FLORIDA

Restoring Florida's Shorebird & Seabird Populations – Phase I

This four-year initiative continues and expands upon critical foundational work previously funded through GEBF and other sources by inaugurating a dedicated shorebird and seabird program across the Florida Gulf Coast, with a goal to reverse the continued population declines in five focal species and begin to increase them over time. The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC) resource management and research arms will partner with Audubon Florida, to conserve these species using five strategies: 1) reduction of human disturbance; 2) habitat management; 3) predation management; 4) addressing data gaps/information needs; and 5) improving regulatory coordination.

The project will develop baseline population estimates and trends for the five focal species (American oystercatcher, black skimmer, least tern, Wilson's plover, and snowy plover), monitor a minimum of 600 miles of nesting habitat annually, reduce disturbance across key nesting beaches to protect a minimum of 6,500 nests annually, and meet predation management goals on a minimum of 10 beaches annually. The program will engage over 750 volunteers each year to assist with nest protection efforts. A focused review of all program activities will occur in year four to inform development of Phase II of this project. A long-term funding strategy will also be developed for future consideration.

Black skimmers, pictured above, are one of five focal species for which monitoring and stewardship will be conducted.

AT A GLANCE

RECIPIENT:
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Audubon Florida
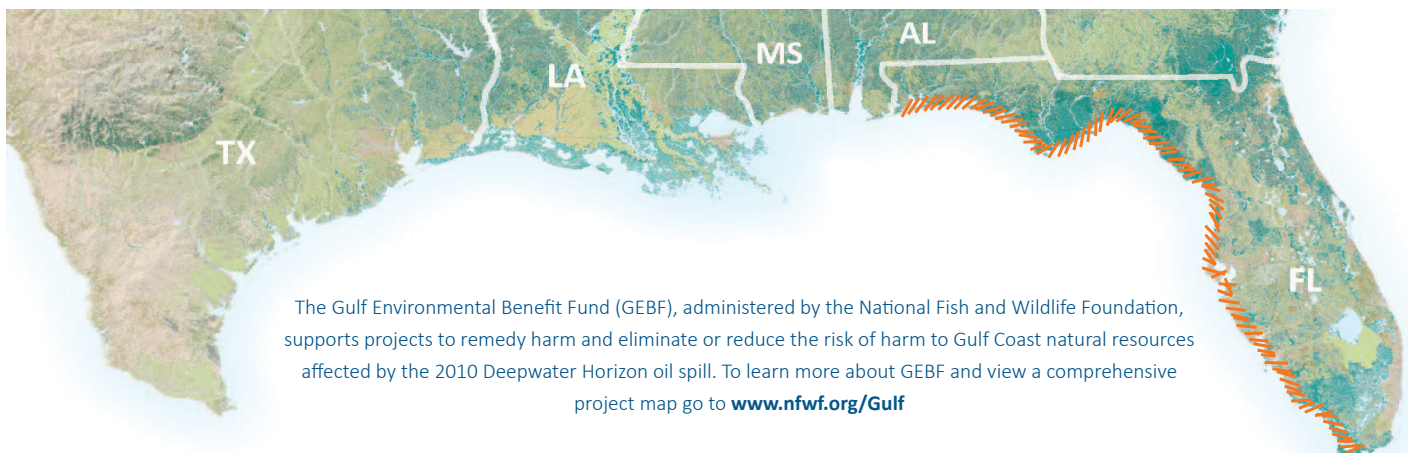
AWARD AMOUNT:
$11,250,000

PARTNERS:
Various Florida Shorebird Alliance partners

LOCATION:
Florida Gulf Coast

AWARD DATE:
November 2016

STATUS:
Active

PROGRESS UPDATE:
Shorebird recovery strategy implementation, surveys of non-breeding shorebirds and seabirds, and outreach activities continues. Significant enhancements to the Florida Shorebird Database were completed.

The Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund (GEBF), administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, supports projects to remedy harm and eliminate or reduce the risk of harm to Gulf Coast natural resources affected by the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill. To learn more about GEBF and view a comprehensive project map go to **www.nfwf.org/Gulf**