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CBRA for Deepwater Horizon Texas Projects

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To: David Hoth <david_hoth@fws.gov>
Cc: Ashley Mills <ashley_mills@fws.gov>

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David, attached please find the CBRA consistency determinations for Texas Rookery Islands project. If you have any questions please feel free to contact Ashley Mills.

Thanks

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Dear Project Leader,

The DOI Deepwater Horizon NRDA Case Management Office is continuing to move the proposed Early Restoration projects forward through the various environmental compliance consultations. First, we would like to thank you for all your efforts in the ESA Section 7 consultations your office conducted for the currently proposed projects. We are now working on the Coastal Barrier Resources Act consistency determinations.

There is one project proposed by the State of Texas for implementation on four Texas bird rookery islands, the Texas Rookery Islands Project, which is being evaluated by the Natural Resource Trustees for the Deepwater Horizon oil spill as a potential early restoration project. This early restoration project was proposed in the draft early restoration plan that was released for public review and comment on May 20, 2015. If the Trustees select the project after consideration of public comment and a stipulated agreement is reached with BP, the early restoration project will be implemented by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD).

We used the Coastal Barrier Resources System mapper – Beta (<http://www.fws.gov/cbra/Maps/Mapper.html> [accessed June 24, 2015]) to determine if proposed projects were located within an Otherwise Protected Area or within a Coastal Barrier Resources System Unit. If the proposed project will occur in an Otherwise Protected Area or outside of a System Unit, no additional analysis was developed.

Texas Rookery Islands Project

The Texas Rookery Islands project is proposed by Texas Trustees for implementation in Texas. This proposed project would restore and protect three rookery islands in Galveston Bay and one rookery island in East Matagorda Bay using coastal engineering techniques. The primary goal of the project is to increase nesting of colonial waterbirds, including brown pelicans, laughing gulls, terns (royal and sandwich terns), and wading birds (great blue herons, roseate spoonbills, reddish egrets, great egrets, snowy egrets, tricolored herons, and black-crowned night herons). Restoration actions at each rookery island would increase the amount of available nesting habitat by increasing the size of the island, enhance the quality of habitat through the establishment of native vegetation, and increase the longevity of the habitat through the construction of protective features, such as breakwaters or armoring. These restoration actions would result in an increase in the numbers of nesting colonial waterbirds. Rookery islands in Galveston Bay include Dickinson Bay Island II, located within Dickinson Bay; Rollover Bay Island, located in East (Galveston) Bay; and Smith Point Island, located west of the Smith Point Peninsula. Dressing Point Island lies in East Matagorda Bay, and is part of the Big Boggy National Wildlife Refuge.

Consistency Analysis

Three of the four islands included in the proposed Texas Rookery Islands project are not within any designated System Unit and are therefore not subject to CBRA.

One of the four islands, Dressing Point in Matagorda Bay (Figures 1 and 2), occurs within T07P. We have determined that CBRA does not apply because this is an Otherwise Protected Area and the only prohibition is Federal Flood Insurance.

If there is anything else we need to capture for CBRA please let me know.

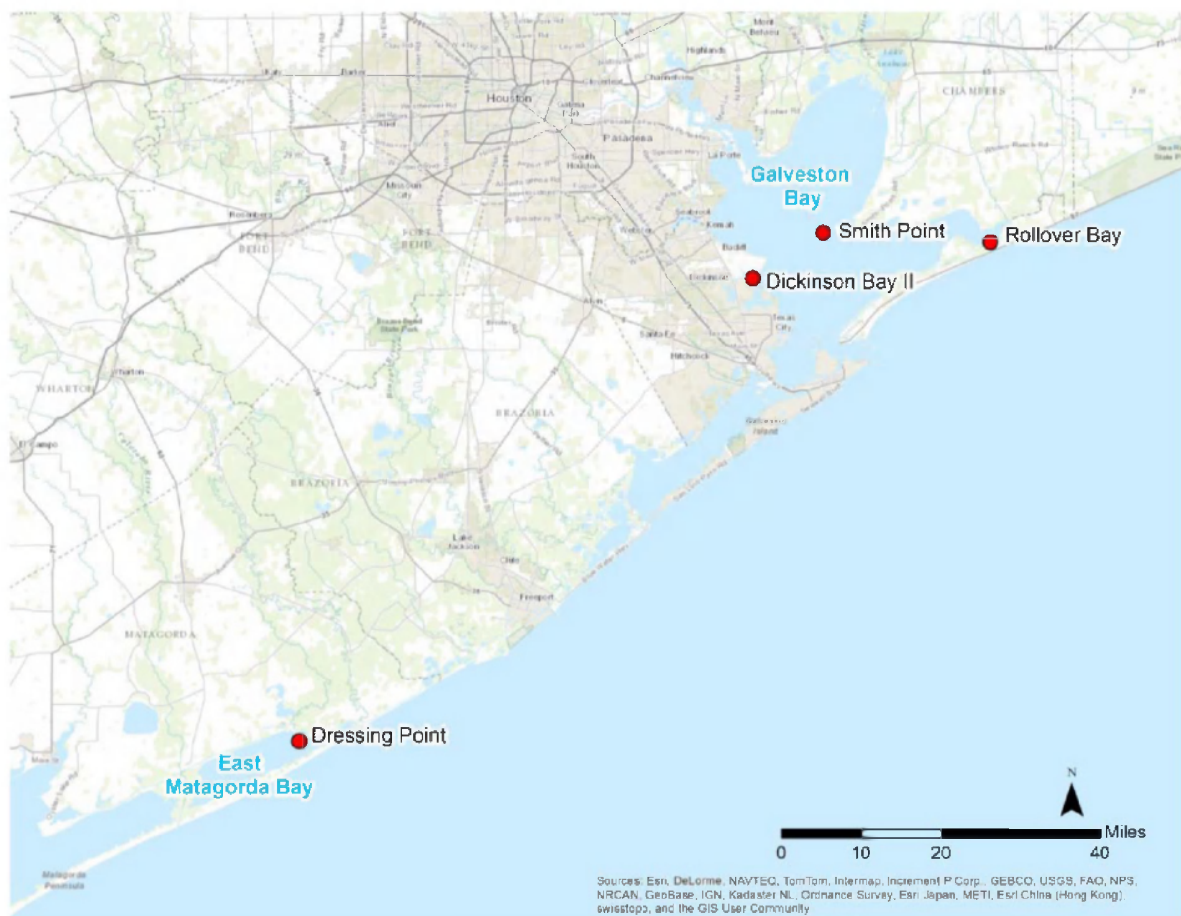


Figure 1. Proposed Texas Rookery Islands project locations.

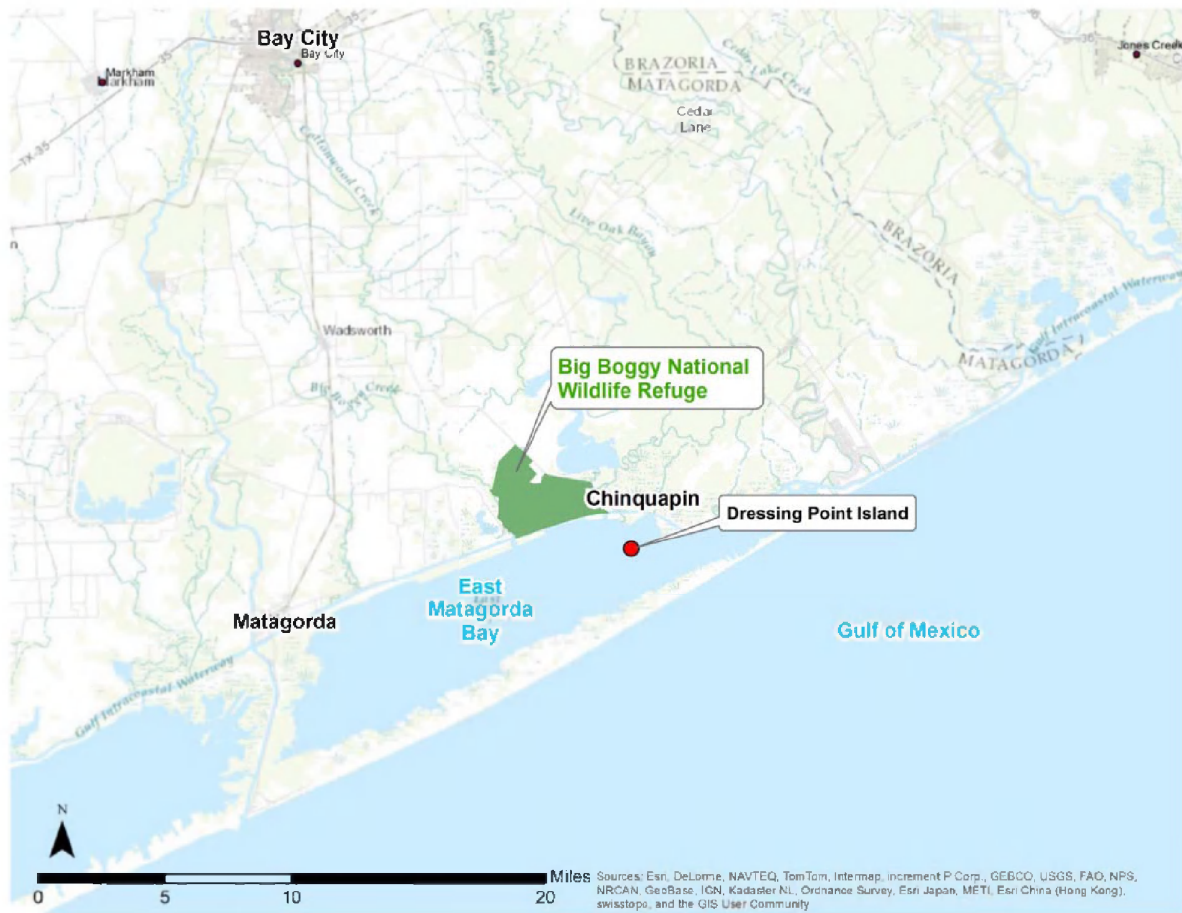


Figure 2. Location of Dressing Point Island, TX.