



# The Mississippi River Delta, Sportsmen and the Economy

## A “Sportsman’s Paradise” in Jeopardy

Coastal wetland loss around the Mississippi River Delta threatens fisheries and waterfowl populations that contribute to a billion-dollar industry vital to the economy of the Gulf region. The largest catch of redfish, world-class opportunities for speckled trout, tuna, bass and 10 million waterfowl wintering in the delta— accounting for 70 percent of the ducks and geese in the Mississippi and Central Flyways— truly make Louisiana a “**Sportsman’s Paradise.**”

More than three years have passed since the 2010 oil spill, which released millions of gallons of crude oil into our Gulf of Mexico. The spill left a significant amount of coastline and marshes damaged, especially around the Mississippi River Delta. Miles of wetlands remain oiled today. **These wetlands provide critical habitat for millions of fish, birds and other wildlife, and supports a robust wildlife tourism industry that attracts sportsmen and women from across the nation.**

In 2012 — a coalition of 750 local, state and national hunting and fishing businesses and organizations — along with other allied sportsmen groups and organizations fought to pass the RESTORE Act, which invests 80 percent of the Clean Water Act fines from the oil spill directly in areas affected by the disaster. There will also be funds available for ecosystem restoration through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Natural Resources Damages Assessment process.

**These funds—potentially billions of dollars—will be available for restoring estuaries, coastal wetlands and barrier islands, replenishing vital waterfowl habitat, rejuvenating fisheries and rebuilding the economy.**

**This is an incredible chance to fix the major environmental damage done to the Mississippi River Delta.**

### THE DELTA BY THE NUMBERS

**\$8 billion**

Annual economic impact of recreational saltwater fishing

**\$2.85 billion**

Annual economic impact of Louisiana’s commercial fisheries

**100 million**

Birds and other waterfowl living in or passing through the delta each year

**70%**

Of waterfowl in the Central and Mississippi River flyways that spend part of their year in the delta

**\$19+ billion**

In tourism – nearly \$2 billion from Louisiana

**2.6 million**

Jobs generated – nearly 83,000 in Louisiana

**\$3.5 billion**

Annually in federal and local tax revenues – more than \$201 million from Louisiana

# Ecosystem Restoration *is* Economic Restoration

The continued deterioration of the Mississippi River Delta ecosystem poses a growing threat to a natural resource that supports regional communities and cultures, our nation's critical shipping, energy, tourism and commercial seafood industries and our hunting and fishing heritage.

## A healthy ecosystem is at the heart of the Gulf's economy.

Sportsmen and women invest billions of dollars in equipment, permits and licenses that support the economies for small, rural communities as well as companies across the country. Hunting and fishing are multibillion-dollar industries in the delta, but they have struggled due to years of natural resource damage that was exacerbated by the 2010 oil spill.

**We must preserve the Sportsman's Paradise around the Mississippi River Delta for future generations and protect our nation's sporting heritage.**



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