



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

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INTERIOR DEPARTMENT ADDS GULF COAST INVENTORY TO COASTAL RESOURCE MAPPING SERIES

The Nation's Gulf Coast is a cornucopia of riches for many segments of American society: sportsman's paradise and vacationer's winter haven, fertile fishing grounds for commercial shrimpers and backyard of the country's oil and natural gas industries.

How well these competing and sometimes conflicting uses co-exist in harmony with the diverse fish and wildlife resources of this treasure-trove depends upon the skill with which coastal development is planned and managed.

As the third in its series of natural resource inventory maps, the Interior Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has just published the "Gulf Coast Ecological Inventory" as a major new planning tool for government and industry. Now, before coastal development decisions are made, an accurate and highly detailed profile of sensitive animal and plant species and the places where they live can be studied with an eye toward avoiding future conflicts over their protection and use.

"The success with which our Atlantic and Pacific coastal inventories has been received by developers, planners, and conservationists has convinced us of the need for such a product and its value toward informed decisionmaking," says Fish and Wildlife Service Director Robert Jantzen. "Our role has been to catalogue and depict this information in a format that may lessen the chances of costly and avoidable resource conflicts."

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The "Gulf Coast Ecological Inventory" is the first comprehensive series of natural resource maps that depict 538 important fish and wildlife species and their habitats along the coastal fringes of the six Gulf Coast States. Major land use designations, such as national wildlife refuges and national and State parks, in the 183,400-square-mile region are also plotted.

The inventory's 22 maps, designated as the Fish and Wildlife Service's "National Ecological Map Series," present their ecological data at a scale of 1:250,000 (1 inch represents about 4 miles) on U.S. Geological Survey topographic base maps. They are formatted on 1 x 2 degree sheets, lithographically reproduced in five colors, and presented in a convenient 4 x 8 inch pocket-fold size.

The U.S. Geological Survey provided the technical assistance in producing the series and it carries the same names as the standard USGS topographic map series (Key West, Miami, West Palm Beach, Charlotte Harbor, St. Petersburg, Tarpon Springs, Gainesville, Valdosta, Apalachicola, Tallahassee, Pensacola, Mobile, Breton Sound, Baton Rouge, New Orleans, Port Arthur, Houston, Bay City, Beeville, Corpus Christi, Port Isabel, and Brownsville).

In addition to the maps, a 191-page accompanying narrative report, "Gulf Coast Ecological Inventory -- User's Guide and Information Base," is also now available to provide detailed explanations of the ecological data displayed on each map.

"Gulf Coast Ecological Inventory" maps are available in 22-map sets or individually, at \$3.25 per map. They can be ordered from the Western Distribution Branch, U.S. Geological Survey, Box 25286, Federal Center, Denver, Colorado 80225. Orders must include a check or money order payable to the "U.S. Geological Survey" and should specify the "National Ecological Map Series -- Gulf Coast Ecological Inventory" and the particular map sections desired.

The companion narrative report, "Gulf Coast Ecological Inventory -- User's Guide and Information Base," can be ordered from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C. 20402, for \$7.00 (specify stock # 024-010-00635-8). Orders for this report must also be prepaid to the "Superintendent of Documents."

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Editors only: Sample individual maps are available from (202) 653-8737.