

# NEWS RELEASE

MS Dept. of Marine Resources  
1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi 39530



*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*

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## **Gov. Phil Bryant announces GOMESA projects**

JACKSON – Gov. Phil Bryant announced today six projects totaling more than \$23 million that will be funded through the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act (GOMESA). The federal passage in 2006 of GOMESA created revenue sharing provisions for the four Gulf oil and gas producing States of Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, Texas, and their coastal political subdivisions.

"These funds will continue our efforts of years past to protect and enhance our beautiful Mississippi Gulf Coast," Gov. Bryant said. "This latest disbursement of revenue generated by offshore energy exploration, as part of the Gulf of Mexico Energy Security Act, will initiate projects that continue to grow our blue economy. I appreciate our Mississippi congressional delegation for their hard work in securing this funding."

The projects will be administered by the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR).

"The Department of Marine Resources looks forward to administering these projects for Governor Bryant," MDMR Executive Director Joe Spraggins said. "The projects will enhance education, research, oyster restoration, water runoff and testing for the Gulf Coast of Mississippi."

## **GOMESA projects:**

1. Beach storm water outfalls in Harrison County (\$4.95 million) – design, engineering, environmental, permits, survey and construction of the first phase to be built to replace or remove seven outfall pipes along the sand beach to help reduce the number of these pipes in Harrison County.

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2. MDMR Marine Fisheries Dry Laboratory (\$760,000) – will provide enhanced marine management opportunities by providing for the potential of a new water quality analysis lab, the ability to conduct HAB ELISA analysis in-house rather than contracting outside the agency and the ability to conduct genetic analysis of fish samples. Additional uses will include the capacity to conduct marine fish stomach content analysis, which will allow for more accurate marine management and to establish a new taxonomic fish comparative collection.
3. Oyster cultch (\$1 million) – provide additional cultch to repair the diminishing oyster population. Areas to receive cultch plant include the Western Mississippi Sound, Eastern Mississippi Sound and Biloxi Bay areas.
4. Oyster plant (\$3 million) – put over 60 million oysters on shell or crushed concrete into the Mississippi Sound to provide stock and future increased spat. These oysters will be placed across the Mississippi Sound to enhance future growth of oysters in different areas.
5. Tramway (\$6,688,944) – funds for the tramway will compliment local and federal funds already dedicated to the project. By tying Jones Park to the Mississippi Aquarium Campus, new educational and recreational opportunities will result. This construction will provide quality emissions-free transit services to meet an expected demand created by traffic associated with the Mississippi Aquarium, festivals and adjacent businesses.
6. Ocean Enterprise Project (\$7 million) – Ocean Enterprise at the Port of Gulfport will bring together state, federal and industry partners to solve challenging problems in the area of national and homeland defense, infrastructure security, environmental monitoring and disaster response, offshore aquaculture and natural resource and habitat characterization.

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources is dedicated to enhancing, protecting and conserving marine interests of the state by managing all marine life, public trust wetlands, adjacent uplands and waterfront areas to provide for the optimal commercial,

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recreational, educational and economic uses of these resources consistent with environmental concerns and social changes.

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