

# Coastal Markers



Volume 7, Issue 2

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

Fall 2003

## DMR receives first place Gulf Guardian Award

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (DMR) received a first place Gulf Guardian Award in the Government Category for its Derelict Crab Trap Removal Program. The award was presented to Bill Richardson and Traci Floyd of the DMR's Shrimp & Crab Bureau Sept. 24 during a ceremony held at the Mississippi Coast Coliseum in Biloxi in conjunction with the Southern States Environmental Conference and Exhibition.

"The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources is continuing to set the standard for other states to follow when it comes to the preservation of our state's waterways as well as the Gulf of Mexico,"

Governor Ronnie Musgrove said. "This award is a testament to the tremendous dedi-



From left: DMR Executive Director William Walker, Traci Floyd, Mike Brainard and Bill Richardson of the DMR's Shrimp and Crab Bureau and DMR Fisheries Director Corky Perret accept a first place Gulf Guardian Award for the Mississippi Derelict Crab Trap Removal Program.

cation of the DMR staff and their good work for our entire state."

The Gulf of Mexico Program developed the Gulf Guardian awards in 2000 to recognize environmental excellence in Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas. First, second, and third place awards are given each year in six categories: Business, Individuals, Youth/Education, Nonprofit/Civic Organizations, Partnerships and Government. Underwritten by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Gulf of Mexico Program is a unique non-regulatory partnership working with interests across the Gulf to link environmental protection with sound economic development of the Gulf Coast states.

"Derelict crab traps can pose a serious navigational hazard to boaters and may be a See **GUARDIAN**, page 3

## Secretary of State presents tidelands check to Commission

Mississippi Secretary of State Eric Clark presented the Commission on Marine Resources with a check for \$5,697,689 to be used for FY2004 Tidelands Funds projects at a ceremony held Oct. 9, 2003 at Forrest Avenue Pier on Biloxi's Back Bay. The money is from tideland lease revenue collected on the Mississippi Gulf Coast last year.

The Commission on Marine Resources will distribute the grants to tidelands funds recipients over the next two months. Grants will be used for projects in Hancock, Harrison and Jackson counties. The DMR oversees



DMR Deputy Director Dr. Fred Deegen (left) and Commission on Marine Resources (CMR) member Dr. Vernon Asper (center) accept the \$5.69 million FY2004 Tidelands Trust Fund check from Secretary of State Dr. Eric Clark (right) during a ceremony on Oct. 9, 2003 in Biloxi.

the progress of the projects. See **TIDELANDS**, page 9

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Governor

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**Managing your marine resources today...for a sound tomorrow**

Director's Notes

Dr. William Walker



It has been scarcely more than a year since I was first named Executive Director of the Department of Marine Resources, and I can now honestly say that I am privileged and honored to have become a part of such a dynamic organization.

That we have accomplished much over the course of a year's time is at no time more evident than now in the fall as we are busily involved with the preparation of our annual report, some 70 pages or so of narrative summaries of program objectives and accomplishments.

What is less evident when reading these pages is the hard work by everyone involved—agency staff and others—who have contributed towards these accomplishments and who continue to make contributions towards the improved stewardship of Mississippi's valuable marine resources.

It is by no mere coincidence that the Department has won a Gulf Guardian Award for its derelict crab trap removal program. It is also no coincidence that the Department was recently recognized by the American Red Cross for its efforts in organizing a blood drive. All of these things require hard work and initiative; and, in this season of giving thanks, I am thankful to see that our staff has an abundance of both.

Executive Director

**Thank you!**

A very special thanks to the following employees who contributed to this issue of Coastal Markers:

Jeff Davis  
Dale Diaz  
Stanley Hamilton  
Irvin Jackson  
Corky Perret

Christine Popwell  
Amy Taylor  
Mike Walker  
Frank Wescovich  
Mark Woodrey

**Boat and Water Safety Course Schedule (Nov.-Dec. 2003)**

Call the DMR Boat and Water Safety Bureau at (228) 435-1332 for more details. All classes are free. Pre-registration is required.

- **Nov. 6-7**, Bolton Building Auditorium, 1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi, 6-9 p.m.
- **Nov. 8**, Mississippi Power Co. Auditorium, 2326 Telephone Road, Pascagoula, 9 a.m.- 4 p.m.
- **Nov. 15**, Mississippi Power Co. Auditorium, 300 U.S. 90, Bay St. Louis, 9 a.m.- 4p.m.
- **Nov. 17-18**, Mississippi Power Co. Auditorium, 2326 Telephone Road, Pascagoula, 6-9 p.m.
- **Nov. 22**, Bolton Building Auditorium, 1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi, 9 a.m.- 4p.m.
- **Nov. 24-25**, Mississippi Power Co. Auditorium, 300 U.S. 90, Bay St. Louis, 6-9 p.m.
- **Dec. 1-2**, Bolton Building Auditorium, 1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi, 6-9 p.m.
- **Dec. 6**, Mississippi Power Co. Auditorium, 2326 Telephone Road, Pascagoula, 9 a.m.- 4 p.m.
- **Dec. 13**, Mississippi Power Co. Auditorium, 300 U.S. 90 Bay St. Louis, 9 a.m.- 4p.m.
- **Dec. 15-16**, Mississippi Power Co. Auditorium, 2326 Telephone Road, Pascagoula, 6-9 p.m.
- **Dec. 20**, Bolton Building Auditorium, 1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
- **Dec. 22-23**, Mississippi Power Co. Auditorium, 300 U.S. 90, Bay St. Louis, 6-9 p.m.

Information about your marine



Visit the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources Web site:

[www.dmr.state.ms.us](http://www.dmr.state.ms.us)

## OYSTER SEASON UPDATE: Season opens in two phases, grant received

The 2003-2004 MS Oyster Season opened in two phases. The first phase opened on Sept. 10, 2003. The areas approved in the first phase were areas that did not receive substantial harvesting pressure in the last oyster season. The initial commercial sack limit was set at 30 sacks for dredging and 20 sacks for tonging.

The second phase of the 2003-2004 MS Oyster Season opened on Oct. 10, 2003 in areas that have traditionally been highly productive.

Two oyster cultch plants have taken place since the close of oyster season in May 2003. The plants place suitable material in the water for oyster larvae to attach. A total of 15,900 cubic yards of cultch material (about 19 barge loads) were planted on 178 acres of Mississippi reefs. These projects were funded by the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality through the Mississippi Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP) and shell retention fees collected from harvesters and processors. CIAP is a federally sponsored program that provides money for the state and counties to address statewide coastal issues.

## Sen. Billy Hewes elected GSMFC chair

Sen. Billy Hewes III of Gulfport was elected chairman of the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission (GSMFC) during its 54th annual meeting held Oct. 13-16, in Corpus Christi, Texas. Sen. Hewes serves in the Mississippi State Legislature.



Sen. Hewes

The GSMFC is a five-state consortium of the Gulf of Mexico bordering states with marine fisheries interest and responsibility. The Compact was created in 1949 by Federal Legislation, Public Law 81-66, and state-enabling legislation. Sen. Hewes is the legislative member from Mississippi who serves on the 15-member body along with other state legislators, the heads of each state's marine agency, and governors' appointees to coordinate marine policy, law and research in the Gulf.

Sen. Hewes has extensive experience dealing with marine issues having served as Chairman of the Ports and Marine Resources Committee for the Legislature and working on marine resource legislation within the state. He also serves on Business & Finan-



Cultch material is deployed on a reef site near the mouth of the Bay of St. Louis using pressure hoses last August.

The DMR has recently been awarded an \$89,000 grant to assist in the planting of cultch material in 2004. The grant is through the Shell Marine Habitat Program which is a special program of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation created in partnership with the Shell Oil Company Foundation. Shell retention fees will be used for matching money for the grant, helping to provide additional value for shell retention fees collected from harvesters and processors.

cial Institutions; Economic Development, Tourism & Parks; Environmental Protection, Conservation & Water Resources; Finance, Highways & Transportation; Insurance, Municipalities and PEER committees. Sen. Hewes sponsored and achieved passage of derelict crab trap removal legislation in Mississippi, which other states have used as a model, to help remove abandoned and lost crab traps in local waters. The highly successful program, which recently received a Gulf Guardian Award, has helped with navigation, safety, and "ghost" fishing of lost traps thereby improving the biological health of blue crabs and reducing the public's interaction with lost traps while fishing and boating.

When asked what he hopes to accomplish during his term as Chairman he replied, "I want to help the living marine resources of the Gulf of Mexico, for which we are responsible, be as healthy and useful to our citizens as possible." He plans to work for actions regionally and nationally that will help answer questions that limit fisheries advances in the Gulf of Mexico.

The DMR is a member of the GSMFC.

GUARDIAN, continued from  
page 1

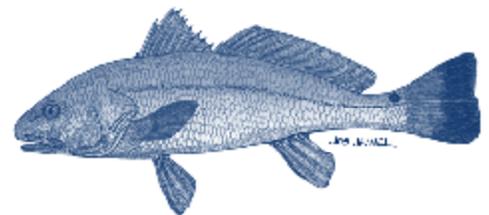
danger to marine and aquatic life. The closed crab season allowed us to remove these traps from Mississippi's marine waters and collect valuable data about the quantity and type of marine life that may become ensnared in these abandoned traps," DMR Executive Director William Walker said. "Our Shrimp & Crab Bureau staff have logged countless hours over the last four years removing and recycling derelict crab traps. It is gratifying to see their efforts recognized with a Gulf Guardian Award."

More than 4,000 derelict crab traps have been retrieved and recycled through the Derelict Crab Trap Removal Program since the program began in 1999. Derelict traps are defined as traps, which are un-buoyed, unmarked and not actively fished. These traps are abandoned or lost due to many factors including floats that are cut by boat propellers, caught in shrimp trawls, storms and theft. These traps are a navigational hazard and may contribute to crab and fin-fish mortality.

"The success of the Derelict Crab Trap Removal Program is a direct result of the commitment of the DMR staff and of the partners, volunteers and fishermen in the community who devote their time and energy to this effort," DMR fisheries biologist Traci Floyd said.

The Derelict Crab Trap Removal Program, a joint effort of the DMR and Gulf Coast Research Lab, is funded in part by the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality through the Mississippi Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP). CIAP is a federally sponsored program that provides money for the state and counties to address statewide coastal issues.

Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission is also a partner in the Derelict Crab Trap Removal Program.



State Record Breakers!  
See page 7

# MS Coastal Cleanup volunteers

Boaters and land-based volunteers flocked to Mississippi's beaches, islands and waterways in record numbers on Sept. 20 to pick up marine debris at 57 designated cleanup sites during the 15th annual Mississippi Coastal Cleanup, part of the International Coastal Cleanup—the world's largest single-day volunteer effort to clean up the marine environment. About 4,520 volunteers—1,046 more than last year—picked up 4,382 bags of trash along 233 miles of Coastal waterways in Hancock, Harrison and Jackson counties and the Barrier Islands during the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup.

Volunteers collected 73,093 pounds of trash—that's 36.5 tons of marine debris—including 3,000 pounds of appliances



picnic every day for the next 60 years.

Almost 53 percent of the debris found during last year's Mississippi Coastal Cleanup came from land-based sources such as beach picnics, inappropriate or illegal dumping and general littering. The source of all debris is human activity. "People need to realize that trash travels," said William Walker, executive director of the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (DMR). "A piece of trash thrown out of a car window washes into a storm drain and eventually winds up in the Gulf."

The mission of the international cleanup is to remove debris from shorelines, bayous, bays, rivers, waterways and beaches; collect valuable information on the



**This group of youngsters from the Sugarfield Road area in Hancock County, along with several adults, collected all types of litter along the banks of Bayou LaCroix at Miss. 603.**

and 7 dump truck loads of large marine debris, such as a couch found partially buried in the sand at Deer Island, which Harrison Central High School ROTC students together with members of the Edgewater Sunrisers Rotary Club of Biloxi dug out and hauled off the island and a 17-foot boat hull found in Keegan Bayou by students with the Naval Construction Training Center. Other items collected were: light bulbs, a plastic sewer pipe, an inflatable bed, antifreeze bottles, an aircraft tire, a chaise lounge, toilet, pool cue, hair dryer, televisions, car parts, shotgun shells, microwave oven, computer printer, bag of chicken feet, and rope. There were six bird entanglements reported, one dead sea turtle, and an injured seagull and an injured egret caught in fishing line that were both taken to

WRANPS Wildlife Center. The most peculiar item was a voodoo doll with a pin stuck in it found at Bayou Heron in Jackson County.

The Mississippi Coastal Cleanup—in conjunction with the International Coastal Cleanup—takes place each year on the third Saturday in September. Hundreds of thousands of people across the world spend three hours combing the beaches and waterways to pick up trash that pollutes our waters, harms marine life, hampers tourism and poses health risks to beach-goers. During last year's International Coastal Cleanup about 400,000 volunteers worldwide removed debris from 12,400 miles of shorelines and waterways. They collected 8.2 million pounds of debris, including enough picnic supplies for a family of four to have a



**About 540 volunteers on Cat, Horn, Petit Bois, Sand, East Ship and West Ship islands collected 804 bags of trash.**



**Members of the Boys & Girls Club of Gulfport Forest Heights unit collect trash on the beach at Courthouse Road in Gulfport and record items collected. About 2,107 volunteers collected 2,097 bags of trash in Harrison County.**

amount and types of debris collected; educate people on the issue of marine debris; and use the data collected to affect positive change. Volunteers clean beaches and collect information on what they find, using the International Coastal Cleanup Data Card, so that sources of marine debris can be targeted for education or pollution prevention campaigns. State coordinators mail the data cards to the Ocean Conservancy in Virginia Beach, Virginia, where the data is tabulated. Over the years, data from the cleanups have been used to enact local, state, national, and even international legislation and agreements.

# collect more than 36 tons of trash

## Sponsors



### The Mississippi Marine Debris Task Force:

BFI  
 Chevron Pascagoula Refinery  
 Disposall, Inc.  
 Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve  
 Gulf Islands National Seashore  
 Hancock County Chamber of Commerce  
 Hancock Insurance  
 Harrison County Sand Beach Department  
 Jackson County Solid Waste  
 Keesler Air Force Base  
 Mississippi Air National Guard  
 Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium  
 Mississippi Department of Marine Resources  
 Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College  
 Mississippi State University Coastal Research & Extension Center  
 National Marine Fisheries Service  
 Naval Construction Battalion Center  
 Naval Station Pascagoula  
 Office of Congressman Gene Taylor  
 Office of the Mississippi Secretary of State  
 Outback Steakhouse  
 Sea Coast Echo

## Co-sponsors

(in-kind donations)

BP, Cellular South, City of Biloxi, Club Caribbean Divers, Da Beach House, Earthgrains Bakery, Jackson County Adult Detention Center, K99FM, Magic 93.7, 92.5 KISS FM and V104.9, Knight-Abbey Commercial Printing & Direct Mail, Lamar Advertising of South Mississippi, Memorial Hospital at Gulfport, Mississippi Soft Drink Association, Ocean Springs Chamber of Commerce, PEPCO, Rainbow Water, Ship Island Excursions, The Ocean Conservancy, The Sun Herald, Triad Broadcasting Company and WLOX-TV 13.

Visit the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup Web site at [www.masgc.org/cleanup](http://www.masgc.org/cleanup)

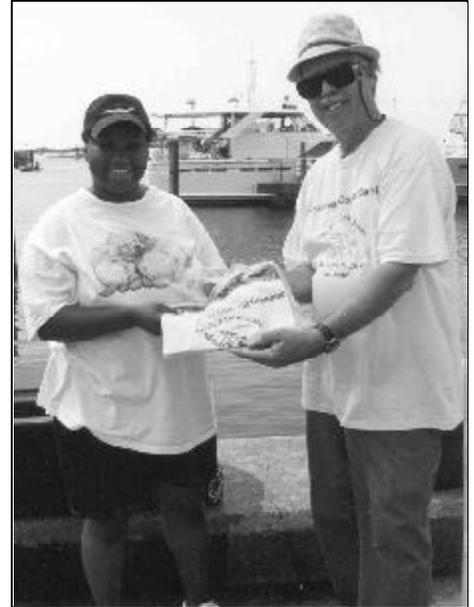
## 2003 Cleanup Stats

Volunteers	4,520
Pounds of debris	73,093
Miles cleaned	233
Bags collected	4,382
Designated sites	57
Bird entanglements	6

### Peculiar items found

aircraft tire	hair dryer
toilet	voodoo doll
sewer pipe	with pin
pool cue	microwave
bag of chicken feet	oven

In Bay St. Louis, the Office of Congressman Gene Taylor and Da Beach House had a cook-out for volunteers. Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College provided food and drinks to volunteers at Belle Fontaine Beach in Ocean Springs. Earthgrains Bakery, Rainbow Water Jackson County Adult Detention Center and ChevronTexaco donated food and drinks to volunteers for a cookout held at Shepard State Park in Gautier.



Deer Island Zone Captain Dr. Ed Cake (right) hands a volunteer a free canvas beach tote, compliments of Chevron Pascagoula Refinery. Dr. Cake and Dr. Irene McIntosh (not pictured) have served as Deer Island zone captains for 15 years.



Volunteers clean along the shoreline in The River Park, Pascagoula. About 1,318 volunteers collected 998 bags of trash in Jackson County.

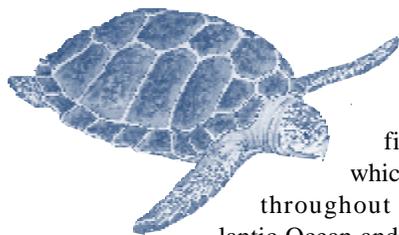


Volunteers collect all types of marine litter at one of the canals along Beach Blvd. in the Clermont Harbor-Lakeshore area. About 570 volunteers collected 501 bags of trash in Hancock County.

**Hats off to Bob Taylor and his staff at Outback Steakhouse in Gulfport for serving free lunch to 1,500 volunteers in a two-hour period!**

# New TED rules effective Aug. 21

To reduce sea turtle deaths that result from trawling in the southeastern United States, NOAA Fisheries has amended Turtle Excluder Device (TED)



regulations. The modifications, which apply throughout the Atlantic Ocean and Gulf of

Mexico, apply to shrimp fishermen who use bottom trawl gear in state and federal waters. The new regulations were announced in February 2003 and took effect on April 15, 2003 in the Atlantic and Aug. 21, 2003 in the Gulf of Mexico.

The new rules, which include an increase in the size of the escape opening, will help all sea turtles escape from shrimp trawls although the new law was initiated to allow for the escape of larger species such as leatherback, loggerhead and green turtles. The rule amends regulations governing the types of TEDs allowed and certain structural aspects of TEDs. The changes include:

- Requiring the use of either the recently approved double cover flap TED or a TED with an opening of at least 71-inch straight-line stretched mesh measurement in all offshore waters and the inshore and offshore waters of Georgia and South Carolina;
- Requiring the use of TEDs with a 44-inch straight-line stretched mesh opening in all inshore waters, except those of Georgia and South Carolina;
- Requiring that hooped hard TEDs can only be used in inshore waters, and not in Georgia and South Carolina. Those TEDs must have a minimum inside horizontal width of 35 inches and an inside vertical height of 30 inches on the front hoop and a clearance between the bars and the front hoop of 20 inches;
- Requiring the use of grids with minimum outside measurements of 32 inches by 32 inches in all waters;
- Disallowing the use of the Jones TED;
- Requiring the use of a brace bar on weedless TEDs;
- Requiring accelerator funnels to have a 44-inch horizontal opening on the 44-inch TED and a 71-inch opening on the 71-inch and double cover flap TEDs;

- Requiring bait shrimpers to use TEDs in states where a state-issued bait shrimp license holder can also fish for food shrimp from the same vessel; and
- Requiring tow time restrictions on trawlers with the headrope lengths of 12 feet or less.

## Want to know more?

### Contact:

NOAA Fisheries' Office of Protected Resources  
Attn: Chief, Endangered Species Division  
1315 East-West Highway  
Silver Spring, MD 20910-3282

or

Bob Hoffman  
(727) 570-5312.

## Marine Patrol Citation Totals

(July-September 2003)

Shrimp	17
Crab	17
Oyster	4
Commercial Net Fishing	0
Live Bait	2
Miscellaneous Seafood	6
Recreational Fishing	44
Boat and Water Safety	95
Marine Litter	4
Miscellaneous	10

## Boat and Water Safety Statistics

(July-September 2003)

Classes held	29
Students certified	337
Outreach events	10
Presentations	0
Boating accidents	15
Fatalities	1

## Sound Advice

Lt. Frank Wescovich



Well, here we go with another summer season that's come and gone, and the crisp days of fall are upon us. If you launch your boat at any of the

public ramps in the three coastal counties, you may have noticed that DMR has installed some new No Wake signs. These signs were graciously funded by the county Boards of Supervisors in Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson counties. The signs were placed by public request and as a result of ongoing problems at these ramps.

DMR Ordinance 16.003 contains special rules and regulations for vessels with regard to No Wake Zones. The ordinance defines a No Wake Zone as an area of marine waters in which vessels are not allowed to create a potentially damaging wake or to operate the vessel above idle speed. It states that there are two categories of No Wake Zones: General and Specific.

*General No Wake Zones* cover all waters within 100 feet adjacent to any small craft harbor, commercial vessel harbor, public marina, places where vessels are normally berthed and also within 100 feet of any public boat launching ramp facility.

*Specific No Wake Zones* are those additional zones that are requested by the public through their local county Board of Supervisors and are approved for implementation by the Commission on Marine Resources.

The intent of ordinance 16.003 is to create No Wake Zones only where there is an overwhelming public need. We look at each request individually and investigate to determine if a No Wake Zone should be approved, but generally find that few are practical or really necessary. If this were not the case, we would soon have all of our local waterways tied in a domino effect of idle speed No Wake Zones.

See SOUND ADVICE, page 10

# Coast residents Celebrate the Gulf

What do a live skunk, an expert oyster shucker and Smokey the Bear have in common? They were all featured at this year's Celebrate the Gulf Marine Education Festival on Sept. 27 at Pass Christian Harbor. More than 2,000 attended the event, enjoying lively, hands-on exhibits addressing marine and estuarine environmental issues and recreational and commercial activities associated with the Gulf.

Pass Christian Elementary, the public school with the most students at the festival and Coast Episcopal Middle School, the private school with the most students, each received a cash prize provided by Mississippi Power Company.

"Celebrate the Gulf is an excellent opportunity for children and adults to learn first-hand about the value of our marine resources. The festival was also a celebration of National Estuaries Day," said Jennifer Buchanan, event co-chair and education coordinator with the DMR's Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. National Estuaries Day is an annual celebration of the magical places where fresh water from rivers mix with the salt water from the oceans.

Attendees experienced everything from crawling through the ever-popular "turtle hurdle," and boarding a Marine Patrol boat, to learning about native plants, birds and marine life first-hand and enjoying a ride on a wooden schooner. Demonstrations on throwing a cast net and flyfishing techniques and the safe operation of canoes and kayaks were also offered.

The Marine Cuisine tent featured demonstrations on how to choose, prepare and cook Mississippi seafood. Tasty samples were offered to the crowd after the demonstrations.

Participants of the Junior Catch and Release Fishing Rodeo learned the proper way to catch and release a fish, and winners received prizes donated by West Marine.

Sponsors of Celebrate the Gulf include: the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources/Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, Mississippi Power Company, Northrup Grumman Ship Systems, Gulf of Mexico Program, City of Pass Christian, ChevronTexaco and Dupont.

The Celebrate the Gulf Marine Education Festival is funded through the Gulf Coast Community Foundation.



**DMR Boat and Water Safety staffer Stanley Hamilton boils shrimp outside the Marine Cuisine tent, preparing for one of the many seafood cooking demonstrations held at the festival.**



**DMR's Comprehensive Resource Management Plan staff member Joan Murphy helps an attendee clean up after a hands-on activity.**



**DMR Management Operations employee Leslie Young prepares the ingredients for one of the many tasty seafood dishes served under the Marine Cuisine Tent.**

## State Record Breakers!

### Coventional tackle:

- **Chad Crawford** of Pascagoula broke the record for Gray Snapper on June 14, 2003, weighing 13 lbs., 7.68 oz.

- **Thomas L. Reynolds III** of Ocean Springs broke the record for Skipjack Tuna on June 21, 2003, weighing 26 lbs., 4 oz.

- **Dick Wilson** of Biloxi broke the record for Blacktail Moray on July 4, 2003, weighing 3 lbs., 7 oz.; set the record for Purplemouth Moray on July 4, 2003, weighing 3 lbs., 1 oz.; broke the record for Blue Runner on July 4, 2003, weighing 6 lbs., 10 oz. Wilson also set the record for King Snake Eel on July 19, 2003, weighing 2 lbs., 6.56 oz. and broke the record for Blacktail Moray again on Aug. 2, 2003, weighing 4 lbs., 13.92 oz.

- **Tommy Saucier** of Biloxi set the record for Spinner Shark on July 5, 2003, weighing 90 lbs., 11 oz.

- **Mark Odom** of Pascagoula broke the record for Almaco Jack on July 18, 2003, weighing 15 lbs., 0.16 oz.

- **Chad Crawford** of Pascagoula broke the record for Bigeye on July 19, 2003, weighing 1 lb., 15.52 oz.

- **Josh Brown** of Lena broke the record for Gray Triggerfish on Aug. 23, 2003, weighing 8 lbs., 13.12 oz.

- **John Townsend** of Biloxi broke the record for Ladyfish on Aug. 26, 2003, weighing 3 lbs., 7.35 oz.

### Fly Fishing Tackle:

- **Reed Guice** of Biloxi broke the record for Tripletail on July 17, 2003, weighing 10 lbs., 1.6 oz.

- **Dwayne Armes** of Pass Christian broke the record for Blue Runner on July 31, 2003, weighing 1 lb., 8.8 oz. and broke the record for Rainbow Runner on July 31, 2003, weighing 5 lbs., 9.28 oz. Armes set the record for Yellow Chub on July 31, 2003, weighing 1 lb., 5.6 oz.

- **Thomas Herrington** of Ocean Springs broke the record for Ladyfish on Aug. 23, 2003, weighing 3 lbs., 4.32 oz. and broke the record for Cobia on Aug. 23, 2003, weighing 41 lbs., 13.6 oz.

### Coming in the Winter 2004 issue...

- Coastal Mississippi Fire Management Cooperative
- Winners of DMR's calendar art contest

# NERR Notes



Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve

*The NERR Notes page is a new addition to Coastal Markers, intended to keep our readers informed about happenings at our Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, located in southeastern Jackson County.*

## What is SWMP (pronounced “swamp”)?

In the early 1990s, scientists within the National Estuarine Research Reserve system began developing a monitoring program to track environmental and biological changes within the reserve system. A Systemwide Monitoring Program, known by its acronym SWMP (pronounced “swamp”), was designed to identify and track short-term variability and long-term changes in the integrity and biodiversity of our nation’s estuaries. The scientific data gathered through SWMP is used to understand how human activities and natural events affect coastal resources. SWMP data is used to aid in coastal zone management decision-making at the national, regional, and local levels.

## How does the Grand Bay Reserve use SWMP?

At the Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, the water quality portion of SWMP has just been initiated. Data for water temperature, conductivity/salinity, dissolved oxygen, pH, and turbidity are being collected every 30 minutes. Data loggers are deployed in strategic locations around the reserve to provide information relating to the magnitude of freshwater inputs, the effect of wind on salinity levels and potential environmental problems stemming from faulty septic systems.

The initial phase of SWMP began in 1995 with the monitoring of basic water quality parameters and meteorological, or weather, conditions at each NERR. Currently the national reserve system uses four YSI-Endeco 6600 data loggers deployed across each reserve to track



**DMR biologist Franklin Leach downloads water quality data at a Grand Bay Reserve SWMP station.**

water quality and a Campbell Scientific weather station to monitor weather conditions.

## Where are the data being collected?

Data at the Grand Bay Reserve are being collected at two of the four sites required by SWMP guidelines. Results of initial efforts indicate that bio-fouling or clogging of the various sensors is high and “clean” sensors will need to replace the “dirty” ones about once a week. Minor improvements have been made to the Grand Bay Reserve monitoring system such as adding plastic screening to the data loggers to prevent fish and crabs from getting stuck in the sensors and negatively affecting the data.

Active water quality sampling stations are located on Bayou Heron north of the Bayou Heron Road boat launch and at the junction of Crooked Bayou and the North Rigolets near the center of the reserve. Additional stations will be placed at Bangs Lake, along the western boundary of the reserve, and Bayou Cumbest, in the northwestern por-

tion of the reserve, as more data loggers are purchased.

## Why are future SWMP sites needed?

Plans are under way to place the Campbell Scientific weather station in the saltmarsh near the middle of the reserve. By locating the weather station in the marsh, water quality data can be directly related to the weather conditions of the reserve. Establishing relationships between these variables will be important for characterizing the environmental conditions of the reserve and will provide valuable background data for scientists conducting research at the reserve.

Once the water quality and weather data are collected, they are checked for quality and accuracy according to a quality control/quality assurance protocols established by the NERR’s Centralized Data Management Office (CDMO). The data from each reserve is submitted to the CDMO annually. Once the data are checked and approved by scientists at the CDMO, the data are then made available to the general public through the CDMO’s Internet Web site (<http://cdmo.baruch.sc.edu/>).

In time, the data collected at the Grand Bay Reserve will provide valuable information to assess the environmental health of the Grand Bay area and aid in maintaining the coastal resources of Mississippi.

## Need more info?

### Contact:

Dr. Mark Woodrey  
Research Coordinator  
Grand Bay National Estuarine  
Research Reserve  
6005 Bayou Heron Road  
Moss Point, MS 39562  
(228) 475-7047  
[mark.woodrey@dmr.state.ms.us](mailto:mark.woodrey@dmr.state.ms.us)



# Seafood Safety Corner

Summer has kept the staff of the Seafood Technology Bureau very busy. Ten new seafood dealers have been added to the roster, which brings the total number of permitted Mississippi seafood dealers to 85.



Jeff Davis

## HACCP Courses

In-house Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) and Sanitation Control Procedures (SCP) training courses have been offered and will continue to be offered upon demand. The Association of Food and Drug Officials' (AFDO) certified HACCP training session will be offered by the Mississippi State University Coastal Research and Extension Service in collaboration with the DMR Seafood Technology Bureau. The next AFDO certified HACCP training session will be held in February 2004. The Seafood Technology Bureau continues to assist new seafood dealers with HACCP Plan requirements and their initial certification processes.

## Education and Outreach

Members of our staff also attended various workshops and meetings such as the Food Safety Task Force Meeting and Mississippi Fish and Wildlife Extravaganza, an Oyster Forensic Science/Oyster Ecology and Management Workshop, the Louisiana Seafood Industry Convention and Field Day and the

bi-annual Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference (ISSC) meeting. During these events several posters, brochures, DVDs, and VHS tapes discussing "Available Post Harvest Processing Technologies on Oysters" were distributed to regulators, members of the seafood industry and the public for educational purposes. In addition, a training session on Bioterrorism and Preparedness will be held in Jackson and sponsored by the Mississippi Food Safety Task Force.

## Educational Video

Other projects have been developed and are currently under way to assist the seafood industry. A shrimp harvesting and processing video is being translated from English to Vietnamese to aid the numerous seafood industry employees who only speak Vietnamese. The script of the video was translated by Annie Nguyen, a DMR Coastal Ecology employee who speaks Vietnamese fluently and is cross-training with the Seafood Technology Bureau.

## Seafood Industry Manual

An additional project is the construction of a seafood manual for the Mississippi seafood industry. Any new materials, technological findings or newly issued regulations that can affect the seafood industry will be provided in this manual and distributed to the industry by our staff.

*Jeff Davis is a seafood officer with the DMR's Seafood Technology Bureau.*

## TIDELANDS, continued from page 1

FY2004 Tidelands Projects include:

### PUBLIC ACCESS PROJECTS:

- City of Bay St. Louis - Rutherford Pier Improvements, Phase II
- City of Biloxi - Hiller Park Recreational Pier
- City of Gautier - City Park Community Center
- City of Gulfport - Gulfport Small Craft Harbor Dredging
- City of Long Beach - Harbor Improvements
- City of Moss Point - Pelican Landing, Phase II
- City of Ocean Springs - Ocean Springs Fishing Bridge Improvements
- City of Pascagoula - East Pascagoula River Boat Launch & Pier
- City of Pass Christian - Harbor Improvements
- City of Waveland - Garfield-Ladner Pier, Phase IV
- Jackson County Board of Supervisors - Old Spanish Fort Boat Launch Ramp & Pier
- Jackson County Board of Supervisors - Lake Mars Boat Launch and Parking
- Jackson County Board of Supervisors - Racetrack Road Boat Launch, Phase I
- Hancock County Board of Supervisors - Pearlington Pier Extension
- Hancock County Board of Supervisors - Washington Street Pier
- Hancock County Board of Supervisors - McCleod Park
- Harrison County Board of Supervisors - Tchouticabouffa River Boat Launch
- Biloxi Port Commission - Schooner Pier Project
- D'Iberville Port Commission - Fountain Beach Public Access and Habitat Learning Center

### MANAGEMENT PROJECTS:

- Mississippi Sound Maritime Museum
- Gulf Coast Research Lab Projects
- WRANPS Wildlife Rehabilitation & Preservation Society, Inc.
- Beauvoir Shrine - Bayhead Swamp and Bayou, Public Access to
- Derelict Vessels/Offshore Artificial Reefs
- Department of Marine Resources - Management Projects
- Deer Island Acquisition

The Tidelands Trust Fund Program consists of funds derived from the lease rentals of tidelands and submerged lands. Revenues are collected by the Office of Secretary of State, appropriated by the state legislature and administered by the CMR. All tidelands projects are reviewed, evaluated and recommended annually by the CMR.

## Pascagoula River is subject of documentary

A documentary titled "The Singing River—Rhythms of Nature" aired on the Mississippi Broadcasting Networks (MSBN) for the first time Nov. 13 at 8 p.m., highlighting the ecological, cultural and economic significance of the Pascagoula River.

Twenty-five years ago The Nature Conservancy and the State of Mississippi partnered to protect 35,000 acres along the Pascagoula River's 81-mile corridor. The documentary is the first step in an educational process led by ChevronTexaco to celebrate the preservation of the

Pascagoula River and to promote its sustainability. The program was produced by MSBN in association with The Nature Conservancy.

Documentary sponsors include the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, ChevronTexaco, EPA Gulf of Mexico Program, Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, Mississippi Power Company and Mississippi Secretary of State's Office. Additional support was provided by the Mississippi Museum of Natural Science Foundation and the USDA Forest Service.

## DMR promotes MS seafood, recreational saltwater fishing

The Mississippi Recreational Saltwater Sports Fishing Marketing Program exhibited for the second year at the Mississippi Wildlife Expo in Jackson Aug. 1-3.

About 1,500 people visited the DMR booth. Items distributed during this year's event included fishing rules and regulations, fish identification posters, fishing guides, seafood recipe books and general information about DMR programs.

The DMR's Seafood Marketing Program exhibited for the first time at the Louisiana Food Service Expo held in New Orleans Aug. 9-11. More than 400 companies participated and industry buyers in attendance exceeded 16,000. The Expo was sponsored by the Louisiana Restaurant Association, the Mississippi Restaurant Association, Alabama Restaurant Association and the Louisiana Hotel & Lodging Association.

About 1,200 prospective buyers visited the DMR booth, receiving various publications about the Mississippi seafood industry.

The DMR also participated in the 22nd Annual Biloxi Seafood Festival held Sept. 13-14, distributing educational materials such as the seafood industry directory, seafood recipe book, seafood recipe cards, fishing rules and regulations, recreational fishing guides and boat and water safety information to the more than 1,500 attendees visiting the DMR's two booths.

While at the festival, the Seafood Marketing Program participated in the second annual Gumbo Contest, winning first place among 21 in the amateur division. Desporte's & Sons donated the seafood to the DMR for the gumbo contest.



**DMR Seafood Marketing Program/Recreational Saltwater Sports Fishing Marketing Program Director Irvin Jackson (left) and staff member Linda Bullard (right) ready their exhibit for the Louisiana Food Service Expo in New Orleans.**

## Port to fulfill mitigation promise

Officials formally broke ground on the \$2.8 million Graveline Bayou Bridge and approach roadways project on Aug. 28, which will provide an all-weather access route into the southernmost residential area of Jackson County and allow the Mississippi State Port Authority at Gulfport to mitigate expansion projects. A 1997 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-Mobile District/DMR permit to the Port of Gulfport allows for 84 acres of shallow water bottoms adjacent to the existing port facility to be filled over a 13-year period. In fulfillment of the permit's requirement for mitigation, the Port of Gulfport will have part of Belle Fontaine Road, located within the Graveline Bayou tidal system, removed and replaced with an elevated roadway, allowing restoration of the tidal marsh west of the causeway.

Jackson County District 5 Supervisor John McKay coordinated the Graveline Bayou Bridge project, designed to restore tidal flow into the upper reaches of Graveline Bayou with a pre-cast concrete bridge approximately 2,260 feet in length, about 2,600 feet of new approach roadways, and removal of about 1,700 feet of existing causeway fill. Construction is scheduled for completion in July 2004.



**From left: Frank Parker, engineer, McCrory-Williams; Jackson County Chancery Clerk Terry Miller; County Administrator Alan Sudduth; Joe West, realtor who donated part of the land for a bypass road; District 5 Supervisor John McKay, Board President and District 4 Supervisor Frank Leach; District 1 Supervisor Manly Barton; Board Vice President and District 3 Supervisor Tim Broussard; William E. Wilkerson, president, McCrory-Williams; Hunter Fordice, president, Fordice Construction Company, and Jackson County Road Manager Joe O'Neal.**

### SOUND ADVICE, continued from page 6

This is highly impractical and would be impossible to manage from a law enforcement standpoint.

By the way, there is nothing in the law preventing you, as a landowner, from placing personal No Wake Signs on your property. These would be unofficial and not enforceable under the law, but might serve as a deterrent for some of the offending boat operators.

So, please heed the warnings on the

new signs at the launch ramps, exercise common sense by operating your vessel courteously and cautiously, especially when passing other vessels that are moored or anchored, and be very careful when passing areas that contain launch ramps where there might be a potential for injuring someone who is launching a boat. Remember that you are ultimately responsible for any damages to property or any injury to a person that is caused by your wake. You could be subject to prosecution under civil and possibly even criminal law for your neglect or inattention.

Don't get so caught up in the boating moment that you forget that you have serious responsibilities as a boat operator.

#### Remember:

**WEAR YOUR LIFE JACKET.**

**SAFE BOATING IS NO ACCIDENT!**

*Lt. Frank Wescovich oversees the DMR's Boat and Water Safety Program. He can be reached at (228) 432-2820 or (228) 435-1332.*



# Take a Bow

*Recognizing employees' commitment to excellence*

## Competencies briefing held at DMR



**From left, clockwise: Finfish Bureau director Mike Buchanan, marine fisheries scientist Eric Porche, Marine Fisheries staff officer Joe Jewell, marine fisheries scientist Marty Jones and DMR Seafood Technology Bureau director Ruth Posadas, take part in one of the exercises using the proposed evaluation process.**

The Mississippi State Personnel Board held an employee competencies briefing Sept. 10 at the DMR. The purpose of the briefing was to introduce supervisors to a new employee evaluation process that uses competencies and behavioral anchors for measuring those competencies. These competencies will allow managers to evaluate an employee's work performance more accurately and will assist in hiring suitable job candidates.

Some of the competencies to be included when the new evaluation process is implemented are work ethic, accountability, integrity and honesty, interpersonal skills, communication skills and self-development.

## Open enrollment attendance climbs



**DMR marine fisheries technician Jamie Herring (left) discusses an insurance product with one of the vendors at the supplemental insurance re-enrollment.**

Eighty percent of DMR employees attended the supplemental insurance open enrollment held Sept. 26. Last year, about one-third of the DMR staff attended.

Open enrollment is the opportunity for employees to talk to vendors about supplemental insurance products not offered by the state. Prior to the open enrollment, the insurance committee, made up of representatives from each of the agency's departments, reviews and selects which products will be offered, and human resources meets with employees to help them make the best insurance choices on enrollment day.

## American Red Cross recognizes DMR



**DMR personnel officer Christine Popwell (left) accepts a certificate of appreciation on behalf of the DMR from Mark Beddingfield (right), American Red Cross' Chief Operating Officer of Alabama/Gulf Coast Region at the American Red Cross Mississippi Gulf Coast Chapter Volunteer Recognition & Annual Staff Meeting held in Biloxi on Aug. 21. The DMR was recognized for its efforts in organizing a blood drive at the Bolton State Building. Eight state agencies participated in the blood drive, which drew 41 pints.**

## Happy Anniversary!

*These anniversaries mark employees' years of service with the Department of Marine Resources and the state of Mississippi.*

- |                            |                            |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| (10/1/83) Stanley Hamilton | (11/1/00) Tommy Jennings   |
| (10/1/99) Barbara Synowicz | (11/1/00) Chris Mask       |
| (10/1/00) Paul Grote       | (11/1/00) Josh Rowell      |
| (10/1/01) Scott Anderson   | (11/1/00) Kyle Wilkerson   |
| (10/1/01) Jack Ewing       | (11/1/01) Charles Taylor   |
| (10/1/01) Patrick Levine   | (11/8/99) Alice Taylor     |
| (10/1/01) Glen Wieck       | (11/12/02) Franklin Leach  |
| (10/1/02) Dave Ruple       | (11/13/00) Annie Nguyen    |
| (10/1/02) Leslie Young     | (11/18/02) Bradley Ennis   |
| (10/8/01) Jim Sartin       | (12/1/88) Iris Lofland     |
| (10/12/98) Irvin Jackson   | (12/1/97) Traci Floyd      |
| (10/12/98) Doug Stringer   | (12/1/97) Mike Walker      |
| (10/15/01) Ron Jordan      | (12/1/98) Brandon Hall     |
| (10/16/74) Pat Daughdrill  | (12/2/96) Kerwin Cuevas    |
| (11/1/96) Kara Vesa        | (12/6/99) Tim Blocker      |
| (11/1/97) Tina Johnson     | (12/8/97) Joe Jewell       |
| (11/1/98) Marcia Garcia    | (12/15/97) Roxanne Russell |
| (11/1/98) Bill Richardson  | (12/17/90) Mike Brainard   |
| (11/1/99) Beth Roberts     | (12/30/96) Dennis Bankston |
| (11/1/00) Scott Chatham    |                            |

*We thank them for their dedicated service to the management of our marine resources.*



**Mississippi Department  
of Marine Resources**  
1141 Bayview Avenue, Suite 101  
Biloxi, Mississippi 39530

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# DMR Calendar

**November 18**

Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources meeting, Bolton Building, 1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, 9 a.m.

**November 19**

National GIS Day, USM Gulf Park Campus, Long Beach. Info: Jerry Coleman, (228) 897-3925.

**December 16**

Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources meeting, Bolton Building, 1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, 9 a.m.

**December 18**

Comprehensive Resource Management Plan meeting, Bolton Building, 1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, 10 a.m.

**January 20**

Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources meeting, Bolton Building, 1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, 9 a.m.

**February 17**

Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources meeting, Bolton Building, 1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, 9 a.m.

**March 16**

Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources meeting, Bolton Building, 1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, 9 a.m.

## Doc's Fishing Tips

*Fred Deegen, Ph.D., Deputy Director*

**Cooler weather signals hot fishing. Try trolling a cocahoe minnow (soft plastic or natural) in area backwaters for top action in the next several weeks.**

*If you did not receive this issue of Coastal Markers in the mail and would like to be placed on the mailing list, please fill out below and mail to: Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, Office of Public Affairs, 1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi, MS 39530; call (228) 374-5022, ext. 5062; or e-mail susan.perkins@dmr.state.ms.us.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_