

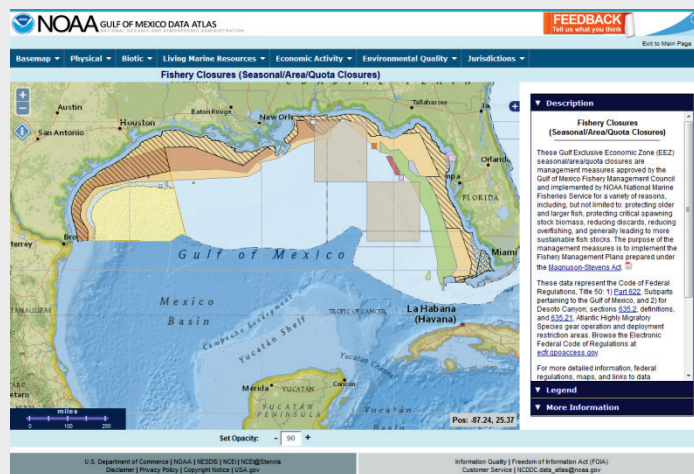


Gulf of Mexico Data Atlas

What is the Data Atlas?

Based on the idea of a traditional atlas but offered via the Internet by NOAA, the Gulf of Mexico Data Atlas provides answers to questions related to the physical environment, marine resources, and economic activity in the Gulf of Mexico. Information is presented in the form of map plates with descriptions written by recognized subject matter experts that explain how the data were gathered and how they are relevant. Users can link directly to the data source and view a complete metadata record for each plate.

The Gulf of Mexico Data Atlas was created in answer to an evolving need. As plans to restore the Gulf of Mexico after recent disasters have progressed, federal and state agencies have turned to NOAA for data and information about all aspects of the Gulf of Mexico. One of the most requested resources for that data and information was the "Gulf of Mexico Coastal and Ocean Zones Strategic Assessment Data Atlas" published by NOAA's National Ocean Service in 1985 as a large hardcopy tabletop book. NOAA was challenged to provide access to these and similar data in digital form for easy discovery and ready access.



AREAS OF COVERAGE

The Gulf of Mexico Data Atlas contains data from:

- Alabama
- Florida
- Louisiana
- Mississippi
- Texas
- Cuba
- Mexico

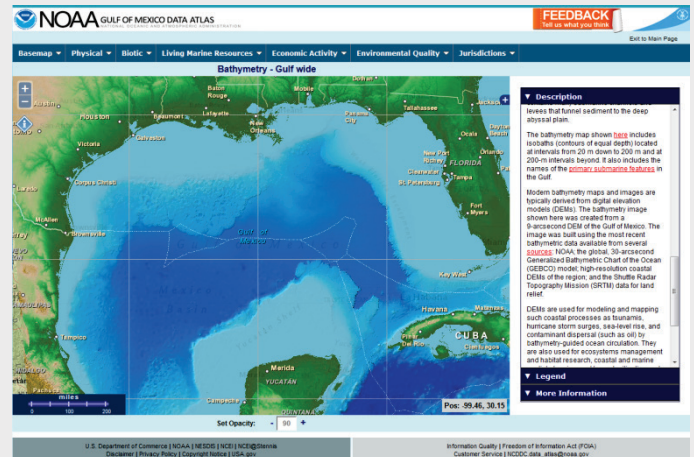
Meeting the Challenge

To meet that challenge, the Center for Coasts, Oceans, and Geophysics formed a multi-agency executive steering committee to guide the development of a new atlas and to contribute data and expertise. The resulting Gulf of Mexico Data Atlas updates and expands the 1985 atlas in an online, digital format. Users can even view a high resolution image of the original 1985 map if available.

The Gulf of Mexico Data Atlas has data from all five Gulf States (Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas), as well as Mexico and Cuba, and from federal, state, non-governmental agencies, and academia. The seaward boundaries of the Atlas extend to the Yucatan Channel and the Straits of Florida.

Becoming a Partner

The Gulf of Mexico Data Atlas will expand with new data to improve the spatial and temporal understanding of the Gulf of Mexico. Expanding partnerships among data providers via a collaborative network is a vital component of the Gulf of Mexico Data Atlas. If you are a collector/provider of Gulf of Mexico data observations and would like to become an active partner or contribute data, please contact ncddc.data_atlas@noaa.gov. Guidance is available that clarifies the requirements necessary to submit data in support of a new or existing plate.



The Atlas currently contains over 256 maps in 79 subject areas. www.ncddc.noaa.gov/website/DataAtlas/atlas.htm

MAPS ARE AVAILABLE IN SIX TOPIC AREAS:

- **Physical** (e.g., bathymetry, climatology)
- **Biotic** (chemosynthetic communities, deep sea corals, aquatic vegetation)
- **Living Marine Resources** (oysters, shrimp, grouper, turtles)
- **Economic Activity** (shipping & navigation, oil & gas, community social vulnerability)
- **Environmental Quality** (oil spills)
- **Jurisdictions** (marine, fishery closures, protected areas)