

[<<Back](#)

Reclaiming Our Coast



The federal government is taking major steps to protect Louisiana's endangered coastline. Construction projects in Vermilion Parish will also provide a home to thousands of animals.

KATC's [David D'Aquin](#) went to Pecan Island where a major restoration project is underway.

In the 1950's, much of the marsh was pumped and drained. It was turned into pasture land for cattle. The land eventually began to wash away.

The Gulf of Mexico has been inching closer to the area's only highway - Highway 82. Wetland Ecologist Dr. John Foret says, "This is the only corridor for the residents of Pecan Island to escape in the path of a hurricane or tropical system. So, the more marsh that you have between the gulf and the community - the better."

Earthen terraces are being built across Louisiana's gulf coast, and they're adding hundreds of acres of wetlands. From the sky, you can see the terraces. They'll block some of the rough conditions from the Gulf of Mexico.

Foret says, "At the end of our twenty year project, we'll have almost 500 acres." The land will protect Pecan Island residents and protect the only highway that will get them out. Foret says wildlife will benefit as well.

Over the next few weeks, crews will plant native plants, and wetland ecologists will begin monitoring the progress. The terraces will be complete in the next few weeks, and the project will continue for 20 years. Foret says, "This is a very cost effective method for doing coastal restoration. We're looking at a 19-hundred acre area of impact and it's costing us just over three million dollars."

A similar project is planned for Rockefeller Refuge.

