

American Sportfishing Association

# Press Release



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**For Immediate Release**

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**FishAmerica Foundation's Gulf Fund Supports Gulf Coast Restoration Efforts**  
*Funds will help restore fisheries habitat impacted by the April oil spill*

**Alexandria, VA - May 10, 2010** – Established in 2005 to provide funding for restoring fisheries habitat and recreational fishing facilities devastated by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, the FishAmerica Foundation is expanding its Gulf Fund grant program to include fisheries and their habitats that are expected to be impacted by the April 22, oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico.

Despite efforts to cap the leak, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, approximately 210,000 gallons of oil per day, over 4 million gallons since April 22, are being released into the Gulf with potentially disastrous effects on the region's fish and wildlife.

"Although no one is certain of the long-term impacts of the oil spill, the FishAmerica Foundation is prepared to step up and assist local groups with funding to restore sportfisheries and their habitat once the restoration efforts begin," said FishAmerica Foundation Executive Director Johanna Laderman. "The foundation has a 27 year track record of successfully helping community-based organizations who want to get involved in restoration projects. Please go to [www.fishamerica.org](http://www.fishamerica.org) to get more information or to make a contribution to the Gulf Fund."

The foundation will work with state and federal natural resource agencies and community conservation groups to identify and prioritize projects such as wetland creation and restoration, aquatic vegetation planting, rebuilding angler access and reestablishing fish passage in the Gulf Region.

Since 1983, the foundation has invested in numerous sportfish restoration projects and worked hand-in-hand with state and local agencies and conservation groups to successfully enhance sportfishing along the Gulf Coast and across the nation.

The foundation's Gulf of Mexico projects include:

- The East Bay Shoreline Protection and Marsh Restoration Project - enhanced four acres of coastal fisheries habitat in the Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge.
- The Mississippi Oyster Reef Project - created two new oyster reefs to improve fish habitat and water quality in Back Bay Biloxi and St. Louis Bay.
- The Red Mangrove Shorelines Project – restored habitat and shoreline along the Charlotte Harbor estuary in Southwest Florida.

According to a [2008 NOAA Fisheries report](#), the Gulf of Mexico is one of the most popular areas for recreational fishing in the United States with nearly six million saltwater anglers,

taking over 45 million fishing trips each year, fishing for red drum, spotted seatrout, sheepshead and red snapper among others. Recreational fishing serves as the economic backbone for many coastal communities surrounding the Gulf of Mexico. The oil spill has the potential to impact the nearly 2,300 tackle shops in Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi and Florida's West Coast. The six million anglers combines resident and non-resident saltwater anglers in Alabama, Florida's West Coast, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas who fish in the Gulf of Mexico.

For additional information and to support the FishAmerica Gulf Fund, please visit [www.fishamerica.org](http://www.fishamerica.org) or contact Johanna Laderman, executive director, FishAmerica Foundation, [jladerman@asafishing.org](mailto:jladerman@asafishing.org), or 703-519-9691, x245.

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*The FishAmerica Foundation, the conservation and research foundation of the American Sportfishing Association, is dedicated to keeping our fish and waters healthy. FishAmerica unites the sportfishing industry with conservation groups, government agencies, fishing tournaments, corporations and charitable foundations, investing in fisheries conservation and research across the country. FishAmerica's matching grants empower citizen conservationists in their own communities. Since 1983, FishAmerica has invested more than \$11 million in 1,000 fisheries conservation and research projects nationwide.*