



NFWF

# Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund

**RECIPIENT**

City of Niceville

**AMOUNT**

\$4,223,000

**LEVERAGE**

\$500,000

**LOCATION**

Okaloosa County, Florida

**ANNOUNCEMENT DATE**

November 2014

**PROGRESS UPDATE**

The construction plans for the 31st St/First Baptist Church Stormwater Improvements are 90% complete. The Boggy Bayou Headwaters Project is gathering finalized data before permits are applied for. The final land acquisition decision for the Thomas Branch project is underway. Final design layout and permitting will move forward afterwards. (August 2016)

The Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund, administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), supports projects to remedy harm and eliminate or reduce the risk of harm to Gulf Coast natural resources affected by the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill. To learn more about NFWF, go to [www.nfwf.org](http://www.nfwf.org).

## FLORIDA

# Boggy Bayou Watershed Water Quality Improvement

This project will address significant water quality concerns in the Boggy Bayou area of northwestern Choctawhatchee Bay. Elements of the project include the installation of sediment collection and treatment facilities at the outfall into Boggy Bayou, the addition of stormwater management controls at Thomas Branch, the creation of habitat and living shorelines, the removal of exotic species, and the restoration of emergent grasses at the headwaters of Boggy Bayou. The City of Niceville has developed a comprehensive watershed management plan to improve water quality and habitat conditions through stormwater retrofits. The city is in the process of completing projects in four of the basins identified in their plan, and this project will fund work in three additional priority areas in the Boggy Bayou watershed to contribute to implementation of Niceville’s Stormwater Master Plan and Boggy Bayou Restoration Assessment.

The Choctawhatchee River and Bay watershed support a wide array of aquatic and wetland resources. EPA determined that waters in Boggy Bayou are significantly impaired for dissolved oxygen and nutrients. The Seagrass Integrated Mapping and Monitoring (SIMM)

program found Choctawhatchee Bay had lost 38%, or 1,638 acres, of seagrass cover. Addressing stormwater treatment and the restoration of the Boggy Bayou headwaters will improve benthic habitat quality, increase biological diversity and productivity, and improve water quality to assist in seagrass recovery.



Credit: Florida DEP



Improved water quality and habitat restoration in the Boggy Bayou Watershed will provide significant and measurable benefits for this important aquatic habitat.