rev. September 2010
Cost figures as of: March 2013

Coastwide Nutria Control Program (LA-03b)

Project Status

Approved Date: 2002 **Project Area:** Coastwide
Approved Funds: $33.7 M **Total Est. Cost:** $68.7 M
Net Benefit After 20 Years: N/A
Status: Implementation
Project Type: Herbivory Control
PPL #: 11

Location

This project is located throughout the coastal zone of Louisiana. The program area includes all basins and coastal parishes located south of Interstates 10 and 12.

Problems

Prior to implementation of the Coastwide Nutria Control Program in 2002, fur trapping activity had declined drastically for over 10 years because of weak market demand and low prices. In coastal Louisiana, this decline has resulted in overpopulation of nutria and serious damage to coastal wetlands from nutria herbivory. Annual aerial surveys from 1993 to 2001 have indicated that approximately 100,000 acres have been impacted coastwide.

Restoration Strategy

This project's objective is to significantly reduce the damage nutria herbivory causes to coastal wetlands.

The Coastwide Nutria Control Program is designed to remove about 400,000 nutria annually. The control program consists of an incentive payment program to encourage nutria harvesting. The program is implemented by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

Nutria harvest locations are recorded in an effort to compare harvest levels and occurrence of herbivory damage.

Mature nutria are very prolific, leading to a high population. Without significant annual harvest, nutria can cause significant damage to marshes and swamps in coastal Louisiana.

Progress to Date

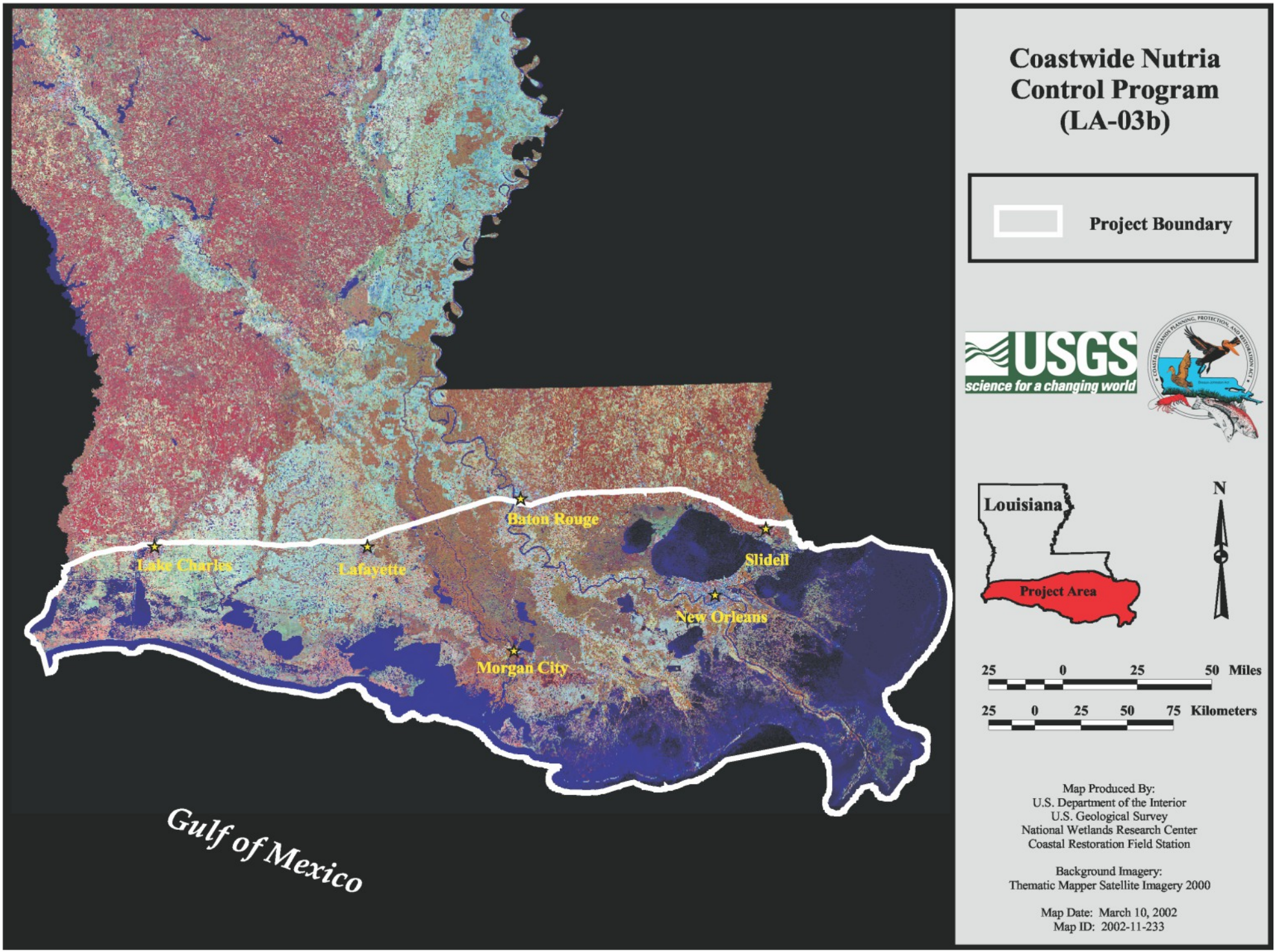
This project was selected for Phase 1 (engineering and design) funding at the January 2002 Louisiana Coastal Wetlands Conservation and Restoration Task Force meeting (Priority List 11). Phase 2 (implementation) was approved during the April 2002 Task Force meeting and began in November 2002 with the 2002-03 Louisiana trapping season. Over the first eight years of program implementation, nutria harvest has averaged 321,354 per year. Acres damaged by herbivory has decreased from about 100,000 acres to about 8,500 acres since the program began.

This project is on Priority Project List 11.

For more project information, please contact:

Federal Sponsor:
Natural Resources Conservation Service
Alexandria, LA
(318) 473-7816

Local Sponsor:
Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority
Baton Rouge, LA
(225) 342-4736


Coastwide Nutria Control Program (LA-03b)
Project Boundary
USGS
science for a changing world
Louisiana
Project Area
N
Baton Rouge
Lake Charles
Lafayette
Slidell
New Orleans
Morgan City
Gulf of Mexico
25 0 25 50 Miles
25 0 25 50 75 Kilometers
Map Produced By:
U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Geological Survey
National Wetlands Research Center
Coastal Restoration Field Station
Background Imagery:
Thematic Mapper Satellite Imagery 2000
Map Date: March 10, 2002
Map ID: 2002-11-233