

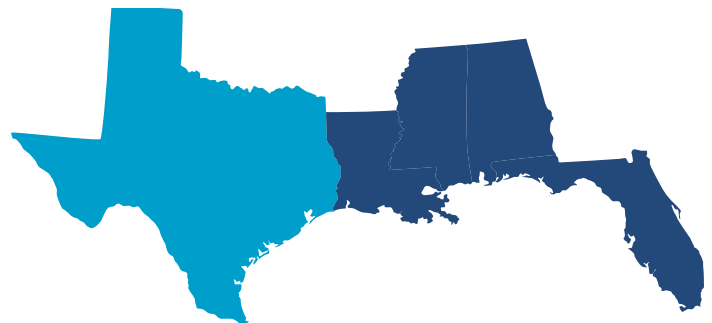
# TEXAS

## Restoring People and Nature



© RJ Hinkle

Since 2018, GulfCorps has had three conservation corps run crews in Texas: American Youthworks Texas Conservation Corps (TxCC) based in Galveston; American Conservation Experience (ACE) based in Corpus Christi; and Student Conservation Association based in Corpus Christi. In April 2021, the RESTORE Council approved a new award and GulfCorps 2.0 launched in the fall of 2021 with TxCC in Galveston and Student Conservation Association in Corpus Christi. These crews partner with federal, state, county and municipal agencies as well as local nonprofits to implement restoration and conservation projects throughout the Texas Gulf Coast. This work includes mapping and treating invasive plant species; planting native vegetation; participating in prescribed burns; and building and maintaining trails and boardwalks. Since the GulfCorps Program started, Texas crews have impacted over 3,015 acres of coastal habitats on 22 project sites.



**LOCATION** Texas

**INVESTMENT** \$2.432 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.*



## Texas Project Highlights

### ① TXCC - TX1-2: Artist Boat Coastal Heritage Preserve Stewardship Project

In January 2018, the TxCC crew began working with the Coastal Heritage Preserve. Over the past four years, the crew treated 25 acres of invasive species. The crew then prepared one of the areas of treatment for a native grass garden, beginning the process by installing seven fully-grown bushy bluestems bundles. The crew also completed over three acres of boundary work, including constructing 3,569 ft of fencing along the boundary of the Preserve. Clear boundary lines help to limit trespassing of vehicles onto restricted areas of the preserve. These vehicles may track invasive species onto the property.



© Aminta Nicole Arevilca

### ② ACE - TX2-5a: Padre Island National Seashore

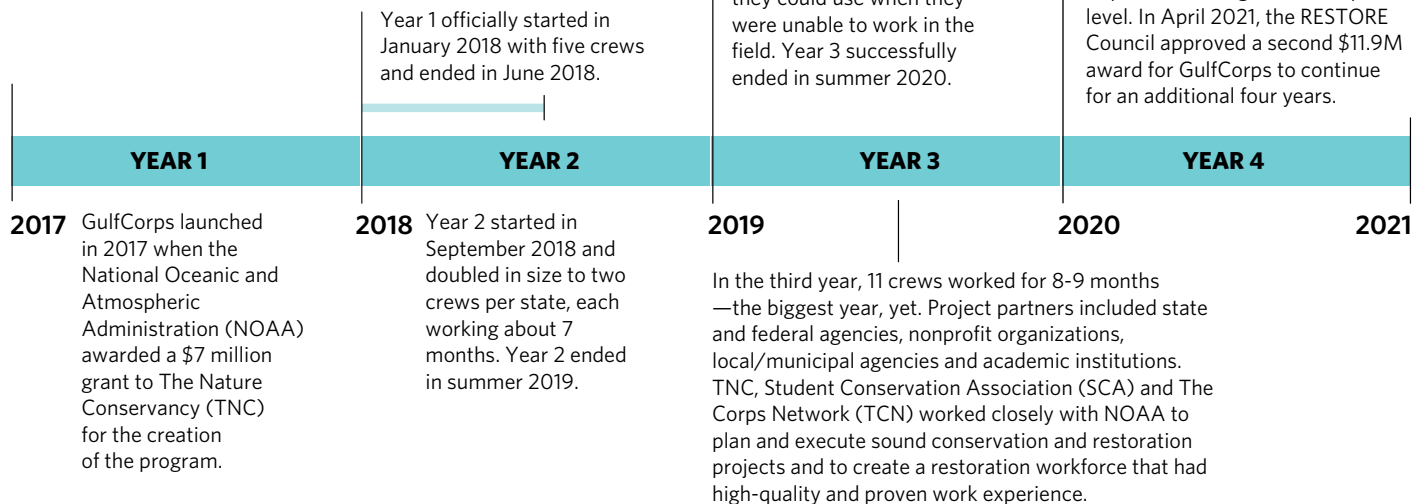
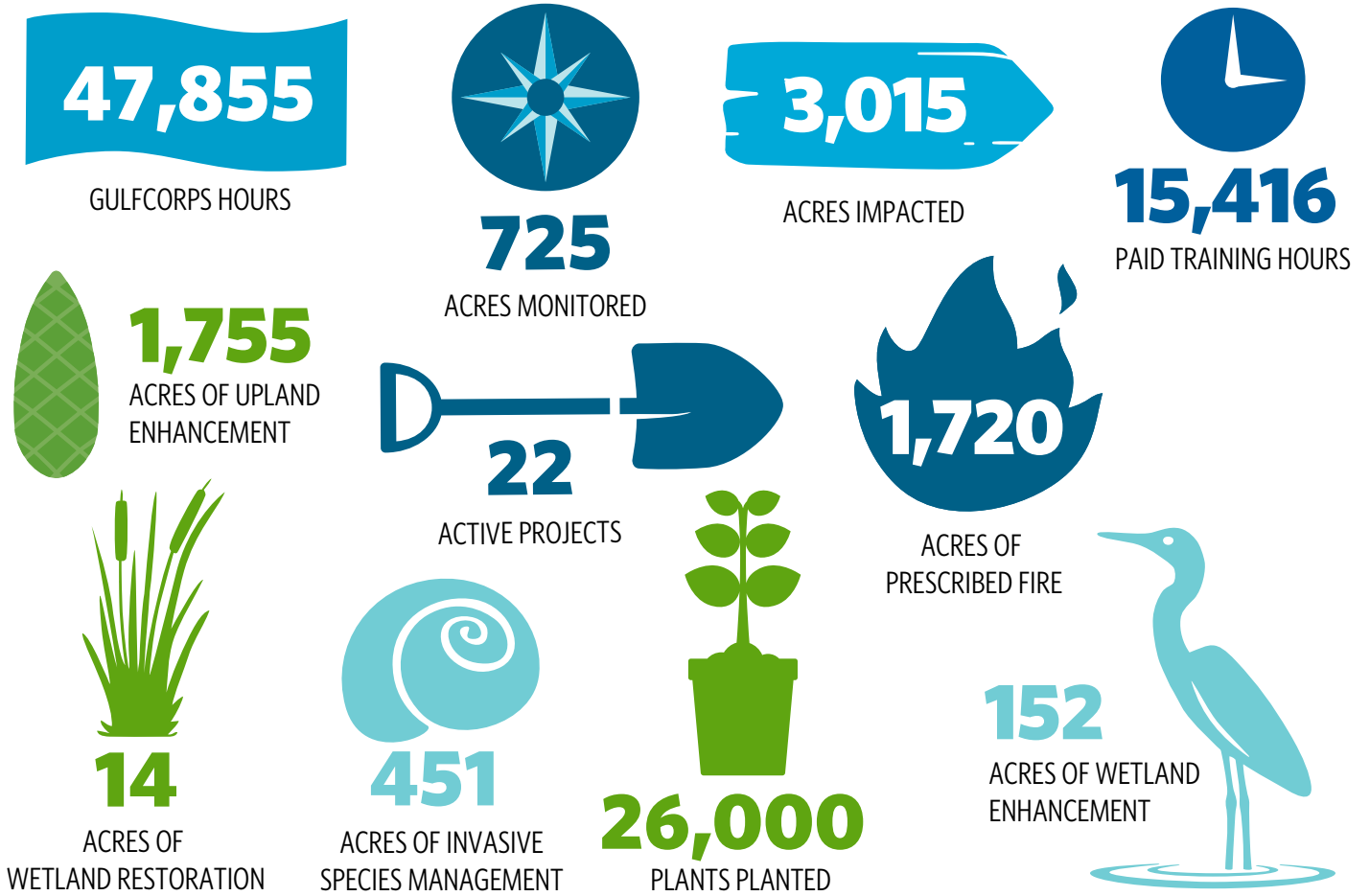
In September 2018, the ACE crew began working with the National Park Service (NPS) at Padre Island National Seashore. Over three years, the crew mapped and treated 258 acres of invasive species, removed 12 acres of debris from shorelines, and conducted four acres of boundary work. The main boundary activity included installing 1.5 miles of bollards and cabling on both sides of Yarborough Pass, excluding motorists from protected mud flats. The crew also assisted NPS staff in releasing endangered, rehabilitated sea turtles back into the Gulf of Mexico.



© Stefan Brisita

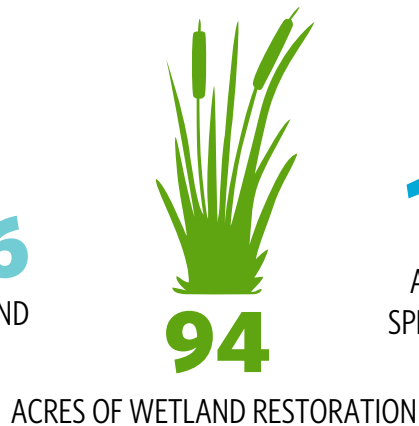
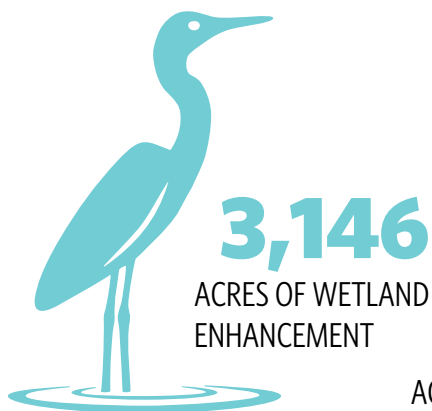
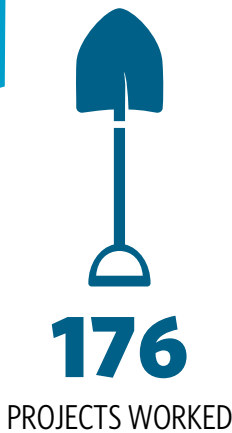


# Texas By the Numbers





## GC 1.0 By The Numbers





© Louis "Grady" Morris

### Texas Project Partners

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

- Armand Bayou Nature Center
- Artist Boat Coastal Heritage Preserve
- Texas General Land Office and SCENIC Galveston
- Galveston Bay Foundation
- Texas Parks and Wildlife
- The Nature Conservancy in Texas
- City of Port Aransas
- Mission Aransas National Estuarine Research Reserve
- Coastal Bend Bays & Estuaries Program
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- National Park Service

### 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 the Houston/Galveston area, GulfCorps works with Texas Conservation Corps, part of American Youthworks. Established in 1975, AYW was founded with a mission to provide young people with opportunities to build careers, strengthen communities, and improve the environment through education, on-the-job training, and service to others. TxCC began in 1993 and includes not only a GulfCorps crews, but also multiple other conservation crews, summer youth programs and individual placements that provide job training and experience for future careers.

GulfCorps worked with American Conservation Experience (ACE) in the Corpus Christi area in Years 2 – 4. ACE is a nonprofit organization formed in 2004 dedicated to providing rewarding environmental service opportunities that harness the idealism and energy of a volunteer force to help restore America's public lands. ACE offers members extensive training in wildland coastal forest management, surveying, mapping, and water quality testing.

### Member Highlights



© Mike Dumas

### Louis "Grady" Morris

Grady started as a GulfCorps crew leader with American Conservation Experience in Year 2 and continued in this position into Year 3. Being a part of GulfCorps and participating in the workforce development portion of the program gave him the confidence and experience he needed to obtain his current position as a Project Manager for the Gulf Coast Texas Crew with American Conservation Experience. Grady once said, "GulfCorps helped me gain the confidence to follow the trail I want to hike, not the trail I thought everyone wanted me to."



### Aminta Nicole Arevilca

Nicole began her corps journey as a crew member on the TxCC Conservation and Disaster Crew and was then promoted to a crew leader position with the TxCC GulfCorps crew in Year 4. The workforce development skills and environmental trainings she received during the program led her down a path toward her current position as a Fisheries Biologist Observer with Alaskan Observers, Inc.



© Elizabeth Rebstad

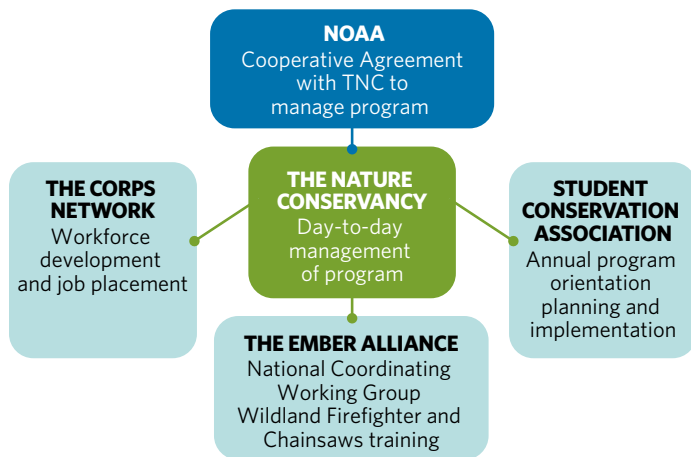
## The GulfCorps Program Team

- 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



For more information, contact: **Jeff DeQuattro**  
GulfCorps Program Director  
jdequattro@tnc.org