



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, Mississippi 39530

News Release

Contact: Melissa Scallan

Phone: 228-523-4124

14-41-MMS
May 16, 2014

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MDMR holds public meeting May 22

BILOXI, Miss. – The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources will hold a public meeting Thursday, May 22, to get input from resident commercially licensed oyster and crab fishermen affected by the opening of the Bonnet Carre Spillway in 2011.

The hearing is from 6-8 p.m. at St. Thomas the Apostle Catholic Church Community Center on U.S. 90 in Long Beach.

In February, NOAA Fisheries announced that Mississippi will receive \$10.9 million for the damage done to the state's oyster and blue crab fisheries due to floods. NOAA made a disaster declaration in September 2012.

"Funds can be used for activities that restore the fishery or prevent a similar failure in the future, and to assist a fishing community affected by such a failure," NOAA officials said in a press release issued in February.

Officials with MDMR will submit a proposal to NOAA regarding the use of the money. Comments from Thursday's meeting will be included.

At the meeting, commercially licensed crab and oyster fishermen can visit stations that have information on possible projects. For oysters, this includes cultivation and relay, cultch plant, mapping oyster substrate and a stewardship programs. Proposals for crabs includes fishery monitoring (catch rates, predation, habitat needs) and a cooperative restoration program (habitat and bycatch reduction). There also will be information on loan opportunities.

Fishermen can comment at the meeting or can submit comments in writing and mail them no later than May 30 to: Department of Marine Resources, attn. Joe Jewell, 1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi, MS 39530.

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.

—END—