

# Coastal Preservation and Restoration Launches to Restore Texas Oyster Reefs and Strengthen Coastal Resilience

*New statewide effort will accelerate reef restoration, sustainable mariculture, and coastal protection for generations to come*

HOUSTON, TX, UNITED STATES, January 27, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Coastal Preservation and Restoration](#) (CPR) has launched a bold, science-driven campaign in partnership with state agencies, conservation groups, and industry stakeholders to halt further damage to Texas's public oyster reefs and restore degraded reef systems in support of bays, shorelines, and coastal economies. The initiative will expand the pace and scale of oyster reef restoration along the Texas coast over the coming decades, building on and accelerating the impactful work already underway. A key early priority for CPR is raising public awareness about the importance of oysters as a natural resource and the reality that Texas is at a tipping point, with reef destruction currently outpacing reef restoration.

## Crisis Point for Texas Reefs

Texas's bays and oyster reefs face a critical juncture. Decades of overharvesting, destructive dredging, and damaging storms have erased or degraded an estimated 50–92% of historic reef acreage, putting fisheries, marshlands, water quality, and the region's cultural heritage at risk. Oyster reefs are the cornerstone of the



Key Allegro Oyster Company Oyster Farm in Aransas Bay; Image Courtesy of Key Allegro Oyster Company



Redfish Swimming on Texas coast. PHOTOGRAPH 2025 MAC ELLIOTT, USED WITH PERMISSION MACELLIOTTMEDIA.COM

coastal ecosystem, buffering storms and wave energy, protecting and creating marsh, supporting more than 300 species, and filtering bay waters in ways artificial structures cannot. These benefits sustain coastal economies such as fisheries, as well as key sectors of Texas' economy, including multi-billion-dollar tourism and sport-fishing industries, birding and other nature-based recreation, and a rich Gulf Coast culinary tradition.

### CPR's Mission and Strategy

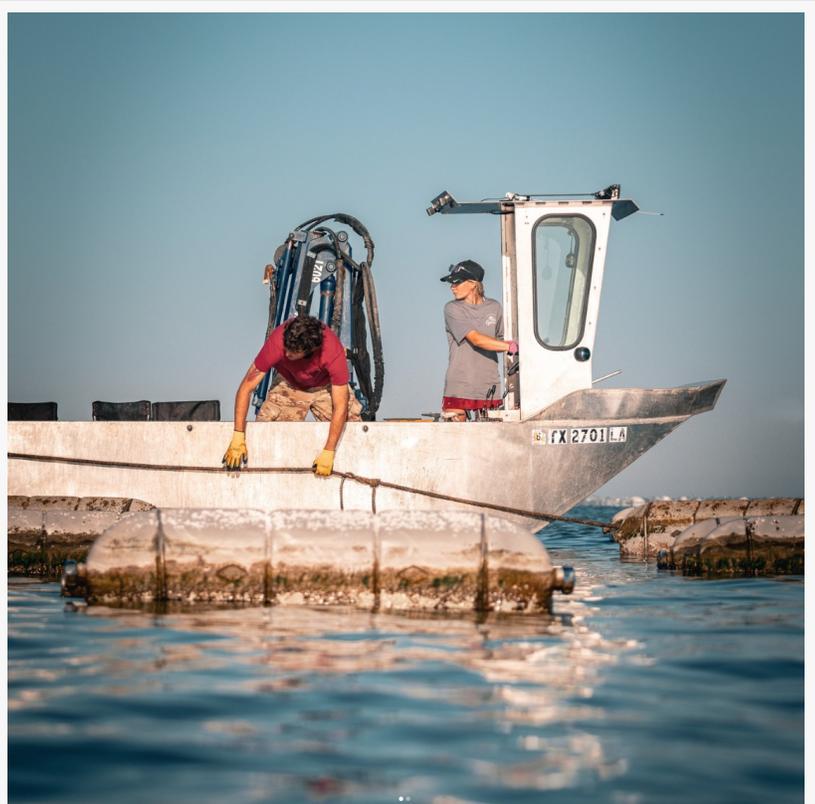
Founded in 2025 to address mounting pressures, CPR aims to increase and sustain oyster populations in Texas waters. The organization focuses on reducing destructive practices on public reefs, restoring degraded habitat at larger scale, and supporting the growth of a sustainable, cultivated oyster mariculture industry in Texas.

These efforts aim to ease pressure on wild stocks and secure a consistent, high-quality local supply by elevating awareness and mobilizing greater action around this critical issue.

"Texas's reefs are nature's first line of coastal defense and the backbone of our bays," said John Eads, founder and Chair of the Board, CPR. "By focusing on protection, restoration, and mariculture together, and by expanding oyster license buybacks and restoration-compatible leases, we can reduce destructive pressures, rebuild reef height and habitat, and deliver clean water, stronger shorelines, and year round jobs for coastal communities."

CPR is intentionally designed to build on, connect, and scale the successful oyster reef projects already led by conservation organizations, agencies, research partners, and local communities along the Texas coast. These efforts aim to expand and accelerate the protection and restoration of this critical natural resource.

CPR is collaborating with CCA Texas, Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program, FlatsWorthy, Galveston Bay Foundation, Gulf Trust, Harte Research Institute at Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi, Matagorda Bay Foundation, Palacios Marine Agriculture Research, Texas General Land Office, Texas Oyster Mariculture Association, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department (TPWD), Texas Parks & Wildlife Foundation (TPWF), as well as other conservation organizations and local, state, and federal government agencies working to protect and restore Texas coastlines. These groups



Key Allegro Oyster Company Harvesting Oyster Farm in Aransas Bay; Image Courtesy of Key Allegro Oyster Company

are driving progress—from expanding license buyback programs and advancing private stewardship through Certificates of Location to restoring degraded reefs, establishing no-harvest sanctuary areas, and supporting the development of a robust, sustainable oyster farming industry in Texas.

### Industry Momentum and Milestones

In spring 2025, Texas completed a landmark buyback of 21% (112) of public dredge licenses—the first successful round since 2017—under TPWF's S. Reed Morian Oyster License Buyback Program. Recent legislation enacted in June 2025 provides tax incentives for restaurants using farm-raised oysters and recycling shells, improves mariculture efficiency, broadens seed options for reef restoration, and increases penalties for repeat violations.

In 2014, the 50-acre reconstruction of Half Moon Reef served as a pivotal proof-of-concept for reef restoration, resulting in a 40% boost in local fish diversity and adding \$1.3 million to the regional GDP. Building on this success, recent successful restoration projects led by local conservation organizations and their state, local and federal partners have created a strong foundation for reef restoration throughout Texas's coastal bays. CPR is collaborating with these organizations to help scale and accelerate the recovery of protected reef areas.

"The strong early momentum we are seeing demonstrates a growing desire for protection of this critical resource in Texas," said Eads. "By expanding investment and building on the best practices in public-private partnerships, we can strengthen our coastal heritage, enhance fisheries and tourism, and support resilient communities for generations to come."

### Roadmap and Partnership

CPR's 25-year roadmap calls for approximately \$250 million in investment for reef protection, large-scale restoration, support for the TPWF and TPWD license buyback program, and increased awareness of the role that sustainable oyster farming in Texas can play in reducing pressure on public oyster reefs. This long-term strategy will be shaped by the priorities and needs of partners, the community, and state leadership. In selecting projects, CPR will work with partners to focus on initiatives that link habitats, restore or protect marshlands, boost biodiversity, and provide opportunities for education and research—always centering scalable, impactful, and cost-effective solutions.

Fewer than 1,000 of Texas' 43,000 acres of oyster reefs have been restored to date, underscoring the urgency for coordinated public private investment to protect shorelines, fisheries, and local economies. By aligning and amplifying the work of existing partners, CPR brings organizations together to accelerate restoration and deliver tangible ecological and economic benefits across the Texas coast.

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About CPR

Coastal Preservation and Restoration (CPR) is a Texas-based nonprofit dedicated to protecting public oyster reefs and restoring degraded reef systems statewide. CPR uses science-based planning, policy and project alignment, and criteria including impact, cost and relative ease of execution to guide its work. The organization collaborates with conservation, research, community, and industry partners across the Texas coast. Together, they work to rebuild reef function at scale, expand cultivated mariculture, and strengthen the resilience of bays, shorelines, and coastal economies, thereby preserving this pristine resource for generations to come. CPR is a component fund of Greater Houston Community Foundation, a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. To learn more about CPR, upcoming projects, and opportunities to get involved or support restoration, visit [www.cprtexas.org](http://www.cprtexas.org).

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