

Valuing Forested Wetland Ecosystem Services – Belle Pointe Coastal Mitigation Bank

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In 2023, Earth Economics partnered with [Delta Land Services](#), a regional leader in coastal forested wetland restoration activities, to value the broader benefits of their work restoring coastal wetlands.

Delta began development of the Belle Pointe Coastal Mitigation Bank (BPCMB) in 2016. The 387.6-acre Wetland Mitigation Bank was previously agricultural land, which flooded frequently, requiring regular pumping to allow for farming. Annual sugar cane burns released smoke and ash, and seasonal agrichemical treatments exacerbated local community health.

Delta restored the site to coastal bottomland hardwood and coastal cypress swamp, with additional investments to support ecosystem services and biodiversity, such as protecting wetlands important for wading birds and waterfowl, removing non-native species, and purchasing an additional 187-acre wildlife corridor to connect to a nearby wildlife management area.

Restoring wetland ecosystems improves several ecosystem services of great social, economic, and environmental value to communities. Earth Economics found that restored forested wetlands provide \$3 million in benefits each year — \$1,813 per person to nearby residents and students. By permanently protecting the wetlands, the bank will create \$101 million (USD 2021) in ecosystem services.