

Coastal Markers



Volume 13, Issue 2

NEWSLETTER OF THE MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

Fall/Winter 2009

U.S. Sen. Wicker tours barrier islands

On Aug. 18, 2009, U.S. Sen. Roger Wicker held a press conference and took a tour of the barrier islands aboard DMR Marine Patrol boat, The Mississippi, with DMR Executive Director William Walker and members of the media to talk about plans



DMR Executive Director Bill Walker, right, and U.S. Sen. Roger Wicker tour Ship Island and discuss plans to revitalize the barrier islands with the \$439 million recently appropriated by the U.S. Congress.

to restore the islands following Hurricane Katrina.

Sen. Wicker discussed Congress' recent \$439 million appropriation to restore the barrier islands. Following the hurricanes of 2005, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was directed by Congress to conduct an analysis and recommend improvements in coastal Mississippi that would reduce hurricane and storm surge, reverse impacts of saltwater intrusion, preserve fish and wildlife and their habitats, prevent shoreline erosion and other related water resource purposes. This effort, known as the Mississippi Coastal Improvements Program (MsCIP), has been conducted in partnership with the DMR, other state, federal and local agencies, and the general public. The vision for the MsCIP is a coastal Mississippi that is more resilient and less susceptible to risk from hurricane and storm surge. The program is being coordinated to be consistent with the state's Coastal Restoration Initiative which includes: implementation of breakwater structures for surge protection; Deer Island restoration to pre-1900 footprint; barrier island restoration to pre-Camille conditions; restoration of 10,000



U.S. Sen. Roger Wicker takes the wheel from DMR Marine Patrol Col. Walter Chatagner on the boat ride out to tour Ship Island on Aug. 18, 2009.

acres of coastal marshes, beaches, and forests; restoration of historical water flow to coastal watersheds; submerged aquatic vegetation restoration; and oyster reef restoration and enhancement.

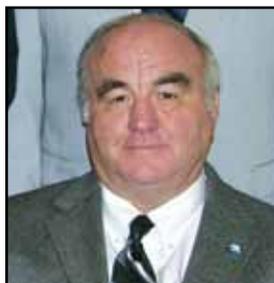
Sen. Wicker, applauded the June 18 passage of the FY 2009 Supplemental Appropriations bill, legislation containing funding for Hurricane Katrina recovery. "The barrier islands act as Mississippi's first line of defense against the storm surge of a hurricane, and it is critical for their restoration to begin immediately," Wicker said. "The funding contained in this bill will help make that happen."

CMR officers selected

The Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources (CMR) reappointed Dr. Vernon Asper (left) as chairman and Richard Gollott as vice chairman during the July 2009 meeting. The



Asper



Gollott

CMR is composed of five members appointed by the governor for four-year terms. The CMR members are Steve Bosarge of Jackson County representing commercial fishermen, Shelby Drummond of Jackson County representing recreational fishermen, Jimmy Taylor of Harrison County representing charter boat operators, Dr. Vernon Asper of Hancock County representing nonprofit environmental organizations, and Richard Gollott of Harrison County representing commercial seafood processors.

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State of Mississippi

Haley Barbour
Governor

**Mississippi Commission on
Marine Resources**

Vernon Asper, Ph.D., Chairman
Nonprofit Environmental
Organization

Richard Gollott, Vice Chairman
Commercial Seafood Processor

Shelby Drummond
Recreational Sports Fisherman

Steve Bosarge
Commercial Fisherman

Jimmy Taylor
Charter Boat Operator

William W. Walker, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Vacant
Deputy Director

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Director's Notes

Dr. William Walker

On June 12, 2009, President Barack Obama issued a memorandum establishing an Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force and directing it to develop a national ocean policy, a framework for policy coordination, and an implementation strategy for the policy. This presidential action follows reports by the Pew Oceans Commission and the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy that recommended a more integrated, regional, approach to managing our nation's great waterbodies. Moving away from state-based ocean management and toward regional ocean governance will allow us to more adequately restore, protect and sustain our great waterbodies and their associated coastal communities, and I absolutely approve of this approach.

In 2006, the governors of the five states that border the northern Gulf of Mexico formed the Gulf of Mexico Governors' Alliance, a partnership focused on developing a regional approach to managing the northern Gulf of Mexico. Mississippi Gov. Haley Barbour currently leads that Alliance. The leadership shown in 2006 by the Gulf states governors has now spread around the country, and today all coastal states in the continental U.S. are cooperating in four new Regional Ocean Partnerships (ROPs) modeled after the Gulf of Mexico Alliance. All five ROPs are currently well on their way toward true regional harmony.

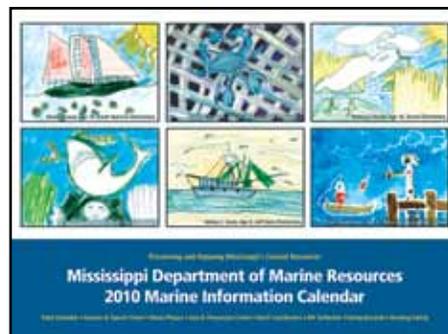
These ROPs are all state-led, federally supported cooperatives that are well positioned to work with the president's Interagency Ocean Policy Task Force as we together develop a National Ocean Policy. The five ROPs have now developed a partnership among themselves focused on working with the Task Force to identify priority actions to improve the health and sustainability of our oceans and focus federal support on those priority actions. If we are successful, and I think we will be, in getting the appropriate federal agencies to truly work together and with the ROPs, we can and will develop and implement a National Ocean Policy that will improve and sustain the health and function of our nation's ocean and coastal communities.

Executive Director

NERR prints plant poster

The Grand Bay NERR recently printed the Selected Plants of Mississippi's Wet Pine Flatwoods poster to highlight the importance of pine flatwood habitats along the Mississippi coast. These habitats, in good condition, are important for a variety of species as illustrated and are among the most prone to developmental pressures. If you would like a complimentary poster, call the NERR at 228-475-7047.

NOW AVAILABLE! 2010 Marine Calendar



**Call 228-374-5000 or visit
dmr.ms.gov for list of
distribution sites.**

Thanks!

**Thanks to all those who
contributed to this issue of
Coastal Markers**

Linda Wakefield	Susan Perkins
Dr. Fred Deegen	Tina Shumate
Kerwin Cuevas	Dorothy Daniel
Amy Taylor	Mike Walker
Traci Floyd	Jennifer Buchanan
Jeff Clark	Corky Perret
Bill Richardson	Patrick Levine
Dave Ruple	Bradley Randall
Rusty Pittman	Scott Gordon
Jeff Davis	Kristina Broussard
Jessica Rankin	Jimmy Hester

Perret receives America's WETLAND Foundation Lifetime Achievement Award

Recently retired Mississippi Department of Marine Resources Deputy Director William "Corky" Perret has been awarded the America's WETLAND Foundation (AWF) Lifetime Achievement Award. Through this award, AWF recognizes outstanding individuals who exhibit a strong commitment to coastal restoration through their work or volunteer activities.

Lake Charles, La., Mayor Randy Roach presented Perret with the award July 29, 2009, at the third annual America's Energy Coast Leadership Forum in Biloxi, Miss.

"Corky has been a career professional in fisheries and fisheries management for more than four decades, working with both the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries," said AWF board member Roach. "His passion, knowledge and expertise are obvious to all that encounter him, and his can-do approach to issues has enabled him to accomplish

many great things for our region and our country over the years. I cannot think of anyone more deserving of this prestigious award."

Perret is the fourth recipient of AWF's Lifetime Achievement Award. He follows former U.S. Sen. John Breaux, who authored the Breaux Act, one of the first bills that directed federal money and resources to wetlands restoration projects; former Louisiana Department of Natural Resources Secretary Jack Caldwell, who helped establish the America's WETLAND Foundation; and Louisiana State Sen. Reggie P. Dupre Jr., a passionate coastal advocate and longtime chairman of the Louisiana Senate Natural Resources Committee.

After receiving both a bachelor of science and master's degrees from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, Perret began working with Louisiana



Recently retired Mississippi Department of Marine Resources Deputy Director William "Corky" Perret, left, accepts the America's WETLAND Foundation (AWF) Lifetime Achievement Award from AWF board member and Lake Charles, La., Mayor Randy Roach.

Wildlife and Fisheries at its marine laboratory on Grand Terre. He progressively held more responsible positions under several Louisiana governors, culminating his time there in 1995 as the assistant secretary in charge of all fisheries, both freshwater and marine.

After 30 years of service in Louisiana, he went to work for DMR as director of Marine Fisheries. He held that position until about two years ago, when he advanced to deputy director of DMR. Perret retired from that position in June 2009. He is a longtime member of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council.

Volunteers needed for derelict crab trap removal

The Shrimp and Crab Bureau is seeking volunteers to pre-register for the 2010 Mississippi Derelict Crab Trap Removal Program set for early 2010. The cooperative program was started in 2000 in conjunction with the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory and has received Gulf-wide recognition.

Mississippi Derelict Crab Trap Removal Program participants have removed and recycled over 18,000 traps to date. The 2010 effort is being funded by a grant through the Fish America Foundation provided by the Brunswick Public Foundation and the NOAA Restoration Center.

The DMR is looking for individuals and groups who would like to volunteer to help clean up our waters and marshes. A vessel is preferred for this type of cleanup but is not required. The date will be set for a Saturday in early 2010. Volunteers will have the option of three drop-off sites (Pascagoula, Ocean Springs and Bayou Caddy). These sites will provide logistical information as well as disposal facilities. Any person or group interested can contact the DMR Shrimp and Crab Bureau at 228-374-5000 or visit our Web site at www.dmr.ms.gov for more information.

Remember: it is illegal to carry away any crab trap not licensed to you unless it is during the official closed season.

DMR reserve officers learn apprehension techniques from law enforcement officers during a training session.



Marine Patrol Reserves volunteer their time

The DMR Marine Patrol Reserve Unit currently consists of 18 volunteer men and women who donate their skills, time and money to support the DMR agency.

Once a month the Reserve Unit meets to discuss the patrol details they recently assisted with and sign up for upcoming dispatch and patrol duties. Additionally, they train in some aspect of law enforcement from “officer-friendly” behaviors to assisting in apprehension under the direct supervision of the State Marine Patrol Officer with which they are partnered.

The Reserve Unit was established to assist the State Marine Patrol officers dur-

ing times when boat traffic was on the increase and when the most law enforcement presence was needed—summer pleasure boating holidays, boat races, oyster and shrimp seasons, during and after severe weather, and local “Christmas on the Water” occasions. The reserve unit donated over 1,000 hours during 2009.

“The Reserves are a vital part of the agency,” said Marine Patrol Chief Walter Chatagner. “They have assisted officers on numerous occasions, and fill a void in our manpower. We are grateful for their dedication and service.”

The Reserve Unit is managed by State Marine Patrol Master Sgt. Patrick Levine. The Senior Reserve “Gold-shield” officers are: Col. Dawson Love, chief of the Reserves (10 years); Lt. Col. Jeff Melton, deputy chief of the Reserves (8 years); Capt. Steve Miner, operations officer (8 years); Lt. J. Michael Martin, training officer (3 years); and Master Sgt. Tamra Carrel, communications coordinator (3 years).

The next time you see a State Marine Patrol officer patrolling the Mississippi coastal waters, look closer; you just might see a reserve officer aboard as their partner.



Lt. Col. Rusty Pittman (yellow ear gear) and Lt. Jimmy Hester run the airboat engines to keep them in top shape for emergencies.

DMR's airboat makes waves

Marine Patrol's airboat has made some waves this year. The boat, which was paid for by a federal grant, has played an instrumental role in a variety of different efforts. Marine Patrol officers used the airboat to rescue a man and his son in December 2008 when the tide went out and left them stranded in a duck pond off the Pearl River. It was also used to transport line crews during the power recovery effort after Hurricane Gustav. Marine Patrol was even able to aid the Moss Point Police Department in finding a drug suspect who tried to escape law enforcement by running into the marsh. The airboat has been an integral addition to the Marine Patrol fleet and it's a nice ride too.

DMR Executive Director Walker Accepts Stratton Award on behalf of Gulf of Mexico Alliance

DMR Executive Director Bill Walker received the Julius A. Stratton Award for leadership in coastal management at the Coastal Zone '09 Conference in Boston on July 20, 2009.

The national award is presented by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration at the Coastal Zone Conference—an international, biennial symposium on coastal zone management—to acknowledge great leadership in the spirit of Dr. Stratton, the first leader of the U.S. Ocean Commission.

Walker has distinguished himself as a leader in addressing the many issues facing coastal and marine resources. He has served as DMR executive director since 2002 where he is responsible for the management of the state's marine resources, including fishing, boating, coastal management and the Coastal Impact Assistance Program.

He represents Mississippi interests on the EPA Gulf of Mexico Program Management Committee. The Gulf of Mexico Program is a non-regulatory, inclusive partnership to provide a broad geographic focus on the major environmental issues in the Gulf. The partnership includes representation from state and local governments and the citizenry in each of the five Gulf States; the private sector (business and industry); federal

NOAA's National Ocean Service Assistant Administrator Jack Dunnigan, left, presents Mississippi Department of Marine Resources Executive Director Bill Walker with the prestigious Julius A. Stratton Award at the Coastal Zone '09 Conference in Boston held in July.

agencies responsible for research, monitoring, environmental protection and natural resource management; and the academic community.

Walker along with Trudy Fisher, executive director of the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, also represents Gov. Haley Barbour in the Gulf of Mexico Governors' Alliance. As a result of a shared vision for a healthy and resilient Gulf of Mexico coast, the Gulf states of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas, supported by 13 federal agencies, formed the Alliance and developed the first Governors' Action Plan for Healthy and Resilient Coasts, which was released at the State of the Gulf of Mexico Summit in 2006 as well as the second Action Plan released this past June at Capitol Hill Oceans Week in Washington, D.C.

These far-reaching Governors' Action Plans, supported by the president in the U.S. Ocean Action Plan, challenges the Gulf of Mexico Alliance to make tangible



progress over the next five years on six priority issues: water quality, habitat conservation and restoration, environmental education, characterization of Gulf habitats, reductions in nutrient inputs, and resilient coastal communities.

"I was both humbled and extremely proud to accept this award on behalf of the Gulf of Mexico Alliance," Walker said. "This five-state partnership, with support from the federal agencies, NGOs, academia and the private sector, completed 95 percent of the 73 actions called for in the Alliance's first Action Plan and are now hard at work on the 97 actions in the second Plan, all of which are focused on sustaining the Gulf economy, improving ecosystem health, mitigating the impacts of and adapting to climate changes, and reducing harmful effects to coastal water quality."

**CELEBRATING THE
CULTURE AND HERITAGE**
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STRATEGIES CONFERENCE**
MAY 12-13, 2010
MISSISSIPPI COAST COLISEUM & CONVENTION CENTER
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UPDATED COASTAL PUBLIC ACCESS INFORMATION

The Office of Coastal Ecology announces availability of information on Mississippi's coastal public access locations, such as marinas, boat launches and piers. One source is contained in a document available on DMR's Web site at <http://www.dmr.state.ms.us/CMP/CRMP/pdfs/public-access-inventory-2009.pdf> and lists an inventory of all marinas, boat launches and piers, along with each location's status. Also, a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) interactive map is available with the noted public access sites at: <http://gis.smpdd.com/dmrpublicaccess>.

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, as Mississippi's federally approved state coastal zone management program, receives funding from the National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration annually for Coastal Zone Management Act administration and enhancement of Mississippi's coastal resources.



DMR Human Resources Director Dorothy Daniel was awarded the Outstanding Member Award for Excellence in Human Resources for 2009 by the Mississippi Association of Personnel Administrators at its October 2009 annual conference.

Daniel receives MAPA award of excellence

DMR Human Resources Director Dorothy Daniel was awarded the Outstanding Member Award for Excellence in Human Resources for 2009 by the Mississippi Association of Personnel Administrators (MAPA) at its October 2009 Annual Conference at the IP Casio and Resort in Biloxi. MAPA is a nonprofit public sector association of human resources professionals. The MAPA award recognizes one person a year in the association for outstanding contributions to personnel and human resources administration. The member must be recommended by the membership and approved by the MAPA Board of Directors.

Daniel has served in state government for 28 years and has been with DMR for 13 years. She plans to retire in June 2010. During her time with DMR, Daniel has worked to establish, implement and update personnel policies and procedures and to establish the unique DMR Classification and Compensation Plan for all marine fisheries scientists, Marine Patrol Officers, marine fisheries technicians, seafood officers, coastal resource management specialists, NERR resource specialists and upper level management. By conducting salary survey of comparable jobs in the public and private sectors and making that information available to the Mississippi State Personnel Board, the human resources control authority in Jackson, Miss. Daniel has helped the DMR keep compensation of DMR jobs competitive with the relevant labor market, as funds are available and funded by the Mississippi Legislature. Daniel established internal DMR training programs and is currently converting DMR human resources documents and personnel files to electronic format in conjunction with implementation of a unique DMR specific human resources management system.

Daniel's nomination letter stated: "Folks at the DMR refer to Dorothy as an outspoken employee advocate, and they appreciate her meticulous attention to detail, succinctness in content, and focus on empowerment of others. She shares the vision she has for employment issues at the DMR and works through others to make it a reality. She understands and places a high value on networking to maximize available resources, and she does this with acumen. Others enjoy, appreciate and depend on the depth and breadth of her knowledge of human relations and resources and her continuous contributions to all aspects of human resources management."

Oyster roundup

New Oyster Task Force Meets for First Time

The newly created Mississippi Oyster Task Force met for the first time Nov. 24, 2009. The task force was formed to improve the oyster fishery on the Mississippi Gulf Coast and will operate in an advisory capacity to the DMR.

Members of the task force are Leslie Hood, Pass Christian dredger; Tam Cu, Pass Christian dredger; Harold Strong, Bayou Caddy dredger; George Stores, tonger; Felix Rodrigue, recreational tonger; Mike Cure, processor; DMR Office of Fisheries Director Dale Diaz and Shellfish Bureau Director Scott Gordon; DMR Marine Patrol Lt. Donnie Armes; and DMR legal staff, Joe Runnels and Sandy Chestnut.

The main goals of the task force are to aid in the collection of pertinent oyster fishery data, provide for an effective management plan, encourage conservation of the resource and its habitat, identify industry issues, and facilitate workable solutions and improve overall value of the oyster.

Commercial oyster licenses sold out

The DMR developed a plan to limit the sale of commercial oyster licenses for the 2009-2010 season. Out-of-state and in-state license limits have been met for 2009-2010.

Oyster stewardship meeting

A total of 172 oyster harvesters attended the oyster stewardship meeting Aug. 27, 2009, for all Mississippi tonging and dredging license holders. Topics discussed included the 2009-2010 oyster season, proposed changes to Title 22 Parts 1 and 17, a review of oyster restoration efforts, future plans for the oyster industry and scheduling of the proposed "Day on the Sound."

MSD giveaway

The DMR Shellfish Bureau gave away roughly 200 coupons for free marine sanitation devices (MSD) to licensed Mississippi oyster harvesters. The program ended Dec. 4, 2009, and was part of the Oyster Stewardship Program. Funding was provided by NOAA Fisheries through the Emergency Disaster Recovery Program.

Read all about it in oyster newsletter

The Fall 2009 issue of the "Rebuilding Mississippi's Oyster Reefs" newsletter contains information on Shellfish Bureau programs and seafood safety, fun trivia and facts about oysters and oyster predators, tips to improve fuel efficiency and a recipe for delicious New Orleans-inspired Oysters Mosca. Visit the DMR Website at dmr.ms.gov or call 228-374-5000 to request a copy.

DMR, partners sink Omega Protein vessel for artificial reef habitat

On Tuesday, Nov. 24, 2009, the DMR, in partnership with Mississippi Gulf Fishing Banks (MGFB), deployed a retired fishing vessel donated by Omega Protein Inc. to be used as an artificial reef habitat.

The Great Wicomico, a 176-foot fishing vessel formerly used by Omega Protein for its fishing operations in Reedville, Va., was submerged in Fish Haven 13, about 13 miles south of Horn Island in Mississippi waters. Omega Protein hosted a dedication ceremony for the submersion of the vessel.

"This is the second-largest vessel we've sunk so far," said DMR Artificial Reef Bureau Director Kerwin Cuevas. "This is a great addition to Mississippi's artificial reefs and we'd like to thank Omega Protein and Mississippi Gulf Fishing Banks for working in partnership to increase our reef fish habitat off the state of Mississippi."

Before a vessel can be deployed, all fuel, oil, engines and any wood must be removed and the fuel tanks pressure-washed. It is then inspected to be sure there are no remaining hazardous materials. To deploy the vessel, holes are cut along the water line and wood patches placed over the holes. Once at

the deployment site, the patches are removed to allow water to overtake and sink the boat.

Omega Protein donated the vessel and shared the cost of cleaning and sinking the vessel with MGFB utilizing NOAA Emergency Disaster Relief Program funds.

"In 2000, Omega Protein donated our vessel the von Rosenberg, which is now part of Mississippi's artificial reef habitat. We're pleased to contribute further with the Great Wicomico," said Ben Landry, director of public affairs for Omega Protein. "We are delighted to have a continued involvement with DMR's Artificial Reef Program and happy to make this contribution for the sustainability of the fishing industry and overall health of the Gulf."

About 90 percent of Mississippi's artificial reefs were destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. A little more than 60 percent of those reefs have been rebuilt.

Omega Protein Inc. makes its products from menhaden, an omega-3 rich fish that is abundantly available along the U.S. Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic coasts. The company has been part of the Jackson County community for roughly 50 years and currently employs 260 Mississippi residents.



The Great Wicomico, a 176-foot fishing vessel formerly used by Omega Protein for its fishing operations in Virginia, was submerged in Fish Haven 13, about 13 miles south of Horn Island in Mississippi waters.

NERR Notes

Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve



Grand Bay NERR is 10 years old

On June 16, 1999, the DMR/Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) was designated by then U.S. Secretary of Commerce James Baker, as the 24th reserve within the National Estuarine Research Reserve System. On Dec. 7, 1999, U.S. Sen. Thad Cochran joined us on the shores of Bayou Cumbest to celebrate the designation of this natural gem in southeast Jackson County.

From those humble beginnings, the NERR has grown by leaps and bounds. The NERR staff is composed of educators and researchers who utilize scientific information to best manage coastal resources and share this information with a variety of resource managers and the general public. It is a goal of the NERR staff that sharing what we learn about our resources will serve to help the public better appreciate and conserve our natural areas, like those found at Grand Bay.

The NERR is also about partnerships. Not only does the NERR serve as a living laboratory for its staff, but it helps to facilitate the use of the Reserve by other researchers. Over the past several years, approximately 150 research projects have been conducted at the NERR. A recently completed

Grand Bay Coastal Resources Center will house NERR and Grand Bay National Wildlife Refuge personnel. The Center was constructed by the State of Mississippi on federal Refuge property and will serve as the basis of operations for both the NERR and the Refuge.

On Dec. 7, 2009, the NERR celebrated its first 10 years and marked the dedication of the state-of-the-art Grand Bay Coastal Resources Center. This event served as a celebration of past activities and a new beginning for the Center, which will enhance our abilities to serve researchers, educators, decision-makers and the general public.

A complete update on the event will appear in the next issue of Coastal Markers.

The 20,000-square-foot facility, which serves as headquarters for the NERR, features a public interpretive area, office space, laboratories, classrooms and a dormitory. It is one of the "greenest" buildings in Mississippi and demonstrates low-impact development design and construction technologies, which create a healthy environment for staff and visitors, reduces operational costs and ultimately demonstrates a commitment to the environment.

Grand Bay NERR partners with Forestry Commission

The Grand Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (NERR) has partnered with the Mississippi Forestry Commission (MFC) to provide Firewise landscaping features at the new Grand Bay Coastal Resources Center. A \$30,000 grant was provided to the NERR by the MFC to install low-profile landscaping within 100 feet of the facility, a fire break/trail, a fuel-reduction perimeter and native vegetation. Other firewise design features were incorporated in the facility's design such as a metal roof, a built-in fire protection system and stormwater retention ponds. A Firewise exhibit is also featured in the Center's Interpretative area.

A Gyro Trac mechanically clears dense woody vegetation adjacent to the new Grand Bay Coastal Resources Center in east Jackson County.



Coastal Preserves

Preserves gain curb appeal

A key goal of the Coastal Preserves Program is to promote opportunities for public appreciation and enjoyment of Mississippi's coastal wetlands. One way the program is accomplishing this is by increasing the curb appeal of the preserves' natural areas. Two recent enhancement projects took place at the Old Fort Bayou Twelve Oaks Preserve and the Wolf River DeLisle Preserve and included trail extensions, signage and a fenced parking area. Hand-made signs and fences of natural materials were chosen to maintain the primitive appeal of these protected lands. Future projects include informational kiosks and additional trail signs to promote these sites as interpretive areas and outdoor classrooms. These sites are open to the public from dawn until dusk. For more information call DMR Coastal Preserves at 228-374-5000.



The new signage gives curb appeal to the natural areas.

Deer Island: An outdoor classroom

There's no better way to spark interest and learning than to create first-hand experiences. This is especially true when exploring the natural world around us. Joyce Applegate, biologist and botany professor at Pearl River Community College, has come to know this through her experiences in bringing students into the wild. Each year, a class of eight to 12 students visits the Gulf Coast with one task in mind: exploration.

After several impromptu stops to inquire about roadside plants, this year's adventure brought the class to the Deer Island Coastal Preserve. Discussions included the beneficial use restoration area, the diversity of plant life on the island, the cultural resources of the shell middens and the regeneration of native plant life after a natural disaster. Questions were raised and pondered and many first-hand experiences were gained through a brief but informative tour of this incredibly diverse outdoor classroom.

Living shorelines provide erosion control

Shoreline stability is an increasingly important issue as more individuals seek to live at the water's edge. With this comes the delicate balance of maintaining personal property while ensuring the health of adjacent natural areas. Alternatives to hardened structures for land protection are gaining in popularity as the push to become more environmentally aware increases.

The idea for an experimental project using coconut fiber logs came to fruition in the placement of 200 feet of "coir logs" along an eroding shoreline in the Gulf Hills Community of St. Martin. The biodegradable logs were installed and secured using untreated wooden stakes and natural twine so that in time the material would degrade.

Native wetland vegetation will be planted on and behind the logs and will act as a sediment trap for material as it moves through the bayou and off of the bank. This site will be monitored over the next several years and, in time, should encourage landowners and contractors to promote "living shoreline" as alternatives to hardened structures.



Coconut fiber logs placed along an eroding shoreline in the Gulf Hills Community of St. Martin.

Seafood Safety Corner



Jeff Davis



Jessica Rankin

A close-up view of the Stomach Ache shows how menacing the *Shigella dysenteriae* virus can be.



Fall brings new HACCP rules

Fall is upon us and the members of the Seafood Technology Bureau (STB) have completed quarterly inspections of seafood facilities. As Mississippi opens its oyster season, inspectors are carefully reviewing sanitary conditions of seafood facilities.

The STB would like to inform all oyster dealers and processors that new language has been implemented in HACCP Plans. A new critical limit was added to the receiving step for shellstock and shucked meats. Seafood officers assisted all seafood dealers with revising HACCP Plans and visiting facilities to obtain signatures. Coincidentally, water samples were also taken from the facilities. Water samples were analyzed at the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory for bacteria that may be present in the water supply that is used for processing. If levels were positive, resamples were taken.

The STB has participated in many outreach events and educated people about the risks of *Vibrio vulnificus* (*V.v.*) infections. STB personnel distributed *V.v.* information to hospitals all over the state of Mississippi. Material was distributed in cities including Tupelo, Starkville, Greenville, Lucedale, Bay St. Louis, and many more. These materials will educate health professionals about the risks of *V.v.* infections and the effects on immunocompromised individuals. Also, the publication "How to Start a Seafood Business" was delivered to libraries in hopes of encouraging people to open seafood businesses and promote the seafood industry in South Mississippi.

In July, the STB attended the Children's Health Fair at the Edgewater Mall in Biloxi. This annual event is hosted by the Edgewater Rotary Club. Over 200

children attended and gathered information from groups such as the Harrison County Health Department, Biloxi Regional Medical Center, the Women's Clinic, Boys and Girls Club and the Biloxi Fire Department. Children in attendance were able to receive dental exams and vaccinations. During this fair, the STB introduced its newest outreach tool, the Giant Microbes display of large representations of the germs that make us ill, including Rhinovirus (common cold), Salmonella, E. coli, and other well-known microbes. This new display helped emphasize the importance of proper hand washing and preventing cross contamination between cooked and raw foods.

In August, STB personnel attended the second annual Long Beach Festival. A crowd of over 5,000 people attended the event. Vendor participation reached well into the hundreds with many educational booths. Visitors to the STB booth participated in the Fishy Prize Wheel game and answered marine-related trivia questions to earn a prize. Thanks go to the following people who helped make these events possible: Mai Dang, Bill Richardson, Lisa Damiano Jones, Jennifer Buchanan and Shelly Becker.

For information on upcoming STB outreach events, contact Jessica Rankin with the Seafood Technology Bureau at jessica.rankin@dmr.ms.gov or by phone at 228-523-4095.



The Seafood Technology Bureau's Giant Microbes display is a hit with everyone, young and old.



Take a Bow

Recognizing employees' commitment to excellence



Dorothy Daniel accepted a certificate of recognition for DMR's outstanding employee safety program at the Oct. 15, 2009, annual meeting of the Mississippi State Agencies Self-Insured Workers' Compensation Trust. The certificate reflects a reduction in overall workers' compensation claims from this calendar year compared to the previous calendar year due to exceptional safety and loss control measures initiated by the DMR. This award was given to only the top five members of the Trust, which is composed of a large number of public entities. The other members who received this recognition were three mental health facilities and Camp Shelby, with Boswell Regional Center coming in first.

Public Relations Representatives Lisa Damiano, Jennifer Goldman and Shelly Becker manned the DMR exhibit for the Oceans 09 Conference held Oct. 26-29, 2009, at the Mississippi Coast Coliseum and Convention Center in Biloxi. The Giant Microbes box and the miniature reef balls were the most popular items on display.



The Southern Public Relations Federation recognized Susan Perkins, APR, of the DMR's Coastal Management and Planning Office as a Senior Practitioner during its annual conference held Oct. 4-6, 2009, in Tunica.



Happy Anniversary!

These anniversaries mark employees' years of service with DMR and the state of Mississippi. We thank them for their dedicated service to the management of our marine resources.

Mike Buchanan.....8/1/1986	John White9/1/2003	Leslie Gollott.....10/1/2002
Sandra Moore.....8/1/2007	Julia Weaver.....9/1/2009	Dave Ruple.....10/1/2002
Erik Broussard.....8/2/2008	Dianne Baronich.....9/2/2009	Mike Pursley.....10/1/2006
Stephanie Boyer.....8/3/2006	Ron Cole9/7/2006	Lauren Clark.....10/1/2007
Joe Runnels8/4/2009	Matt Hill9/9/2000	Jake Walker.....10/9/2006
Jana Guynes8/6/2007	Adam Jackson.....9/12/2006	Irvin Jackson10/12/1998
Daniel Williams.....8/6/2007	Erick Porche.....9/15/1999	Ron Jordan.....10/15/2001
David Butler.....8/7/2006	Joe Roach9/15/1999	Teresa Stadler.....10/18/2004
Brenna Ehmen8/10/2009	Al Warburton.....9/15/1999	Kara Vesa.....11/1/1996
John Mitchell.....8/10/2009	Greg Christodoulou.....9/15/2006	Tina Johnson.....11/1/1997
James Davis.....8/13/2007	Kay Rexroad.....9/18/2006	Bill Richardson.....11/1/1998
Jason Snawder.....8/14/2006	Tony Johnson.....9/18/2006	Beth Roberts.....11/1/1998
Richard Cooley.....8/15/2001	Michael Lee.....9/18/2006	Scott Chatham.....11/1/2000
Sally Richards.....8/18/2003	Nadine Ross.....9/29/2008	Tommy Jennings.....11/1/2000
Rebekah Ray.....8/20/2007	Barbara Synowiez.....10/1/1999	Chris Mask.....11/1/2000
Marty Jones.....8/25/1997	Paul Grote.....10/1/2000	Kyle Wilkerson.....11/1/2000
Kenny Melvin.....9/1/1998	Scott Anderson.....10/1/2001	Tamra Carrell.....11/3/2004
Don Baxter.....9/1/2000	Jack Ewing.....10/1/2001	Kimberly Denz.....11/8/2004
Alan McArthur.....9/1/2000	Patrick Levine.....10/1/2001	Christine Walters.....11/17/2003
Tina Shumate.....9/1/2000	Glen Wieck.....10/1/2001	Jay Mcllwain.....11/19/2007
Linda Wakefield.....9/1/2001		Tom Strange.....11/19/2007



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DMR Calendar

January 18

Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources meeting, Location to be announced, Biloxi, 9 a.m.

January 27-28

Advanced Problems in Hydric Soil Evaluation Workshop, Grand Bay NERR, 6005 Bayou Heron Road, Moss Point, 7:30 a.m.-5 p.m. For registration contact Marian Hanisko at marian.hanisko@dmr.ms.gov

February 9

Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources meeting, Bolton Building, 1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi, 9 a.m.,

Reminder:

Tuesdays-Saturdays

Grand Bay Coastal Resources Center Interpretive Area open to the public, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., Grand Bay NERR, 6005 Bayou Heron Road, Moss Point



Go Green

To receive your Coastal Markers via e-mail, contact lauren.thompson@dmr.ms.gov

Doc's Fishing Tip

To catch fish consistently when the mercury plummets, experienced anglers usually fish a live bait deep and very slowly. Less experienced fishermen, used to fishing at a much faster pace, may have trouble slowing things down enough to interest the fish. For these guys, switching to a circle hook might be just the answer.



Hook up a live shrimp or cocahoe as you usually would on a normal hook, cast it into a likely holding spot and wait . . . When the rod tip dips, just start reeling. There's no need for a quick hookset or any fast action. Reel it in, and the hook will set itself. Give it a try! - Dr. Fred Deegen

Shrimp and Pea Salad

- 1 cup fresh boiled Mississippi Gulf shrimp, chopped
- 1 can small green peas, drained
- 1/2 small onion, minced
- 1 cup chopped, mild cheddar cheese
- 2 heaping tablespoons mayonnaise



Combine all ingredients, and add salt and pepper to taste. Great served on bed of lettuce. Garnish with red pepper or pimento. Serves 4.

Reprinted from DMR's *Get Hooked on Mississippi Shrimp Recipe Book*
Recipe by Marcia Garcia