):
9. Please identify the federal, state, or local permits required:

(Note - Applicants invited to send full proposals will need to provide sufficient project specific information to allow NOAA to complete a NEPA analysis on their proposed project in order to be selected for funding.)

IV. Project Abstract
1. Project objective(s) summary (100 words maximum) – specify only those objectives accomplished with this funding:
2. Description of project to be completed with this funding (250 words maximum):
3. Is this project part of a larger effort?:
4. If so, briefly describe the larger effort:
5. Describe the specific on-the-ground activities to be undertaken to achieve project objectives:
6. Describe project partners and their contribution:
7. Describe community involvement through an educational and/or volunteer component:

V. Budget
1. Amount of Gulf of Mexico Community-based Restoration Partnership funds requested – please include a brief budget narrative explaining what these funds will be used for:
2. Matching contributions - specify sources and types of contributions, both cash and in-kind (calculate volunteer hours at $19.5/hr., federal funds CANNOT be used for match), and what the matching funds will be used for:
3. Total of requested GCRP funds AND matching funds (can be included as a table):