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Oyster Cultch Relief and Reef Configuration

Overview

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Oyster Cultch Relief and Reef Configuration

Project ID: 136 | **Project Status:** Monitoring/O&M



Description:

The project will deploy different types of cultch material in various configurations to facilitate growth of oysters on selected reef areas in Mobile Bay, Alabama. Since 2005, the oyster reefs have been in decline as a result of damage and silting associated with Hurricanes Ivan and Katrina. This has caused proliferation of the predatory oyster drill on historically productive reefs. The Alabama Marine Resources Division (AMRD) will investigate the merit of deploying different types of cultch to enhance settlement and growth of oysters on selected reef areas in Mobile Bay. The project is currently in the planning phase for implementation.

The project has three additional study objectives:

- (1) determine whether there are differences in oyster settlement, growth, and survival on reefs of differing levels of relief and reef material relief needed to restore oyster density on specific reefs within historical reef areas in view of oxygen and salinity and oyster recruitment and survival are highly variable; and
 - (2) determine optimum reef material relief needed to restore oyster density on specific reefs within historical reef areas in view of oxygen and salinity and oyster recruitment and survival are highly variable; and
 - (3) estimate the cost/benefits of deploying cultch in configurations differing from traditional cultch broadcast methods.
- The broader goal is to inform and increase the success of future oyster reef restoration activities. For project implementation, the project area was selected for pre-monitoring surveys--a 36-acre reef approximately 1 mile north-northeast of the mouth of East Fowl River; located approximately 3 miles southeast of the mouth of East Fowl River.

Recent Update:

In 2023, the project continued maintaining YSI sondes devices for measuring water quality, and continued data collection.

Trustee Implementation Group(s):

- Alabama

Implementing Trustee(s):

- Alabama Department of Conservation & Natural Resources (ADCNR)

Restoration Type(s):

- Oysters

Restoration Phase:

- Post-Settlement

Plan:

- Alabama Trustee Implementation Group Restoration Plan 2: Restoration of Wetlands, Coastal, and Nearshore Habitats; Habitat Projects on Federally Managed Lands; Nutrient Reduction (Nonpoint Source); Sea Turtles; Marine Mammals; Birds; and Oysters

Site Location(s):



GULF SPILL RESTORATION

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