



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

**NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE**

Southeast Regional Office

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To: Kristopher Benson  
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From: Rusty Swafford   
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Subject: Essential Fish Habitat Consultation: NOAA Restoration Center Draft Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan/Environmental Assessment for the Tank Barge DBL 152 Oil Spill

The NOAA Restoration Center (RC) has provided its Essential Fish Habitat Assessment (EFH) Assessment for the selected restoration plan proposed as compensation for impacts to natural resources that occurred as a result of the Tank Barge DBL 152 Oil Spill in the Gulf of Mexico. The EFH Assessment is provided within the Draft Damage Assessment and Restoration Plan/Environmental Assessment (DARP/EA) document dated March 2013. The proposed restoration action consists of shoreline erosion protection and salt marsh restoration on the northern shoreline of East Galveston Bay on the Texas Chenier Plain National Wildlife Refuge Complex. The restoration project will construct at least 4.23 miles riprap breakwater structure over a footprint of 8.97 acres located offshore from the eroding marsh shoreline. Saltmarsh vegetation will be planted behind the breakwater within an 11.55-acre wetland restoration area. It is estimated the breakwater will also protect an additional 8.5 acres of existing saltmarsh from erosion over its lifetime.

The RC's EFH consultation memorandum dated November 20, 2014, states the RC has determined that: (1) substantial beneficial restoration of EFH and other important habitat in the project area will result from project implementation; (2) adverse EFH effects of the project will be minor and temporary; and (3) any adverse EFH effects will be alleviated by project benefits, and have been minimized to the extent practicable through design and proposed construction methods. The NMFS HCD finds the potential impacts of the restoration project on EFH and marine fishery resources are adequately described in the DARP/EA document and concurs with the RC's determination that the preferred restoration action will not have a net adverse effect on EFH.

Thank you for coordinating the proposed restoration plan with us. No further EFH consultation is required for this action.

