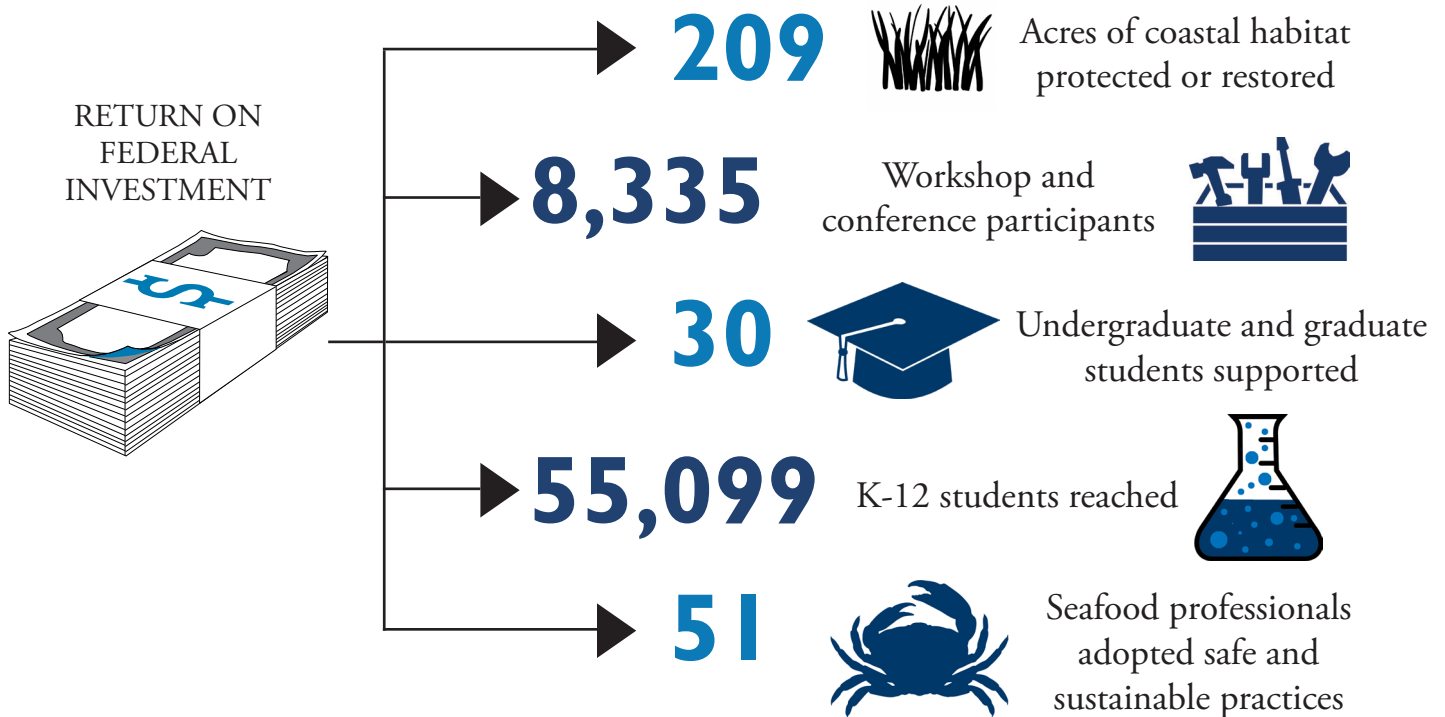


# MISSISSIPPI-ALABAMA

## SEA GRANT CONSORTIUM

**\$457,000**  
economic impact in 2015

*Metrics reported to National Office in June 2016  
for work completed Feb 2015 to Jan 2016.*



### Volunteers help restore oyster reef habitat valued at \$41,465

**“When we replant a reef we’re not only providing a benefit to the habitat, but we are providing a benefit to the water quality as well.”**

- P.J. Waters

Extension Specialist-Alabama  
Cooperative Extension

Mississippi-Alabama (MSAL) Sea Grant coordinates the Mobile Bay Oyster Gardening Program in Alabama, a volunteer-based project that focuses on education, restoration/enhancement and research by bringing the reef to the people. A restored oyster reef provides critical habitat for popular recreational fish species, as well as tremendous filtration potential to improve water quality. The oyster gardening program restoration efforts within Mobile Bay has produced nearly 750,000 oysters. In 2015, volunteers restored up to 2.15 acres of oyster reef habitat with an economic value of \$41,465.

[oystergardening.org](http://oystergardening.org)



“Two fishermen were involved in a collision at night, and one of the boats sank...They knew it was going to sink, but because we had trained them, they knew not to just jump in the life raft. They also knew to grab their ditch bag, which is prepacked with emergency items, such as medicines, first-aid materials and the **Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon.**”

- Dave Burrage  
former MSAL Sea Grant Extension leader

Fishermen learn safety formations that could keep them together in open water.

Credit: MSAL Sea Grant

## Boat safety training helps save two fishermen

Commercial fishing continues to be the most dangerous occupation in the United States. In 2014, 38 commercial fishing fatalities were reported in the U.S., with 10 of those fatalities (26%) in the Gulf of Mexico. MSAL Sea Grant organized and implemented U.S. Coast Guard certified safety training courses for professional fishermen.

To date, a total of 90 fishermen in Mississippi and Alabama have become Coast Guard Certified Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety Drill conductors as a result of the training offered by MSAL Sea Grant. In August 2014, two trained fishermen, one of which was trained by MSAL Sea Grant outreach personnel, survived a vessel collision and successfully abandoned into their life raft with emergency materials in hand.

[extension.msstate.edu/news/feature-story/2015/msu-boat-safety-training-helps-save-two-fishermen](http://extension.msstate.edu/news/feature-story/2015/msu-boat-safety-training-helps-save-two-fishermen)

## Sea Grant helps community adapt to increased flood risk

Localized flooding in Mississippi and Alabama coastal communities is becoming more frequent. Local hazard mitigation plans generally do not take into consideration the increased flooding risks due to sea level rise, and sufficient data is not available at a scale where decisions can be made to protect critical infrastructure and facilities.

MSAL Sea Grant supported the City of Ocean Springs to produce maps depicting the vulnerability of roads, beaches and other infrastructure to expected flooding from sea level rise. This study also recommended mitigation actions, such as adapting infrastructure to coastal drainage, erosion prevention and transportation infrastructure. The city then conducted a public outreach campaign to determine what types of mitigation measures residents would support to address these vulnerabilities. [masgc.org/focus-areas/article/resilient-communities-and-economies](http://masgc.org/focus-areas/article/resilient-communities-and-economies)



THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA®



### Contact information

LaDon Swann, PhD. Director, Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium, swanndl@auburn.edu, Office: (228) 818-8843