



Deepwater Horizon Project Updates 2023

Highly Migratory Species Advisory Panel
Deepwater Horizon Restoration Program
May 9, 2023



Purpose and Overview

Purpose

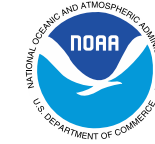
- Provide a brief overview of Fish and Water Column Invertebrate restoration activities, to answer any quick questions and provide information for follow up as needed.

Overview of Activities

- Hotspots Mapping Initiative
- Bluefin Tuna Restoration Project
- Characterization of Caribbean Fisheries Interactions with HMS
- Proposed *Deepwater Horizon* restoration project: *Seabird Bycatch Reduction in Northeast U.S. and Atlantic Canada Fisheries*

The Hotspots Mapping Initiative

A Voluntary Opportunity to Help Improve Fishing Efficiency



NFWF

Project Overview:

This five-year **voluntary and non-regulatory project** is evaluating the feasibility of fisheries hotspot communication networks to improve fishing in and around the Gulf of Mexico.

Using technology, fishermen and anglers can share information and maps, **through a trusted partner**, about high bycatch or predation areas they are seeing while on the water.

If the project team can identify groups that would be interested in this approach, **additional implementation funding** could be proposed after this first phase.



Interested? Please fill out NFWF's brief and confidential online form. (See QR code on postcard)

This project is managed by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

The Hotspots Mapping Initiative

A Voluntary Opportunity to Help Improve Fishing Efficiency



NFWF

Mapping Hotspots Should:

- Improve commercial and recreational fishing experiences.
- Keep unwanted catch in the water so they can grow and reproduce for future fishing opportunities.
- Help avoid predators that damage fishing gear and eat target catches.

Next Steps:

- Continue soliciting volunteers to fill out NFWF's brief and confidential interest form.
- Interview, and hold group discussions with more charter boat captains, members of HMS, reef and shrimp fisheries, private anglers, and other stakeholders.
- Inventory existing data sets and technologies, identify gaps in available data and technologies on boats, and develop sample products that could support the project.



Interested? Please fill out NFWF's brief and confidential online form. (See QR code on postcard)

This project is managed by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)



BLUEFIN TUNA RESTORATION PROJECT

- Project Goal: Reduce bluefin tuna bycatch and bycatch mortality rates in the Gulf of Mexico by presenting a new fishing approach to U.S. and Mexican pelagic longline fleets.
- Project Specifics: Recruit pelagic longline fishermen to complete alternating (typical and deep) sets to target tuna species and deploy 40 PSAT tags on yellowfin and bluefin tuna.
- Expected Outcomes: Setting gear deeper is expected to reduce bluefin tuna interactions, enabling them to grow and reproduce, and ultimately helping to restore this resource. Additionally, we anticipate pelagic longline fishermen will voluntarily adopt this new fishing approach.



Characterization of Caribbean Fisheries Interactions with Highly Migratory Species

Objectives

- Collect and evaluate existing fisheries data to identify restoration opportunities and support restoration planning in the Caribbean.
- The overarching objective has 3 steps 1) compile data into a data system, 2) evaluate the breadth and limitations of the data, and 3) identify the greatest threats (fisheries, geography) in the Caribbean and potential areas of restoration.

Implementation

- The project duration is scheduled over 3 calendar years (January 2023 – June 2025) with a total budget of \$382,000.
- Project team is developing an implementation approach that will work with international partner organizations.



Contacts

- Hotspot Mapping Initiative – Gray Redding
 - gray.redding@nfwf.org

- Bluefin Tuna Restoration Project - Abby Vaughn
 - abby.vaughn@msstate.edu

- Characterization of Caribbean Fisheries Interactions with Highly Migratory Species
 - james.reinhardt@noaa.gov

- *Seabird Bycatch Reduction in Northeast U.S. and Atlantic Canada Fisheries* – Caleb Spiegel
 - caleb_spiegel@fws.gov