

PROJECT SUMMARY

NAME: Half Moon Reef Restoration Project

LOCATION: Palacios/Matagorda County, Texas

ACRES/RIVER MILES: 290 acres

NON-FEDERAL SPONSORS: The Nature Conservancy

PROJECT PARTNERS Texas General Land Office
Texas Parks and Wildlife

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Half Moon Reef is located on Palacios Point within Matagorda Bay, which lies north of Corpus Christi, Texas. Anecdotal information suggests this reef was once large and productive. Little cultch material exists there today. Sampling indicated the presence of live oysters and shell, although not in quantities great enough to re-establish the reef. The Colorado River was recently re-diverted reverting some of the original hydrology to the reef, and providing a salinity regime suitable for oyster propagation and growth. Three reefs established by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the eastern arm of Wet Matagorda Bay are thriving and commercially viable, and provide evidence of the suitability of Half Moon as a restoration project.

Expected Benefits:

The project will result in the direct restoration of 20 acres of oyster reef on Half Moon Reef which will provide increased filtration, and therefore improved water quality in the bay. The reef structures will also create vertical relief that is almost non-existent in the bay; this will enhance fish and invertebrate habitat. Oyster reefs are also associated with feeding stations for large predatory fish. This restoration may enhance socio-economic benefits provided by fishing tourism in this area.

STATUS: Planning and Design