

# #206

**COMPLETE**

**Collector:** Gimbel Foundat...nd Evaluation (Web Link)  
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Page 1

**Q1** Name of your organization.

Gulf Restoration Network

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**Q2** Grant #

20180044

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**Q3** Grant Period

3/1/18-3/15/19

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**Q4** Location of your organization

City	New Orleans
State	LA

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**Q5** Name and Title of person completing evaluation.

Cynthia Sarthou, Executive Director

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**Q6** Phone Number:

5045251528

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**Q7** Email address.

cyn@healthygulf.org

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Page 2: Key Outcomes and Results

**Q8** Total number of clients served through this grant funding:

150 +

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**Q9** Describe the project's key outcomes and results based on the goals and objectives. Use the following format: State the Goal: State Objective 1: Describe the Activities, Results and Outcomes for Objective 1: State Objective 2 (if applicable): Describe the Activities, Results and Outcomes for Objective 2: State Objective 3 (if applicable): Describe the Activities, Results and Outcomes for Objective 3:

Goal: In East Baton Rouge and Tangipahoa Parishes, develop an educated and informed public aware of the increase in flood risk associated with destruction of floodplain forests and the flood reduction benefits of protection and restoration of critical floodplain forests in the Amite and Tangipahoa Rivers.

Objective: To educate decision-makers and residents of East Baton Rouge and Tangipahoa Parishes to

Outcomes:

- Document and map the loss of floodplain forests in the Amite and Tangipahoa River Basins;

Healthy Gulf (formerly Gulf Restoration Network) completed research on relevant Corps of Engineers and Louisiana Department of Natural Resources permitting and used GIS mapping technology to produce a GIS report, and a series of stand-alone maps which outline the scope and severity of the impacts of sand and gravel mining in the Amite and Tangipahoa watersheds. We then developed a power point presentation and report that incorporates the maps and supporting information, as well as associated public education material. These materials have allowed us to reframe the impacted areas as opportunities for restoration that will provide flood mitigation, important habitat and enhanced recreational and economic activities.

- Release a report that (1) documents the acreage and geographic location of floodplain forest destruction; (2) creates GIS maps depicting the loss; and (3) calculates the impact on community flood risk;

We completed and released a report incorporating all of research and mapping, emphasizing sand and gravel mines as opportunities for restorations. However, due to the loss of our expert, we were unable to obtain any comprehensive calculation of the impact of that loss on community flood risk. Instead, we focused on the benefits of restoration in terms of reduced flood risk

- Increase public understanding of the link between floodplain forests and flood risk as reflected by (1) distribution of the report to at least 5 relevant state and local decision-makers, and sponsorship of 4 meetings that engage at least 40 residents of East Baton Rouge or Tangipahoa parishes.

Our educational efforts were successful at engaging community members in both parishes, through the distribution of our educational materials and meetings with community residents. We also developed a power point presentation based on our research, as well as fact sheets. We presented to: (1) the Federation of Greater Baton Rouge, (2) a community meeting in East Baton Rouge entitled "Make Floodplain Restoration Work for You", (3) the Sierra Club Delta Chapter, (4) the Amite River Watershed Symposium and (5) a Drainage Baton Rouge meeting. We also tabled at the Wild and Scenic River Festival. And, provided comments and our maps at an open house for the Amite River and Tributaries feasibility study which is looking at ways to better protect residents, business and infrastructure in the basin. These events reached over 150 people, including homeowners and key decision-makers including the United States Army Corps of Engineers, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Senator Bill Cassidy's Office, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Office of Community Development, Parish Floodplain Managers, Louisiana Wildlife Federation.

Additionally, we published an extensive blog on the issue: "No Museum for Trees, but Plenty of Gravel for the Parking Lot" (July 2018), which was published on Facebook and participated in a radio interview in Baton Rouge to share the findings of our research.

We have also distributed our findings, including our report, to decision-makers, such as the Louisiana Office of Community Development, and to Healthy Gulf members and partners in the relevant parishes.

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**Q10** Please describe any challenges/obstacles the organization encountered (if any) in attaining goals & objectives.

Sadly, our expert on calculating the increase in flood risk caused by the destruction of floodplain forests passed away suddenly. We were unable to find another expert capable of making these calculations. As a result, our report and materials do not include any estimate of increases in flood risk due to loss of floodplain forest.

Also, an unexpected family emergency required our Wetlands Analyst, Natalie Montoya, to relocate to California. Due to a downturn in revenue in 2018, we were unable to replace her. As a result, production of the report was delayed until 2019.

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**Q11** How did you overcome and/or address the challenges and obstacles?

We expanded our research to include historical changes in flood inundation in the two target river basins and reduction in flood risk associate with wetland forest restoration. This information was then substituted for the expert analysis we had originally contemplated. Thankfully, in the summer of 2018, Healthy Gulf's Wetland Analyst had used the results of our research and mapping to create educational materials and completed numerous presentations. Thus, although the production of the report on our research was delayed, much of the community engagement had already occurred. Our Water Program Director has now assumed responsibility for leading education and outreach efforts.

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**Q12** Describe any unintended positive outcomes as a result of the efforts supported by this grant.

The State and Parish governments have been supportive of the call for restoration of abandoned sand and gravel mines, which finds support in Louisiana's law on reclamation of abandoned mines.

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**Q13** Briefly describe the impact this grant has had on the organization and community served.

Our findings provide highlight the potential for flood risk reduction which are achievable and relatively cost effective and can be incorporated in the Louisiana Office of Community Developments ongoing planning efforts in East Baton Rouge and Tangipahoa parishes.

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Page 3: Budget

**Q14** Please provide a budget expenditure report. Also, provide a budget narrative that explains how the funds were utilized, what was purchased, what were the expensed items based upon the budget that was submitted.

Grant funds were used to defray the cost of purchasing GIS software and increased computer capacity. The majority of the remaining funds under the grant-supported time spent by our Wetlands Analyst, Community Science Director and Fellow in researching relevant Corps of Engineers and Louisiana Department of Natural Resources permitting, geographically locating and mapping areas of historic floodplain forest destruction, and calculating the potential for flood risk reduction associated with restoration of sand and gravel mines throughout the Amite and Tangipahoa river basins. Our Wetlands Analyst and Community Science Director then dedicated staff time to community outreach and education, including the 5 presentations discussed above. Communications and graphic design staff were involved in developing a report incorporating the results of our research and the maps, as well as associated public education materials

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Page 4: Success Stories

**Q15** Please relate a success story:

In 2016 several Louisiana parishes suffered severe flooding, in part, due to the destruction of wetland forests along three Louisiana's scenic rivers for sand and gravel mining. We documented the destruction, highlight the potential for flood risk reduction through the restoration of abandoned sand and gravel mines, and used those materials to educate and engage Louisiana communities and decision-makers

The result, we have created real interest and thus the potential for restoration of over 12,000 acres of mined floodplain forests in the Amite River, the Tangipahoa and other Louisiana Scenic Rivers watersheds to reduce flood risk.

**Q16** Please relate a success story here:

**Respondent skipped this question**

**Q17** Please relate a success story here:

**Respondent skipped this question**

Page 5: Organizational Information

**Q18** Which category best describes the organization.  
Please choose only one.

**Environmental**

**Q19** What is the organization's primary program area of interest?

**Environment/Environmental**

**Q20** Percentage of clients served through grant in each ethnic group category. Total must equal 100%

**Respondent skipped this question**

**Q21** Approximate percentage of clients served from grant funds in each age category.

**Respondent skipped this question**

**Q22** Approximate percentage of clients served with disabilities from grant funds.

**Respondent skipped this question**

**Q23** Approximate percentage of clients served in each economic group.

**Respondent skipped this question**

**Q24** Approximate percentage of clients served from grant funds in each population category.

**Respondent skipped this question**