# *Deepwater Horizon* Oil Spill Natural Resource Damage Assessment

## Emergency Restoration

### What Is Emergency Restoration?

Emergency restoration actions are those taken by trustees prior to the completion of a natural resource damage assessment and restoration planning process to prevent or reduce continuing natural resource injuries and avoid potentially irreversible loss of natural resources.

*Oiled Kemp's ridley turtle*

*Seagrass scarred by response vessels*

A natural resource damage assessment is the process used by natural resource trustees to develop the public's claim for natural resource damages against the party or parties responsible for the spill and to seek compensation for the harm done to natural resources and services.

### When Is Emergency Restoration Appropriate?

As established in natural resource damage assessment regulations, trustees may undertake emergency restoration actions when the following criteria are met:

- The action is needed to avoid irreversible loss of natural resources, or to prevent or reduce any continuing danger to natural resources or similar need for emergency action.
- The action will not be undertaken by the lead response agency.
- The action is feasible and likely to succeed.
- Delay of the action likely would result in increased natural resource damages.
- The cost of the action is not unreasonable.

### Is Emergency Restoration Being Pursued for the *Deepwater Horizon* Oil Spill?

Yes. In 2010, the *Deepwater Horizon* Oil Spill Natural Resource Damage Assessment Trustees requested funding from BP for three emergency restoration projects:

1. **Submerged Aquatic Vegetation**: This project would prevent additional injury by restoring submerged aquatic vegetation beds damaged by propeller scarring and other response vessel impacts.
2. **Shorebird Habitat Enhancements**: This project provides alternative wetland habitat in Mississippi for waterfowl and shorebirds that might otherwise winter in oil-affected habitats. The project was funded by BP and has been implemented.
3. **Sea Turtles**: This project improves the nesting and rearing success of endangered sea turtles on the Texas coast, including Padre Island National Seashore.

Some of the Trustees have independently pursued additional emergency restoration actions.