



GULF STAR

GULF OF MEXICO ALLIANCE

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



Front cover:
St. Marks Lighthouse, Florida

Current page:
great egret chicks, Florida

GULF STAR PROGRAM

The Alliance's **Gulf Star Program** is a unique public-private partnership that leverages contributions from agencies and businesses. Gulf Star provides funding for projects that support healthy beaches, clean waters, productive ecosystems, and thriving coastal communities.

The Gulf Star Program includes four theme areas: **Coastal Community Resilience, Environmental Education, Habitats & Wildlife, and Clean Water.**

For more information or to become a Gulf Star partner, visit gulfofmexicoalliance.org/gulfstar.



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



The mission of the Gulf of Mexico Alliance is to enhance the ecological and economic health of the Gulf of Mexico region through increased regional collaboration. While we have tweaked our priorities through the years, our mission has remained steadfast. And, it's those last three words that are the basis for what we do: increased regional collaboration. We believe that working together to address regional issues can bring exponential results.

This past year, we continued to invest in our commitments to coastal community resilience, environmental education and stewardship, habitats and wildlife, and clean water through our Gulf Star Program. Our success is built upon the strength of GOMA's collaborative formula and the Gulf Star projects described in this report are only made possible by the shared vision of our partners.

Our annual report highlights collaboration and Gulf Star projects from 2023. We recognize that these efforts required a collective effort and we would not be where we are today without the financial support of each of our Gulf Star partners. Thank you to all of our funders, project partners, staff, and volunteers for supporting these efforts to advance a healthy and resilient Gulf of Mexico.

Lana W. Bowie

2023 GULF STAR PARTNERS

Alabama Florida Louisiana Mississippi Texas



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At Oxy, we're 100% committed to environmental stewardship and elevating the Gulf's beauty. For over seven years, Oxy has partnered with the Gulf of Mexico Alliance's Gulf Star Program to fund projects that advance our shared vision of healthy beaches, clean waters, productive ecosystems, and thriving coastal communities.

We're proud to support this coastal preservation program, which helps conserve at-risk species only found in this region, and believe our partnership with the Alliance is a catalyst for safeguarding nature along our spectacular Gulf Coast.

Andrew H. Kershaw, Executive Vice President, U.S. Offshore
Oxy

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NEW PROJECTS IN 2023

Seven new projects were funded to further improve the health of the Gulf of Mexico. Information for each of these projects is included on the following pages. This includes projects funded by our newest Gulf Star partners: **1PointFive**, **Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative**, and **NASEM Gulf Research Program**.

New 2023 projects funded by:



NEW PROJECTS IN 2023



nesting least tern, Florida

Coastal Bird Conservation and Outreach

National Audubon Society | Florida

Education, outreach, and monitoring activities are supporting the conservation of terns, herons, brown pelicans, and other vulnerable birds. In Florida, anglers are learning ways to reduce fishing line entanglement and volunteers are cleaning up used fishing gear.

Get into the Gulf Awareness Campaign

Gulf of Mexico Alliance | Gulfwide

This year-long communication and social media campaign encourages people to learn about and explore the Gulf of Mexico.

Green Design for Coastal Resilience and Clean Water

TBA | Texas

Communities are increasing their ability to improve resilience and reduce water pollution by adopting innovative practices. Other benefits include reduced flooding, storm protection, cleaner water, and increased habitat for wildlife. *Selected partner and project details will be announced after review of applications is finalized.*

NEW PROJECTS IN 2023



seagrass bed, Florida

Seagrass Status and Trends Assessment

CNL World | Gulfwide

Scientists are reviewing available seagrass data and monitoring guidance and completing the initial planning phases for a 2030 *Seagrass Status and Trends Report*.

Environmental Stewardship with Students

Robertsdale High School | Alabama

Ecole Pointe-au-Chien | Louisiana

Students are adopting sustainability practices and developing a local conservation project to become recognized as a “NOAA Ocean Guardian” school. Alabama high school students are installing recycling bins, educating others about the importance of recycling, and holding cleanup events. Kindergarten and first graders are building a community garden in Louisiana.

Youth Ambassador Program

Gulf Reach | Gulfwide

Young adults from diverse backgrounds receive training in conservation, stewardship, and science communication and then implement a citizen science project in their local community.

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At CITGO we safeguard the environment through smart decisions and safe actions. That's why we invest in the Gulf of Mexico Alliance, whose dedication to the protection, conservation and restoration of natural habitats helps ensure these delicate areas are safe today and for years to come.

Shannon McNary, Manager, Public Affairs and Corporate Citizenship

CITGO

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COASTAL COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

Gulf Coast communities are deeply shaped by a sense of place and their connections to the natural environment. Communities that plan and prepare for storms, flooding, and other coastal impacts are able to recover from disasters more quickly.

Ongoing 2023 projects funded by:



ONGOING PROJECTS



Port Sulphur Community Resilience Implementation



Increasing Community Resilience Using Green Design Practices



Training to Support Community Resilience Assessments



Understanding the Economic Benefits of Eco-Tourism

Port Sulphur Community Resilience Implementation

Institute for Diversity and Inclusion in Emergency Management | Louisiana

Increasing Community Resilience Using Green Design Practices

Backcountry Hunters & Anglers | Texas

Training to Support Community Resilience Assessments

Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant | Gulfwide

Understanding the Economic Benefits of Eco-Tourism

Mississippi State University | Mississippi

Public Awareness Videos Promoting Eco-Tourism

Mississippi State University Television Center | Mississippi

HIGHLIGHTS



15

acres of marsh planted



83

new resilience facilitators



ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Diverse education, outreach, and engagement opportunities create better Gulf stewardship. We are committed to engagement that makes measurable impacts and increases diversity and inclusion.

Ongoing 2023 projects funded by:



ONGOING PROJECTS



Environmental Stewardship with Students



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Intern Program



Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Intern Program



Water Bottle Refill Stations in Local Schools

Environmental Stewardship with Students

Lincoln Middle School | Texas

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Intern Program

Gulf of Mexico Alliance | Gulfwide

Water Bottle Refill Stations in Local Schools

Gulf of Mexico Alliance | Louisiana

Fully Serving the Underserved Training and Guidebook

Gulf of Mexico Alliance | Gulfwide

HIGHLIGHTS



7

completed internships



152,000

plastic bottles kept out of landfills



HABITATS AND WILDLIFE

Conservation and management of coastal habitats and wildlife species are essential to healthy Gulf ecosystems and economies. Stakeholders benefit from access to data and information that can be used for local, state, and regional decision-making.

Ongoing 2023 projects funded by:



ONGOING PROJECTS



Homeowner Training for Living Shorelines



Louisiana Coastal Bird Stewardship and Outreach



Louisiana Coastal Bird Stewardship and Outreach



Terrapin Education and Outreach

Diamondback Terrapin Habitat Research

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi | Texas

Homeowner Training for Living Shorelines Permitting

Mississippi State University | Gulfwide

Louisiana Coastal Bird Stewardship and Outreach

National Audubon Society | Louisiana

Gulf of Mexico Open Data Platform Expansion

CPC, Inc. | Gulfwide

Terrapin Education and Outreach

Galveston Bay Foundation | Texas

Texas Coastal Bird Conservation and Outreach

National Audubon Society | Texas

HIGHLIGHTS

 **140**
homeowners trained

 **4,800**
students learned about terrapin conservation



CLEAN WATER

Clean, healthy water resources are vital to strong communities and a thriving economy within the Gulf of Mexico region. Advancing science, improving stewardship, and enhancing partnerships protects waterways vital to the Gulf of Mexico region.

Ongoing 2023 projects funded by:



ONGOING PROJECTS



Marine Debris Awareness and Outreach



Texas Water Quality Economic Study



Citizen Science Monitoring Texas



Citizen Science Monitoring Louisiana

Marine Debris Awareness and Outreach

Florida Aquarium | Florida

Texas Water Quality Economics Study

Harte Research Institute | Texas

Citizen Science Water and Marine Debris Monitoring

Galveston Bay Foundation | Texas

Citizen Science Water and Marine Debris Monitoring

Pontchartrain Conservancy | Louisiana

HIGHLIGHTS



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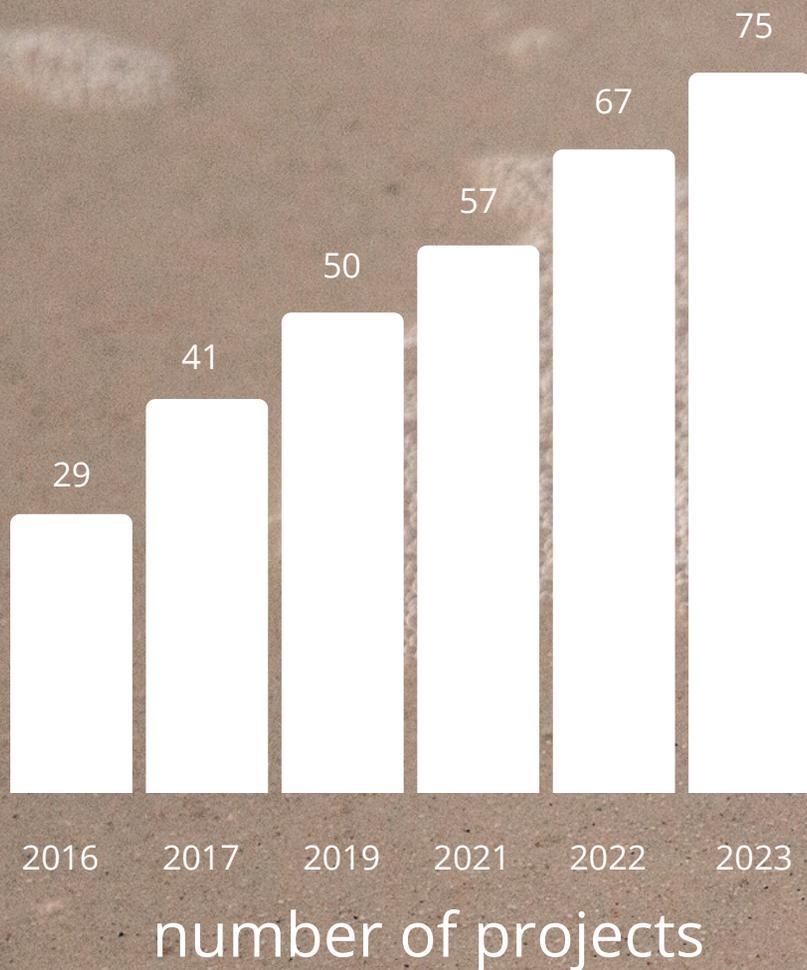
community science labs



115

pounds of marine debris collected for art outreach

BY THE NUMBERS



75 total projects
(2016-2023)

7 new projects
this year

\$3.9 million in
total funding



loggerhead hatchling, Florida

COMPLETED PROJECTS

Integrated Resilience and Conservation Planning

Texas AgriLife Extension | Mississippi and Alabama

Port Sulphur Community Resilience Assessment

Louisiana Sea Grant | Louisiana

Pointe-Au-Chien Community Resilience

*First People's Conservation Council, Lowlander Center,
LA Sea Grant | Louisiana*

Incorporating Socio-Economic Indicators into the Community Resilience Index

Harte Research Institute | Gulfwide

Updated Homeowner Handbooks

Gulf of Mexico Alliance | Gulfwide

Fostering Resilient Building Practices

Smart Home America | Gulfwide

Linking Science Communication and Municipal Planning

University of Texas Marine Science Institute | Texas

Cross-Sector Snapshot of Community Resilience

Louisiana Sea Grant | Louisiana

Design Testing for Wind Hazards

Louisiana State University | Louisiana

Regional Coastal Resilience Mini-Grants

Various Coastal Communities | Gulfwide

What the Gulf Gives Awareness Campaign

Gulf of Mexico Alliance | Gulfwide

Water Bottle Refill Stations in Local Schools

Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program | Louisiana

Fully Serving the Underserved Training and Guidebook

Gulf of Mexico Alliance | Gulfwide

Embrace the Gulf Initiative

Hummingbird Ideas and MS Congeniality TV | Gulfwide

Watershed Monitoring with Underserved High School Students

Mobile Baykeeper | Alabama

Video Case Studies

*Mississippi State University Television Center and Dauphin
Island Sea Lab | Gulfwide*

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A healthy, resilient, and sustainable Gulf of Mexico will only be achieved through the kind of collaborations and networks that GOMA is building. We're a proud partner as we work together to support a bright future for all the region's communities.

Lauren Alexander Augustine, Executive Director
NASEM Gulf Research Program

The Gulf Star Program is an exemplary public-private partnership that leverages our federal dollars and delivers significant regional impacts on collective needs.

Todd Hopkins, Coastal Resilience Coordinator
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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COMPLETED PROJECTS

Urban Youth Conservation Corps

Limitless Vistas | Louisiana

Tracking Trash

Dauphin Island Sea Lab | Alabama

Marine Debris Dash

Ocean Hour | Florida

Plastic Free Gulf Coast

Gulf Coast Community Design Studio | Mississippi

Microplastics Citizen Science Project

Mississippi State University | Gulfwide

Marine Debris Education and Prevention

Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program | Louisiana

Diamondback Terrapin Conservation Plan

The Nature Conservancy | Gulfwide

Understanding Recovery and Species Use of Restored Habitats

Abt Associates | Gulfwide

Gulf of Mexico Open Data Platform Development

NatureServe | Gulfwide

Developing Capacity for Adaptation and Resilience Planning

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission | Gulfwide

Sea Level Rise Workshop

Gulf of Mexico Alliance and Northern Gulf of Mexico Sentinel Site Cooperative | Gulfwide

Living Shorelines Data Inventory

Gulf Coast Research Lab | Gulfwide

Monitoring and Metadata Catalog

University of South Florida Water Institute | Gulfwide

Seagrass Assessment

CNL World | Gulfwide

Living Shorelines Site Suitability Modeling

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission | Florida

Sediment Resource Database

Aptim | Louisiana

COMPLETED PROJECTS

Updating and Upgrading GOMAportal

Harte Research Institute | Gulfwide

Seagrass Status and Trends

CNL World | Gulfwide

Connectivity of Sea Turtles in Gulf Habitats

Inwater Research Group | Louisiana and Florida

Species Recovery Plan Review

Ashley Ballou Consultant | Gulfwide

Florida Water Quality Economics Study

The Balmoral Group | Florida

Inshore to Offshore Monitoring

Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority | Louisiana

Citizen Science Water Monitoring

University of Florida | Florida

Expansion of Harmful Algal Bloom Sensor Network

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission | Florida

Additional Harmful Algal Bloom Gliders

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission | Florida

Nutrient Reduction Social and Civic Engagement Survey

Mississippi State University | Texas, Alabama, Florida



New Orleans, Louisiana

ABOUT US

The **Gulf of Mexico Alliance** is a regional partnership focused on enhancing the environmental and economic health of the Gulf of Mexico. Led by the five Gulf states, our network includes over 1,000 members and 165 participating organizations. Our actions support commitments to strengthening community resilience, increasing regional data sharing, serving underrepresented communities, and improving management of habitats and wildlife species.



Current page:
Biloxi, Mississippi

Back cover:
Naples, Florida

building partnerships for a healthier gulf

GULF OF MEXICO ALLIANCE

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gulfofmexicoalliance.org

