DUCKS UNLIMITED

SCIENCE

RESEARCH AND PLANNING

PROJECT DETAILS

Title:	**Waterfowl Foraging Capacity of Gulf Coast Marshes**
Location:	Gulf Coast marshes from Mobile Bay, Alabama to Corpus Christi, Texas
Purpose:	Determine the capacity of marshes in the Gulf Coast region to support foraging waterfowl and compare to desired population levels.
Methods:	Estimate waterfowl foods available in an acre of coastal marsh, extrapolate across all existing acres of coastal marsh in Gulf Coast region, and compare total foods available to what is needed to meet foraging demands of target waterfowl populations.
Key Findings:	Extensive losses of coastal wetlands during the past half-century have significantly reduced the capacity of Gulf Coast marshes to support wintering waterfowl. Scientists estimate coastal marshes in these areas may now be capable of supporting nearly 3 million fewer waterfowl than they did in the 1970s.
Management Applications:	Results from this study will enable DU and partners to develop quantitative objectives for coastal marsh restoration across the Gulf Coast region. Having specific, quantitative objectives is critical for effective and efficient delivery of wetland restoration efforts in the habitats most crucial for wintering waterfowl.
Partners:	Completed July 2010 through the cooperation of the Gulf Coast Joint Venture, Ducks Unlimited, and Louisiana State University Agricultural Center

Gulf Coast marshes from Mobile Bay, Alabama to Corpus Christi, Texas, were included in this study.


B. Wilson

Extensive losses of coastal wetlands have significantly reduced the capacity of the Gulf Coast to support wintering waterfowl. Quantifying resource needs for desired population levels is key to effective delivery of habitat conservation.

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