



## MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

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# News Release

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### ***Free boating safety class combines dockside and classroom training***

BILOXI, Miss. – The Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR), in partnership with the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR), is offering a special field-based boating education course that is approved by the Mississippi Department of Wildlife Fisheries and Parks (MDWFP). Participants who complete and pass this free course will be issued a Mississippi boating education certificate.

The class will be held March 15 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Grand Bay NERR's Coastal Resources Center, 6005 Bayou Heron Road, Moss Point, in southeastern Jackson County. Community members over age 10 are encouraged to attend the class, which will be taught by members of MDMR's Marine Patrol. Pre-registration is required. For more information or to pre-register, call Officer Patrick Levine at 228-523-4128. For directions, visit [www.grandbaynerr.org](http://www.grandbaynerr.org)

Remember, all persons born on or after June 30, 1980, must have passed a boating education course approved by the MDWFP to legally operate a vessel (persons under the age of 12 must be accompanied by an adult 21 years of age or older).

Weather-permitting, this special, enhanced version of the standard boat and water safety course will take place both down at the dock and in the classroom. Participants will learn how to launch and trailer a boat, approach and tie off at a dock and many more safety techniques. This class will actually serve as a great refresher course if you just want to sharpen your boating skills.

Because this course will extend through the lunch hour, be sure to bring a sack lunch or be prepared to go into town for lunch. Also, you may want to bring bug spray and wear long sleeves and pants instead of shorts.

The Grand Bay NERR is located in southeast Jackson County and includes wetlands and waterways from Bang's Lake to the Alabama state line. A major goal of the Reserve is to provide for research coordination and dissemination of scientific data to the community and local decision-makers to provide sound information on which to base management decisions.

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](http://www.dmr.ms.gov).

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**Students of the St. Martin Center for Gifted Excellence enjoy a boat ride out to Deer Island to help collect trash.**

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