



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

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News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

2012-2013 Limited Mississippi Oyster Season to Open Nov. 5

BILOXI, Miss. – The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) has announced that the 2012-2013 limited Mississippi oyster season is scheduled to open **at legal sunrise Monday, Nov. 5, 2012**, only in Areas II Approved and Conditionally Approved waters provided the area meets all criteria for opening as specified in the area management plan:

- **Area II Approved Waters**, and its subdivisions of II “H” and II “I” which includes reefs know as Telegraph and Buoy and the Shell Keys referred to as Pelican, Fletcher’s and Umbrella and the southern portion of Pass Marianne Reef.
- **Area II “A” Conditionally Approved Waters**, which includes northern portions of the Pass Christian and Henderson Point reefs and Hornet’s Reef **for tonging only.**
- **Area II “B” Conditionally Approved Waters**, which includes St. Stanislaus and Waveland reefs. (This includes areas designated as tonging only.)
- **Area II “C” Conditionally Approved Waters**, and its subdivisions of II “E” (including Square Handkerchief Reef and southern portions of Henderson Point Reef), II “F” (including southern portions of the Pass Christian Reef) and II “G” (including northern portions of the Pass Marianne and Telegraph reefs). (This includes areas designated as tonging only.)
- **Area II “D” Conditionally Approved Waters, for tonging only.**

Additionally, the 2012-2013 Limited Mississippi Oyster Season shall **close at 4:00 P.M., Saturday, Dec. 29, 2012**, unless extended by the Executive Director of the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, as authorized by the Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources.

The 2011-2012 oyster cultch plant sites located within these areas will remain closed to the harvest of oysters.

All recreational harvest is limited to three sacks per recreationally licensed resident individual per seven day period. All Mississippi recreationally licensed harvesters must obtain a recreational harvest tally card at the check-in/out stations prior to their initial harvest trip. This tally card must be presented at the check-in/out station prior to any subsequent recreational harvest trip.

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The Commission on Marine Resources authorizes the Executive Director to establish the initial commercial oyster tonging vessel daily limit of 12 sacks and a commercial oyster dredging vessel daily limit of 20 sacks. The Executive Director is also authorized to adjust the harvest vessel daily sack limits as deemed necessary. Individual(s) must also harvest oysters from said licensed vessel. No commercial vessel shall possess over the daily catch limit by any manner, or exceed any experimental limit as may be established.

All commercially licensed Mississippi resident individuals and/or vessels are limited to three sacks for personal use per seven day period per commercially licensed vessel actively engaged in harvesting said sacks, however, these sacks of oysters shall be counted towards the daily commercial sack limit for that boat or vessel. Said sacks shall be tagged with tags identifying them as "Personal Use" and may not be sold. "Personal Use" is hereby defined for purposes herein as "any use other than for sale or intent to sell".

The checkout time will be 4 p.m. with the designated checkout station on the west side of Pass Christian Harbor and Bayou Caddy.

For more information on the open and closed areas, call the MDMR's 24-hour Oyster Information Hot Line at (228) 374-5167 or (800) 385-5902.

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

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