




MEMORANDUM FOR: FILE

FROM: Christy Fellas, DWH Environmental Compliance Coordinator
NOAA Restoration Center, Southeast Region 

DATE: June 7, 2021

SUBJECT: Projects Proposed in Regionwide TIG Restoration Plan #1 and
Environmental Assessment Statement: EFH Reviews Complete and No
Further Consultation Needed

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), as amended by the Sustainable Fisheries Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-267), established procedures designed to identify, conserve, and enhance Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for those species regulated under a Federal fisheries management plan (FMP). A Federal agency must prepare an EFH Assessment for any Federal action that may adversely affect EFH (50 CFR 600.920(e)(1)). A Federal agency must first determine whether their action may adversely impact EFH. If a Federal agency determines that a Federal action may adversely impact EFH, then the Federal agency must prepare an EFH assessment. If a Federal agency determines that a Federal action will not adversely affect EFH, then the Federal agency is not required to prepare an EFH Assessment.

Based on my review of project materials (Winter/Spring 2021) in coordination with representatives from NOAA's Habitat Conservation Division (HCD) in the South East Regional Office (SERO), the NOAA Restoration Center determined that the projects below proposed for implementation in the Regionwide TIG Restoration Plan #1 and Environmental Assessment will have minimal effects on EFH. As a result, HCD SERO did not provide any conservation recommendations and none of the projects below require further EFH evaluation. Should any project be modified in a way that could adversely impact EFH, this determination will be reevaluated as appropriate.

Oyster Projects

- Improving Resilience for Oysters by Linking Brood Reefs and Sink Reefs – Texas
- Improving Resilience for Oysters by Linking Brood Reefs and Sink Reefs - Louisiana
- Improving Resilience for Oysters by Linking Brood Reefs and Sink Reefs - Mississippi
- Improving Resilience for Oysters by Linking Brood Reefs and Sink Reefs - Alabama
- Improving Resilience for Oysters by Linking Brood Reefs and Sink Reefs – Florida

Bird Projects

- Conservation and Enhancement of Nesting and Foraging Habitat for Birds: Texas Matagorda Bay/Chester Island
- Conservation and Enhancement of Nesting and Foraging Habitat for Birds: Texas San Antonio Bay Island



In addition, the following projects were determined to have no effect on EFH, due to no EFH resources in the proposed project area, no construction or in-water work proposed or the project only includes planning and design activities:

Marine Mammal Projects

- Reducing Injury and Mortality of Bottlenose Dolphins from Hook and Line Fishing Gear by Utilizing Fishery Surveys, Social Science, and Collaborative Problem Solving
- Enhance Capacity, Capability, and Consistency of Marine Mammal Stranding Networks (MMSNs) in the GOM
- Voluntary Modifications to Commercial Shrimp Lazy Lines to Reduce Dolphin Entanglements

Bird Projects

- Conservation and Enhancement of Nesting and Foraging Habitat for Birds: Mississippi Round Island
- Conservation and Enhancement of Nesting and Foraging Habitat for Birds: Alabama Land Acquisition Pilot Town and Little Bon Secour parcel
- Bird Nesting and Foraging Area Stewardship
- Conservation and Enhancement of Nesting and Foraging Habitat for Birds: Louisiana Chandeleurs Engineering and Design

Sea Turtle Projects

- Restore and Enhance Sea Turtle Nest Productivity on GOM Beaches
- Pilot Implementation of Automatic Identification System (AIS) in the GOM Inshore Shrimp Fishery to Better Understand Fishing Effort to Inform Efforts to Reduce Sea Turtle Bycatch
- Reducing Sea Turtle Bycatch at Recreational Fishing Sites
- Enhancements to the STSSN – Activity 1: Enhancing Response, Coordination, and Preparedness in the GOM
- Enhancements to the STSSN –Activity 2: Texas Rehabilitation Facility

Sea Turtle/Bird Projects

- Reducing Marine Debris Impacts on Birds and Sea Turtles Gulfwide