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## **NFWF Announces \$26.5 Million Award to Restore 17 miles of Shoreline at McFaddin National Wildlife Refuge**

*Award will help construct critical beach and dune landscape to protect Texas's largest expanse of coastal wetlands, as well as coastal communities and infrastructure in Jefferson County*

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (April 23, 2018)** – The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) today announced a \$26.5 million award to the Texas General Land Office to restore approximately 17 miles of the beach dune ridge system along McFaddin National Wildlife Refuge (NWR), from High Island, Texas to Sea Rim State Park.

The award will leverage more than \$25 million from Natural Resource Damages and RESTORE Act funds for a total conservation investment of more than \$50 million. This project could not have come together without strong support from partner organizations in Texas, including U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department as well as Jefferson County Judge Jeff Branick. Construction is expected to commence later this year.

When combined with an earlier pilot phase, completion of this restoration project will bring the total restored habitat to 20 miles, including the addition of approximately 150 feet of sand beach seaward of the dunes. In conjunction with an interior clay berm installed by partners in 2016, the overall restoration effort has a design life of at least 50 years, protecting the Salt Bayou Watershed, an ecosystem that contains the largest contiguous estuarine marsh complex in Texas.

The grant was awarded through the Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund, which NFWF created in accordance with the terms of criminal settlement agreements between DOJ and BP and Transocean. The agreements directed a total of \$2.544 billion to NFWF to fund projects benefiting the natural resources of the Gulf Coast that were impacted by the spill. Of these funds, more than \$200 million are allocated for natural resource projects in Texas.

“This important investment will bolster a fragile stretch of shoreline that is critical to the coastal ecosystem and communities of southeast Texas,” said Jeff Trandahl, executive director and CEO of NFWF. “The restored shoreline will also serve as a first line of defense against future storms.”

Funding from NFWF will be combined with awards anticipated by the Natural Resource Damage Assessment and the RESTORE Act. The NRDA Texas Trustee Implementation Group included funds for this project in its Final 2017 Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessment: Restoration of Wetlands, Coastal, and Nearshore Habitats; and Oysters was published on October 18, 2017. The Texas Council on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) included funds for this

project in Restore Act Direct Component Texas Multiyear Implementation Plan which was accepted by the U.S. Department of Treasury in December 2017.

To learn more about the Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund, visit [www.nfwf.org/gulf](http://www.nfwf.org/gulf).

**About the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation**

*The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) protects and restores our nation's wildlife and habitats. Chartered by Congress in 1984, NFWF directs public conservation dollars to the most pressing environmental needs and matches those investments with private contributions. NFWF works with government, nonprofit and corporate partners to find solutions for the most intractable conservation challenges. Over the last three decades, NFWF has funded more than 4,500 organizations and committed more than \$4.8 billion to conservation projects. Learn more at [www.nfwf.org](http://www.nfwf.org)*

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