

Innovasea Helps Secure Federal Grant for Next Phase of Oil Rig Aquaculture Project in Gulf of Mexico

Unique project would transform abandoned platform off Texas coast into working fish farm and create blueprint for future aquaculture re-use projects

BOSTON – Innovasea, a global leader in technologically advanced aquatic solutions for aquaculture and fish tracking, announced today that it has helped the Gulf Offshore Research Institute secure federal grant funds to continue its plan to repurpose a defunct oil rig in the Gulf of Mexico for aquaculture.

The \$100,000 grant from the [Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission](#) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration will help GORI finance the next phase of its proposal to transform Station Padre, a former oil platform 25 miles east of Padre Island, Texas, into a working fish farm.

“We’re grateful for this grant and are excited to put the funds to use proving the viability of platform-based aquaculture in the United States and elsewhere,” said Kent Satterlee, executive director of [GORI](#). “With the renewed push toward a low-carbon future, we believe offshore fish farming is the best way for the country to provide a sustainable, domestically-produced source of protein.”



The grant money will go toward preliminary design of the net pen system and a more in-depth financial analysis of the overall project, both of which will be performed by Innovasea. It will also fund a species study by the [Rosenstiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science](#) at the University of Miami and research into the various permits that will be required to proceed with the project.

“This is a creative project that could potentially pave the way for the reuse of

abandoned oil platforms and help spur offshore aquaculture in the Gulf of Mexico,” said David Kelly, CEO of Innovasea. “Rather than spending millions of dollars to dismantle these pieces of ocean infrastructure – and disturb the ecosystems that have sprung up around them naturally in the process – it makes sense to explore productive new uses for them like offshore aquaculture.”

Last year Innovasea assisted GORI in examining whether Station Padre was suitable for re-use as a commercial fish farm and discovered favorable conditions. The rig sits in about 150 feet of water that offers excellent visibility and is conducive to aquaculture.

There are hundreds of abandoned oil rigs in the Gulf of Mexico waiting to be dismantled. Dismantling a platform can cost up to \$10 million, and in 2015 the Government Accountability Office estimated [it will eventually cost \\$38 billion to remove the 1,800 or so platforms from the Gulf of Mexico.](#)

Built by Shell in the 1980s, Station Padre is now owned by Peregrine Oil and Gas. Natural gas production there ended in 2015.

GORI is currently seeking re-use permits for the platform with the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement and the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management.

About Innovasea

Fueled by leading-edge technology and a passion for research and development, Innovasea is revolutionizing aquaculture and advancing the science of fish tracking to make our oceans and freshwater ecosystems sustainable for future generations. With 250 employees worldwide, we provide full end-to-end solutions for fish farming and aquatic species research – including quality equipment that's efficient and built to last, expert consulting services, and innovative platforms and products that deliver unrivaled data, information and insights.

Learn more at Innovasea.com and follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and [Twitter](#).

About GORI

The Gulf Offshore Research Institute is a not-for-profit corporation engaged in the research of offshore platforms in the Gulf of Mexico and how they can be repurposed once they are no longer producing oil and gas. These platforms perform significant ecological services which can be maintained through conversion to artificial reefs or through repurposing to alternate marine-related uses. Through its subsidiary, MMEERSET L3C, we work with platform owners to identify the platform options, including managing the repurposed platforms.

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