

The Chandeleur Islands, National Treasure in need of Restoration



Todd Baker, Project Manager

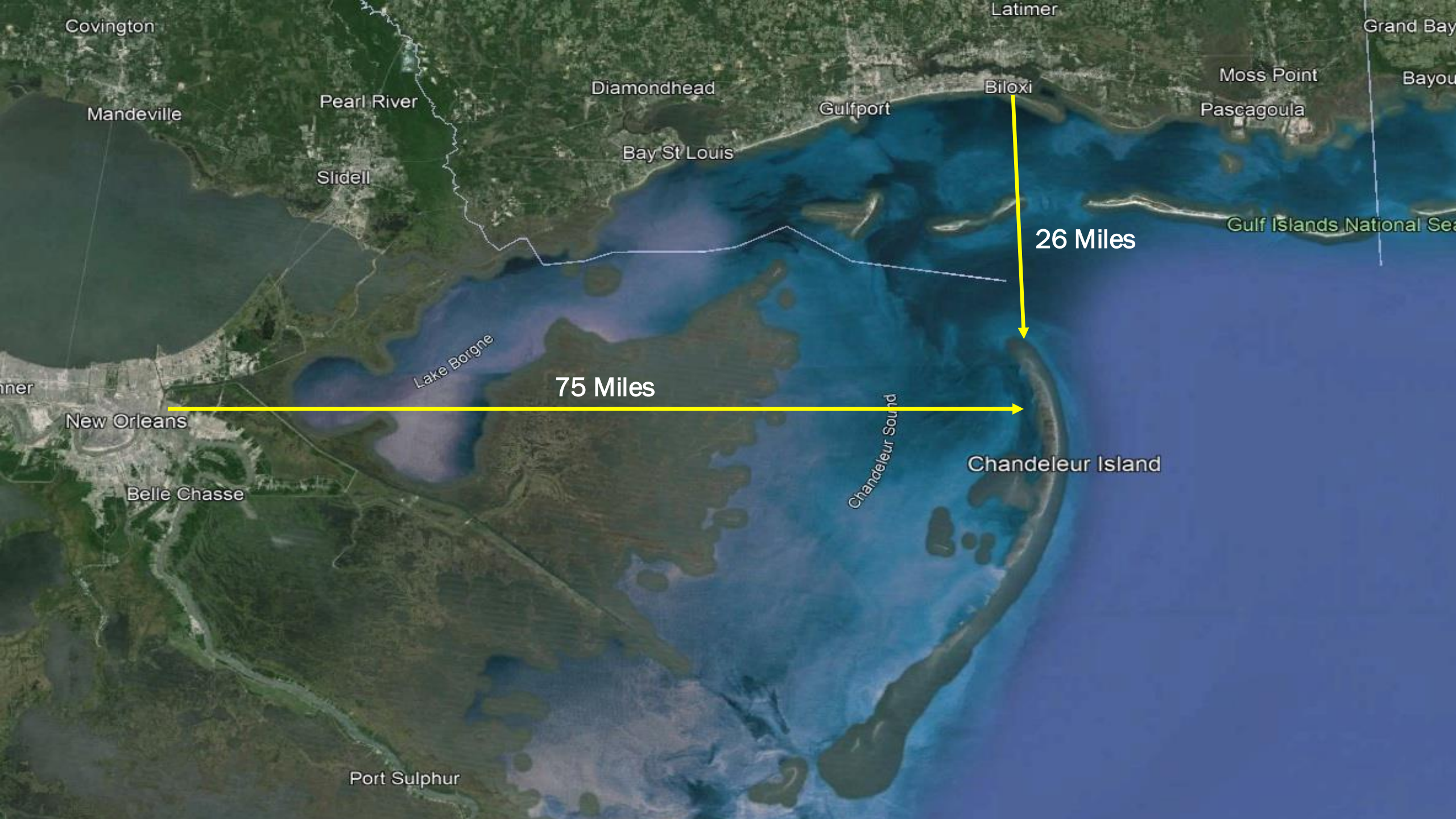
Chandeleur Islands Significance

- Louisiana's Largest Barrier Island
- New Orleans, St Bernard, Plaquemines Parish's only Barrier Island – 1st line of defense
- Most remote and difficult to access location in Louisiana
- Second oldest National Wildlife Refuge in the Country – Breton National Wildlife Refuge
- The only “Federal Wilderness Area” in Louisiana



Chandeleur Islands Significance

- **Has the largest and most diverse assemblage of seagrasses in the Northern Gulf**
Only true marine seagrasses in Louisiana
- **Once was the largest congregation of nesting colonial water birds in the World**
 - **Now the largest in the northern Gulf– Reduction due to habitat loss**
- **One of the most important sea turtle nesting areas in the Northern Gulf**
 - **Second highest sea turtle crawl density in the Northern Gulf**
- **Regulates salinity of the Pontchartrain and Breton Sound Basins. = Over 1.5 million acres**
- **Home to 80 “Species of Greatest Conservation Need” including 7 Species of Global Importance**



Covington

Mandeville

Pearl River

Slidell

Diamondhead

Bay St Louis

Gulfport

Biloxi

Latimer

Moss Point

Pascagoula

Grand Bay

Bayou

Gulf Islands National Seashore

26 Miles

75 Miles

Lake Borgne

New Orleans

Belle Chasse

Chandealeur Sound

Chandealeur Island

Port Sulphur

Species of Greatest Conservation Need = 80

Birds – 38 Species

Plants – 12 Species

Marine Fish - 11 Species

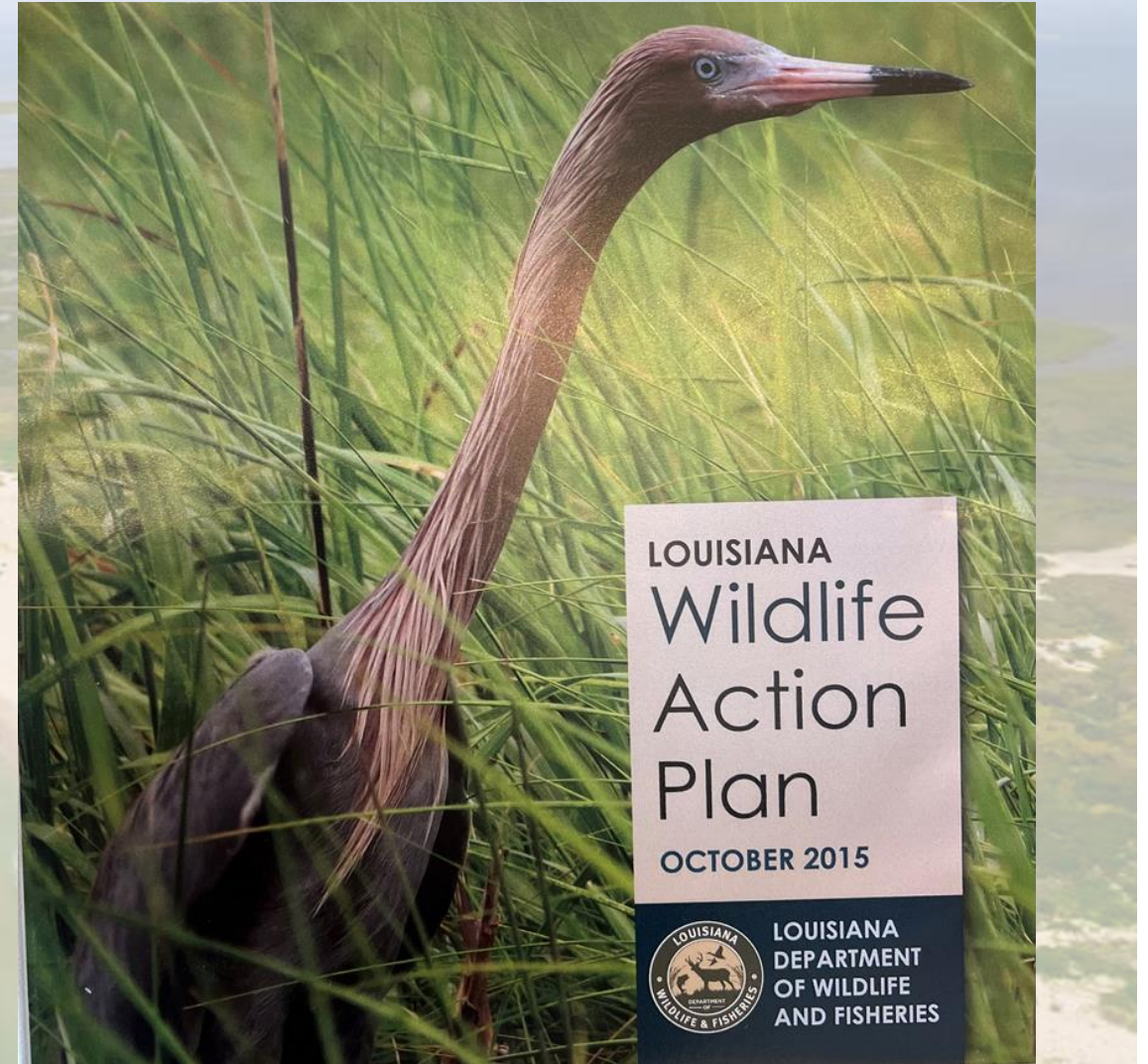
Reptiles – 6 Species

Mollusks – 5 Species

Arthropods – 5 Species

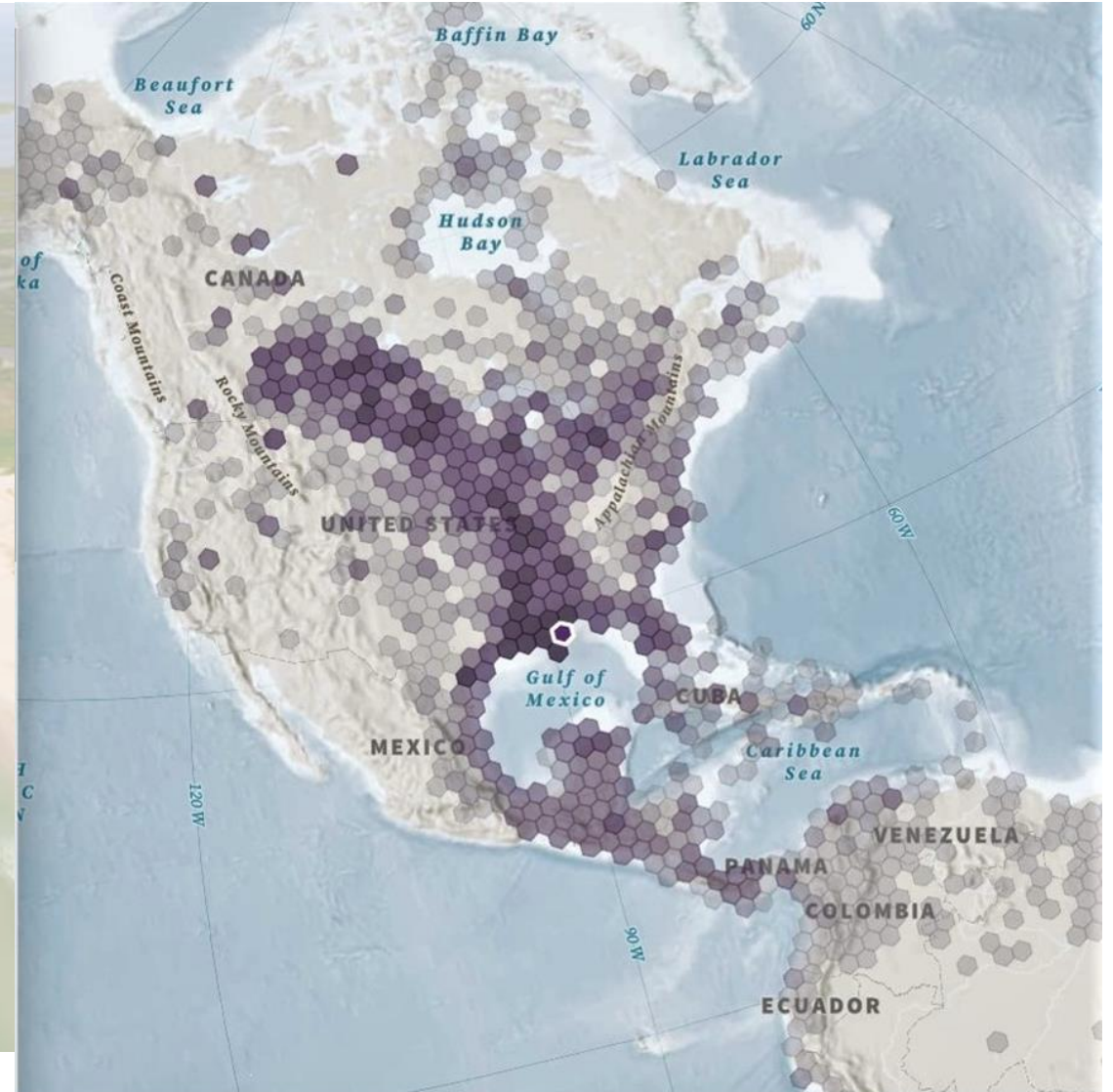
Crustaceans – 2 Species

Marine Mammals – 1 Species

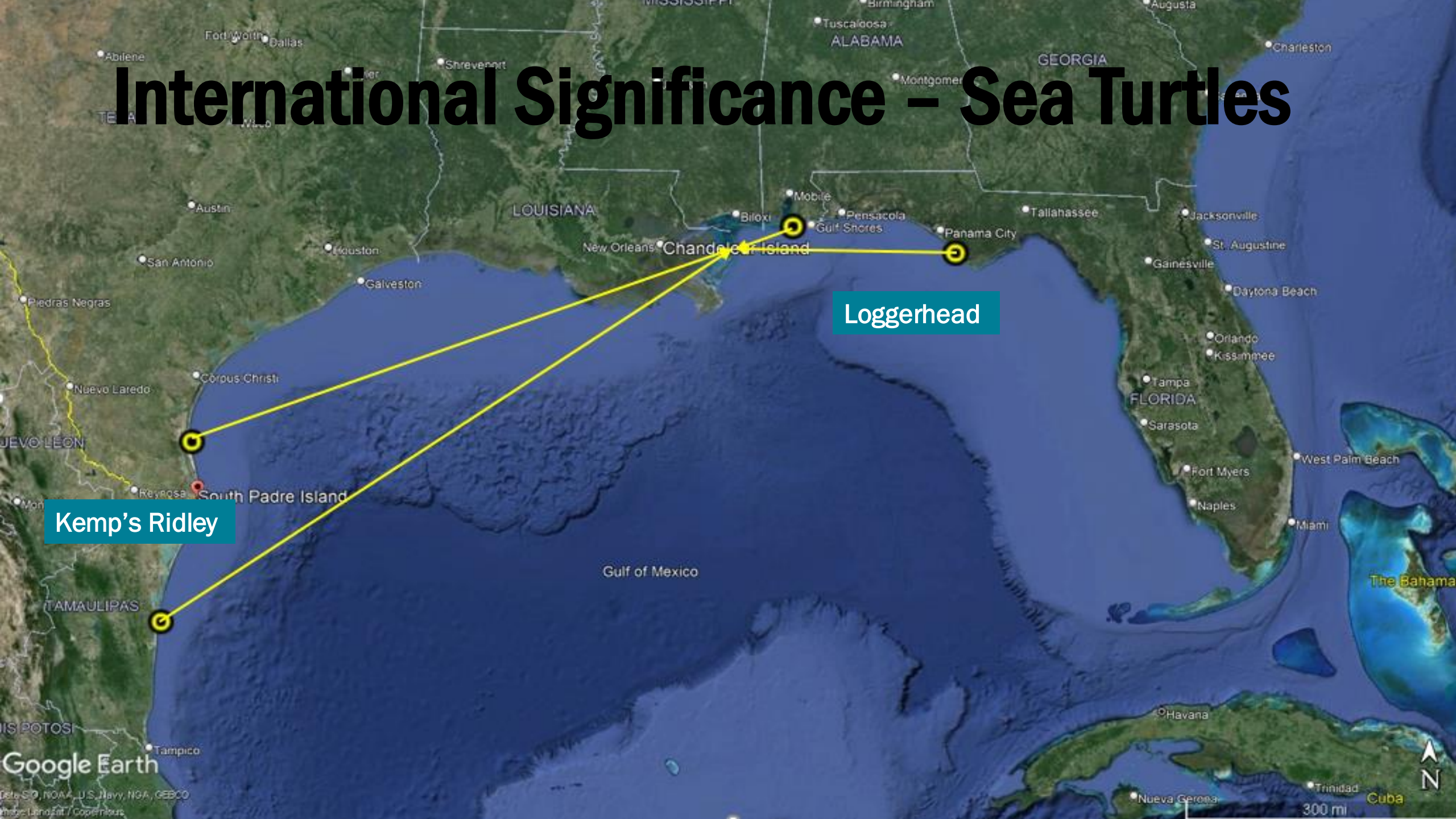


International Significance - Birds

- Banded birds that visit Chandeleur Island have been observed in 33 other countries around the world.
- Chandeleur Islands are considered “Globally Significant” Bird Area by the National Audubon Society



International Significance – Sea Turtles



Kemp's Ridley

Loggerhead

Google Earth

International Significance - Fisheries



CHANDELEUR ISLAND FISH COMMUNITY ASSEMBLAGE

Data Credit: Dr. Michael Dance, Louisiana State University, Department of Oceanography and Coastal Sciences



Photo: Brad Miller

Photo: Jeff Deblieux

Land Loss Over 39 Years



Land Loss Over 39 Years

2023

1984

1984

2023

1984

1.4 miles

2023



Restoration Plan Development

• Marine Seagrass Team Members

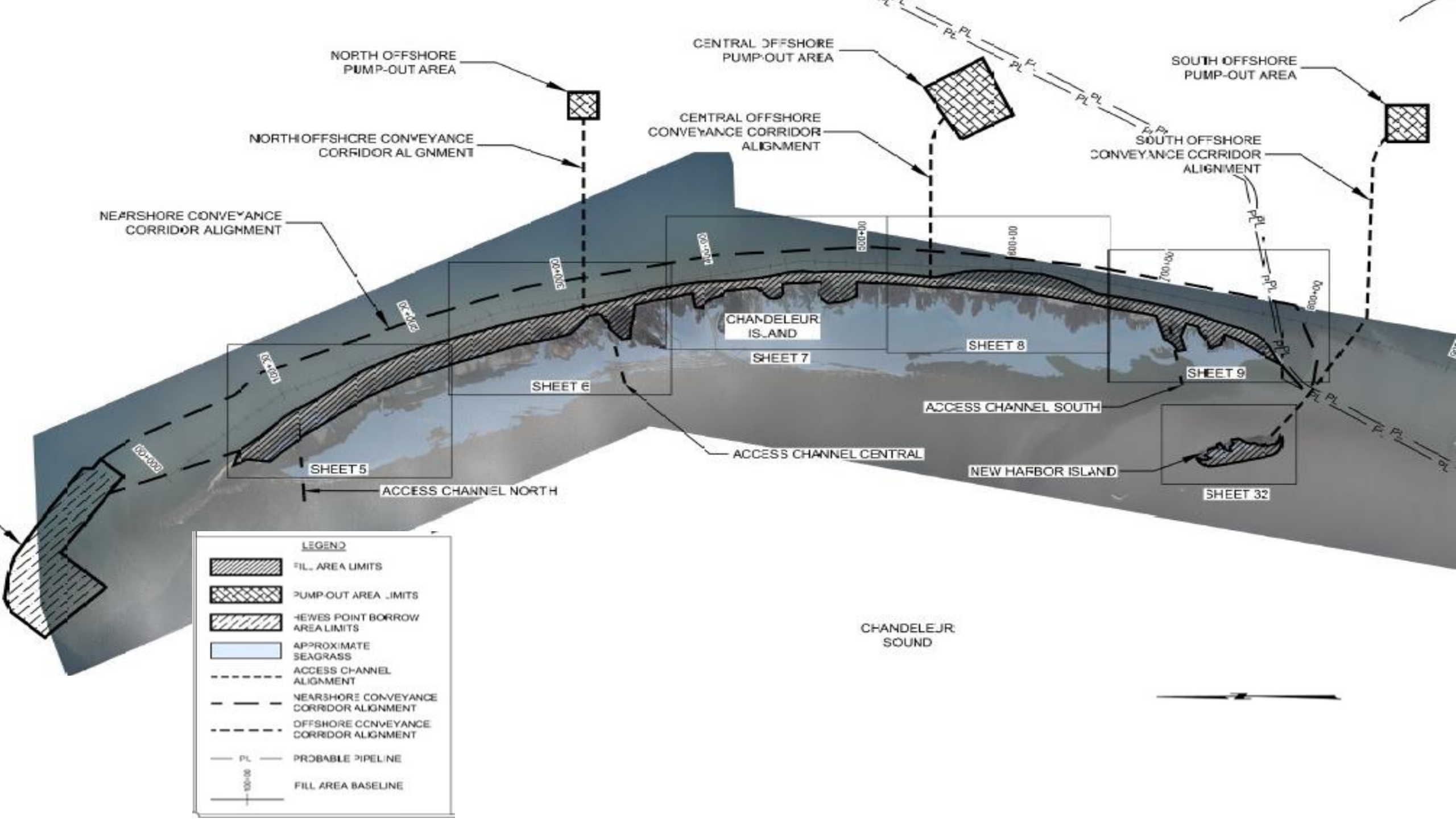
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration
- University of Southern Mississippi
- Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
- Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority
- Coastal Engineering Consultants
- SWCA Environmental Consultants
- The Water Institute of the Gulf

Bird Team Members

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
- Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority
- Coastal Engineering Consultants
- SEG Environmental
- The Water Institute of the Gulf

Sea Turtle Team Members

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration
- U.S. Geological Survey
- Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
- Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority
- Coastal Engineering Consultants
- SWCA Environmental
- The Water Institute of the Gulf



Whole Ecosystem Restoration



Photo: USFWS



Questions?



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