January 2002
Cost figures as of: March 2013

Ship Shoal: Whiskey West Flank Restoration (TE-47)

Project Status

Approved Date: 2002 **Project Area:** 1,249 acres
Approved Funds: $3.74 M **Total Est. Cost:** $66.0 M
Net Benefit After 20 Years: 195 acres
Status: Engineering and Design
Project Type: Barrier Island Restoration
PPL #: 11

Location

The project is located on Whiskey Island, a barrier island in the Isles Dernieres chain in south Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana. The Whiskey West Flank project will extend Whiskey Island westward.

Problems

The Isles Dernieres barrier island chain, which is considered one of the most rapidly deteriorating barrier shorelines in the United States, is losing its structural functions for the coastal/estuarine ecosystem. Chief among these is the chain's storm buffering capacity and the protection it provides human populations, oil and gas infrastructure, inland bays, estuaries, and wetlands. Chain breakup has resulted from both major storm actions and, due to human alterations, the loss of nourishing sediment from the natural system. Whiskey Island changes from 1978 to 1988 include the average loss of 31.1 acres per year.

This project will restore approximately 387 acres of barrier island habitat into the island's western flank pictured above.

Progress to Date

This project was selected for Phase I (engineering and design) funding at the January 2002 Breaux Act Task Force meeting.

This project is on Priority Project List 11.

Restoration Strategy

The project's objectives include: 1) restoring the integrity of the west flank of Whiskey Island to retain its structural function; 2) adding new offshore sediment into the west flank; and 3) restoring roughly 387 acres of barrier island habitat into the island's western flank.

One approach to the problem includes mining and importing offshore Ship Shoal sediment into the Louisiana coastal ecosystem to increase the sediment supply and strengthen island formation. Other approaches involve rebuilding the natural structural framework within the coastal ecosystem to provide for separation of the gulf and the estuary, and creating a continuous protective barrier for back bays and inland marshes to reduce wave energies, thereby helping to reduce land loss and restore the longshore transport system. One final approach towards meeting these goals is to provide a unique and sustainable barrier island habitat for numerous biological species, several of which are endangered, in areas that are presently open water.

Ship Shoal sand would be mined by a cutterhead hydraulic dredge and/or hopper dredge. It would then be transported approximately 8 miles to Whiskey Island. Restored areas will include: 1) 52 acres of 7-foot high, 150-foot wide dunes; 2) 114 acres of above-tide habitat at an elevation of 4 feet; 3) 208 acres of intertidal habitat at an elevation of 2 feet; 4) 8 acres of subtidal habitat. All areas will be planted and have sand fencing placed in order to trap wind-blown sediment.

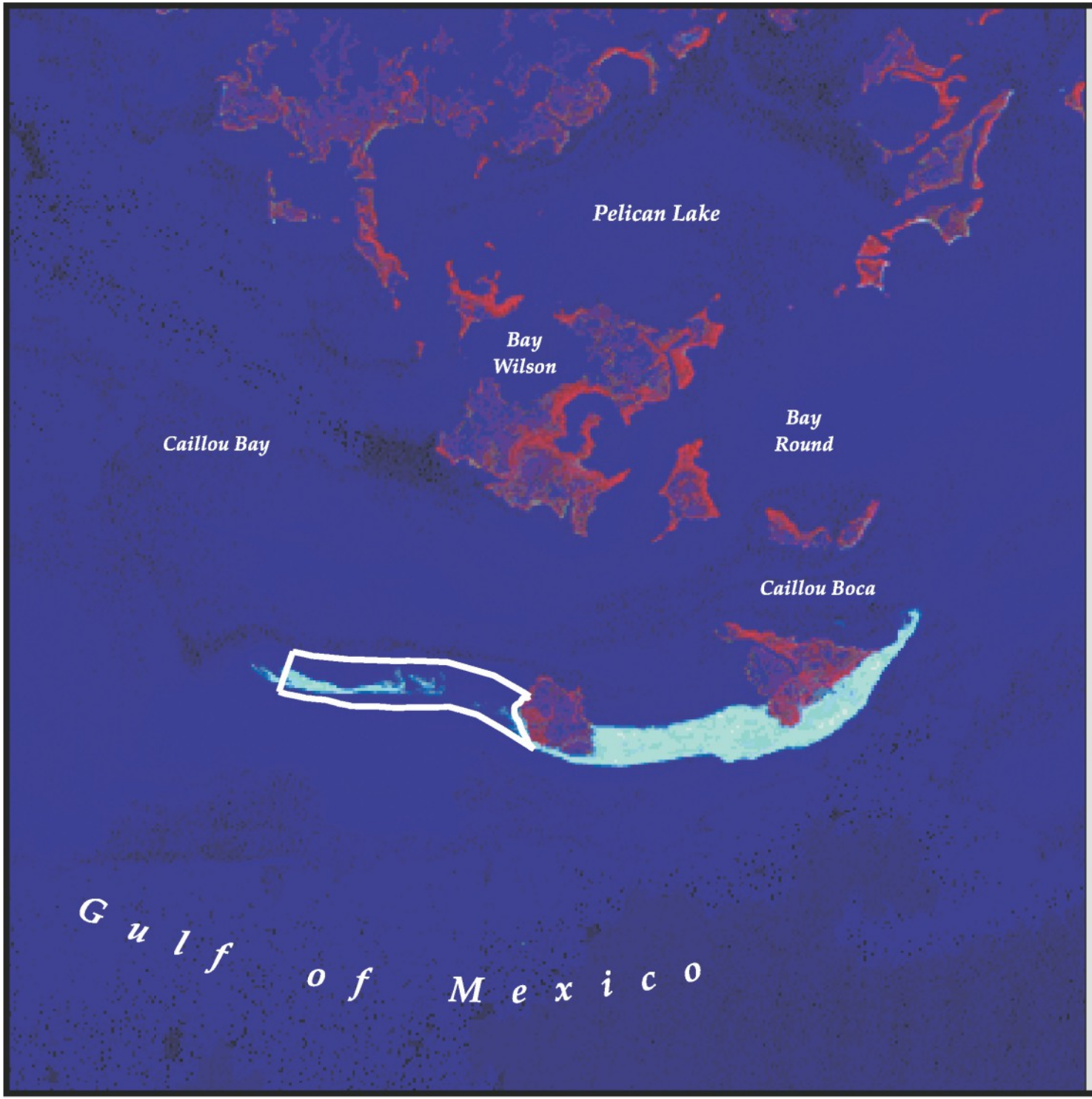
Details for pipes and booster pumps or additional equipment for hopper dredge operations will be analyzed during engineering and design. Conventional equipment is expected to be used for earth moving to obtain island design elevations, widths, and slopes. Approximate design features for the west flank restoration include beach platform, dune, and marsh platform.

Maintenance is not proposed for this project. If a disastrous storm event should cause significant damage, a restoration project would be proposed.

For more project information, please contact:

Federal Sponsor:
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Dallas, TX
(214) 665-6722

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



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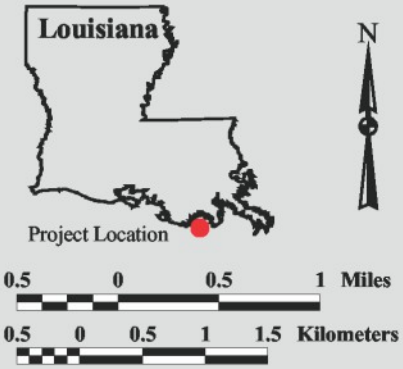
Project Boundary



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: 2002-11-223