



NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND
ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



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NOAA Celebrates Earth Day at Recovery Act Shoreline Restoration Project in Louisiana

NOAA joined local partners in Grand Isle, La., today to celebrate Earth Week at an American Recovery and Reinvestment Act project that is putting local residents to work restoring five acres of oyster reefs that will help protect shoreline and marsh habitat.

"The Recovery Act is making a difference in people's lives today and for the long term," said Monica Medina, principal deputy under secretary for oceans and atmosphere for NOAA. "This oyster reef restoration is creating immediate jobs, contributing to future improvements to fishing and making an investment in the long-term protection of Louisiana's vulnerable coast from hurricanes and the effects of climate change."

The oyster reefs built by the \$4 million Recovery Act project will serve as natural breakwaters to help protect 3.4 miles of shoreline and 350 acres of marsh habitat from storms. Shoreline protection is especially important in Louisiana, which loses 22,000 acres of wetland each year – 80 percent of the nation's annual coastal wetland loss.

The project, led by The Nature Conservancy, is supporting jobs for welders, laborers, fishermen, biologists, and project managers from the local community, as well as students from Louisiana State University. Oyster restoration and wetland protection will benefit more than 100 marine species, some that support recreational and commercial fisheries.

Through the Recovery Act, NOAA was provided \$167 million for marine and coastal habitat restoration. The Grand Isle and St. Bernard Shoreline Restoration Project is one of 50 habitat restoration projects selected by NOAA for this funding.

More than 30 projects have broken ground, with the rest preparing to start throughout the next year and a half. The 50 projects are supporting thousands of short-term and long-term jobs. They support the equivalent of more than 250 full-time jobs as of the latest report and are expected to support the equivalent of an additional 1,000 full-time jobs before they are completed.

When all the planned projects are complete, 8,900 acres of habitat will be restored, and fish will gain access to 700 stream miles that had been blocked by obsolete and unsafe dams. The projects also will remove more than 850 metric tons of abandoned fishing gear and other marine trash, rebuild oyster and other shellfish habitat, and reduce threats to 11,750 acres of coral reef habitat.

NOAA understands and predicts changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and conserves and manages our coastal

and marine resources. Visit us at <http://www.noaa.gov> or on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/noaa.lubchenco>.

On the Web

NOAA Recovery Act: www.noaa.gov/recovery

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