



# ALABAMA'S **LIGHTNING POINT**

The Nature  
Conservancy





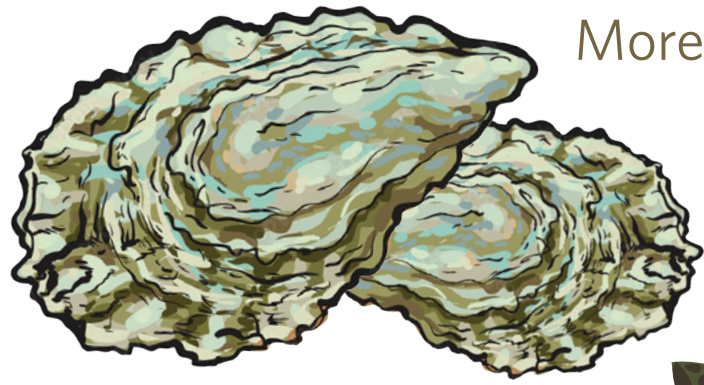


## BAYOU LA BATRE

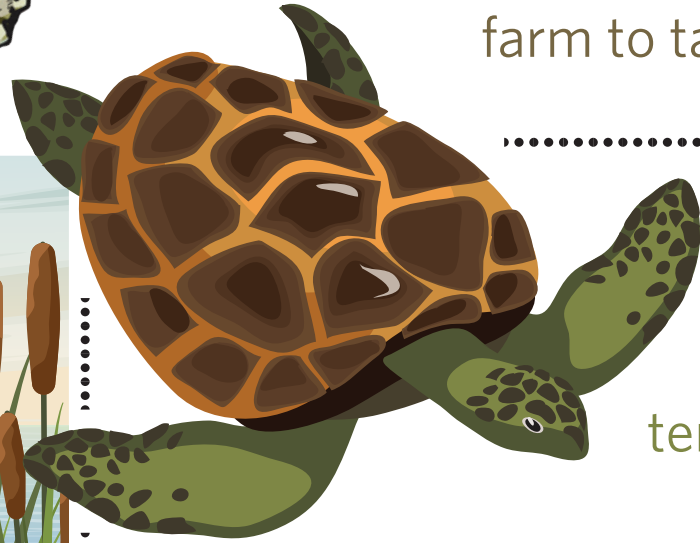
One of Alabama’s most iconic landscapes, the seafood capital of Alabama, and a town steeped in southern history with dashes of French and Southeast Asian flair, **Bayou La Batre** is an American landmark and one that is also under threat. Together with the City of Bayou La Batre, the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Mobile County, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, The Nature Conservancy is committed to protecting and preserving this quintessential town. The Lightning Point restoration project has helped revitalize the locally important waterfront area by restoring, enhancing, and protecting the shoreline habitats and providing improved community access for recreation and fishing opportunities.

*On the Cover: Beginning of Lightning Point Restoration Project © Hunter Nichols/TNC*  
*This page: One of the created tidal creeks at low tide with native smooth cordgrass along the edges – 1.5 years after construction © Mary Kate Brown/TNC*





More than **650 cubic yards** of recycled oyster shell collected from local seafood restaurants of coastal Alabama used to create habitat for birds and terrapins – farm to table to nature!



Future home to Alabama diamondback terrapins, where University of Alabama-Birmingham is raising **180 terrapins** to release into nearby coastal marsh habitats

More than 240,000 cubic yards of sediment used to build over **40 acres** of coastal habitats

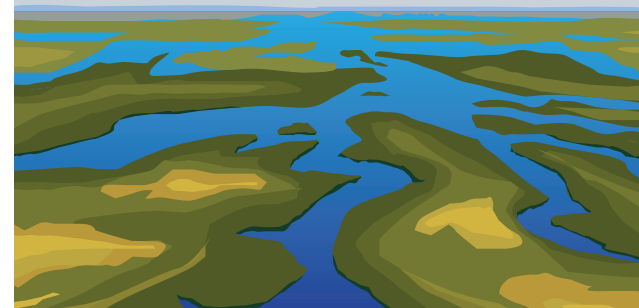


**90,000** native plants

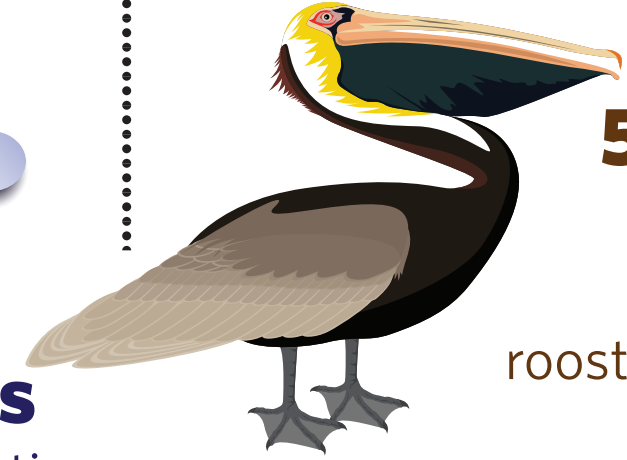


**51,000 tons** of rock

Created **2.5 miles** of new tidal creeks



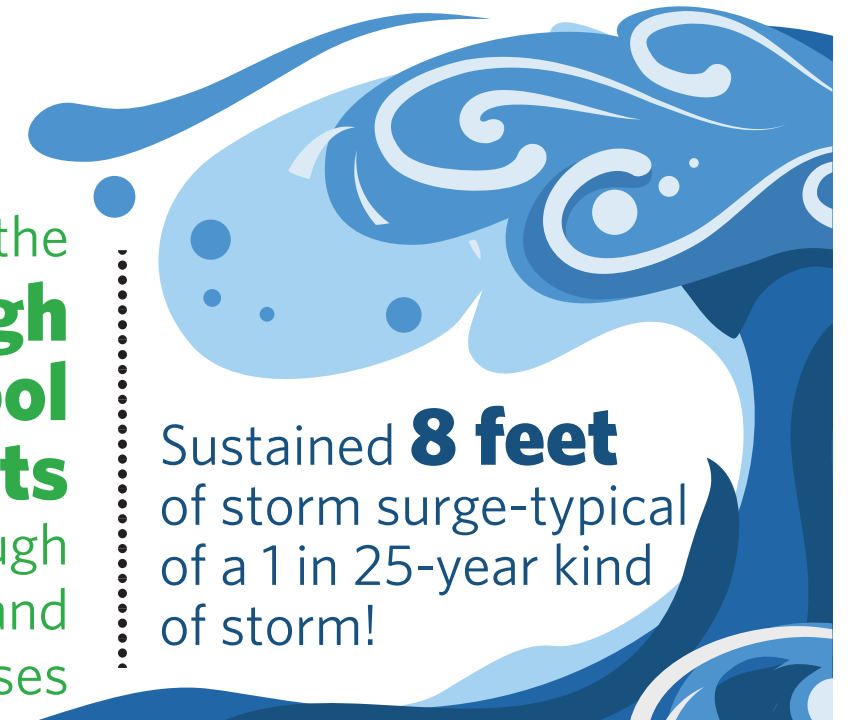
Survived **5 named storms** in less than 2 years after completion of construction



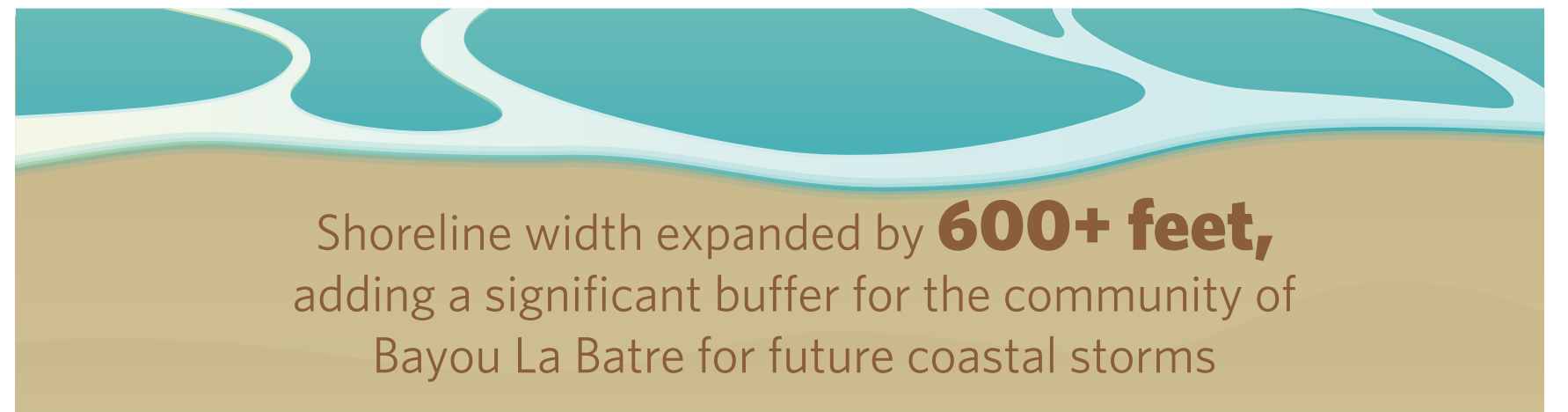
**50+ bird species** observed roosting, feeding and nesting



Engaged with the **local high school students** through transplanting, collecting seeds and planting of native grasses



Sustained **8 feet** of storm surge-typical of a 1 in 25-year kind of storm!



Shoreline width expanded by **600+ feet**, adding a significant buffer for the community of Bayou La Batre for future coastal storms





Connecting the old marsh with the new marsh, construction equipment sculpting new coastal marsh habitat © CrowderGulf

## A COMMUNITY ASSET

Lightning Point is a place for the entire Bayou La Batre community. From the beginning, the Lightning Point project has prioritized three goals to ensure that the work truly benefits those who call Bayou La Batre home:

- **A COMMUNITY FRONT PORCH** Provides an enhanced experience for locals and visitors for boating, fishing, and sightseeing.
- **RESILIENT AND PRODUCTIVE SHORELINE** Restores a diverse system of coastal habitats that provides shoreline protection for the long-term and supports nursery habitats for the fish and shellfish sought after by recreational and commercial fishers.
- **IMPROVED PUBLIC AMENITIES** Provide a safe, enjoyable area for the community for fishing and recreation access, parking, walking, and utilizing the waterfront, while limiting impacts to restored habitats.

## A VISION FOR RESTORATION

The Lightning Point project was designed and constructed to achieve multiple restoration goals for the Bayou La Batre coastline.

**SHORELINE PROTECTION** Constructed 1 mile of overlapping, segmented breakwaters along the shoreline on both sides of the navigation channel to provide a buffer from waves and boat wakes, including two jetties (700-800ft long) at mouth of channel to maintain access to the navigation channel for all types of vessels, from commercial shrimp boats to manufactured pilot boats to recreational bay boats.

**HABITAT CREATION** Created approximately 40 acres of marsh, 2 miles of tidal creeks, and 4 acres of upland habitats that support a wide range of fish, shellfish, and birds.

**MANAGED ACCESS** Complemented the City of Bayou La Batre's Master Plan for the City Docks area with walking paths and a lookout point for community use and enjoyment of the site. Designed a low-impact parking lot employing green infrastructure techniques, such as pervious pavers, bioretention cells, and bioswales, to aid in stormwater management to improve water quality in the area.

**BENEFICIAL USE OF DREDGED MATERIAL** Utilized 240,000 cubic yards of dredge material beneficially to create marsh habitat and use thin-layer deposition to build and nourish the marsh for decades to come.



Western view of the constructed breakwaters with construction equipment creating new tidal creeks © CrowderGulf



Aerial view of Lightning Point before construction © Moffatt & Nichol



Lightning Point in December 2021, less than 2 years after construction © Sam St. John





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The Nature Conservancy is a leading conservation organization working around the world to protect ecologically important lands and waters for nature and people. Visit us at [nature.org](http://nature.org).

Working waterfront of Bayou La Batre channel  
© Hunter Nichols/TNC

