

From Liabilities to Assets: GORI Reimagines the Future of Offshore Platforms

Finalist in the \$50M Gulf Futures Challenge, GORI leads effort to repurpose retired oil platforms into hubs for energy, food, minerals, and marine conservation

MANDEVILLE, PA, UNITED STATES, September 9, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Gulf Offshore Research Institute (GORI) advanced to the finalist stage of the prestigious \$50 million Gulf Futures Challenge with a groundbreaking initiative to repurpose retired offshore oil and gas platforms into hubs for renewable energy, sustainable seafood production, critical mineral harvesting, data streaming, and marine habitat conservation.

The Gulf Futures Challenge, powered by The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine's Gulf Research Program and Lever for Change, invests in bold solutions to address the Gulf region's most critical challenges in energy transition, environmental change, and community resilience. As a finalist, GORI will compete for one of two \$20 million awards to scale its offshore demonstration projects.

GORI's proposal-Repurposing Petroleum Infrastructure for Sustainable Energy, Food, and Critical Minerals-turns existing offshore structures into engines for the blue economy. The initiative aims to preserve marine habitats, expand seafood production, develop renewable energy and mineral recovery, and strengthen coastal communities historically dependent on oil, gas, and fishing industries.

"We are transforming the backbone of oil and gas production into a cleaner, more sustainable, and more prosperous Gulf Coast," said Kent Satterlee, Executive Director of GORI. "By integrating renewable energy, aquaculture, mineral recovery, and ocean monitoring, we strengthen marine



habitats, support thriving ecosystems, boost coastal economies, and advance sustainable energy production."

"Offshore platforms already support ecosystems below water and clean energy potential above," said Dr. Greg Stunz, Senior Executive Director, Harte Research Institute. "Repurposing them offers a once-in-a-lifetime chance to leverage existing assets instead of replacing them at massive cost."

Our approach will guide strategies to transition Gulf infrastructure into long-term community and environmental assets.

"This recognition proves the Gulf has the talent, technology, and vision to lead the next chapter of offshore innovation," said Amber Sparks, Co-Founder of Blue Latitudes LLC and GORI partner.

The finalist project unites a powerhouse team of partners, including:

The Harte Research Institute (HRI) at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi - bringing expertise in fisheries, socioeconomics, and marine policy and law

Blue Latitudes, LLC - an internationally recognized, women-owned marine environmental consulting firm specializing in offshore work and Rigs to Reefs project planning

The University of Southern Mississippi - advancing open-ocean aquaculture, hydrographic science, and uncrewed ocean monitoring

University of Houston (ROICE Program) - specializing in offshore hydrogen production and energy transition feasibility studies

University of Michigan - pioneering sustainable critical mineral extraction from seawater

Gulf Trust - advocating for pragmatic solutions that unite industry, environment, and communities

The FerVid Group - assessing geothermal energy potential in offshore reservoirs

Blue Silo Aquaculture, LLC - a for-profit company specializing in platform-assisted open-ocean aquaculture

For more information about GORI's work, visit www.gulfoffshorereseearch.com

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