

Gulf of America Alliance announces six new projects to address regional priority issues

Funding will support development of tools and resources to improve community resilience, coastal management, and environmental education

OCEAN SPRINGS, MS, UNITED STATES, June 26, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Gulf of America Alliance is investing \$2.2 million in funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office for Coastal Management to increase regional collaboration and advance priorities identified by the five Gulf states. The funds are being used to increase capacity and implement projects that address priority issues for the region.



Pensacola Beach shoreline at sunset

Four Regional Ocean Partnerships, including the Gulf of America Alliance, received similar awards. Regional Ocean Partnerships focus on issues that are identified by the member states, provide a voice for a wide variety of stakeholders, and advance collaborative solutions. They also leverage public and private funding to accomplish objectives common to multiple stakeholders across the region, reducing duplication.

Regional Ocean Partnerships have operated for nearly two decades and were formally authorized by Congress in 2022. Since then, the Gulf of America Alliance has awarded 27 projects, totaling over \$8 million invested in the five Gulf states, through Regional Ocean Partnership funding.

“As the Regional Ocean Partnership for the Gulf, we provide unique capacity for intentional, efficient collaboration and coordination at the regional scale,” said Laura Bowie, Gulf of America Alliance Executive Director. “By working together, we can accomplish more than any single organization alone.”

Six new projects located across the Gulf states will focus on:

- * coastal community resilience
- * data accessibility and sharing
- * environmental education
- * habitat and water resources
- * wildlife and fisheries

Each project was selected to achieve goals identified in the Alliance's Governors' Action Plan IV for Healthy and Resilient Coasts (<https://gulfofamericaalliance.org/what-we-do/governors-action-plan/>), a five-year strategic plan developed by the Gulf states in collaboration with federal agencies, universities, non-profit organizations, and industry partners. Projects will continue through November 2027.

Information for each project is listed below:

Project Title: Increasing Community Resilience by Protecting Future Gulf Coast Wetlands

Location: Gulfwide

Lead Institution: The Nature Conservancy

Project Description: Map high-priority conservation areas and develop a best practices guide to protect and manage tidal wetlands and adjacent upland spaces using voluntary conservation programs, local planning, and other best practices

Project Title: Improving Data Comparability and Accessibility Across the Gulf Region

Location: Gulfwide

Lead Institution: Esri

Project Description: Work with leading geospatial experts to create a sourcebook of mapping standards for oyster and seagrass habitats and provide geospatial resources through a Gulf Living Atlas to improve data accessibility

Project Title: Online Professional Development for Education and Engagement Products

Location: Gulfwide

Lead Institution: Mississippi State University

Project Description: Develop online professional development courses and lesson plans aligned to state standards for the Alliance's "Waters to the Sea: Gulf Coast Adventure" and "Gulf Literacy Principles" educational products

Project Title: Assessing the Impact of Neighboring Shoreline Management

Location: Mississippi

Lead Institution: Mississippi State University

Project Description: Evaluate the physical effects of living shorelines versus bulkheads on neighboring shorelines and share the results with end-users including private property owners and natural resource managers

Project Title: Movement Ecology of Female Shortfin Mako Sharks in the Gulf

Location: Gulfwide

Lead Institution: Harte Research Institute

Project Description: Identify movement patterns and habitat use of female mako sharks using advanced satellite tagging technologies to improve understanding of stock structure, informing conservation and fisheries management

Project Title: Understanding Dynamics of Septic System Pollution Potential in the Gulf Region

Location: Gulfwide

Lead Institution: Auburn University

Project Description: Install long-term monitoring stations at on-site water treatment (septic) system sites to understand pollution drivers and connections between surface water, groundwater, and soil types; refine pollution potential models developed for coastal communities in the Gulf region

About the Gulf of America Alliance

The Gulf of America Alliance is a regional partnership focused on enhancing the environmental and economic health of the region through increased collaboration. Led by the five Gulf states, our network includes over 165 participating organizations from state and federal agencies, local governments, communities, academia, non-governmental organizations, and industry. Working with these partners, we address priority issues including coastal community resilience; data and monitoring; education; habitat; water resources; wildlife and fisheries; and marine debris.

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