

Protecting and Restoring Natural Resources in Texas

Issues

- Texas has 3,359 miles of coast, millions of acres of coastal wetlands, and active shrimp, crab, and oyster fisheries.
- Coastal hazardous waste sites and oil spills threaten natural resources.
- The port of Houston/Galveston is one of the largest petrochemical ports in the world. The Houston Ship Channel is a high risk area with thousands of vessel transits along a narrow corridor. Crude and refined oils are transported locally, regionally, and internationally through a network of tankers, barges, and pipelines. The area is also home to a large land-based and offshore oil and gas industry.

What we do

NOAA's Damage Assessment, Remediation, and Restoration Program (DARRP) acts as a trustee for natural resources on behalf of the public. 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:

- protect coastal and marine natural resources;
- respond to discharges of oil and hazardous substances;
- assess risks and injuries to natural resources; and
- restore injured natural resources and related socioeconomic benefits.

How we do it

DARRP acts as a trustee for natural resources to:

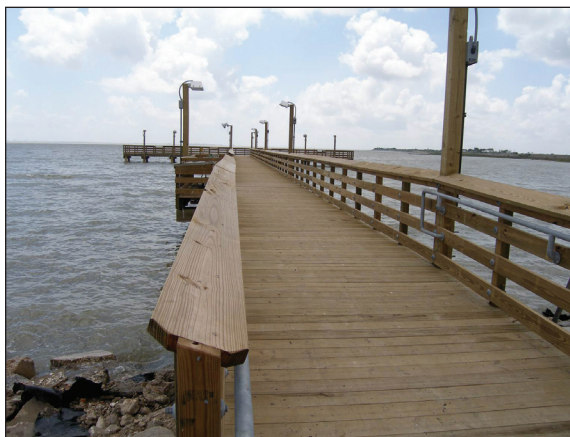
- work cooperatively with those responsible for the incident;
- develop innovative approaches and techniques for remediation and restoration;
- work with the public to select restoration options to compensate for injuries to natural resources; and
- design and implement or oversee natural resource restoration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



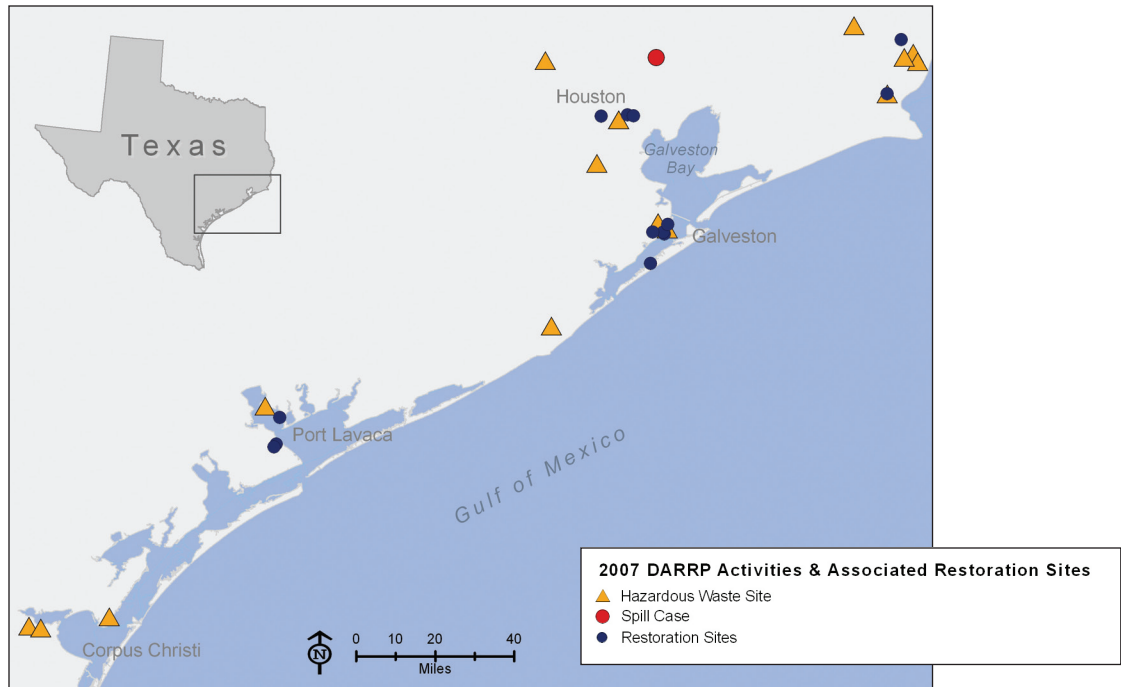
Lavaca Bay/Point Comfort Site, Calhoun County - see case highlights.

DARRP Accomplishments

- Restoration and/or protection of 2,498 acres of marine habitats and 834 acres of freshwater and terrestrial habitats in Texas (completed and planned activities).
- Settlements have resulted in 23 protection and restoration projects in Texas.
- Cleanup actions promote recovery of coastal resources and communities at 15 hazardous waste sites.



Lavaca Bay/Point Comfort Site, Calhoun County - see case highlights.



Historic and ongoing case highlights

- Brio Dixie Site, Harris County – Secured 140 acres of upland habitat under a perpetual conservation easement; created 6 acres of wetland habitat.
- Bailey Waste Site, Harris County – Created 70 acres of salt marsh; nearly 30 acres of mudflat and shallows created through beneficial use of dredge material.
- Lavaca Bay/Point Comfort Site, Calhoun County – Preserved 729 acres of coastal prairie habitat; created 70 acres of salt marsh (*top photo on page 1*) and 11 acres of oyster reef habitat; constructed three 300-foot lighted piers (*bottom photo on page 1*) and two new docks, refurbished a boat ramp, and other improvements designed to benefit recreational fishing in the bay.
- Chevron Texaco Refinery/ Port Arthur Old Gulf Refinery, Jefferson County – Constructed 83 acres of estuarine marsh and 30 acres of coastal prairie; enhanced 600 acres of wetland habitat through construction of water control structures.
- Greens Bayou, Harris County - Constructing nearly 11 acres of intertidal wetlands and preserving 100 acres of forested wetland habitat.

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

