



GULF STAR

GULF OF AMERICA ALLIANCE

2024 ANNUAL REPORT

Front cover:
sea turtle hatchling, Florida

Current page:
South Padre Island, Texas

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 [**gulfofamericaalliance.org/gulfstar**](https://gulfofamericaalliance.org/gulfstar).



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Gulf Star Program is a public-private partnership of agencies, businesses, and non-profits. Together, we are committed to healthy beaches, clean waters, productive ecosystems, and thriving coastal communities in the Gulf region.

Over the years, the Gulf Star Program has become known for projects that provide foundational support for ecosystem health and resilience. Our success is built upon the strength of the Alliance's collaborative formula and Gulf Star projects are only made possible by the shared vision of our partners. We could not accomplish any of it without the support of our funding partners.

I am incredibly proud of the community partners that work with us on this program, the work documented in this report, and the impact these projects are having on Gulf ecosystems and economies. I look forward to the years ahead!


Laura Bowie, Executive Director



2024 GOMCON Opening Plenary

2024 GULF STAR PARTNERS

Alabama Florida Louisiana Mississippi Texas



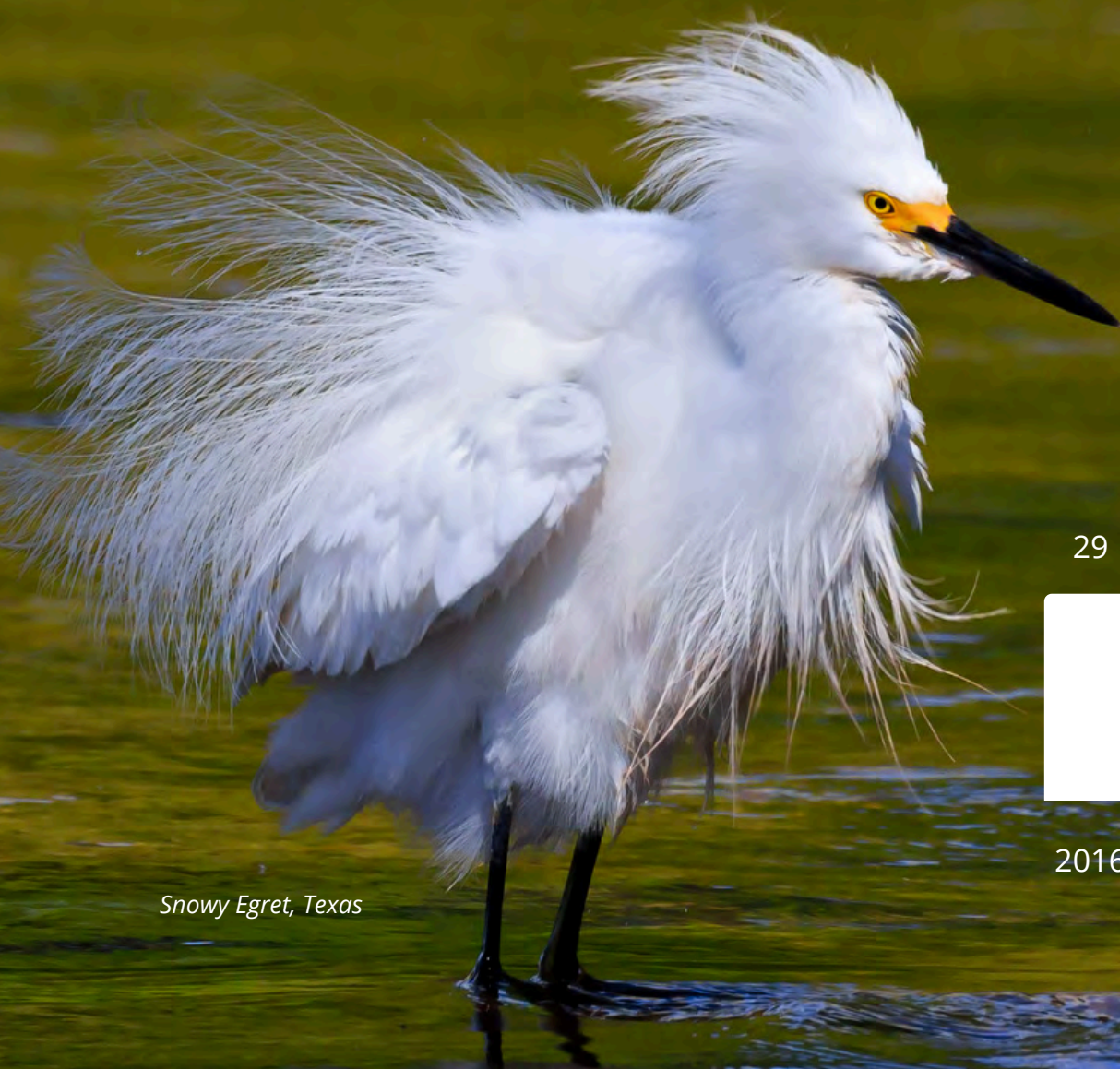
NATIONAL ACADEMIES
Sciences
Engineering
Medicine
GULF RESEARCH PROGRAM



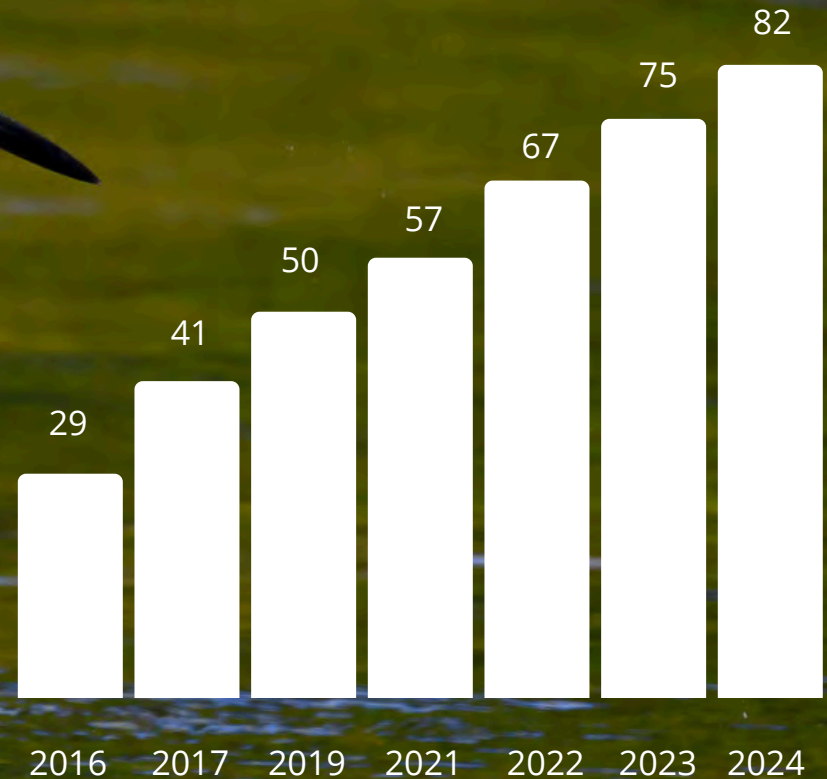
MOTIVA



GULF STAR GROWTH



Snowy Egret, Texas



number of projects

\$6 million in
total funding

82 total projects
(2016-2024)

7 new projects
this year

“ —

As an operator who has 45 years of pioneering deepwater operations in the Gulf, Shell is proud of its continued partnership with the Gulf Star Program. Together with the Alliance, we share the vision of building a resilient Gulf Coast for decades to come.

Colette Hirstius, Senior Vice President, Gulf of America, Shell





NEW PROJECTS IN 2024

Seven new projects were funded to further improve the health of the Gulf Coast. Information for each of these projects is included on the following pages. This includes projects funded by our Gulf Star partners Chevron, CITGO, Freeport McMoRan, Hess Corporation, Oxy, Shell, and Valero.

New 2024 projects funded by:





Corpus Christi, Texas

NEW PROJECTS

Community Resilience Assessment and Implementation

City of Corpus Christi | Texas

Work with community leaders to assess and identify vulnerabilities using the Coastal Community Resilience Index; Implement a project that improves resilience to storms and other hazards

Supporting Interns Conducting Offshore Microplastic Sampling

Mississippi State University | Mississippi

Understand where microplastics are in the Gulf by collecting samples during offshore cruises and providing hands-on internship opportunities to students

New Techniques for Early Detection of *Vibrio* Bacteria

Florida Institute of Technology | Florida

Use cutting-edge science and AI to create a model that predicts when bacteria might be present in coastal waters and oysters before conditions become unsafe for people

Stewardship of Coastal Bird Rookeries

Coastal Bend Bays and Estuaries Program | Texas

Engage volunteers to protect and monitor 20 coastal bird nesting sites around Corpus Christi, Texas; Install protective signs around key rookery sites to limit disturbance by people

Reddish Egret, Texas



NEW PROJECTS

Reducing Urban Litter in Local Waterways

Galveston Bay Foundation | Texas

Install “litter gitter” devices to capture and remove litter from Houston-area waterways before it goes downstream into Galveston Bay and the Gulf

Understanding Reddish Egret Habitat Use

Texas State University | Gulfwide

Combine information on tidal flat habitat and reddish egret movement to help scientists prioritize important locations for conservation and restoration

Understanding Design Requirements to Promote Seagrass Success

Moffatt & Nichol | Gulfwide

Identify requirements needed to reduce wave energy and promote seagrass growth when planning shoreline restoration and similar projects



New Orleans, Louisiana

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.

This section includes previously funded projects that are still ongoing to support coastal community resilience. They are funded by:



ONGOING PROJECTS



Building Resilience in Port Sulphur, Louisiana

Building Resilience in Port Sulphur, Louisiana

Institute for Diversity and Inclusion in Emergency Management | Louisiana

Connect community members with preparedness agencies and resources to meet resilience needs identified by community leaders during the Coastal Community Resilience Index self-assessment

Planting Marsh Grasses for Nature-based Infrastructure

Texas A&M Agrilife Extension | Texas

Restore coastal salt marsh while giving local high school students hands-on experience in STEM-related career opportunities



Planting Marsh Grasses for Nature-Based Infrastructure

Understanding the Economic Benefits of Eco-Tourism

Mississippi State University | Mississippi

Provide information on the current status of eco-tourism businesses, their impacts on the economy, and ways to foster growth



Understanding the Economic Benefits of Eco-Tourism



ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Diverse education, outreach, and engagement opportunities create better Gulf stewardship. We are committed to engagement that leverages resources, builds partnerships, and results in measurable impacts.

This section includes previously funded projects that are still ongoing to support environmental education. They are funded by:



NATIONAL ACADEMIES
Sciences
Engineering
Medicine
GULF RESEARCH PROGRAM



ONGOING PROJECTS



*Environmental Stewardship
with Students*



*Coastal Resource Management
Intern Program*



Youth Ambassador Program



*Environmental Stewardship
with Students*

Environmental Stewardship with Students

Robertsdale High School | Alabama

Ecole Pointe-Au-Chien | Louisiana

Bob Hope Elementary | Texas

Install recycling bins, educate peers, and hold cleanup events at a high school in Alabama; Build a community garden with kindergarten and first graders in Louisiana; Install a native garden with elementary students in Texas

Coastal Resource Management Internship Program

Gulf of Mexico Alliance | Gulfwide

Coordinate internships that provide undergraduate students from backgrounds underrepresented in coastal science opportunities to gain hands-on experience at state agencies across the region

Youth Ambassador Program

Gulf Reach Institute | Gulfwide

Train young adults from diverse backgrounds in conservation, stewardship, and science communication and then implement a citizen science project in their local community

Educating the Public through Social Media

Gulf of Mexico Alliance | Gulfwide

Encourage people to learn more about the Gulf and take simple actions to make a difference through social media campaigns and messaging



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.

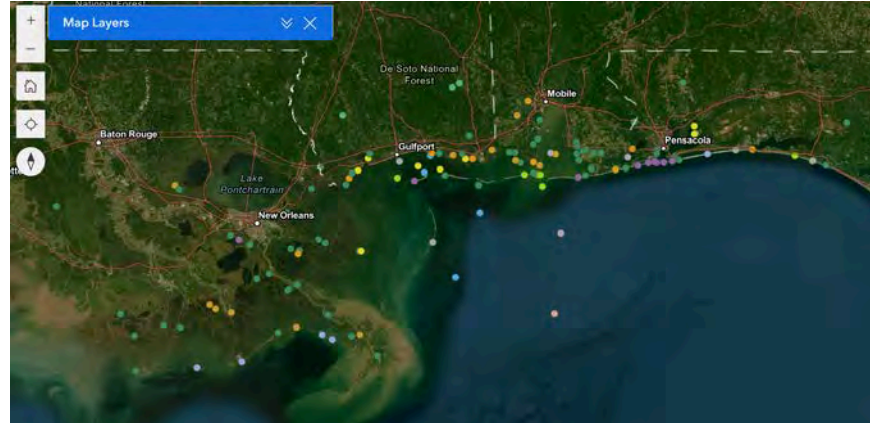
This section includes previously funded projects that are still ongoing to support habitats and wildlife. They are funded by:



ONGOING PROJECTS



Seagrass Status and Trends



Advancing Regional Data Sharing for Coastal Management



Coastal Bird Conservation and Outreach

Seagrass Status and Trends

CNL World | Gulfwide

Review available seagrass data and monitoring guidance and completing the initial planning for a 2030 Seagrass Status and Trends Report

Advancing Regional Data Sharing for Coastal Management

Gulf of Mexico Alliance | Gulfwide

Support continued expansion of the Gulf of Mexico Open Data Platform (GOMOD) to make it easier for users to discover, explore, and access mapping data for the Gulf of Mexico region

Coastal Bird Conservation and Outreach

National Audubon Society | Florida

Education, outreach, and monitoring activities to support the conservation of vulnerable birds; Educate anglers on ways to reduce fishing line entanglement and clean up used fishing gear

Diamondback Terrapin Habitat Research

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi | Texas

Fill gaps in understanding of terrapin habitat use in coastal Texas, a need identified in the Terrapin Conservation Action Plan



CLEAN WATER

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

This section includes previously funded projects that are still ongoing to support clean water. They are funded by:



MOTIVA

ONGOING PROJECTS



*Marine Debris Awareness
and Outreach*



*Marine Debris Awareness
and Outreach*



Citizen Science Monitoring



Citizen Science Monitoring

Marine Debris Awareness and Outreach

Florida Aquarium | Florida

Reduce marine debris by engaging students in the classroom, leading local clean-up events, and creating art using collected debris

Citizen Science Water and Marine Debris Monitoring

Galveston Bay Foundation | Texas

Understand marine debris impacts on bottlenose dolphins that live in Galveston Bay through citizen science surveys; educate the public about dolphin safe fishing practices

Citizen Science Water and Marine Debris Monitoring

Pontchartrain Conservancy | Louisiana

Monitor water conditions with community volunteers, sample for algal pollution and microplastics, reduce litter entering waterways, and track public engagement

COMPLETED PROJECTS



COMPLETED PROJECTS

Increasing Community Resilience Using Green Design Practices

Backcountry Hunters & Anglers | Texas

Training to Support Community Resilience Assessments

Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant | Gulfwide

Public Awareness Videos Promoting Eco-Tourism

Mississippi State University Television Center | Mississippi

Environmental Stewardship with Students

Lincoln Middle School | Texas

Water Bottle Refill Stations in Local Schools

Gulf of Mexico Alliance | Louisiana

Fully Serving the Underserved Training and Guidebook

Gulf of Mexico Alliance | Gulfwide

Homeowner Training for Living Shorelines Permitting

Mississippi State University | Gulfwide

Louisiana Coastal Bird Stewardship and Outreach

National Audubon Society | Louisiana

Terrapin Education and Outreach

Galveston Bay Foundation | Texas

Texas Coastal Bird Conservation and Outreach

National Audubon Society | Texas

Texas Water Quality Economics Study

Harte Research Institute | Texas

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

COMPLETED PROJECTS

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 & 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

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

COMPLETED PROJECTS

Seagrass Assessment

CNL World | Gulfwide

Living Shorelines Site Suitability Modeling

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission | Florida

Sediment Resource Database

Aptim | Louisiana

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



Pascagoula, Mississippi

ABOUT US

The Gulf of America Alliance is a regional partnership focused on enhancing the environmental and economic health of the Gulf. Led by the five Gulf states, our network includes over 1,100 members and 175 participating organizations. Our actions support commitments to strengthening community resilience, increasing regional data sharing, and improving management of habitats and wildlife species.

1,100+ members **175+** organizations **\$522M** in funding since 2012

RECENT SUCCESSES

\$7.7M to remove derelict boats and marine debris region-wide

\$1.4M to improve farming practices and reduce fertilizer runoff

1,120 attendees at GOMCON 2024, an increase of 30% from 2022



20 years of building partnerships for a healthier Gulf

GULF OF AMERICA ALLIANCE

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gulfofamericaalliance.org

