

# Coastal Markers



NEWSLETTER OF THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

Volume 10, Issue 1

Summer 2006

## 2006 SHRIMP SEASON OPENS:

### First day brings fewer boats, bigger shrimp

Shrimp season, which officially opened in Mississippi territorial waters on June 7, brought with it a decrease in the number of commercial vessels but better-than-average size shrimp.

With all the underwater debris left behind by Katrina, shrimpers snagged tree limbs, derelict crab traps and an occasional lawn chair. Despite these underwater hazards, most shrimpers were pleased with their catch.

The Department of Marine Resources' (DMR) marine fisheries staff completed an aerial survey of the shrimp boats and observed a substantial decrease in the number of smaller craft and shrimp boats on the waters: 306 shrimp boats this year compared to 633 shrimp boats in 2005.

"The 2006 shrimp season started with the fewest vessels trawling Mississippi's waters since the DMR began regular fly-over counts in the early 1990s," said the



A large shrimp boat heads in to join the more than 300 commercial vessels that turned out on June 7 for the opening day of the 2006 shrimp season in Mississippi.

DMR's Shrimp and Crab Bureau Director Mike Brainard.

"This reduction in numbers can be attributed to several factors which are directly related to Katrina and some that existed

prior to Katrina," Brainard said. "Katrina-related impacts include the loss of infrastructure including damaged or lost shrimp vessels and gear, lack of ice, few function-

**See SHRIMP, page 3**

## Oyster reef restoration efforts begin

*The DMR recently began restoration work on oyster reefs, damaged by Hurricane Katrina. See full story on page 3.*



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National Marina Day  
August 12

Director's Notes

Dr. William Walker



It has almost been a year since Hurricane Katrina unleashed its fury on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, and considerable progress has been made in the meantime to clean up the mess the storm left behind and restore damaged coastal resources. While there is much work remaining to be done, the year's accomplishments are nonetheless staggering. Debris removal has been a constant daily activity in every community, but the removal of marine debris – below the watermark of ordinary high tide – just got underway in May. The first three areas that are under contract are the Enger St. and St. Mary canals in Pascagoula, Henderson Point in Pass Christian and Jordan River Isles in Hancock County.

Work on the Enger St. and St. Mary canals and waterway was recently completed. The Henderson Point and Jordan River Isles debris removal should also be completed by the time this newsletter is published.

The quantity of marine debris removed in each of the coastal counties as of mid June is as follows: Jackson County: 2,389 cu. yds.; Harrison County: 5,225 cu. yds.; and Hancock County: 6,963 cu. yds. The total for all sites is 12,836 cu. yds.

The next area, which is pending contract award, is the general coastline from below mean high tide to a distance of a half mile. Following that, focus will be on the Pearlinton area followed by 10 previously identified sites north of I-10. Finally, the remaining waterways and canals within each county will be done. Each county has been divided into three sections, and sites within each section have been prioritized. The process of debris removal is tedious and slow, but the progress is apparent as the shoreline of the place we call home gradually returns to its former beauty.

Executive Director

**Register today!**



**The Mobile Bay National Estuary Program, Mississippi Alabama Sea Grant Consortium and the Alabama Center for Estuarine Studies is hosting the Alabama-Mississippi Bays and Bayous Symposium at the Mobile Convention Center Nov. 27-29. Abstract submission and pre-registration is now open at <http://ambbs.mobilebaynep.com>. The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources is a sponsor of this event.**

**For more information, call (251) 431-6409.**

**Thanks!**

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

**Dorothy Daniel  
Amy Taylor  
Dr. Fred Deegen  
Marcia Garcia  
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Chris May  
Dr. Mark Woodrey  
Jan Welker  
Traci Floyd  
Ruth Posadas  
Frank Wescovich**

# DMR enhances Katrina-damaged reefs

The DMR began restoration efforts on oyster reefs damaged by Hurricane Katrina by distributing approximately 5,000 cubic yards of cultch material (oyster shells) in the Henderson Point Square Handkerchief area about 1.5 miles south of Pass Christian on May 22-26. Hurricane Katrina damaged about 90 to 95 percent of Mississippi's 12,000 acres of oyster beds on Aug. 29, 2005.

"We are proud that Mississippi is the first 'Katrina state' to begin cultch planting operations that will help to restore our public oyster reefs and begin the process of bringing our oyster industry back to its former production," said DMR Executive Director William Walker. "We genuinely appreciate all of the hard work on the part of the oyster industry, our Commission, Governor, Legislature and Congressional delegation in making this possible."

"Following Katrina, 'building back better than ever' is a theme that carries beyond our shoreline," said Gov. Haley Barbour. "Restoring our marine resources is critical to the economic and environmental recovery of the Mississippi Gulf Coast, and I am thrilled the Department of Marine Resources has begun the process of oyster reef restoration. This is a significant first step, and with the help of our Congressional delegation, we'll soon be on our way to rebuilding the barrier islands and marshes as well."

"Just like our coastal communities, the beautiful scenery and wildlife habitat for which the coast is well-known will be back stronger and better than ever."

Funding for this cultch plant is being



DMR Marine Fisheries Technicians CW Clarke (left) and Steve Breland measure the volume of shell on the barge prior to its distribution in the Henderson Point Square Handkerchief reef area.

provided by monies from the Hurricane Ivan Shellfish Restoration and Enhancement Project funds and the tidelands program. More money from Congress is needed to go further in the rebuilding process.

Eventually, the DMR hopes to build most of the beds with oyster shells and the broken concrete from structures destroyed by Katrina scattered across the coast. The concrete would be crushed and spread across the bottom of the Mississippi Sound to create new oyster beds.

"It is one of our duties to see that our oyster reefs are developed and made as

productive and profitable as possible," said DMR Shellfish Coordinator Scott Gordon. "The cultch planting is one of the most essential tools we have to achieve that."

Cultch plants consist of spreading oyster shell or crushed concrete rubble over the water bottom using high-pressure hoses, giving oyster larvae a clean surface on which to attach and grow. These plants are intended to enhance oyster productivity and increase fishing opportunities in south Mississippi through the continued development of existing reefs and the creation of additional new reefs.

## **SHRIMP, continued from page 1**

al docking facilities, reduced number of dealer/processors, and excessive marine debris on the shrimping grounds."

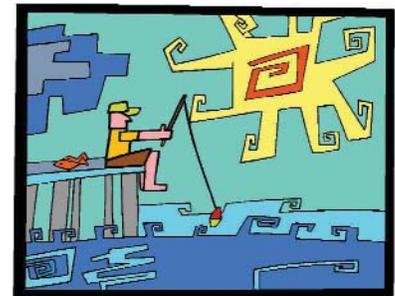
"Additionally, shrimpers still have to deal with economic difficulties, which existed prior to the storm such as high fuel prices, low shrimp prices and competition from imports. All of these obstacles combined are making it very difficult for the post-Katrina shrimp fishery in Mississippi to recover."

Prior to the season opening, the DMR's Marine Patrol issued three citations for

shrimping during closed season.

The DMR's Marine Patrol was out in full force starting at 6 p.m. June 6 and worked 'round the clock to ensure a smooth shrimp season opening. This included 24 officers, one reserve officer and two dispatchers. Marine Patrol officers conducted patrols from 10 patrol boats throughout the Mississippi Sound.

"We were extremely pleased with opening day commercial shrimping activities," said Col. Walter Chataginer, DMR's Chief of Marine Law Enforcement. "Voluntary compliance rates with the state's seafood laws were much higher than in previous years."



**Recreational saltwater fishing licenses expired June 30.**

# Grant to fund invasive species impact study



A close-up of giant salvinia (*Salvinia molesta*), an invasive aquatic fern.

The DMR recently received a grant from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) for a study of the “Biological Impacts of High-Energy Storm Events on Coastal Ecosystems.”

The \$40,000 grant will fund the study of “Effects of Hurricane Katrina on an Incipient Population of Giant Salvinia in the Lower Pascagoula River, Mississippi.” DMR Staff Officer Dale Diaz, in cooperation with the USGS and Pam Fuller, Fisheries Biologist with USGS/Florida Integrated Science Center, will lead the study.

“This grant will allow us to assess the impact of Hurricane Katrina on the distribution of giant salvinia in the Lower Pascagoula River system,” said Diaz.

Giant salvinia (*Salvinia molesta*) is an invasive aquatic fern native to South America. A population of giant salvinia was discovered in June 2005 in the Lower Pascagoula River in coastal Mississippi. By the time this infestation was first reported it had already spread to numerous waterways within the Pascagoula River. Control measures were implemented, which consisted of a public awareness campaign to educate the public on measures to prevent the spread of the invasive plant, the release of a weevil that feeds exclusively on the giant salvinia and spraying the plant with herbicides.

Preventing the spread of giant salvinia is extremely important. Giant salvinia is among the worst invasive aquatic plants in the world, second only to the water



The aquatic invasive species called giant salvinia (*Salvinia molesta*) is shown in a portion of the Pascagoula River System.

hyacinth, *Eichhornia crassipes*. Under ideal conditions giant salvinia can double the size of the area it occupies within two to four days clogging waterways with dense mats of vegetation. A single plant, under ideal conditions, can multiply into 67 million plants in only two months.

Giant salvinia can quickly out-compete native vegetation and if control measures are not implemented, will grow into thick mats. These mats become dense, crowding out native plants, along with reducing oxygen available in the water to fish and invertebrate species. The dense mats also hinder activities such as boating, fishing, and swimming. Giant salvinia has adapted well to Mississippi waterways. The study will map the presence or absence of giant salvinia along with additional parameters such as salinity (giant salvinia cannot tolerate high salinity waters).

Based on limited assessments after Hurricane Katrina, many of the areas initially found to be heavily infested with salvinia were substantially less so as a result of the storm.

“Once a detailed map is developed the information collected will be used to better focus available resources to control giant salvinia,” said Fuller.

## How you can help

Giant salvinia spreads easily when pieces of it are moved from one place to another. The public can help prevent the spread of this invasive plant and others by doing the following:

- Remove any aquatic plants from boat propellers, intakes, trailers and gear before leaving a launch area;
- Always blow out jet-ski intakes and wash boats and equipment land side before traveling into a new waterway;
- Eliminate water from equipment before transporting; and
- Never release aquarium plants or aquarium water into a water body including storm drains.

**For more information on giant salvinia visit the Web site <http://salvinia.er.usgs.gov/> or <http://protectyourwaters.net>.**

It is illegal in Mississippi to release giant salvinia. If you have seen this plant in cultivation or in the wild please contact the DMR at (228) 523-4064.

# Bait dealers licensed and ready for fishing season

Eleven fishing camps and marinas have been licensed to sell live bait for the 2006-2007 season. This number is down considerably from the 28 camps that were licensed in 2005-2006.

“It is so encouraging to see these historical bait suppliers operational again when you consider that all had severe damage or were completely wiped out in last year’s storm,” said Traci Floyd, DMR Live Bait Program Coordinator. “These dockside businesses are vital to the Coast’s recovery as they provide a service integral to our fishing community way of life and encourage anglers to return to the water in the numbers our coastal economy will benefit from.”

Floyd said the demand for live bait has been increasingly high as more and more Coast residents and visitors are able to go fishing again.

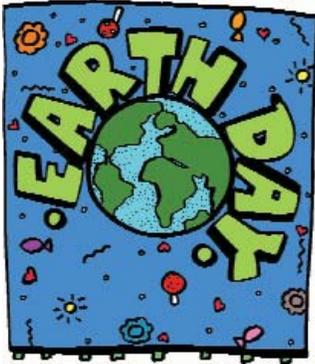
Licensed live bait dealers currently providing bait are:

- Dog River Live Bait, Moss Point – 475-1874
- Fort Bayou Bait Shop, Ocean Springs – 875-6252
- Mary Walker Marina, Gautier – 497-3141
- Ocean Springs Marine Mart, Ocean Springs – 875-0072
- Point Cadet Bait & Tackle, Biloxi – 432-7387
- Tucei’s Fishing Camp, Gautier – 497-6743
- Who Zat Bait Camp, Ocean Springs – (no phone yet)



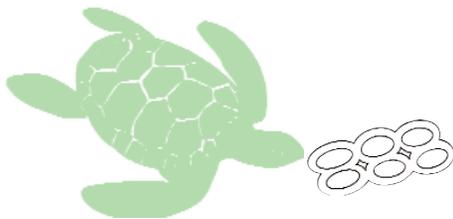
Traci Floyd discusses the demand for live bait while inspecting a bait dealer in Ocean Springs.

For the most current list of bait dealers, contact the DMR Shrimp & Crab Bureau at (228) 374-5000.



# DMR celebrates Earth Day

A visitor to the DMR’s exhibit at the Gulf Islands National Seashore Earth Day (GINS) event on April 22 tries his luck at Stash Your Trash, a game designed by the DMR Public Affairs staff to teach children how to properly dispose of marine debris. The event was held at the GINS Davis Bayou visitor center in Ocean Springs. More than 500 people stopped by the DMR’s booth to pick up educational materials and to learn more about estuaries, the hazards of marine debris and our coastal resources.



# GNDNERR takes on two habitat restoration projects

The Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (GNDNERR) began two new projects in the spring aimed to improve habitats of the reserve.

In April, the first phase of a unique marsh restoration project and experiment was completed. The goals of the project are to track the success of two different restoration techniques and to demonstrate the value of marsh vegetation as a filter to remove nitrogen from groundwater. Dr. Just Cebrian of Dauphin Island Sea Lab in Alabama is the lead investigator of the project.

On April 29, volunteers harvested approximately 190 plugs of black needlerush (*Juncus roemerianus*) along Bayou Heron. About two weeks later another group of volunteers planted the plugs at the restoration site located adjacent to the fishing pier at the end of Bayou Heron Road in Jackson County. The restoration site covers 800 square feet and consists of a retaining wall constructed of crushed concrete and sandy backfill material. The project provides an additional benefit by protecting the bank of the bayou, which was eroding.

During the next 12 months the growth of the *Juncus* plugs will be monitored to assess the success of the two restoration techniques. (Some plots were planted at half density while other plots received full density plantings.) During the second year of the project, researchers will examine the value of black needlerush marsh as a

filter to remove human-based nitrogen from groundwater. This second phase will involve injecting a nitrogen solution into the ground and monitoring nitrogen levels in the groundwater down-slope of the injection sites.

The second project at GNDNERR will improve pine savanna habitat along Bayou Heron Road. The goal of this project is to restore the historical pine savanna ecosystem of the site. In cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, GNDNERR identified 213 acres of forest that needed to be thinned on both the GNDNERR and Grand Bay National Wildlife Refuge. Prior to thinning, the treated areas had stands of small diameter trees growing close together. A drum chopper, or roller chopper, was used to thin the areas. The chopper is a large drum with horizontal blades; the drum is filled with water to increase its weight, which forces the blades to cut through, or chop, vegetation as the drum rolls over it. The chopper is pulled behind a bulldozer. As the dozer pushes over trees, the blades of the drum chop up the trees and shrubs. The drum chopping was completed during a seven-week period.

The next step in restoring these areas is to conduct a prescribed fire, which will reduce the downed material left by the



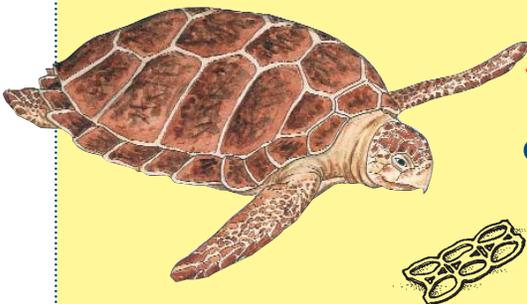
Volunteers plant plugs of marsh vegetation at the restoration site behind the boat ramp at the end of Bayou Heron Road in Jackson County.

drum chopper and open up the ground layer for grasses to become established. As the area is treated with regular fires at two- to three-year intervals, visitors will see widely spaced pine trees and an open, grassy understory containing a diversity of plant species. An added short-term benefit to visitors is increased visibility along Bayou Heron Road—deer and other wildlife can be seen during morning and evening drives along the road.

18th annual

## Mississippi Coastal Cleanup

Saturday, Sept. 16  
8 a.m.-11 a.m.



**Volunteer!**

Call (877) BEACH-05  
or  
(228) 523-4052

Visit [www.masgc.org/cleanup](http://www.masgc.org/cleanup)

## A Clapper Rail's Mussel Pain



This mussel-bound Clapper Rail was found on June 17 at the Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve. The bird was found with its toe stuck in a ribbed mussel but was later released and is doing well despite the circumstance of its capture and the loss of its toe.

# National Heritage Area makes strides, despite Katrina

The commissioners of the Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area and staff are working to promote heritage tourism and to highlight the rich heritage of the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

More than ever before, the 30 commissioners and staff of the DMR and its partners, including the National Park Service, are dedicated to defining the cultural, historical, and natural heritage elements that characterize the Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area. They are incorporating these elements into the recovery of the Coast to retain the area's culture and identity in the post-Katrina world.

Despite the challenges of the past months, the Heritage Area continues to receive acknowledgement and make progress. In May, the House of Representatives of the State of Mississippi through House Resolution No. 57 recognized and commended the Mississippi Congressional Delegation and the staff of the DMR/Comprehensive Resource Management Plan (CRMP) for their efforts in securing the Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area.

The Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area passed in the 109th Congress in 2004 and was signed into law by President George Bush on Dec. 8, 2004.

The mission of the Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area is to promote



**Rep. Hank Zuber (right) presents DMR Executive Director William Walker with a House Resolution commending the DMR/CRMP for its efforts in securing the Miss. Gulf Coast National Heritage Area at the annual Coastal Development Strategies Conference held in Biloxi in May.**

understanding of and to conserve and enhance the heritage resources of the six counties of the Mississippi Gulf Coast by telling the area's nationally significant story to residents and visitors through activities and partnerships that celebrate the area's unique history, people, traditions, and landscapes.

The Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area is a partnership of commu-

nities, businesses, governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, and individuals who value the region's rich cultural and environmental diversity, history, natural beauty, and traditions. This partnership represents the Mississippi Gulf Coast's distinctive story in terms of its national significance.

Visitors will have the opportunity to experience the Heritage Area through a set of integrated themes that highlights the Coast's unique qualities and emphasizes the important role the region has played in the history of the United States.

The Heritage Area enhances conserves, promotes, and provides connectivity among the Mississippi Gulf Coast's many heritage resources. These resources serve as a source of pride and identity for residents who are stakeholders in this conservation effort and provide heritage tourists with authentic experiences reflective of the Mississippi Gulf Coast National Heritage Area. Residents benefit from increased awareness and appreciation of their environment, history, culture, traditions, and lifestyles.

The economic effects of heritage tourism benefit the entire region and support the long-term enhancement and conservation of those qualities that make the Mississippi Gulf Coast unique.

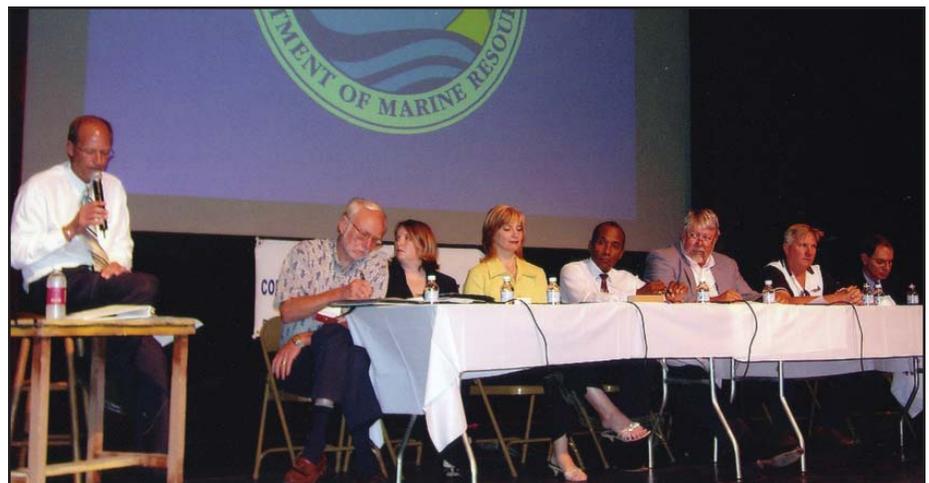
# More than 500 attend Smart Growth conference

The 7th annual Coastal Development Strategies Conference held on May 2-3 at the Historic Saenger Theatre in Biloxi was a huge success. More than 500 people registered for the conference hosted by the DMR/Comprehensive Resource Management Plan (CRMP) and the Mississippi Gulf Coast Chamber of Commerce.

The theme for the regional conference was *education*. By educating the general public about smart growth principles, the implementation of these principles gain momentum, and through the support for the Governor's Recovery Program, the Coast will have a sustainable future.

Mayor Joseph Riley from Charleston, South Carolina gave the keynote address. The Mayor is regarded as an expert on urban design and livability issues. His message of hope, including the response

**See SMART GROWTH, page 9**



**WLOX-TV's David Elliott (left) introduces the participants in the mayors' post-Katrina panel discussion about the Coast's recovery held during the conference. Pictured at table, from left: Mayor Dayton Whites of Lucedale, Lisa Bradley of Gulfport's Main Street Association, Ocean Springs Mayor Connie Moran, Moss Point Mayor Xavier Bishop, Gautier Alderman Jeff Wilkinson, Mayor Pro Tem Chip McDermott of Pass Christian, and David Staehling, Director of Administration with the City of Biloxi. This session was moderated by John McFarland of the Sun Herald.**



## Workshop teaches ‘green,’ storm-resistant building

The Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve’s (GNDNERR’s) Coastal Training Program (CTP) hosted a “Storm-Resistant and Green Building Products” Workshop and Technology Fair at the Mississippi State University Coastal Research and Extension Center (MSU-CREC) facility in Biloxi on June 6. Sixty-five individuals participated in the training seminars, and the technology fair drew an additional 75 members of the general public.

Jules Paulk and Adam Deck, building scientists with Sowing Green Collaborative, were the primary facilitators and trainers of the workshop. The workshop defined what it means to build green and identified ways in which green construction can also be storm resistant. Storm-resistant construction means that not only should buildings use materials that withstand high winds and water damage and be placed in low-impact areas, they should also be livable in conditions where access to local infrastructure is limited or temporarily non-existent, such as after a hurricane.

Paulk and Deck also provided participants with lists of funding sources and tax incentives for green building projects, including an explanation of the Gulf Opportunity Zone Act of 2005.

A technology fair took place in MSU’s auditorium, which was adjacent to the training classroom. Fourteen vendors participated in the event, and several of the products discussed during the training seminar were displayed in the auditorium. Exhibitors included Audubon Mississippi (native plants), Duro-Last Roofing, EcoBlock Insulating Concrete Forms,



**Carl Frederickson with Chaux Products discusses storm-resistant building materials with an attendee of the “Storm-Resistant and Green Building Products” Technology Fair held in Biloxi in June.**

Energy Wise Construction Products, Greenguard Environmental Institute, Gulf Coast Solar, Koreteck Panelized Building Systems, Premier Foam Insulation, and Tierra Concrete Homes. For more information about these events, please visit the Grand Bay NERR’s Web site: [www.grandbaynerr.org](http://www.grandbaynerr.org).

## GNDNERR, partners host Conservation Easements workshop



**Hans Neuhauser, Director of the Georgia Land Trust Service Center in Athens, talks about Voluntary Land Conservation Agreements at the workshop.**

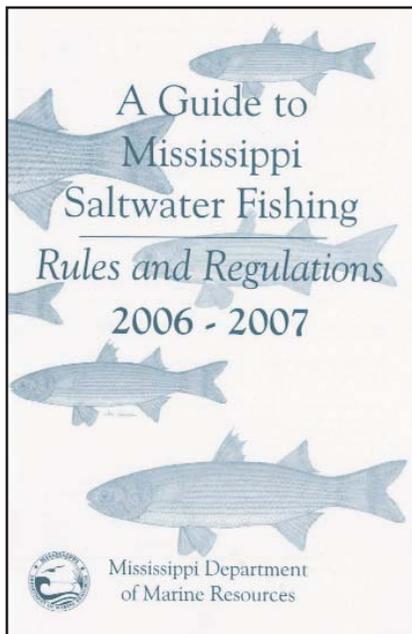
About 50 people attended the “A Practical Guide to Conservation Easements” workshop held June 21 at the Mississippi State University Coastal Research & Extension Center in Biloxi. The workshop was hosted by the Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve’s Coastal Training Program, the Land Trust for the Mississippi Coastal Plain, the Harrison County Board of Supervisors, the DMR’s Comprehensive Resource Management Plan (CRMP) and the Coastal Preserves Program, and Mississippi Power Company.

The workshop provided information, skills, and tools to help participants make informed decisions about the benefits and applications of conservation easements. Attendees learned how they can establish green space while protecting thier land from future storms and increase the aesthetic value of a community landscape. Agenda items included strategic planning for conservation easements, estate planning and easement preparation, tax incentives, and protection of easement properties.

# New 2006-2007 saltwater fishing regulations book now available

The 2006-2007 edition of the DMR's free booklet, "A Guide to Mississippi Saltwater Fishing Rules and Regulations," is now available at the DMR office located at 1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi. The guide incorporates new and revised saltwater fishing regulations for the state of Mississippi.

The 32-page fishing regulations book includes information on commercial and recreational saltwater fishing, license requirements, size and possession limits, descriptions of fish, and covers topics such as catch and release, protected species, marine litter and a new section on invasive species. The guide includes the original artwork of Joe Jewell, a member of the DMR's Office of Marine Fisheries staff. Jewell has provided illustrations for the fishing regulations book since 1999.



The cover of the 2006-2007 rules and regulations book is illustrated by DMR staffer Joe Jewell.

**For your free copy, stop by the DMR office or call the DMR Public Affairs Bureau at (228) 523-4051 or (228) 523-4052.**

## SMART GROWTH, continued from page 7

and recovery from the ravages of Katrina, is added value for the Coast, especially from the man who continues to contribute to Charleston's 25-year renaissance.

Topics discussed at the conference included site development, heritage development, sustainable habitats, stormwater runoff, development design in Southern Mississippi with do's and don'ts using smart growth principles, green space, waterfront protection, diversity of plants and animals, museums, cultures, natural resources and recreational opportunities were components of the conference.

Because of the widespread impact of Hurricane Katrina, the conference fee was waived this year. Meals were catered by Java Joe's and the world famous Mary Mahoney's Restaurant.

Sponsors for the conference were NOAA, Mississippi Power, Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, Gulf Hills Conference and Convention Center, Chevron Pascagoula Refinery, DuPont DeLisle Plant, DMR's Coastal Preserves Program and DMR/CRMP.

## Marine Patrol Citation Totals

(April-June 2006)

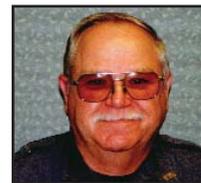
Shrimp	3
Crab	13
Oyster	1
Commercial Net Fishing	3
Live Bait	0
Miscellaneous Seafood	1
Recreational Fishing	111
Boat and Water Safety	56
Marine Litter	3
Miscellaneous	19



**Boat Smart.  
Wear your  
Lifejacket**

## Sound Advice

**Lt. Frank Wescovich**



The heat of summer is here again and the boating season is in full-swing. Everyone has probably made

at least one or two trips out on the water by now. Hopefully, they have been successful and enjoyable. Unfortunately, we have had several bad boating accidents in the past month. These accidents were caused by collision with hurricane debris.

We at DMR have made a great effort to get the word out to the boating public about hurricane debris and its associated dangers by developing and running public notices and Public Service Announcements (PSAs) in newspapers and on television, radio and on the DMR Web site ([www.dmr.state.ms.us](http://www.dmr.state.ms.us)). The news media has also been very cooperative at helping us pass the word. People have been advised over and over again to operate their boats with extreme caution, even in previously familiar areas, due to possible debris in the water. Remember, debris can and will move around with the wind and tide. Just because a channel is clear today doesn't necessarily mean it will still be clear tomorrow. Also, just because you can't see debris doesn't mean it's not there lurking beneath the surface for the careless or unsuspecting boater. Another thing to consider is, if we ever do get a good heavy rainfall, the debris situation will get even worse. Rivers, creeks and bayous, are backed up with tons of debris that is just waiting to be dislodged by a good high storm tide or waterways swollen by a heavy runoff.

I have said many times before that the best thing to do to avoid major problems with debris is to slow down. Even if you operate at a safe, slow speed, you are likely to encounter debris. Remember, the higher the speed, the greater the potential for damage. Personally, I would much rather encounter a log at idle speed and just slide up on it than to hit one at full throttle and rip off the lower unit or tear out the transom.

**See SOUND ADVICE, page 10**



# Seafood Safety Corner

The Seafood Technology Bureau certified 39 licensed seafood dealers and processors during the first quarter of Fiscal Year 2006-2007. These dealers and processors are up and running. Several dealers and processors whose facilities were completely

destroyed by Katrina are making plans to rebuild, while others plan to relocate elsewhere on the coast.

Mississippi has only two certified oyster shucker packers—down from last year's 12. There are nine reshippers and five shellstock shippers. There are now 16 certified shrimp processors and 10 licensed crab dealers. Last year, there were 27 shrimp processors and 15 crab dealers. Ice, a valuable commodity to all fishermen, is available at two locations on the Coast: Saint Michael's Fuel & Ice Inc. in east Biloxi and Pascagoula Ice and Freezer Company in west Pascagoula.

The Bureau completed its semi-annual analysis of the samples of all water sources used by the seafood facilities. Currently, the first quarter regulatory routine and follow-up inspections are in progress while technical assistance is extended to all those who may need it or request it.

The Seafood Technology Bureau participated in its first public outreach event in Hurley, Miss. at the Lum Cumbest Park on April 8. The Bureau distributed educational materials about seafood safety, the marine environment, DMR programs and coastal resources to the more than 8,000 people who attended the annual spring event. Bureau staffers were on-hand to answer questions on seafood safety, seafood harvests and the seafood industry's recovery efforts after Hurricane Katrina.

The Bureau also assisted the Mississippi Seafood Marketing Program in promoting



Jan Welker

the seafood industry and seafood safety awareness at the Biloxi's Cajun Crawfish Festival held April 22-23 and April 28-29 at the Mississippi Coast Coliseum.

A new resource on seafood safety is a Web site recently launched by the Gulf and South Atlantic Fisheries Foundation, Inc. where a lot of seafood safety information can be found. The Bureau works and collaborates with the foundation on several of its projects. Visit [BeOysterAware.com](http://BeOysterAware.com) for more information.

## How to reach us

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Jan Welker: (228) 523-4091

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## SOUND ADVICE, continued from page 9

Unfortunately the latter case is usually the one we usually see most often.

I cannot stress enough that boating conditions are not the same after Katrina, and they won't be for some time to come. Although a cleanup of debris is in the works, the task is so monumental that all of the debris can't possibly be eliminated. The presence of Katrina debris is just a cold hard fact of life along the Mississippi Gulf Coast that must now, more than ever, be taken into consideration when operating a boat.

Remember to slow down to increase your chances of having a good time on the water.

**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.*



Seafood Technology Bureau Director Ruth Posadas (left) talks to booth visitors about seafood safety at an event held at the Lum Cumbest Park on April 8 in Hurley, Miss. More than 8,000 people attend this annual spring event.

Visit the DMR online @  
[www.dmr.state.ms.us](http://www.dmr.state.ms.us)



# Take a Bow

Recognizing employees' commitment to excellence

## DMR receives Keep Mississippi Beautiful Award

"We've got plenty of work ahead of us," said Lauren Thompson, public relations director for the DMR, after accepting a Partnership Award for the DMR's role in organizing volunteer shoreline cleanups along the Coast to remove marine debris and educating the public on the value of Mississippi's marine resources and the negative impact that litter can have on coastal habitats and wildlife.

On April 20, Keep Mississippi Beautiful (KMB) hosted its 14th Annual Awards Luncheon at the Country Club of Jackson. Participants from across the state traveled to Jackson to attend the program. The event recognizes individuals, groups, companies and government agencies who partner with KMB to make a difference in the quality of life in Mississippi.

"We are a facilitator of these cleanup efforts," Thompson said. "When you reach out to the community with a vision and people come together with a shared goal, it is amazing what you can accomplish. In the case of marine debris, we have moved mountains, because of the collaborative efforts of the coastal counties and dedicated, hands-on organizations with people who volunteer their time and resources, like KMB, the Mississippi Marine Debris Task Force, DEQ, EPA, Keesler Air Force Base, NCBC, Coast Guard, Americorps and many others," Thompson said.

The KMB Partnership Award recognizes exemplary support of KMB. This is the sixth consecutive year the DMR has received a Keep Mississippi Beautiful award.



DMR Public Relations Director Lauren Thompson accepts a Keep Mississippi Beautiful Partnership Award on behalf of the DMR. (From left: Keep Mississippi Beautiful Chairperson Bob Fairbank Jr., DMR Public Relations Director Lauren Thompson and Keep America Beautiful President Ray Empson.)

## DMR wins national award



The DMR Public Affairs staff received an Award of Excellence for the 2005 "Preserving and Enjoying Mississippi's Coastal Resources" Marine Information Calendar at the annual

National Association of Government Communicators (NAGC) Communications School held recently in Baltimore, Maryland.

The DMR is one of about 80 government agencies in the United States to earn the prestigious Blue Pencil Award at this year's annual NAGC Blue Pencil/Gold Screen Awards banquet, which recognizes excellence in written, filmed, audio/video-taped, published and photographed government information products.

NAGC is a national, nonprofit professional network of federal, state, and local government employees who disseminate information within and outside government. Its members are guided by a professional code of ethics, which demands complete and timely communication between government and the people it serves.

## Happy Anniversary!

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

- |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| (7/1/85) Scott Gordon    | (8/15/01) Richard Cooley |
| (7/1/91) David Rose      | (8/18/01) Sally Richards |
| (7/1/91) Frank Wescovich | (8/25/97) Marty Jones    |
| (7/1/97) John Grimsley   | (9/1/98) Kenny Melvin    |
| (7/1/03) Marian Dicas    | (9/1/00) Alan McArthur   |
| (7/1/05) Christina Young | (9/1/00) Don Baxter      |
| (7/1/05) Will Freeman    | (9/1/00) Tina Shumate    |
| (7/7/92) Charlie Vyles   | (9/1/01) Linda Bullard   |
| (7/8/02) William Walker  | (9/1/03) John White      |
| (7/15/99) Michaela Hill  | (9/1/03) Chris May       |
| (7/21/97) Joe Ziegler    | (9/9/00) Matt Hill       |
| (7/25/96) Corky Perret   | (9/15/99) Erick Porche   |
| (7/28/05) David LaVigne  | (9/15/99) Al Warburton   |
| (7/31/90) Dorothy Daniel | (9/15/99) Joe Roach      |
| (8/1/86) Mike Buchanan   | (9/20/01) Marti Schuman  |
| (8/1/99) Susan Perkins   |                          |

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



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## Mississippi Coastal Cleanup Saturday, Sept. 16, 2006

[www.masgc.org/cleanup](http://www.masgc.org/cleanup)

# DMR Calendar

### August 10

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

### August 15

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

### September 19

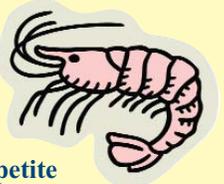
Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources meeting, 10383 Automall Parkway, D'Iberville, 9 a.m.



Celebrate  
National Estuaries Day  
Sept. 30

## Doc's Fishing Tip

Having trouble catching fish? Try fishing a live shrimp beneath a popping cork. These little morsels whet the appetite of just about anything that swims, and they're easy to fish too.



Tie a number four treble hook onto a couple of feet of twenty-pound test line; then tie the opposite end of the line onto the bottom side of a popping cork. Tie the completed rig onto your fishing line, and it's nearly ready to go. All you need now is a couple of dozen live shrimp, and you can get those at the nearest bait shop. Hook one prong of the treble hook through the clear spot below the big spine atop the shrimp's head, and you're all set. Cast the rig anywhere near a fish and hang on!

— Fred Deegen, Ph.D., Deputy Director