

Coastal Markers



Volume 10, Issue 2

NEWSLETTER OF THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

Fall 2006

Two CMR members sworn-in, officers selected

Gov. Haley Barbour has appointed Jimmy Taylor of Harrison County and re-appointed Dr. Vernon Asper of Hancock County to the Commission on Marine Resources (CMR). The two were sworn in at the July meeting of the Commission on Marine Resources. The CMR selected Dr. Vernon Asper as chairman and Richard Gollott of Harrison County, representing Commercial Seafood Processors, as vice-chairman.

Jimmy Taylor replaces Mikel Gusa as Charter Boat Operator representative, and Dr. Vernon Asper will continue as Nonprofit Environmental Organization representative. Terms will run July 1, 2006 to July 1, 2010.

Taylor holds an active charter boat license and has fished the northern Gulf of Mexico for the past 45 years. He has owned and operated three different charter boats for 12 years. Taylor is also a board member and vice-president of the Mississippi Gulf Fishing Banks. A life-long resident of the Mississippi Gulf Coast, Taylor is an alumnus of The University of Southern Mississippi and Biloxi High School and has been a State Farm Insurance agent for 31 years.

Dr. Asper is a professor in the Department of Marine Science at The University of Southern Mississippi. He holds a Ph.D. in marine geology and geophysics from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, a master's degree in oceanography from the University of Hawaii and a bachelor's degree in biology and chemistry from Messiah College in Grantham, Pa.



The Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources members are (back row, from left) Oliver Sahuque of Hancock County, representing Commercial Fishermen; Jimmy Taylor of Harrison County, representing Charter Boat Operators; Shelby Drummond of Jackson County, representing Recreational Fishermen; (front row, from left) Chairman Dr. Vernon Asper of Hancock County, representing Nonprofit Environmental Organizations; and Vice-Chairman Richard Gollott of Harrison County, representing Commercial Seafood Processors.

The CMR is composed of five members appointed by the Governor for four-year terms to represent the following areas: commercial seafood processor, nonprofit environmental organization, charter boat operator, recreational fisherman, and commercial fisherman.

DMR seeks commercial fishermen for Hurricane Katrina monitoring program

The DMR is recruiting assistance from licensed commercial fishermen to aid in the recovery and monitoring of Mississippi's Gulf Fisheries. Mississippi resident commercial fishery license holders for either 2004-2005 or 2005-2006 license year will be eligible for paid contractual jobs to help restore the Mississippi coast through habitat recovery and fisheries monitoring.

The DMR Marine Fisheries Office will receive \$37 million over the next five years as part of the NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service Fisheries Disaster Recovery Program.

"We began the work of this project as soon as possible on September 1, 2006," DMR Fisheries Office Director Corky Perret said. "Our staff is excited to be able to work cooperatively with fishermen on these projects to monitor and restore our marine resources."

See **MONITORING**, page 2

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Coastal Markers is a publication of the

**Mississippi Department
of Marine Resources**

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State of Mississippi

Haley Barbour
Governor

**Mississippi Commission on
Marine Resources**

Vernon Asper, Ph.D., Chairman
Nonprofit Environmental
Organization

Richard Gollott, Vice Chairman
Commercial Seafood Processor

Shelby Drummond
Recreational Sports Fisherman

Oliver Sahuque
Commercial Fisherman

Jimmy Taylor
Charter Boat Operator

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**Coastal Markers is produced by
the Office of Public Affairs**

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This publication was funded through a federal grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Office of Ocean and Coastal Resource Management under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended.

**Visit the DMR online
www.dmr.state.ms.us**

Director's Notes

Dr. William Walker



Amidst all the hurricane recovery and restoration efforts that are ongoing all along the Mississippi Gulf Coast these days, the Department of Marine Resources in partnership with the University of Southern Mississippi's Gulf Coast Research Laboratory has one in the mix that should interest all fishermen. The Spotted Seatrout Population Enhancement Cooperative, or SPEC for short, is a focused effort to improve the quality of the speckled trout fishery by rearing and stocking fish to supplement the natural population of this popular species. The first release of Mississippi hatchery-reared fish took place just several days ago, and we are optimistic about the long-term results. A complete status report of this project is featured on page 5 in this issue of Coastal Markers.

Executive Director

Thanks!

Thanks to those DMR employees who contributed to this issue of Coastal Markers:

Dale Diaz
Joe Jewell
Mike Brainard
Scott Gordon
Steve Breland
Tina Shumate
Marcia Garcia
David Ruple
Chris May
Jennifer Buchanan
Dr. Fred Deegen
Amy Taylor
Walter Chataginer
Frank Wescovich
Rhonda Price
Irvin Jackson
Linda Bullard
Gretchen Waggy
Ruth Posadas

MONITORING, continued from page 1

To sign up, the eligible license holder will need to bring the following: Social Security number or Tax ID number; boat registration; e-mail address and commercial licenses. The DMR office is located in the Bolton State Office Building at 1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi. Office hours are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information call the DMR at (228) 374-5000.

Shrimp: Contact Darrin Stewart
• Commercial Shrimp Recovery Reporting

Crab: Contact Darrin Stewart
• Commercial Crab Recovery Reporting
• Derelict Crab Trap Gear Removal (Licensed Crab Fishermen)



Seated in back, from left: DMR Marine Fisheries Staffers Sally Richards, Mai Dang and Bill Richardson assist commercial fishermen in signing up for the fisheries monitoring and assessment program.

Oyster: Contact Rita Duvernay
• Oyster reef surveys/oyster relay/cultch plants

Finfish: Contact Melanie Lane
• Fishery Recovery Reporting (Charter Boat Fishermen, Commercial Net Fishermen and Commercial Hook and Line Fishermen)

DMR begins rebuilding Miss. oyster reefs

Even before many people were reflecting on the one-year anniversary of Hurricane Katrina's impact on the coast, DMR Office of Marine Fisheries employees were utilizing 2006 disaster funds provided by Congress to help offset the damage caused to Mississippi's fishery resources.

Beginning on Aug. 26, 2006, DMR employees Steve Breland, Danny Ross and Jason Canaan, working with a private contractor, planted more than 9,000 cubic yards of cultch material to build new oyster reefs in the Telegraph reef area, located about 4 1/2 miles south of Pass Christian. Meanwhile, Fisheries employees Kenny Melvin, Joe Roach and Doug Drieling were utilizing the DMR's vessel, the *Conservationist*, to dredge about 1,000 sacks of live oysters from the Point Cadet area in east Biloxi for relaying to the new cultch plant site at Telegraph Reef.

"Providing these live oysters to this freshly planted site is like giving a jump start to the new reef," said DMR Marine Fisheries Technician Steve Breland. "Once these adult oysters spawn, this new clean



More than 9,000 cubic yards of cultch material was distributed in the Telegraph Reef area, located about 4 1/2 miles south of Pass Christian, in an effort to offset the damage done to the oyster reef by Hurricane Katrina.

cultch will be excellent material for young oysters to grow on."

"These are the first of the Hurricane Katrina fishery disaster funds to be used for rebuilding oyster reefs," said Jeff Brown of NOAA Fisheries in St. Petersburg, Fla., who on Aug. 30, observed the off-loading of the live oysters over the new cultch plant area. Also observing the live oyster relay were Larry Simpson, Steve Vanderkooy and Ralph Hode with Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, the agency coordinating the disaster grant with NOAA

Fisheries and the five Gulf states.

Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission Executive Director Larry Simpson said he is pleased to assist the states and NOAA Fisheries in getting this important work done because it is so vital in the rebuilding of our Gulf fisheries.

"On behalf of the DMR, I would like to acknowledge the work of and thank Senators Thad Cochran and Trent Lott and Congressman Gene Taylor, and Governor Haley Barbour for their work in getting Congress to approve

these disaster funds for Gulf fisheries," said DMR Office of Marine Fisheries Director William "Corky" Perret. "This cultch plant certainly fits in with Governor Barbour's Commission on Recovery, Rebuilding and Renewal Program and is the first of several cultch plants that will utilize Hurricane Katrina disaster funds to help Mississippi oyster resources recover from this terrible natural disaster."

In October, a cultch plant took place in Jackson County. See page 10 for full story.

CRMP commended for dedication, post-Katrina efforts

The Mississippi Heritage Trust presented the DMR/Comprehensive Resource Management Plan (CRMP) staff with a resolution "for their commitment, dedication, leadership and hard work in getting the Mississippi Gulf Coast designated a National Heritage Area and for working tirelessly after Hurricane Katrina to document and help save historic sites across the Mississippi Gulf Coast." Lolly Barnes and Liz Ford, commissioners for the Mississippi Department of Archives and History and for the Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area and Ken P'Pool, Mississippi Department of Archives and History director of Historic Preservation, presented the resolution to CRMP Director Tina Shumate at the August CRMP meeting in D'Iberville on behalf of Mississippi Heritage Trust President Isla Tullos.

On Dec. 8, 2004, the counties of Harrison, Hancock, Jackson, Stone, Pearl River and George were designated as a National Heritage Area. CRMP and its stakeholders and the Gulf Coast's Congressional delegation were instrumental in having this designation signed into law (P.L. 108-447). A management plan was completed on Aug. 15, 2005 just days prior to Hurricane Katrina. In the aftermath of Katrina, CRMP staff assessed damages to cultural institutions in the Heritage Area and assisted the Mississippi Department of Archives and History in securing funding for the restoration of the remaining storm-damaged historic sites.

The Mississippi Heritage Trust is a statewide organization dedicated to the preservation of the prehistoric and historic cultural resources of Mississippi.



(From left: CRMP staffers Leslie Young, Marica Garcia and Grant Larsen and CRMP Director Tina Shumate.) The Mississippi Heritage Trust presented a resolution to the DMR/CRMP for their efforts in helping to document and save historic sites in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

Grand Bay Reserve launches new Web site

The DMR's Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (GNDNERR) recently launched a new Web site, <http://www.grandbaynerr.org>, which has been designed to provide the communities along the northern Gulf of Mexico with information regarding estuarine and coastal issues. The site contains information that is pertinent to educators, researchers, students, community members and visitors to the reserve, which is located in the southeast corner of Mississippi near the towns of Moss Point and Pascagoula.

This Web site features several sections of interest:

- The Home Page features a short video showing our reserve before and after Hurricane Katrina, a species profile generator and a link to real-time weather and water-quality data that is very useful to fishers and boaters.
- Our Estuary highlights the reserve and other Mississippi estuaries and coastal habitats.
- Education serves as the portal to our



The Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (GNDNERR) recently launched a new Web site, which includes video footage of the GNDNERR before and after Hurricane Katrina.

Coastal Training Program (designed for coastal decision-makers), community, and K-12 education programs such as EstuaryLive. Additional selections link to a Kids Fun Page, Careers, Ocean Literacy and more.

- Research provides information on our real-time water and weather collecting program, System-wide Monitoring Pro-

gram (SWMP), ongoing research projects, and fellowship opportunities.

- Stewardship highlights our ongoing natural resource management programs including invasive species control, restoration, monitoring, and more.
- Recreation includes a wealth of information on the recreational opportunities found at the reserve and highlights the watchable wildlife and plants found at our site.
- Reference Materials includes publications, news, presentations and technical posters that are of use to a variety of audiences.

Look through the Web site for the information you need,

including downloadable field journals, books for students, slide shows, cook books and more. We invite everyone to visit our site and provide feedback, suggestions and community contributions to us through the link on the homepage, or directly to Jennifer Buchanan at jen.buchanan@dmr.ms.gov.

Student honors marine resources protectors



LEFT: William Neil Gryder (left), an eleventh-grade Art 3 student at Ocean Springs High School, presents DMR Executive Director William Walker with a shield during a presentation on Aug. 29. Gryder made the shield for the DMR to recognize the agency for its bravery in protecting Mississippi's coastal resources. For the shield project, art instructor Andrés Hill asked students to personally relate to the concept of growing brave and to recognize those who have already achieved levels of "brave" and who serve us through their courage and wise decisions. BELOW: The shield made by William Neil Gryder.



Hatchery abounding with seatrout fry

After a roller coaster ride of successes and setbacks, the most recent of which was Hurricane Katrina, the Seatrout Population Enhancement Cooperative (SPEC) finally has something to shout about. Following repeated spawning events—the latest resulting in the production of over a million eggs—researchers at the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory’s Cedar Point facility have more trout (*Cynoscion nebulosus*) fry and fingerlings than they know what to do with. And that’s a great problem to have.

The earliest group of fish, which was spawned some 30 days ago, range in size from about an inch-and-a-half to nearly three inches in total length (the average is about two inches). This group of fish is approximately 16,000 individuals strong. More importantly, these fish seem to have gotten over the rampant cannibalism that they exhibited as smaller fry; and they are now on a regular diet of dried, granulated fish food.

The fish are being maintained in 12-foot diameter tanks where strong currents keep them moving, active and too busy to chase one another. Automatic feeders provide food at regular intervals with supplemental feeding provided by technicians as needed. This too keeps the young trout’s appetites in check and makes them less prone to can-

nibalism.

These larger fish are expected to be moved one more time into bigger, 20-foot diameter tanks in a newly constructed grow out greenhouse. In the process, they will also be tagged with small, coded-wire tags before their release into the bay systems.

These tags will not be visible to fishermen, but the metal tags can be detected by



creel survey researchers using special magnetic wands.

Smaller fry are currently in the larval-rearing tanks, and these already appear to be larger than the first batch of fish were at the same age. There is an approximate 30-day difference in the ages of these two groups of fish.

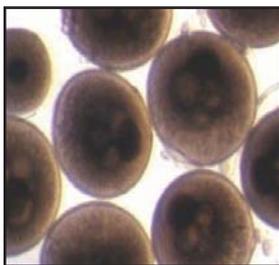
Release sites in which the small fish can seek refuge (i.e., sea grass meadows, vegetated marsh shorelines and oyster beds) are being identified by researchers to hopefully minimize mortality at release.

Tentative plans call for the fish to be grown to three or four inches before they are tagged and released into the bay. In any case, the first release should occur in the Biloxi Bay area sometime this fall; and that’s good news for anyone who likes to fish for speckled trout.

Project leader, Dr. Reginald Blaylock, said, “Future plans call for an evaluation of seatrout genetics in Mississippi so that releases can be expanded into other areas without compromising the structure of the natural population. This may require the maintenance of broodstock from different areas such as Bay St. Louis or the Pascagoula River.”

If all continues to go according to plans, anglers from Bayou Caddy to Bayou Cumbest can look forward to better trout fishing.

SPEC is a cooperative effort between the University of Southern Mississippi’s Gulf Coast Research Laboratory and the Department of Marine Resources. Researchers and fisheries technicians as well as other resources from both organizations are involved in the project, which is headquartered at the Cedar Point aquaculture operations facility just east of Ocean Springs in Jackson County.



Trout eggs



Embryo



Day 1



Day 10



Day 15



Mature adult spotted seatrout

Volunteers come out in full

Boaters and land-based volunteers flocked to Mississippi's beaches, islands and waterways to pick up marine debris at 43 designated cleanup sites during the 18th annual Mississippi Coastal Cleanup, part of the International Coastal Cleanup—the world's largest single-day volunteer effort to clean up the marine environment. More than 3,200 volunteers picked up 4,051 bags of trash along 147 miles of Coastal water-

Dive Team did an underwater cleanup of the pier at West Ship Island and removed three bunches of fishing line, including some with treble hooks and a mirror lure.

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 450,000 volunteers removed 8.2 million pounds of debris from 18,000 miles of coasts spanning 74 different nations.

The source of most debris is human activity. More than 50 percent of the debris found during the last Mississippi Coastal Cleanup held in 2003 came from land-based sources such as beach picnics, inappropriate or illegal dumping and general littering. "Debris generated on land can be blown, swept, or washed out to sea. While storms like Katrina are one source of debris, most debris can be traced back to a single source—people," said Lauren Thompson, state

coordinator of the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup and public relations director for the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources. "If we change our behavior, we can keep marine debris out of the water."

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



Volunteers on Front Beach in Ocean Springs pick up marine debris along the shoreline.

ways in Hancock, Harrison and Jackson counties and the Barrier Islands during the Mississippi Coastal Cleanup.

Volunteers collected 63,336 pounds of trash—that's more than 31.6 tons of marine debris—including 4 dump truckloads of marine debris too large to fit in trash bags, such as the two refrigerators found on Deer Island. Other items collected were: tires, a car battery, a television, two riding lawn mowers, tires, 8-track tapes, a kitchen cabinet door, ceramic serving dishes, a bundle of foreign mail, a swim fin, wooden pallets, Princess Diana Royal Wedding commemorative coin, two cars, a Tennessee Williams novel and boxer shorts. There were four bird entanglements reported, one turtle, and a raccoon. The most peculiar item reported was a breast implant found on Horn Island. The DMR Fisheries



Volunteers at Preservation Oaks in Harrison County scour the beach, collecting debris.

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 Washington, D.C. 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.

Following this year's Mississippi Coastal Cleanup, John Graham of Outback Steakhouse in D'Iberville and his staff—assisted by 50 Girl Scouts—provided a free lunch to 1,500 volunteers. In Jackson County, 500 volunteers received a free lunch at The Shed Barbeque in Ocean Springs courtesy of The Shed and Chevron. In Hancock County, the Office of Congressman Gene Taylor and the Bay St. Louis Rotary Club treated volunteers to hotdogs and drinks.



This group of Hancock County volunteers collected some 25 bags of debris from along the beach in the western Waveland area during the Sept. 16 Mississippi Coastal Cleanup.

force to clean up Coast



Sponsors



The Mississippi Marine Debris Task Force:

Allied Waste Services	Mississippi Department of Marine Resources
Chevron Pascagoula Refinery	Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College
Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve	Mississippi State University Coastal Research & Extension Center
Gulf Islands National Seashore	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Hancock County Chamber of Commerce	Naval Construction Battalion Center
Hancock Insurance	Naval Station Pascagoula
Harrison County Beautification	Office of Congressman Gene Taylor
Harrison County Sand Beach Department	Office of the Mississippi Secretary of State
The Home Depot	Outback Steakhouse
Jackson County Solid Waste	Rotary International District 6840
Keesler Air Force Base	Sea Coast Echo
Mississippi Air National Guard CRTG-Gulfport	
Mississippi-Alabama Sea Grant Consortium	
Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality	

Co-Sponsors (in-kind donations): *Allen Beverages, Inc.; Applewhite Industries; The Bay Press; Beverage Association of Mississippi; Cellular South; City of Biloxi; Clark Seafood, Inc.; Coast Coca-Cola Bottling Co., Inc.; Coca-Cola Bottling Co., Consolidated; The Dive Shop; First American Printing and Direct Mail; K99FM, Magic 93.7, 92.5 Hallelujah FM, and News Radio 104.9; Lamar Advertising of South Mississippi; Macland Disposal Inc.; Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians; Mississippi Media; Ocean Springs Chamber of Commerce; Rainbow Water; The Shed Barbeque; Ship Island Excursions; The Ocean Conservancy; The Sun Herald; Ultimate Chase, Inc.; and WLOX-TV 13.*

Next year's Mississippi Coastal Cleanup will be held Sept. 15 in conjunction with the International Coastal Cleanup.

2006 Cleanup Stats

Volunteers	3,230
Pounds of debris	63,336
Miles cleaned	147
Bags collected	4,051
Designated sites	43

County and Island Totals:

Hancock County:	Harrison County:
Volunteers: 225	Volunteers: 1,455
Bags collected: 440	Bags collected: 2,393
Designated Sites: 6	Designated Sites: 13
Miles cleaned: 12.1	Miles cleaned: 31.5
Barrier Islands:	Jackson County:
Volunteers: 335	Volunteers: 1,215
Bags collected: 139	Bags collected: 1,079
Designated Sites: 6	Designated Sites: 18
Miles cleaned: 30	Miles cleaned: 73



About 142 Horn Island volunteers picked up 840 pounds of debris.

Peculiar items found

bundle of foreign mail
8-track tapes
Princess Diana Royal Wedding commemorative coin
Tennessee Williams novel
breast implant

*A very special thanks to
OUTBACK Steakhouse
and
Chevron Pascagoula Refinery
for continued support of the
Mississippi Coastal Cleanup.*



Researchers monitor intertidal reef restoration

A new demonstration project at Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (GNDNERR) will monitor intertidal oyster reef restoration success at the reserve. Funded through the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Community-Based Habitat Restoration Program, the project is a collaborative effort with The Nature Conservancy, researchers at The University of Southern Mississippi's Gulf Coast Research Laboratory and the GNDNERR.

"This is a small-scale demonstration project to establish best management practices and success criteria for restoration of intertidal oysters," said Dr. Mark Peterson, USM researcher. "We will attempt to replicate intertidal oyster reef habitat along the shorelines of three sites in Crooked Bayou, North Rigolets, and Bayou Cumbest."

Each restored site is located near a natural oyster bed and covers about 600



Gulf Coast Research Laboratory researchers Dr. Mark Peterson (front) and J.D. Lopez deploy sampling trays in the North Rigolets area.

square feet of the intertidal zone. The restoration sites were bare mud prior to this project adjacent to natural oysters. Alix Guidry, a graduate student at USM will monitor both restored sites and the nearby natural oyster reefs to assess whether oyster growth and use of the reefs by aquatic organisms are comparable between the two reef types.

The project includes a substantial volunteer effort which is being coordinated by Nicole Vickey with The Nature Conservancy. During July, volunteers bagged shell to make the material easier to move to the restoration sites. In August, volunteers helped plant shell randomly at the constructed reef sites. Between fall 2006 and spring 2008, quarterly samples will be collected to monitor progress. Data collection will include fish and invertebrate use, and oyster recruitment and growth. Erosion along the bank behind the reefs

will also be monitored to determine if oyster beds provide measurable shoreline protection.

"I hope that this project will lead to additional research, monitoring and stewardship efforts that will improve our knowledge and understanding of this habitat at the reserve," said GNDNERR Manager David Ruple.

Grant awarded for saltmarsh topminnow conservation

The GNDNERR, in partnership with The Nature Conservancy and The University of Southern Mississippi's Department of Coastal Sciences has received a grant to develop a conservation plan for the saltmarsh topminnow (*Fundulus jenkinsi*) over the next five years. Baseline data will be collected during the first two years, which will then be used to develop and implement the conservation plan in the following three years.

The saltmarsh topminnow occurs sporadically along the Gulf Coast from Galveston, Texas to Escambia Bay, Fla. It is a small killifish found primarily in

Spartina marsh and low salinities. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has placed the saltmarsh topminnow on the list of Species of Concern for coastal areas ranging from Texas to Florida. This species is also listed as a Species of Concern in Mississippi, threatened in Florida, endangered in Alabama, and Species of Concern in Louisiana. However, due to the difficulties of sampling in saltmarsh habitats, it is suspected that the saltmarsh topminnow may be more abundant than previously expected. Little is known about the distribution and habitat characteristics of the saltmarsh topmin-

now throughout its range.

Through the Saltmarsh Topminnow Conservation Project, biologists hope to gain a better understanding of the habitat needs and stresses/threats (e.g., coastal development, marsh loss due to hurricanes, and dredging) to the saltmarsh topminnow and to develop a regional conservation plan that would outline strategies for increasing the viability of this species in the northern Gulf of Mexico.

Funding for the project is being provided by the National Marine Fisheries Service's Proactive Species Conservation Program.

Bobcat to aid in hurricane response



From left: Lt. Donnie Armes, Lt. Col. Rusty Pittman and Col. Walter Chatagner, Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (DMR) Chief of Law Enforcement, take receipt of a Bobcat compact track loader that the DMR purchased recently through a federal law enforcement disaster relief grant.

After Hurricane Katrina left many of Mississippi's boat ramps littered with debris, Marine Patrol officers were unable to launch their boats until an agency from Florida came to Mississippi to clear them. With the purchase of the Bobcat, Marine Patrol officers will be able to clear ramps more efficiently, push heavier loads without getting stuck, eliminate downtime, aid in the loading and unloading of equipment, minimize soil disturbance and reduce the need for work site reclamation after the job is complete.

The Bobcat, three separate attachments and the trailer were purchased with funds from a federal law enforcement grant written by the Mississippi Department of Public Safety as a result of Hurricane Katrina.

Sound Advice

Lt. Frank Wescovich



In this issue of *Coastal Markers*, I will respond to some frequently asked questions.

Question: *I have a boat with no hull I.D. numbers. What do I need to do to get it registered in my name?*

Answer: You will need to send in a "Request for Boat Inspection" form to the Mississippi Department of Wildlife Fisheries and Parks (MDWFP) in Jackson. The form can be downloaded from their Web site at www.mdwfp.com. There is a small fee for the inspection. After they receive the request and the payment, they will assign a Boat Inspection Officer who will contact you and make arrangements to look at the boat. You will also need to provide a bill of sale that is either notarized or contains names and addresses of two witnesses to the seller's signature. If everything checks out OK, you will be given a replacement hull I.D. number decal that must be placed on the starboard outer transom of the boat. After being issued the hull I.D. number you will need to complete a Boat Registration Application, which can be downloaded from www.mdwfp.com, and send it with the proper fee to MDWFP. They will process the application and send your registration card in a few weeks. It is then your responsibility to put the registration number on both sides of the bow of the boat with at least three-inch block letters. These can either be done with stick-on letters or painted-on letters.

Question: *I have a 14-foot Jon Boat. What is the maximum size engine that I can put on it?*

Answer: There should be a manufacturer's capacity plate on the inside of the transom that tells the maximum weight and horsepower allowed on the boat. You should not put a larger motor on the boat than recommended

See **SOUND ADVICE**, page 10

Dispatchers complete certification course

DMR Marine Patrol dispatchers Gretchen Clayton, Thomas Faeser and Stephanie Roberts completed a week-long National Emergency Communications Institute (NECI) Emergency Communications Officer National Certification Course held September 18-22 in Biloxi. Lt. Robert Graham, a certified NECI911 Instructor, taught the course.

Mississippi Law Enforcement Standards and Training and Mississippi state law requires this certification course and periodic re-certification courses for all emergency dispatch personnel. About 23 dispatchers from the three coastal counties attended the course, since there was such a personnel turn-over after Hurricane Katrina.

Marine Patrol Citation Totals

(July-September 2006)

Shrimp	4
Crab	31
Oyster	4
Commercial Net Fishing	0
Live Bait	2
Miscellaneous Seafood	0
Recreational Fishing	178
Boat and Water Safety	105
Marine Litter	2
Miscellaneous	18

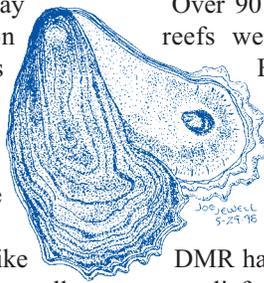
DMR plants donated shells on Jackson Co. reef

The DMR distributed about 240 bags of oyster shells in the Middle Bay area in southeast Jackson County, Oct. 19-20. The shells were donated to the DMR's Shellfish Program by the Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve and The Nature Conservancy.

"Even small-scale projects like this one are important to the overall recovery of the Mississippi oyster resources affected by Katrina," said DMR

Shellfish Bureau Director Scott Gordon.

Over 90 percent of Mississippi's oyster reefs were damaged or destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. Since this time, the DMR has planted more than 9,000 cubic yards of cultch material to help build new oyster reefs. Along with this donation of shells, the DMR has received \$15 million in disaster relief funds provided by Congress to help offset damage caused to Mississippi's oyster fishery resources.



Mississippi's First Pump-Out Boat



Purchased through the Clean Vessel Act program grant administered by the DMR, Mississippi's first pump-out boat—owned by Mitchell Marine Inc. of Ocean Springs—provides a mobile sewage disposal service to boaters in Mississippi's three coastal counties and barrier islands.

Mississippi's first pump-out boat, operated by Mitchell Marine Inc. of Ocean Springs, is helping to meet south Mississippi boaters' sewage disposal needs. Hurricane Katrina destroyed many of the marinas and harbors along the coast, and with the destruction went the pump-outs at these facilities. The 23-foot open scow boat, which was commissioned in May, services vessels in the three coastal counties and barrier islands.

A pump-out boat can pull up alongside a recreational boat and pump out its sewage holding tank with a suction hose. Once the pump-out boat is full, it discharges the waste into a sewage treatment facility for proper disposal.

The pump-out boat was purchased with funds allocated under the Clean Vessel Act program. The Clean Vessel Act program is a grant funded through the federal Sport Fish Restoration Act and is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service through the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (DMR). It is a cost reimbursable grant that pays for 75 percent of the cost to install pump-outs or pump-out boats.

To contact Mitchell Marine for pump-out services, call (228) 875-1092. There is a fee for pump-out service. Marinas and harbors seeking funds through the Clean Vessel Act program can contact the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, Clean Vessel Act Coordinator at (228) 374-5000, rhonda.price@dmr.ms.gov, or visit the DMR online at www.dmr.state.ms.us.

SOUND ADVICE, continued from page 9

on the capacity plate, as this could cause serious consequences later if you are involved in a boating accident.

Question: *I have an old fiberglass boat that has rotted wood inside the transom that needs to be replaced. This will most likely result in the hull I.D. number being destroyed in the process. What do I need to do?*

Answer: You should contact The Wiggins Office of the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks at (601) 928-3720. They will send an officer to verify the hull number before the transom is removed. When the work is completed, you will need to request a boat inspection and have a replacement decal issued and installed on the new transom.

Question: *I found an abandoned boat in the marsh after Katrina. What are my salvage rights?*

Answer: Mississippi has no law in regards to rights of salvage. If you are in possession of the boat due to having salvaged it, you must contact the last owner and get a proper bill of sale, giving you ownership of the boat. You then submit this bill of sale, along with a registration application, to the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks.

The coastal waters of Mississippi are in the process of being cleaned to remove debris from Hurricane Katrina. This monumental task is like no other ever attempted before. Please exercise extreme caution when operating your boat and always be on the lookout for debris in the water. A bit slower speed increases your margin of safety.

Remember: Wear your life jacket. Life jackets save lives. Safe boating is no accident.

Lt. Frank Wescovich oversees the DMR's Boat and Water Safety Program. He can be reached at (228) 523-4126.



**Boat Smart!
Wear your life
jacket.**



Take a Bow

Recognizing employees' commitment to excellence

To Protect and Serve with Excellence



(Front row, left to right: Matt Kasovich, Wade Dominey, Curtis Culpepper, Anthony Tremonte. Back row, left to right: John Ladner, Scott Saucier and Justin Amacker.) Marine Patrol welcomes officers Justin Amacker, Curtis Culpepper, Wade Dominey, Matt Kasovich, John Ladner and Anthony Tremonte, who recently completed training at the Mississippi Law Enforcement Officers Training Academy in Pearl, Miss. Scott Saucier also joins Marine Patrol from the Waveland Police Department; he is retired from the United States Marine Corps. Amacker received honors for Expert Marksman, placing in the top five of the class and also received a leadership award. Tremonte received honors for Expert Marksman, placing in the top five of the class and was named 1st Class Commander and Carrier of the Gidon for the graduating class. Kasovich was named 1st Platoon Leader, and Culpepper received an award for Top Academic Scores in the graduating class.

DMR staffers win PR awards



From left: Susan Perkins, Lauren Thompson and Marti Schuman

The DMR Public Affairs Bureau received two awards at the annual Southern Public Relations Federation Conference held recently in New Orleans. The Lantern Awards are given each year by the Southern Public Relations Federation to recognize public relations projects, programs, and productions across the Gulf South that display outstanding strategy, creativity, and production skills.

DMR Public Relations Director Lauren Thompson and Public Relations Representatives Susan Perkins and Marti Schuman won a Lantern Award for the DMR's "Preserving and Enjoying Mississippi's Coastal Resources" 2006 Marine Information Calendar and an Award of Excellence for the "Post-Katrina Volunteer Beach Cleanups."

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 | (11/3/04) Tamra Carrell |
| (10/1/99) Barbara Synowiez | (11/8/04) Kimberly Denz |
| (10/1/00) Paul Grote | (11/17/03) Katie Rosetti |
| (10/1/01) Scott Anderson | (11/17/03) Christine Walters |
| (10/1/01) John Ewing Jr. | (12/1/98) Iris Lofland |
| (10/1/01) Patrick Levine | (12/1/97) Traci Floyd |
| (10/1/01) Glen Wieck | (12/1/97) Mike Walker |
| (10/1/02) David Ruple | (12/1/98) Brandon Hall |
| (10/1/02) Leslie Young | (12/2/96) Kerwin Cuevas |
| (10/12/98) Doug Stringer | (12/8/97) Joe Jewell |
| (10/12/98) Irvin Jackson | (12/13/04) Brittany Breazeale |
| (10/15/01) Ron Jordan | (12/15/97) Roxanne Russell |
| (10/16/74) Pat Daughdrill | (12/17/90) Mike Brainard |
| (10/18/04) Teresa Stadler | (12/19/05) Curtis Culpepper |
| (11/1/96) Kara Vesa | (12/19/05) Thomas Faeser |
| (11/1/97) Tina Johnson | (12/19/05) Matt Kasovich |
| (11/1/98) Marcia Garcia | (12/19/05) Anthony Tremonte |
| (11/1/98) Bill Richardson | (12/22/03) Mario Sapet III |
| (11/1/99) Beth Roberts | (12/28/05) Justin Amacker |
| (11/1/00) Scott Chatham | (12/29/05) Wade Dominey |
| (11/1/00) Tom Jennings | (12/29/05) John Ladner |
| (11/1/00) Chris Mask | (12/29/05) Ali Leggett |
| (11/1/00) Kyle Wilkerson | (12/29/05) Charlie Robertson |

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



Mississippi Department
of Marine Resources
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Biloxi, Mississippi 39530

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Now available! DMR has reprinted its popular "Saltwater Fish Common to Mississippi" poster, featuring the artwork of Coast artist Marty Wilson.

DMR Calendar

November 21

Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources meeting, Mississippi State University Coastal Research and Extension Center, 1815 Popp's Ferry Road, Biloxi, 9 a.m.

November 27-29

Alabama-Mississippi Bays and Bayous Symposium, Mobile Convention Center. For information, call (251) 431-6409

December 14

Comprehensive Resource Management Plan Meeting, D'Iberville City Hall, 10383 Automall Parkway, D'Iberville, 10 a.m.

December 19

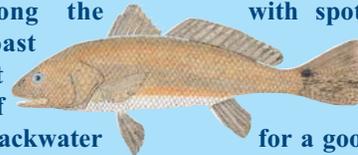
Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources meeting, Mississippi State University Coastal Research and Extension Center, 1815 Popp's Ferry Road, Biloxi, 9 a.m.

January 16

Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources meeting, 10383 Automall Parkway, D'Iberville, 9 a.m.

Doc's Fishing Tip

The next few weeks should provide fishermen along the Mississippi Gulf Coast with some of the best fishing conditions of the year. Bay and backwater anglers, in particular, can look



forward to excellent fishing action with spotted seatrout, red drum and striped bass. Try fishing a silver spoon like the Johnson Sprite for a good chance at catching any one of these gamesters.

— Fred Deegen, Ph.D., Deputy Director

Red drum illustration by Joe Jewell.

Eggplant Casserole with Shrimp

- 1 lb. Mississippi Gulf shrimp (boiled and peeled)
- 3 eggplants, peeled and diced
- 4 green onions, chopped
- 1 yellow onion, chopped
- 2 stalks celery, chopped
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 8 oz. cheddar cheese, cubed
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 8 oz. ham, diced
- 2 eggs
- 1 and 1/2 packs Ritz crackers, crushed



Boil eggplant and drain. Saute onions and celery in olive oil. Mix all ingredients, add salt and pepper to taste. Bake at 350 degrees for 45-60 minutes.

Recipe by Irvin Jackson. This recipe is featured in the November 2006 issue of Southern Living magazine in an article showcasing "Certified Wild American Shrimp."

Reprinted from "Get Hooked on Mississippi Seafood" recipe cards.