

Wildlife Tourism and the Gulf Coast Economy

Economic Study by Datu | July 2013



Wildlife tourism is a vital component of Florida's economy

Millions of tourists come to Florida every year to experience the natural wonders of our state. The tourism industry – which includes hotels, restaurants, retail and tour guides catering to these tourists – provides more than **280,000 jobs** in Florida and wildlife tourism generates over **\$8 billion** in spending every year.

Tourism depends on a healthy environment

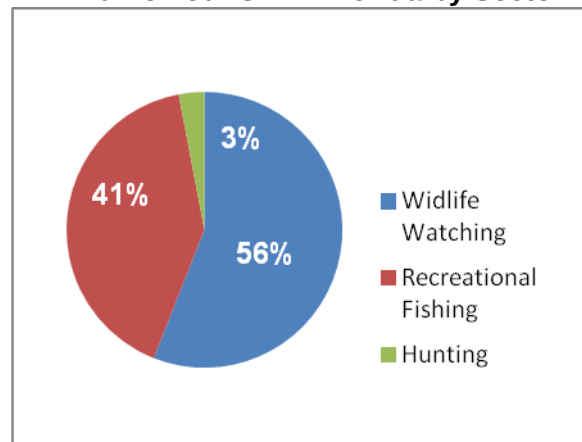
Wildlife tourism relies on the natural beauty of Florida, which in turn relies on thriving ecosystems. Repairing the damage to these ecosystems caused by the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill and the channelization of the Mississippi River is critical to maintaining and growing this critical sector of Florida's economy.



Wildlife tourism matters to Florida

- Florida's 23 coastal counties host over **16,000 wildlife tourism-related businesses**.
- State and local governments generate nearly **\$1 billion in tax revenue** from tourism, a sum that could pay salaries of over 16,000 nurses.
- Over **7.6 million wildlife tourists** visit Florida every year.

Wildlife Tourism in Florida by Sector



Restoring Our Environment Restores Our Economy

The RESTORE Act dedicates fines paid by parties responsible for the oil spill to restoration in Florida and the other Gulf states. This is an unprecedented opportunity to bolster our state's natural resources and the industries that depend on them.