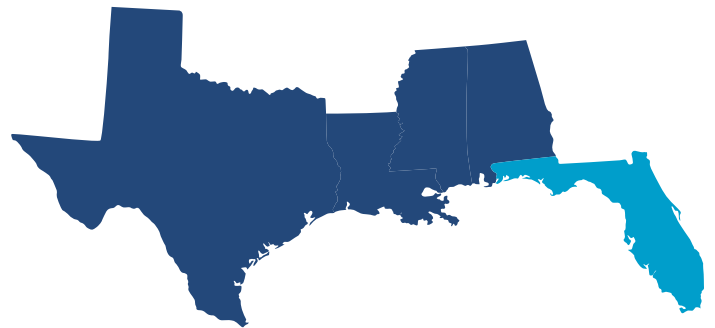




In 2018, GulfCorps launched in Florida with the Conservation Corps of the Forgotten Coast in Franklin County, part of Franklin's Promise Coalition, Inc (FPC). In Year 2, FPC added the Conservation Corps of the Emerald Coast in Escambia County and launched the Conservation Corps of the Emerald Coast in Bay County in Year 3. The RESTORE Council approved a new award in April 2021 and GulfCorps 2.0 launched in the fall of 2021. The three Florida GulfCorps crews partner with federal, state, county and municipal agencies as well as local nonprofits to implement restoration and conservation projects throughout the Panhandle coast. This work includes mapping and treating invasive plant species; propagating and planting native vegetation; building living shorelines; participating in prescribed burns; and building and maintaining trails and boardwalks. Crews also collect and recycle oyster shells for restoration purposes across multiple Florida counties. Since the GulfCorps Program started, FPC crews have impacted over 1,530 acres of coastal habitats on 26 project sites.



LOCATION Florida

INVESTMENT \$3.403 million over 8 years

PROGRAM PARTNERS The Nature Conservancy, The Corps Network, Student Conservation Association, The Ember Alliance

FUNDING AGENCIES Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council (RESTORE), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (sponsor)

PROJECT DATES 2017 - 2025

This factsheet was prepared by The Nature Conservancy using federal funds under award number IA3CP21CM0001 from the RESTORE Council, and award number NA21NMF4630551 from the NOAA Restoration Center, U.S. Department of Commerce. The statements, findings, conclusions, and recommendations are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of NOAA, the U.S. Department of Commerce, or the RESTORE Council.



FLORIDA

Florida Project Highlights

① FL1-1a: Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve (ANERR)

From January 2018 to August 2021, the CCFEC - Franklin crew worked with ANERR. The crew assisted in 41 acres of prescribed fire and fire preparation work, through both applied fire and raking of fire breaks. The crew also treated over five acres of invasive plant species and mapped five acres of invasive species. Lastly, the crew completed ongoing Hurricane Michael recovery efforts, which include seven acres of trail and boardwalk reconstruction, 89 acres of debris removal, and the installment of 8,540 spartina plants along the East Bay shoreline.



② FL2-3a-i: Escambia County Living Shorelines

The CCFEC - Escambia crew worked with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection to assist in construction of nine living shorelines. From September 2018 to August 2021, the crew constructed nearly 50 reefs and installed over 5,000 plants on shorelines. In September 2019, the crew began working to grow their own marsh plants for these shorelines. The crew worked over 750 hours collecting and propagating seed and harvesting plants.



③ FL3-4: Ecofina Creek Wildlife Management Area

The CCFEC - Bay crew began work in September 2019. After Hurricane Michael, the crew became an integral part of Ecofina Creek Wildlife Management Area District's restoration efforts. The crew treated three acres of invasive species and maintained three acres of fire breaks in preparation for prescribed burning to eliminate downed trees from the storm. The crew also removed over 20 acres of debris, reconstructed nearly three acres of trails and boardwalks, and planted nearly 30 acres of upland and wetland species. With this support, the WMA was able to reopen in 2021.



Florida By the Numbers



GULFCORPS HOURS



404

ACRES MONITORED



ACRES IMPACTED



9,728

PAID TRAINING HOURS



968

ACRES OF UPLAND ENHANCEMENT



419

ACRES OF INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT



26

ACTIVE PROJECTS



26

ACRES OF WETLAND RESTORATION



753

ACRES OF PRESCRIBED FIRE



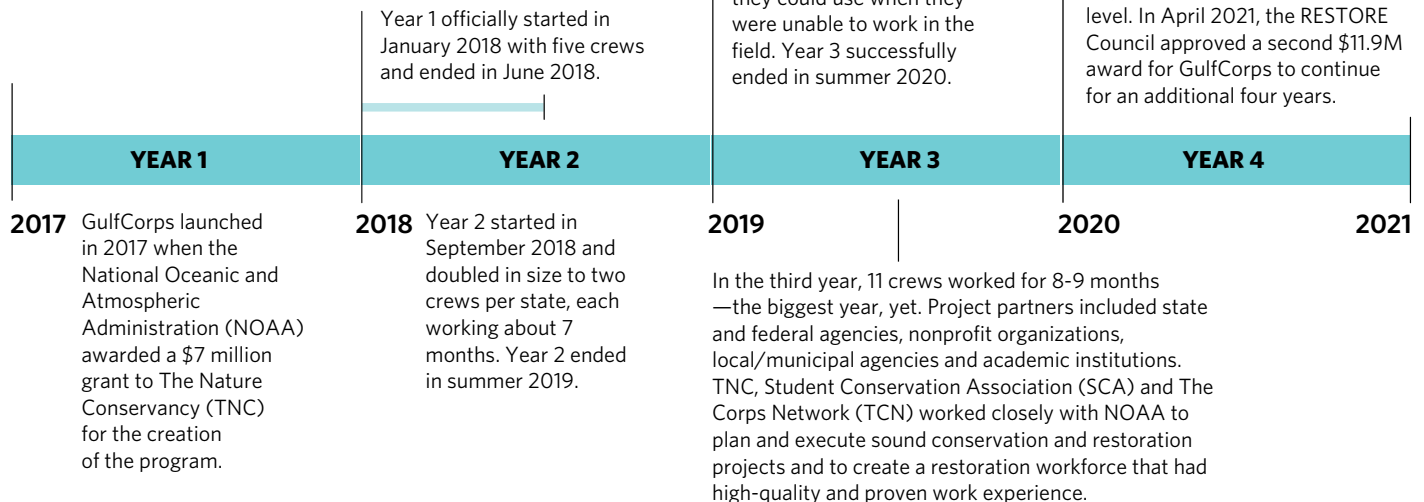
17,097

PLANTS PLANTED



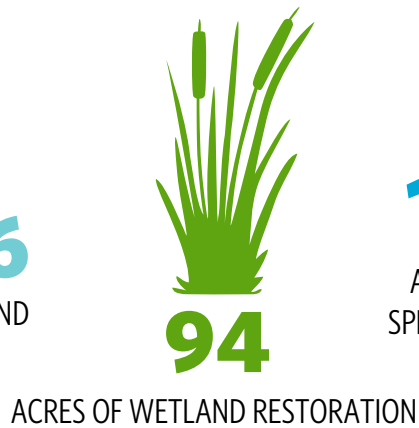
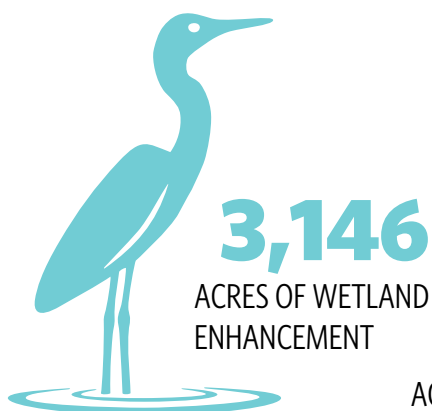
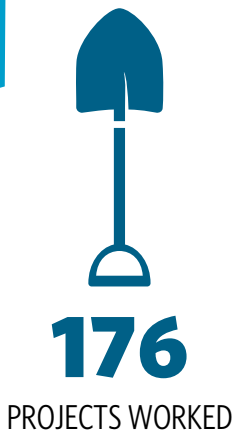
162

ACRES OF WETLAND ENHANCEMENT





GC 1.0 By The Numbers





Florida Project Partners

During Years 1 – 4, FPC crews worked on meaningful coastal restoration projects under the direction of a range of federal, state, and community partners:

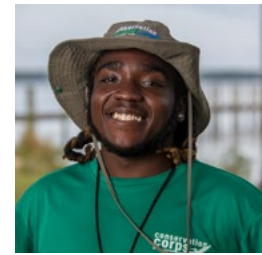
- Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve
- St. Joseph Bay State Buffer Preserve
- US Forest Service
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Franklin County
- Gulf County Public Works
- Northwest Florida Water Management District
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection
- Apalachee Regional Planning Council
- Apalachicola Riverkeeper
- Escambia County
- The Nature Conservancy in Alabama and Florida
- National Park Service
- City of Mexico Beach
- City of Panama City Beach
- St. Andrew Bay Resource Management Association

Local Crews, Local Communities

At its heart, GulfCorps is about rebuilding the environment and local communities. This means working with and relying on organizations that know and are deeply rooted in the local communities GulfCorps is helping.

In Florida, GulfCorps is working with crews from Franklin’s Promise Coalition, Inc.: Conservation Corps of the Forgotten Coast, Conservation Corps of the Emerald Coast in Bay County, and Conservation Corps of the Emerald Coast in Escambia County. Franklin’s Promise was founded in 2014 with a goal of empowering young people to positively impact their lives, their community, and the land they live on. Young adults on these crews receive job training, leadership skills, academic programming, and other support to help them find careers in their local communities after they complete their GulfCorps term of service.

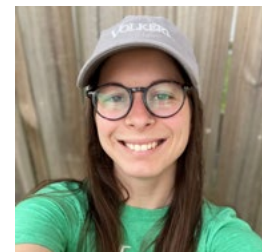
Member Highlights



© Mike Dumas

Ronald “Rolo” Henderson

Ronald (Rolo) Henderson was a member of the Conservation Corps of the Forgotten and Emerald Coasts in Years 2 and 3 when he obtained certifications in Wildland Fire Chainsaws, Wildland Firefighter Type 2 (FFT2), OSHA-10 and FEMA’s Community Emergency Response Team (CERT). After completing his terms, these certifications helped him to land a crew member position with Student Conservation Association’s Fire Crew in south Alabama. After that seasonal position ended, he obtained a Restoration Technician position with the Longleaf Alliance. In the summer of 2021, Ronald transitioned to a Conservation Practitioner position with the North Florida Land Stewardship Program at The Nature Conservancy, where he continues to prepare to obtain his Wildland Firefighter Type 1 (FFT1) certification.



Kaylyn Cullen

Kaylyn Cullen was a member of the Conservation Corps of the Forgotten and Emerald Coasts in Year 3 when she received training in habitat restoration, debris removal, trail maintenance, invasive plant control and living shoreline development. She also obtained her OSHA-10 and Wildland Firefighter Type 2 (FFT2) certifications. After completing her term of service, she qualified for an Environmental Specialist position at St. Joseph Bay State Buffer Preserve. A year later she moved to a position as an Environmental Scientist at Volkert, Inc.



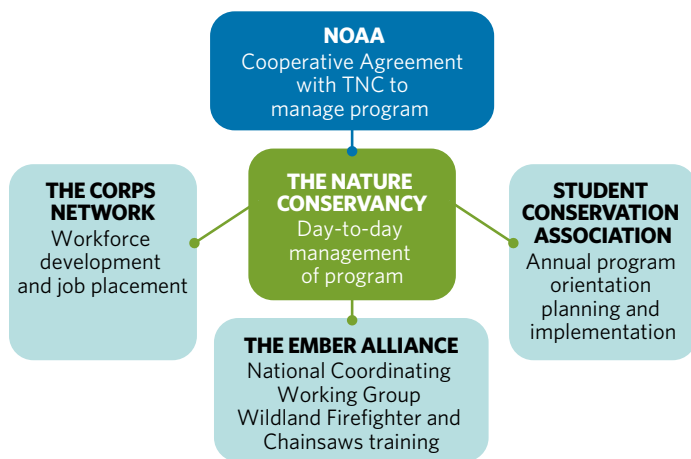
The GulfCorps Program Team

- NOAA Fisheries – Fiscal sponsor, environmental compliance, program advisor
- The Nature Conservancy – Program day-to-day operations, conservation and project planning, monitoring, implementation
- The Corps Network – Professional / Workforce development, member preparation to pursue careers in conservation and restoration, job placement, post-program tracking
- Student Conservation Association – Orientation planning and implementation

Through this project, NOAA, TNC and partners are

- Providing support to local conservation corps that recruit young adults from their communities. These young adults want to better their communities through restoration and conservation work. GulfCorps aims to recruit 75% of each crew from Gulf Coast communities.
- Providing young adults with the highest quality training, including project-related training, industry-recognized certifications, and workforce development opportunities. This combination of training, work experience and professional development fuels placements in environmental jobs, internships, externships and post-secondary educational opportunities.
- Working with stakeholders to select restoration projects that address ecological impacts of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill and that are consistent with the RESTORE Act's Comprehensive Plan.
- Monitoring progress over the course of the entire program to make certain the work is producing the desired environmental results.

Partner Roles



Sample Project Partners

US Fish and Wildlife Service (FL, AL, LA, TX) US Forest Service (MS), National Park Service (FL, MS, LA, TX), National Estuarine Research Reserves (FL, AL, TX)

Florida – St. Joseph Bay State Buffer Preserve, St. Andrew Bay Resource Management Association, Northwest Florida Water Management District, Florida Forest Service

Alabama – South Alabama Land Trust, Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Dog River Clearwater Revival, Dauphin Island Bird Sanctuary

Mississippi – Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, Land Trust for the Mississippi Coastal Plain

Louisiana – Louisiana Office of State Parks, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, North Lake Nature Center

Texas – Armand Bayou Nature Center, Artist Boat, City of Port Aransas, Texas Parks & Wildlife, Galveston Bay Foundation