

Proposed Nearshore Artificial Reefs

▶ The Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries' Artificial Reef Program (the Program) is proposing to create new 'planning areas' for nearshore artificial reefs. Nearshore are those waters between Louisiana's coastline and the 100-foot depth contour. Because these reef sites have the potential to impact shrimpers, we seek to inform shrimpers of our efforts and solicit their comments.

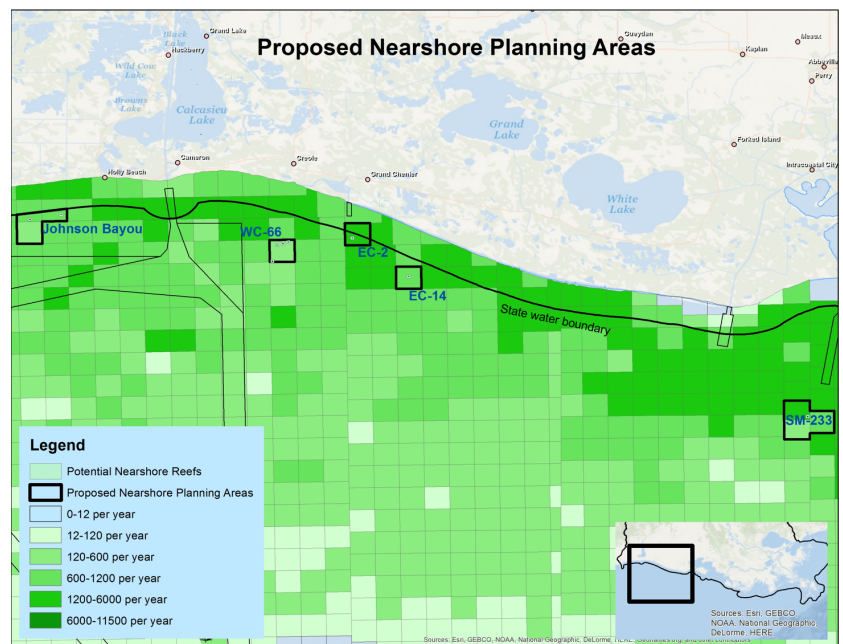
The Program has an Inshore and Nearshore Artificial Reef Plan and maps of the sites that detail how we will construct these reefs. They are available at: www.LaFisheriesForward.org/artificialreef

Where will the reefs be located?

The Program has identified 12 potential planning areas, 5 along the western coast, in which to develop nearshore reef sites (see map at right).

To avoid currently trawlable bottom, the Program will be targeting standing oil & gas platforms as sites for the reefs themselves—to 'replace' the platform with a reef when it is removed.

The Program will also try to avoid developing reefs within the 3-mile line to avoid undue burden on shrimpers who do not have federal permits.



What materials will be used?

Materials are likely to include limestone; large, fabricated materials; recycled concrete and construction materials; and in some instances, the base of an oil & gas platform.

NOTE: Some of these materials could be large enough to snag shrimp gear. It will be important to mark these sites on your personal maps.

What is the water depth/clearance?

The planning areas have water depths from 22-75 feet. Clearance above reefs will likewise vary, but the Program will develop reefs with at least 10-12 feet of clearance above all materials.



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How will the coordinates be communicated?

The Program is responsible for notifying regulatory agencies: US Army Corps of Engineers, Coast Guard, and National Ocean Service (NOS) of the construction and completion of all artificial reefs. The NOS charts artificial reefs upon completion, and these charts/maps are available online and through various services. We will likewise work with the Department of Natural Resources and the LFF program to ensure the location and size of each reef are broadcast to all fishermen.

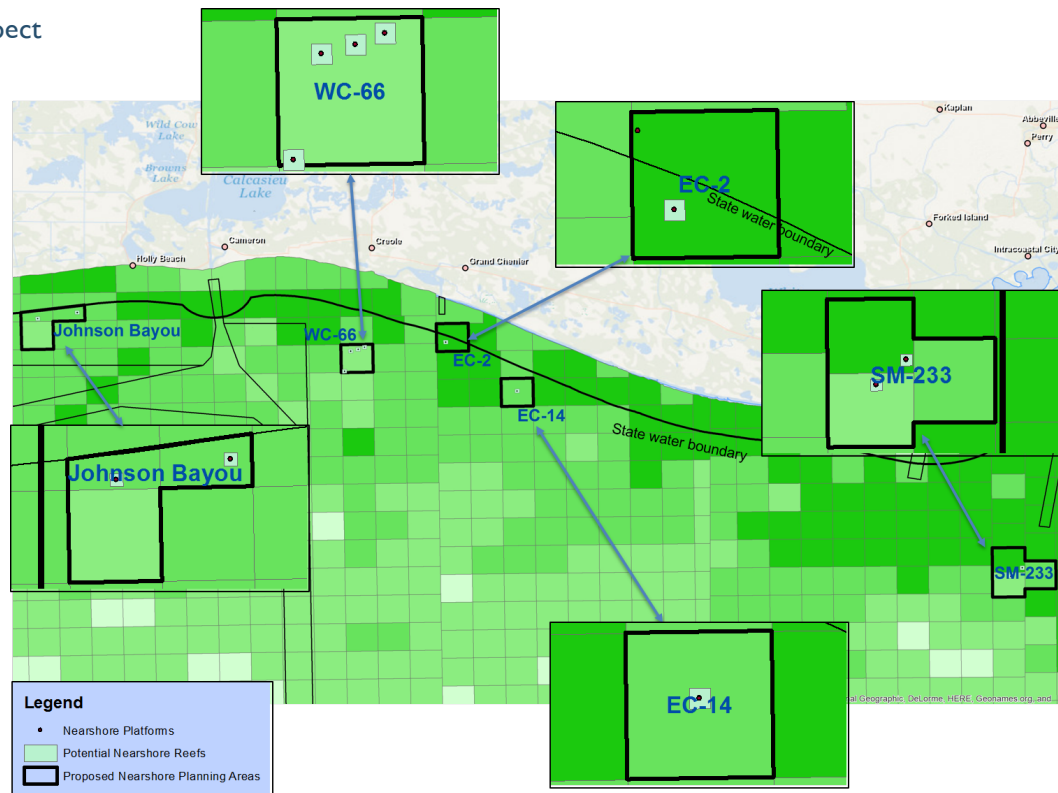
Will these reefs be considered 'hangs'?

Artificial reefs are distinct from hangs in that they are intentionally deployed and charted on nautical maps; therefore they do not meet the requirement for compensation through the gear compensation fund.

Will buoys mark the sites?

Typically, artificial reefs are not marked with buoys; we do not expect these sites to be marked.

Map detail of areas



For more information or to give input, contact Mike McDonough at (225) 763-5418 or mmcdonough@wlf.la.gov