

Alabama Gulf Ecological Management Site (GEMS)

The GEMS Program was established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Gulf of Mexico Program and five gulf states to advance conservation efforts of coastal areas that represent unique habitats for fish, wildlife and other natural resources of particular significance.

Bon Secour

National Wildlife Refuge

Description

- The Bon Secour National Wildlife Refuge, 7,100 acres in area, lies directly west of Gulf Shores, Alabama on the Fort Morgan peninsula and stretches to portions of Little Dauphin Island.
- The Refuge was established in 1980 as undisturbed habitat for migratory birds and other vulnerable species.
- Consisting of five units, the Refuge is a combination of barrier islands, low-lying marshes and highly erodible mainland shores.

Protected and Managed Lands

Fort Morgan Unit (510 acres) is located in Baldwin County at the western terminus of the Fort Morgan Peninsula.

Little Dauphin Island Unit (850 acres) is located in Mobile County on Little Dauphin Island.

Sand Bayou Unit (1,132 acres acquired and 155 acres in acquisitions or leases pending) is located in Baldwin County bordered to the north by the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway and to the east and west by Oyster Bay and Bon Secour Bay.

Little Point Clear Unit (1,990 acres) is located in Baldwin County to the east of the Fort Morgan Unit.

Perdue Unit (2,632 acres) is located in Baldwin County adjacent to Little Lagoon. It is the largest unit on the refuge.

Photo by Steve Hillebrand/USFWS

Photo by USFWS

Bon Secour

National Wildlife Refuge

Location

Alabama, Baldwin
and Mobile counties

Relative Size

The GEM site is
approximately
7,100 acres.



- Bon Secour NWR
- Lillian Swamp
- Lower Perdido Bay
- North Mississippi Sound
- Mobile Tensaw
- OB Maritime Forest-GSP
- Perdido River Corridor
- Weeks Bay NERR

Photo by Steve Hildebrand/USFWS



Brackish Tidal Marsh

Photo by USFWS



Alabama Beach Mouse

Photo by Kate Sampson/NOAA



Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle

Bon Secour NWR Facts:

- Habitats include: Beaches and sand dunes, scrub forests, interdunal swales, fresh and saltwater marshes, freshwater wetlands, maritime forests, oyster reefs, riparian buffers and pine savanna.
- The Refuge is designated as Alabama Beach Mouse Critical Habitat, containing the largest contiguous tract of habitat vital to this endangered species.
- The Refuge's beaches serve as nesting sites for loggerhead, Kemp's Ridley and green sea turtles. They also contain important breeding habitat for shorebirds, including Snowy Plovers.
- Containing one of the largest undeveloped parcels of land on the Alabama Coast, the Refuge is a significant example of an intact coastal barrier ecosystem.
- Bon Secour NWR derives its name from the French phrase meaning "safe harbor" due to the community's secluded location on the inside coast of the Fort Morgan Peninsula of southern Alabama.

