



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

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News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MDMR Begins 60-Day Agency Evaluation and Assessment

BILOXI, Miss. – Today, the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) announced that it has begun a 60-day comprehensive evaluation to identify and recommend a plan of action to correct any fiscal and programmatic deficiencies, and to ensure more transparency, efficiency and accountability in the future.

“The challenges we have at MDMR cannot be fixed overnight, but this week we have taken a big step toward meeting those challenges head-on by beginning a process that will shine a light on the agency’s weaknesses and restore hope in its future,” said Jamie Miller, Executive Director of MDMR. “The solution begins and ends with being transparent and accountable to the public, and in order to get there, we’ve got to find out what’s been done wrong, what’s been done right, and how we can do things better.”

In Miller’s testimony to the Mississippi Senate during his confirmation hearing, he proposed to implement the 60-day agency evaluation and assessment. With a joint meeting with the State Auditor’s office yesterday, MDMR started the 60 day evaluation which marks the beginning of the process. To assist MDMR and the State Auditor’s office with this analysis, two CPA firms, Horne, LLP and Nicholson and Company, PLLC, were hired to provide the following services:

1. Financial examination, auditing, compliance and assessment activities.
2. Organizational review, including but not limited to, structure, staffing, classification, work flow analysis, job description and compensation analysis.
3. Recommendations to improve efficiency, maximize agency effectiveness, strengthen public transparency, and assure operational integrity.
4. Preparation of internal and external communication strategy to include public outreach
5. Other related financial, organizational, and operational assessment and review as assigned by the Executive Director.

State Auditor Stacey Pickering talked about the 60-day review saying, “This objective evaluation of MDMR is the necessary and prudent approach to ensuring that the agency is operating efficiently and effectively. Our office will work closely with MDMR to assist in this process.”

“I’m determined to set a course for the future that will put MDMR on the right track and keep us there,” stated Miller. “Mississippi’s coastal and marine resources are too important not to seize this opportunity to make MDMR a model of integrity, openness and accountability for all other state agencies to emulate.”

“We owe it to our state, our elected officials, and most of all, the taxpayers to make sure MDMR is doing everything possible to live up to the high expectations we are setting, and I look forward to sharing the results of this effort so everyone will know where we stand, and where we will go in the future,” Miller said.

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 DMR online at www.dmr.ms.gov.