



Draft 2026 FUNDED PRIORITIES LIST

Colonial Waterbird Rookery Island Restoration (New Project)

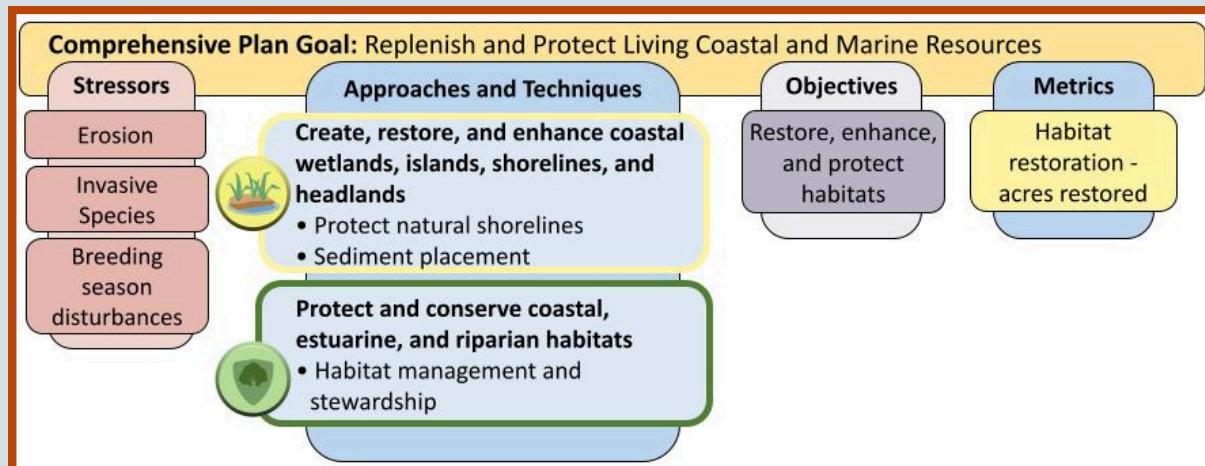
The Department of the Interior (DOI) is requesting \$2M in funding for the *Colonial Waterbird Rookery Island Restoration* project to support restoration actions to slow and reverse declines in waterbirds on islands in coastal Texas. Actions could include restoration through sediment placement, erosion protection, vegetation manipulation, invasive species control, and/or disturbance abatement. DOI will work with Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, Texas General Land Office and other partners to implement the projects in support of waterbird rookery island restoration actions. The project supports the Council's Comprehensive Plan goal of Replenish and Protect Living Coastal and Marine Resources.

This project would leverage NOAA RESTORE Science Program funding for the development of a tool to prioritize rookery island restoration based on bird biology, nesting productivity and food resources, named "Colony Island Network Design and Implementation" (CINDI). This tool is designed to help managers prioritize a network of colony islands where rehabilitation and management are cost effective and the potential for enhancing waterbird populations is high. Funding from this project would be used to implement actions using the CINDI tool as a guide. The project duration is 5 years.

This DOI-led project would support the Protecting and Restoring Waterbird Rookery Habitat program proposed by Texas by leveraging a science-based prioritization tool to guide restoration efforts to high-impact sites. Together, these two projects create a coordinated, data-driven approach to improve habitats, boost nesting success and sustain healthy waterbird populations across Texas.

Project at a Glance

The *Colonial Waterbird Rookery Island Restoration* project applies Planning Framework approaches and techniques to support Comprehensive Plan goals and objectives. In support of the primary objective, to *Restore, enhance, and protect habitats*, stressors such as erosion, invasive species, and disturbances during breeding season will be addressed through restoration techniques such as providing *protection for natural shorelines*, *placing sediment* to restore island habitat, and performing *Habitat management and stewardship* action on priority colonial waterbird rookery islands. Success using these techniques to *Restore, enhance, and protect habitats* may be tracked using the number of acres of habitat restored.



**Draft FPL 2026 Public Comment Period:
October 15 - 11:59 PM MT November 14, 2025**

Visit restorethegulf.gov for info on public meetings & how to comment.



Colonial Waterbird Rookery Island Restoration

