



THE MISSISSIPPI COAST

The Mississippi Gulf Coast is home to incredible saltwater fishing and hunting, but nearly 200 acres of habitats erode annually, leaving communities and wildlife at risk.

The 86-mile-long Mississippi Coast is made up of barrier islands and sea grass beds, meandering waterways and maritime forests. The coast's centerpiece is Mississippi Sound, where rivers and bayous feed into bays that are a nursery for many species of wildlife. Barrier islands maintain the balance of the Sound and defend communities against storms and hurricanes.

However, an annual erosion rate of 200 acres a year is decimating the coastline and its barrier islands. Development has altered waterways and shorelines, and intensified water quality problems. Oyster reefs are at an all-time low.

The federal fines and penalties from the Deepwater Horizon oil disaster—potentially billions of dollars—could be used to restore Mississippi Sound and its oyster reefs, wetlands and barrier islands. **But unless hunters and anglers speak up, this money might well be spent on unrelated efforts that will not benefit the coast, and could even harm it.**



We must restore and protect the health of the Mississippi Coast for our children's future.

vanishingparadise.org/mississippi
mswildlife.org/camo-coalition

MISSISSIPPI COAST BY THE NUMBERS

86 miles

of coastline

\$2 billion

annual economic impact of hunting, angling and wildlife watching in the three coastal counties

\$700 million

annual economic impact of commercial and recreational fishing

1 in 5

coastal jobs are related to tourism

200 acres

of coastal habitats erode annually

97 percent

of the Gulf's commercial fish and shellfish rely on coastal estuaries

Using BP oil spill funds to improve the health of the Mississippi Coast will benefit hunting, fishing and people.

Hunting

Mississippi Sound is home to thousands of wintering waterfowl, including redheads, canvasback, bufflehead, and scaup. This massive body of water runs the entire length of the Mississippi Coast and includes great hunting locations such as Heron Bay, Deer Island and the coastal marshes of the Pascagoula River. Unfortunately, coastal waterfowl habitats in Mississippi Sound continue to face the challenges of coastal erosion, water quality problems, and development pressures.

Saltwater Fishing

Most of Mississippi's prized saltwater fish—including speckled trout, redfish, black drum, and flounder—are dependent on Mississippi Sound for at least part of their lifecycle. The Sound is a vital resource for wildlife and it is in need of restoration. Rebuilding oyster reefs, restoring marshes and protecting sea grass beds would improve water quality and measurably increase fish and wildlife populations.

Benefits for All

An estimated 120,000 recreational anglers go fishing along Mississippi's coast annually, generating around \$70 million in tax revenues and supporting more than 5,000 jobs. The resulting economic impact is \$600 million. Investing in Mississippi's waters, wetlands, and fisheries will improve our economy and will preserve our coastal heritage for our children and grandchildren.

Urge your state leaders to fund coastal restoration:
www.restore.ms/contact/

Join the Mississippi Camo Coalition to stay informed:
mswildlife.org/camo-coalition



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MS Coast CVB



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