



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

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News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Volunteers Needed for Deer Island Restoration Project

BILOXI, Miss. – An ongoing Deer Island restoration project is in need of volunteers to help build 8,000 wire bags, fill them with oyster shells and deploy them along the island's shoreline. Volunteers also are needed to place logs made of coconut fiber along the shoreline. The Deer Island restoration project is part of an ongoing effort to restore Deer Island to its original size prior to Hurricane Katrina.

If you are interested in learning more about these alternative shoreline protection strategies (known as living shorelines), the restoration project or becoming a volunteer, you can join Marty Jones, of the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources Shellfish Bureau, and Chris Boyd, of Mississippi State University and the Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium, for an informational meeting from 9-11 a.m., Tuesday, March 5, at the Mississippi State University Coastal Research and Extension Center, 1815 Pops Ferry Road, in Biloxi.

Space is limited. RSVP by March 4 to Chris Boyd, cboyd@ext.msstate.edu or 228-546-1025.

This shoreline stabilization effort is part of a Mississippi Department of Marine Resources project to reduce erosion of the island and is being funded through the Gulf of Mexico Foundation. Hands On Mississippi and the Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium are partners in the project.

One-hundred-sixty coconut fiber coir logs 20 inches in diameter by 10 feet long will be placed along the marked shoreline. Volunteers will create 8,000 bags out of one-inch mesh by 24-inch width poultry netting. The bags will be filled with oyster shell using MDMR equipment and a conveyor belt offered for use from Wayne Eldridge. An estimated 320 cubic yards of oyster shell will be purchased from Crystal Seas Seafood. The bags will be transported to the site by the MDMR vessel *Conservationist*. MDMR staff along with volunteers will use MDMR boats to transfer the bags off the *Conservationist* to the site. Bags of recycled oyster shell will be placed along the seaward side of the coir logs 10 feet wide by 1,600 feet long.

The coir logs and oyster shell should reduce erosion along the shoreline and create an inter-tidal oyster reef. The poultry netting will eventually rust away leaving oyster reef without exposed wire.

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources is dedicated to enhancing, protecting and conserving marine interests of the state by managing all marine life, public trust wetlands, adjacent uplands and waterfront areas to provide for the optimal commercial, recreational, educational and economic uses of these resources consistent with environmental concerns and social changes. Visit the DMR online at www.dmr.ms.gov.

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