



**NOAA
FISHERIES**

Habitat Conservation and Fisheries

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July 14, 2014

Habitat Mission

Protect and restore coastal and marine habitat to support **sustainable fisheries** and contribute to the recovery and conservation of **protected resources**.



Supporting Core Mandates

Habitat Conservation Outcome	Key Mandates
Rebuilding sustainable populations of managed fisheries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Magnuson-Stevens Act • Federal Power Act, Energy Policy Act • Fish & Wildlife Coordination Act • Estuary Restoration Act • CWPPRA • NOAA Authorization Act • Hydrographic Services Improvement Act • Coral Reef Conservation Act • Endangered Species Act
Recovering threatened and endangered species	
Recovering lost or injured resources affected by oil spills, toxic releases, and ship groundings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oil Pollution Act • CERCLA/Superfund • RESTORE Act

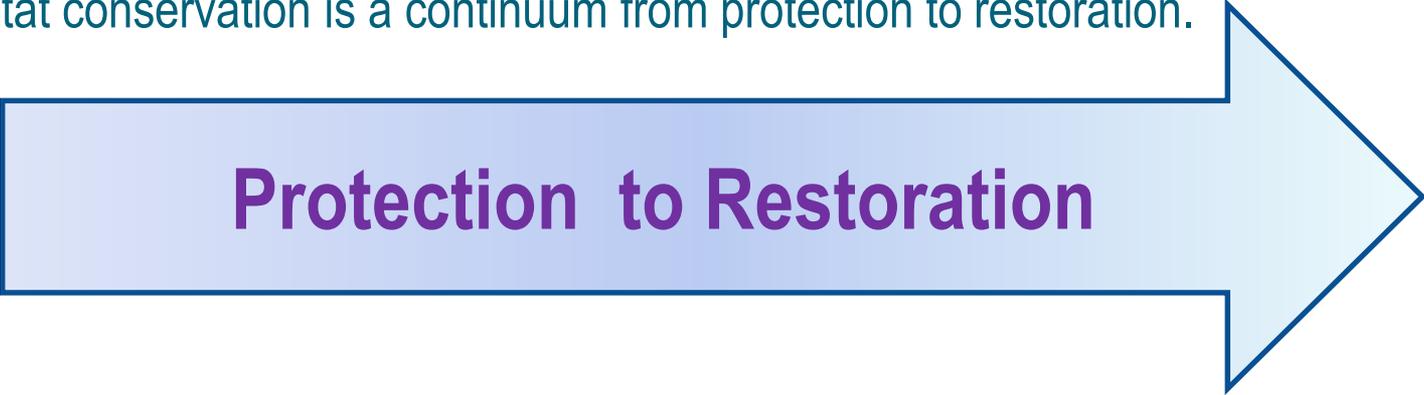
CWPPRA: Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act

CERCLA: Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensations, and Liability Act

RESTORE: Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunity, and Revived Economies of the Gulf States

Our Approach to Habitat Conservation

Habitat conservation is a continuum from protection to restoration.



Protection to Restoration

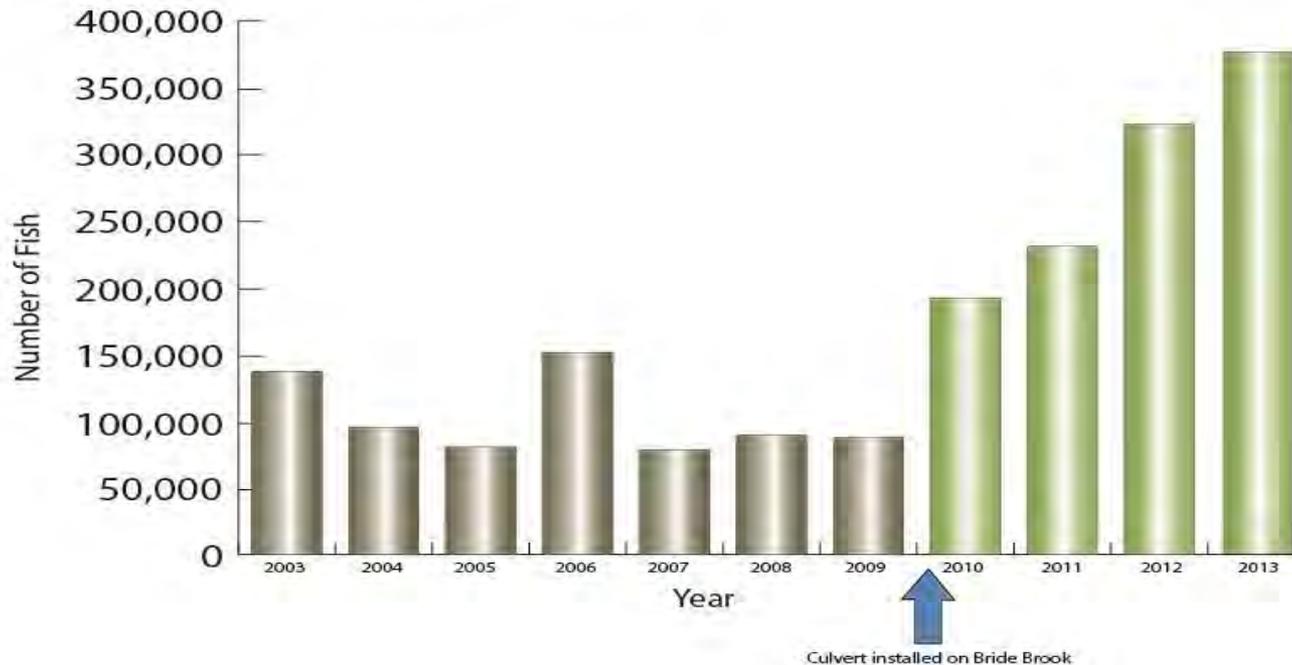
- We protect healthy habitat prioritizing our work to address the biggest threats
- We restore degraded or injured habitat maximizing our benefits to NOAA trust resources through targeted and response restoration

Fisheries Rely on Healthy Habitats

More habitat = More fish

Bride Brook, CT restoration: **164,000** to **363,000** fish in 4 years

Data collected by Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection



So, What's Changed

❖ **The Scale and Scope of our Thinking: NOAA Habitat Principles**

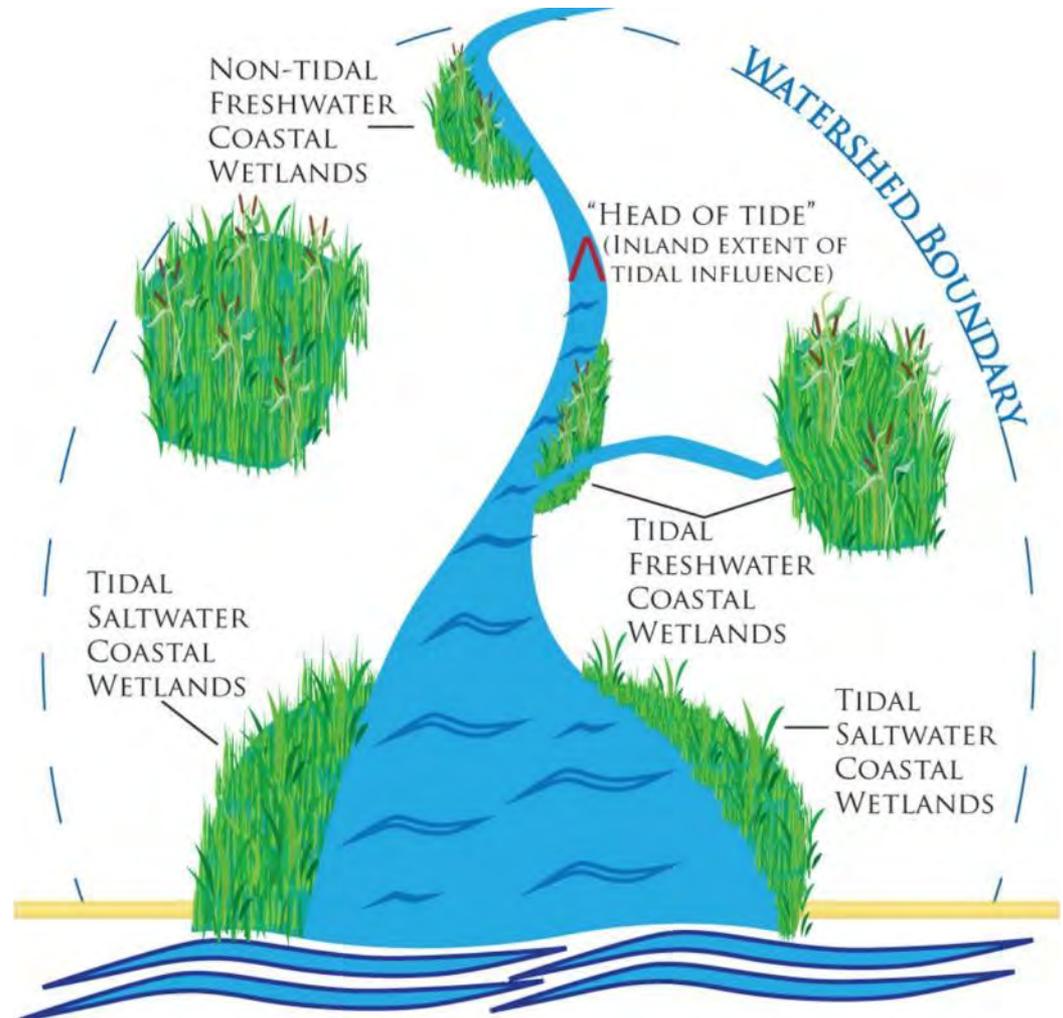
- Prioritize resources and activities across NOAA to improve habitat conditions for our trust resources and coastal economies.
- Implement innovative place-based habitat solutions to address coastal and marine resource challenges.
- Make natural resource management decisions and recommendations in an ecosystem context that considers competing priorities.
- Foster and leverage internal and external partnerships to improve our execution of a broad range of authorities, tools, and capabilities that will increase habitat conservation.
- Integrate and improve the delivery of habitat science across disciplines to facilitate conservation actions.

❖ **FY15 Senate report:**

- Encourages NOAA to take a broader ecosystem-based management philosophy to include recreational species, commercial species, forage species, & communities
 - Example: \$10M increase for coastal ecosystem resiliency grants (NMFS)

Coastal Wetlands Include...

- Salt marshes
- Brackish marshes
- Fresh tidal marshes
- Fresh tidal shrub
- Tidal riverine
- Non-tidal freshwater wetlands

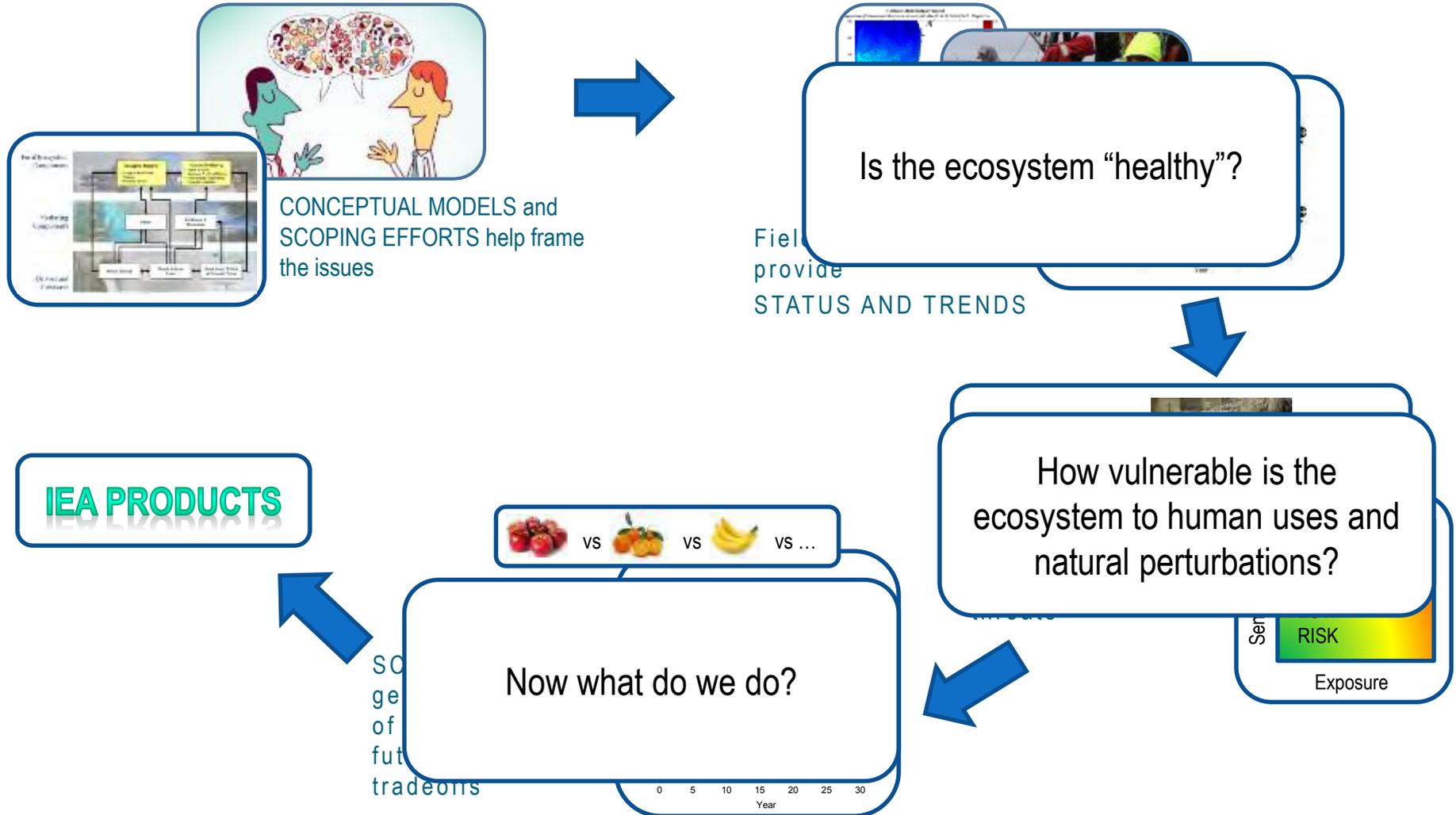


Next Generation Habitat Conservation

- Use the NOAA Habitat Blueprint to focus on place-based activities
- Developing a watershed approach to improve habitat protection and restoration
- Increase interagency coordination for landscape scale conservation
 - National Fish Habitat Partnership
 - Wetlands Report
 - Interagency partners (e.g., LCCs, AGO)
- Continue recent successes showing benefits to fisheries and protected species (forage fish, inshore/offshore connectivity, ecosystem modeling)
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5POPdvbKtQA>



Linking habitat to fishery productivity



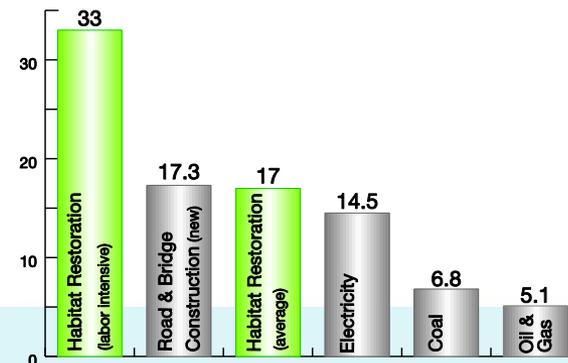
Understanding the “value” of habitat

Demonstrating the value of habitat conservation for ecosystem services and economic benefits

- Documenting social and economic benefits of habitat conservation
- Implementing projects to show the value of habitat conservation for an array of ecosystem services
- Partnering with NGOs on project-specific topics
 - Oyster restoration and value
 - Blue carbon sequestration

- 17 jobs created, on average, for every \$1 million invested based on NOAA restoration projects implemented through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.
- \$9-\$20 million in reduced maintenance costs and flood protection for Skagit County, Washington from \$7.7 million investment in habitat restoration at Fisher Slough.
- We are documenting the effects that large-scale oyster restoration in the Choptank River watershed has on the value of commercial and recreational fishing, water quality, shoreline protection, and property values.

Average number of jobs per
\$1 million investment by sector



Promoting an Ecosystem Approach to Gulf of Mexico Restoration



- Executing millions of dollars worth of large-scale restoration through the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act Program
- Leading the NRDA restoration planning for the Deepwater Horizon case
- Supporting a coordinated approach to NRDA, Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund, and RESTORE Act implementation

- Restoration of a critical 18-mile stretch of the Barataria basin shoreline, the first line of defense from coastal storms for the New Orleans metropolitan area, helped establish NMFS' reputation as a leader in barrier island restoration.
- Since 2009, CWPPRA has overseen \$146 million in funds for marsh and barrier island restoration in coastal Louisiana.
- OHC is leading four projects in the NRDA Early Restoration Phase III Plan. NOAA will partner with Louisiana and the Department of the Interior to restore beach, dune, and back-barrier marsh habitat on Chenier. We will partner with Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi on three living shorelines projects totaling \$66 million.
- OHC advises NFWF on implementation of the Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund. 22 projects totaling more than \$100 million have been selected including living shorelines, oyster restoration, stream restoration, land acquisition, fisheries monitoring, and river diversions modeling projects.

Overarching Messages

- Our work supports Fisheries priorities for rebuilding fisheries and recovering protected species
- Through the Blueprint strategy, we are seeing measurable results through implementation of place-based habitat conservation
- Healthy habitat is good business
 - Blue carbon
 - Restoration
- Our work benefits communities (flood control and reduced impact from storms), and businesses (crop protection, commercial and recreational fishing)
- Our work supports the U.S. economy (restoration and fisheries jobs)