

Protecting and Restoring Natural Resources in Louisiana

Issues

- Louisiana contains 30% of the total coastal marshes, and accounts for 90% of the coastal marsh loss, in the lower 48 states.
- The network of pipelines and energy facilities in the coastal zone produces or transports nearly 1/3 of the nation's oil and gas supply and is tied to 50% of the nation's refining capacity.
- Louisiana contains the largest area of coastal wetlands in North America. Approximately 2.95 million acres of marsh and swamp in Louisiana support nearly one-third of the shrimp and oysters harvested within the United States (excluding AK and HI).
- 18% of the nation's oil production and 24% of its gas production comes from Louisiana. Within a 10 year period, the state had one-fifth of the total oil spills in the nation.
- The cumulative impact of oil spills and hazardous chemical releases on fish, wildlife, and the environment can harm the industries and communities that depend on them.

What we do

NOAA's Damage Assessment, Remediation, and Restoration Program (DARRP) acts as a trustee on behalf of the public to protect and restore coastal marine resources. DARRP collaborates with federal, state, and tribal entities and also works with cleanup agencies (such as EPA), local organizations, the public, and those responsible for the incident to:

- respond to discharges of oil and other hazardous substances;
- address vessel groundings where releases of oil are possible;



Greenhill, Terrebonne Parish - see case highlights.

- assess risks and injuries to natural resources; and
- restore injured natural resources and related human use services.

How we do it

DARRP acts as a trustee for natural resources to:

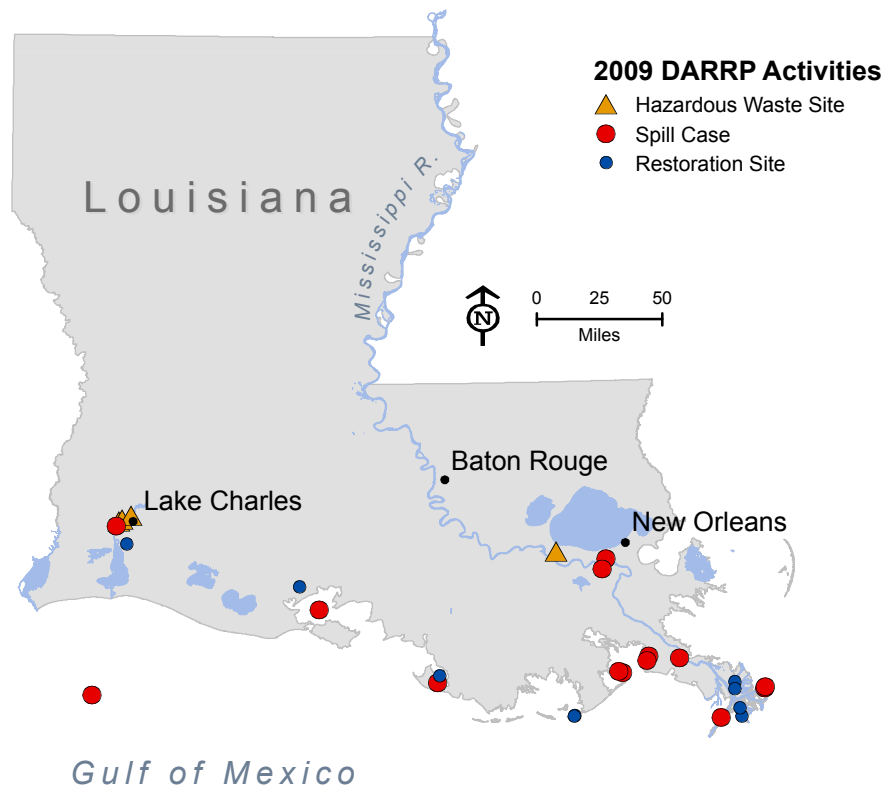
- work cooperatively with those responsible for the incident;
- develop innovative approaches and techniques for remediation and restoration;
- work with the public to select restoration options to compensate for injuries to natural resources; and
- design and implement or oversee natural resource restoration projects and monitor their success.

DARRP Accomplishments

- Restoration and/or protection of 579 acres of marine habitats and 5 acres of freshwater and terrestrial habitats in Louisiana (completed and planned activities).
- Development of the innovative statewide comprehensive Regional Restoration Planning Program (RRP) for natural resource trustee response to address oil discharges and published two Louisiana RRP Program documents.
- Settlements resulting in 9 protection and restoration projects in Louisiana.
- Cleanup actions promoting recovery of coastal resources and communities at 6 hazardous waste sites. Working with regional academic and agency partners to improve injury assessment and restoration technologies.



Greenhill, Terrebonne Parish - see case highlights.



Historic and ongoing case highlights

- Greenhill, Terrebonne Parish – Created 21.7 acres of tidal marsh on East Timbalier Island, a coastal barrier island (page 1 photos - top, spill photo; bottom, restoration photo).
- Lake Barre, Terrebonne Parish – Planted 18.6 acres of East Timbalier Island with native vegetation.
- Westchester, Plaquemines Parish – Constructed a crevasse in the Mississippi River Delta capable of creating more than 25 acres of wetlands; increased recreational access by constructing a boat dock, upgrading an existing boat ramp, and improving public camping grounds.
- Upper Calcasieu Estuary, Lake Charles – Two hazardous waste sites are being addressed, Bayou d’Inde and Bayou Verdine. Provided valuable technical assistance to EPA to develop and implement a complex field sampling plan for large areas of contaminated sediment in bayous, and to develop cost-effective on-site remediation measures to address risks and accelerate recovery of estuarine resources.
- North Pass, Plaquemines Parish – Constructing a crevasse in the Mississippi River Delta capable of creating more than 25 acres of wetlands.
- Equinox, Plaquemines Parish – Working cooperatively with co-trustees to design and construct wetland habitat using \$904,000 in settlement funds.
- Bayou Trepagnier – Working cooperatively with co-trustees and the Potential Responsible Party during remediation, injury assessment, and restoration planning activities. A “clean corridor” in Bayou Trepagnier will be created to remediate this hazardous waste site. The extent and severity of contamination caused by the discharged contaminants and their effect on natural resources and services will determine the amount and type of restoration needed to address any associated injuries.
- Barataria Bay – Working to settle three cases together (Lake Washington, Mendicant Island, West Bay Champagne) to increase size and overall benefits of compensatory wetland restoration project.
- Citgo, Calcasieu Estuary – Working cooperatively with the federal and state natural resource co-trustees and the Responsible Party during assessment activities. The extent and severity of contamination caused by the oil spill and its effect on natural resources and services will determine the amount and type of restoration needed to address any associated injuries.
- Mississippi River (2008 spill) – Working cooperatively with the federal and state natural resource co-trustees and the responsible party during assessment activities. The extent and severity of contamination caused by the oil spill and its effect on natural resources and services will determine the amount and type of restoration needed to address any associated injuries.

For further information about DARRP, please visit
<http://www.darrp.noaa.gov>

