



Better Bycatch Reduction Devices for the Gulf Shrimp Fleet

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

- Identify new advances in BRDs
- Evaluate bycatch reduction and shrimp retention capabilities of new BRD ideas through research and industry pilot testing
- Certify successful BRD designs for use in the Gulf shrimp industry
- Increase voluntary use of new BRDs in the U.S. Gulf of Mexico shrimp fishery via outreach and incentives
- Provide training and outreach on new BRDs for optimal performance

Finfish bycatch in shrimp trawls impact both shrimpers and the environment. It causes additional labor for shrimpers who must sort and remove unwanted catch, and it is an environmental concern as many of these finfish species are commercially, recreationally, and ecologically important.

This project aims to improve bycatch reduction by identifying, and increasing use of more efficient bycatch reduction devices (BRDs) for the Gulf of Mexico shrimp trawl fishery. Successful BRD designs could be certified for use to provide Gulf shrimpers with additional BRD options.

The **initial phase (BRD Hunt)** of the project includes identifying advances in BRD designs through dockside outreach and surveys within the Gulf shrimp fishery, as well as with others involved in shrimp trawl BRD development nationally and internationally.

Phase two (Testing) will include evaluations of the newly identified BRDs

using prototypes on research and active commercial fishing vessels. Successful BRDs will be put forward for **Phase three (Certification)** testing on commercial fishing vessels.

In the **final phase (Industry-Wide Use)** of the project, newly certified BRDs will be advanced through dockside assistance, workshops, and trainings to help fishermen install and use them correctly, as well as incentives (such as BRDs) to encourage their use.

Engagement with the Gulf shrimp fishery and its supporting industries will continue throughout the project duration to collect feedback on the use and effectiveness of all new BRDs identified.

This project is a collaborative effort amongst Louisiana Sea Grant, Texas Sea Grant, NOAA Restoration Center, and NOAA Fisheries to restore finfish populations injured by the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill through development and certification of new BRDs for the shrimp industry throughout the Gulf of Mexico.



PROJECT TIMEFRAME: 6-7 YEARS

PHASE 1: BRD HUNT

Identify new BRD designs and current ideas within the Gulf of Mexico fishery, while also exploring gear used in other fisheries around the world.

PHASE 2: TESTING

NOAA gear tests and trials on commercial vessels.

PHASE 3: CERTIFICATION

BRDs proven to be successful after field testing may be added to the certified BRD list and used legally.

PHASE 4: INDUSTRY- WIDE USE

Newly certified BRDs will be made available to industry with incentives to encourage voluntary adoption.

Why Should I Get Involved?

You can contribute industry knowledge and aid testing at all project phases for new BRDs. Fishery insights during this process can improve both shrimp retention and bycatch reduction and benefit the shrimp industry.

How Can I Get Involved?

- Provide input at shrimp industry meetings hosted by the project team to discuss new BRDs.
- Sign up to test new BRDs on your vessel.
- Sign up to use newly certified BRDs in the final phases of the project.

Contact the project team to get involved.

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For more information on the project, please visit
www.laseagrant.org/outreach/projects/better-brds/



This is one of 18 Open Ocean Trustee Implementation Group Final Restoration Plan 2 projects selected to restore natural resource injuries caused by the *Deepwater Horizon* oil spill. Based on public input, this is one of several projects revised to increase opportunities for the fishing industry to engage in restoration efforts.

For more information, please visit www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov/restoration-areas/open-ocean.

Better Bycatch Reduction Devices for the Gulf of Mexico Commercial Shrimp Trawl Fishery Project

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