On April 20, 2021 National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) announced an advanced notice of proposed rule making to solicit comments on the possibility of modifying the turtle excluder device (TED) related requirements for skimmer trawl vessels less than 40 feet (12.2 meters) in length operating in the southeast United States shrimp fisheries. Small skimmer trawl vessels are currently allowed to use tow times instead of TEDs.

NMFS is requesting public comments until May 20, 2021 on the potential expansion of TED requirements for skimmer trawl vessels less than 40 feet (12.2 meters) in length, the feasibility of employing these TEDs on small length vessels, input on the associated costs of any new TED requirements, and other potential environmental impacts.

Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered by NMFS. All comments received are part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address, etc.), confidential business information, or other sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter “N/A” in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous).

For more information contact Michael Barnette at 727-551-5794 or michael.barnette@noaa.gov.
MISSISSIPPI INSHORE AND TERRITORIAL SEAS SHRIMPING GROUNDS

For the most up-to-date information on openings and closings of Mississippi’s shrimping waters, please call the Mississippi Shrimp Information Hotline at (866)-WE-TRAWL (938-7295).
SHRIMP SEASON OPENING DAY 2020

Number of Shrimp Vessels Counted on Opening Day

<table>
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NEW TED REQUIREMENTS FOR SKIMMER VESSELS DELAYED

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is delaying the effective date of a final rule that published on December 20, 2019. As of March 31, 2021 the effective date of the rule amending 50 CFR part 223 that published at 84 FR 70048 on December 20, 2019 is delayed until August 1, 2021.

For further information please contact Jennifer Lee, NMFS Southeast Regional Office, telephone: 727-824-5312, or email: jennifer.lee@noaa.gov.

On December 20, 201, NMFS published a final rule to amend the alternative tow time restriction to require all skimmer trawl vessels 40 feet and greater in length to use turtle excluder devices (TEDs) designed to exclude small sea turtles in their nets, and that rule had an effective date of April 1, 2021 (84 FR 70048). The final rule amends regulations at 50 CFR part 223 under the authority of the Endangered Species Act. The purpose of the final rule is to reduce incidental bycatch and mortality of sea turtles in the southeastern U.S. shrimp fisheries, and to aid in the protection and recovery of listed sea turtle populations. The rule also amends the definition of tow time to better clarify the intent and purpose of tow times to reduce sea.

NMFS is now delaying the effective date of the final rule published on December 20, 2019, (84 FR 70048) until August 1, 2021. Safety and travel restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic have limited their ability to complete the in-person workshops and training sessions that they had anticipated and communicated to the public. This delay in effective date is necessary to provide them with additional time to conduct planned outreach and training for fishers through a modified strategy, including but not limited to, virtual training sessions with the public. In addition to generally educating the public on the use of the devices, it will help prepare NMFS staff for responding to installation and maintenance problems from industry when the regulations go in effect. This will allow fishers to be better prepared for compliance with regulations and reduce the likelihood of potential increased sea turtle deaths caused by widespread use of improperly constructed and/or installed TEDs.

SOME OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE SKIMMER TEDS INCLUDE:

- the space between the deflector bars of the new TEDs must not exceed 3 inches;
- escape openings must be oriented at the top of the net; and
- webbing restrictions on the escape opening flap depending on the type and angle of TED grid and escape opening configuration.

Additionally, NOAA Fisheries also amended the allowable tow time definition. The new definition requires all vessels less than 40 feet in length operating under the allowable tow time limit to remove and empty their catch on deck within the tow time limit (i.e., 55 or 75 minutes, depending on season).

For additional information on the new rule please, visit fisheries.noaa.gov/bulletin/noaa-issues-final-rule-require-turtle-excluder-device-use-all-skimmer-trawl-vessels-40.

For technical assistance, contact the NOAA Gear Monitoring Team at (228) 762-4591 or email TED.info@noaa.gov.
Guide for Checking 44-Inch Single Flap TED on Skimmer Trawl Vessels 40 Ft. or Greater

- This opening can only be used in waters landward of the COLREGS Demarcation Line*
- All Skimmer Trawl TEDs must be Top-Opening.
- TED grids must be at least 32” x 32” with a maximum 3-inch bar spacing.
- If TED angle is 46-55 degrees, the escape flap twine can be no larger than #15.
- If TED angle is 45 degrees or less, the escape flap twine can exceed #15.
(see Allowable Configurations below)

* COLREGS Demarcation Line refers to the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea 1972.

** Allowable Configurations **

- **Requirement 1**
  - **Minimum Escape Opening Requirements**
  - The required escape opening must measure 44-inches when stretched horizontally and at least 20-inches when stretched vertically.
  - The measurements must be taken separately.

- **Requirement 2**
  - **Maximum Flap Length and Grid Bar Spacing**
  - Measure the distance from the posterior edge of the TED frame to the trailing edge of the flap A to B.
  - This measurement must be taken from the center of the frame and must not exceed 24-inches as the TED is hanging (not stretched).
  - Grid bars may be no more than 3.0 inches apart.

- **Requirement 3**
  - **Maximum Attachment Down Side**
  - Measure the distance the flap is attached beyond the posterior edge of the TED frame C to D.
  - This measurement must be taken from the center of the frame and must not exceed 6-inches when the TED is hanging (not stretched).

**Recommended Cut Length**

- **Forward Cut Length**
  - Measure the distance from the TED frame forward along the side of the escape hole cut to the leading edge of the escape hole cut E to F.
  - Recommended cut of at least 20-inches when stretched.

**Recommended Cut Width**

- **Leading Edge Cut**
  - Measure the leading edge of the escape hole cut G to H.
  - Recommended stretched measurement of 56-inches or greater.
  - Note: This measurement must also be obtained with flap attached.

This document provides instructions for measuring the 44-inch single flap escape opening for single grid hard TEDs. These instructions summarize regulations at 50 C.F.R. 223.206 (d)(2)(ii)(A)(3), 223.206 (d)(3)(i) and 223.207 (a)(4), (a)(6), (a)(7)(ii)(A), (d)(3)(i), and (d)(3)(v). It is the responsibility of the owners and vessel operators using these instructions to insure that their TEDs meet all regulatory requirements.
Hướng dẫn và Kiểm tra cho Lốc Rùa Một Nắp 44-inch Cho Các Tầu Cánh Buóm 40 Ft. hoặc dài hơn

- Nắp mở máy chỉ được sử dụng trong hố và cửa đường phân giới COLREGS Demarcation Line*
- Tất cả các tàu Cánh Buóm mang Lốc Rùa phải đạt Mô phỏng trên.
- Các khung Lốc Rùa phải có kích thước ít nhất là 32” x 32” và không cách xa nhau không được quá 3 inch.
- nouvelle Lốc Rùa ở mức độ từ 46-55 độ, thì chiều rộng ở lỗ thoát nắp phơi không được lớn hơn chiều 15.
- nouvelle Lốc Rùa ở mức độ từ 45 độ hoặc nhỏ hơn, chiều rộng ở lỗ thoát nắp phơi có thể vượt quá chiều 15.

(Xem mẫu hình cho phép bên dưới)

* Đường phân giới COLREGS Demarcation Line để cập đến các quy định quốc tế về ngăn chặn và chăm sóc biển nên năm 1972.

Mẫu hình cho phép

Yêu cầu 1

- Yêu cầu mở lỗ thoát từ thiết bị
- Đồ mở cửa lỗ thoát phải là 44 inch khi kéo dài theo chiều ngang và ít nhất phải là 20 inch khi kéo dài theo chiềuocrats.
- Các thuộc đồ phải được trục hiện rất.

Yêu cầu 2

- Chiều dài tối đa của nắp phơi Lốc Rùa và khoảng cách thân.
- Do khoảng cách từ bến cạnh và sau không Lốc Rùa đến cạnh dưới của nắp lưu phơi từ A đến B.
- Cách đo nắp phơi được lấy ngay dưới và ở giữa không Lốc Rùa và lưu phơi không được vượt quá 24 inch khi Lốc Rùa đang leo lên (không được kéo căng ra)
- Cách thân và nhau không được quá 3 inch.

Yêu cầu 3

- Khỏng cách giữa mặt lưu phơi đầu xuống vào bến cạnh cuối cùng của không Lốc Rùa.
- Do khoảng cách nắp phơi được gán ngoài ra sau của không Lốc Rùa ở đến G đến D.
- Cách đo nắp phơi được lấy ở dưới và ở giữa không Lốc Rùa do xuống từ C đến D và không được vượt quá 8 inch khi Lốc Rùa đang leo lên. (không được kéo căng ra)

Khuyến nghị khi cắt lỗ cho chiều dài

- Lưu ý: Không khí thoát được nắp phơi từ E đến F và G đến H nhưng phải ở dưới một chiều dải 20 inch khi kéo căng ra để nắp phơi được ban hành có lỗ thoát cắt đến cạnh dưới của lỗ thoát, được cắt từ G đến H.
- Khuyến nghị cắt tối thiểu là 20 inch khi kéo căng ra.

Khuyến nghị khi cắt lỗ cho chiều rộng

- Do chiều dài
- Do khoảng cách từ khung Lốc Rùa trở về phía trước đó theo bến hôm cạnh của lỗ thoát, cắt đến cạnh dưới của lỗ thoát, được cắt từ E đến F.
- Khuyến nghị cắt tối thiểu là 20 inch khi kéo căng ra.

Guide for Checking **Double-Cover Flap** TED on Skimmer Trawl Vessels 40 Ft. or Greater

- This opening can be used Inshore or Offshore of the COLREGS Demarcation Line*
- All Skimmer Trawl TEDs must be **Top-Opening**.
- TED grids must be at least 32” x 32” with a maximum 3-inch bar spacing.
- If TED angle is 46-55 degrees, the escape flap twine can be no larger than #15.
- If TED angle is 45 degrees or less (except for straight bar grids), the escape flap twine can exceed #15 (see allowable configurations below).

* COLREGS Demarcation Line refers to the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea 1972.

### Allowable Configurations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maximum Grid Angle</th>
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<th>Maximum Grid Angle</th>
<th>Flap Twine Can Exceed #15</th>
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<td>Bent Bar Only</td>
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<td>Bent Bar</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Requirement 1
Measure the distance from the TED frame forward along the side of the escape hole cut to the leading edge of the escape hole cut A to B. This measurement must be greater than or equal to 20-inches when stretched.

#### Requirement 2
Measure the leading edge of the escape hole cut C to D. This measurement must be greater than or equal to 56-inches when stretched.

**Note:** This measurement must also be obtained with the flap attached.

#### Requirement 3
Measure the distance along the leading edge of the overlapped portions of the flap section. The overlap from E to F must not exceed 15-inches when stretched.

#### Requirement 4
Measure the distance from the posterior edge of the TED frame to the trailing edge of the flap. This measurement must not exceed 24-inches when hanging (not stretched) measure G to H (not stretched).

This document provides instructions for measuring the double cover escape opening for single-grid hard TEDs. These instructions summarize regulations at 50 C.F.R. 223.207 (a)(7)(ii)(C), 223.207 (d)(2)(ii), and 223.207 (d)(3)(iii). It is the responsibility of the owners and vessel operators using these instructions to ensure that their TEDs meet all regulatory requirements.
Hướng dẫn và Kiểm tra cho Lốc Rửa **Nâp dời** Cho Các Tẩu Cánh Bướm 40 Ft. hoặc đại hơn

- **Nâp mầu** này có thể được sử dụng trong höchst hoặc ngoài biển khi cả các đường phân giới COLREGS Demarcation Line*
- Tắt cò các tẩu Cánh Bướm mang Lốc Rửa phải để **Mở ở phía trên**
- Các khung Lốc Rửa phải có kích thước ít nhất là 32” x 32” với khoảng cách thân xa nhau không được quá 3 inch.
- Nếu để Lốc Rửa ở mức độ từ 46-55 độ, thì chiều rộng ở nắp thoát không được lớn hơn chi #15
- Nếu để Lốc Rửa ở mức độ từ 45 độ hoặc nhỏ hơn (Xuất ngoại trừ những trường hợp), chiều rộng ở lỗ thoát nắp phải có thể vượt quá chiều #15. (Xem mẫu hình cho phép bên dưới)

* Đường phân giới COLREGS Demarcation Line để cập den các quy định quốc tế về ngăn chặn va chạm trên biển năm 1972.

Mẫu hình cho phép

**Tối thiểu cho chiều ngang của Lốc Rửa 55 đố chi dưới phải không được lớn hơn chi #15**

Thành thẳng

Thành cong

Chi cho Thành cong

Tối thiểu cho chiều ngang của Lốc Rửa 45 đố hoặc nhỏ hơn chi dưới phải có thể vượt quá chi #15.

Yếu cầu 1

- Đo chiều dài:
  - Đo khoảng cách từ khung Lốc Rửa trở về phía trước đó theo biên horizon của lỗ thoát đặt đến cạnh đầu của lỗ thoát, đặt từ A đến B
  - Kích thước đo nắp tối thiểu 20 inch hoặc dài hơn

Yếu cầu 2

- Đo cạnh đầu:
  - Đo cạnh đầu của lỗ thoát đặt ở C đến D
  - Kích thước đo nắp tối thiểu 56 inch hoặc dài hơn

Yếu cầu 3

- Đo khoảng cách đó theo cạnh đầu của hai vạch bờch läng nhất nhau.
  - Kích thước nắp rộng trên từ E đến F không được quá 15 inch

Yếu cầu 4

- Cách đo nắp phải được lấy ngay dưới và ở giữa khung Lốc Rửa và chiều phụ không được vượt quá 24 inch khi Lốc Rửa đang treo lơ (không được kéo căng ra) do từ G đến H

SKIMMER TRAWL TED REIMBURSEMENT PROGRAM

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) currently has a program to provide financial assistance to Mississippi skimmer fishermen that are now required to use TEDs. Through a TED gear reimbursement program, fishermen may be reimbursed for NOAA-approved TEDs installed on their commercial vessels. The TED gear reimbursement program is funded by a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) grant.

PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible for this program, fishermen must meet the following criteria (a separate online application must be submitted for each qualified vessel):

• Must be a Mississippi resident.
• Must have had a 2018-2019 or 2019-2020 and a current 2020-2021 Mississippi resident commercial shrimp license for a skimmer trawl vessel 40 feet and over (license type 52 or 53).
• A maximum of two NOAA-approved TEDs and installation will be reimbursed per qualified licensed vessel not to exceed $700 ($350 per TED).
• Must apply online via MDMR website at arcg.is/1uamKq0.
• Must watch MDMR-NOAA Gear Monitoring Team video information on specifications for the skimmer TEDs.
• Qualified shrimpers can register online and will be required to purchase the TEDs within 90 days of the date of submitting their online application to receive reimbursement from MDMR.
• This program will end July 31, 2021.

APPLY FOR THE PROGRAM

• Applications open: 8 a.m. on April 1, 2021
• Applications close: 11:59 p.m. on July 31, 2021

All applications submitted before the deadline will be considered. No late applications will be considered and there will be no appeals if the deadline is missed.

For assistance submitting a reimbursement application, contact Mike Brainard with the MDMR at 228-374-5000 or email SkimmerTED@dmr.ms.gov.
MISSISSIPPI SHRIMP LANDINGS 2016-2020

The blue bars represent the total number of pounds of shrimp landed for the given year while the blue-green bar represents the average shrimp landings over the 5-year period. The yellow line represents the total value in dollars of shrimp landed for the given years and the 5-year average. The highest landings and value, 11,214,938 pounds and $18,963,202 respectively, occurred in 2017.

2020 MISSISSIPPI SHRIMP LANDINGS BY MONTH

The blue bars represent the totals pounds of shrimp landed each month in 2020 and the yellow line represents the total monthly value in dollars of those 2020 landings. The highest landings of shrimp in 2020 occurred in August at 1,425,327 pounds and the highest monthly value occurred in August at $2,593,146.22.
The MDMR Shrimp and Crab Bureau, along with the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory’s (GCRL) Center for Fisheries Development, recently began extensive sampling for brown shrimp in the Mississippi Sound. The sampling is necessary for MDMR’s fisheries scientists to determine the exact date for the opening of the 2021 shrimp season. GCRL staff pull beam plankton nets in the Back Bay of Biloxi to sample brown shrimp post larvae. The post larval stage is the stage of the shrimp’s life cycle when it is extremely small (less than 25 millimeters (mm) or 0.98 inches).

MDMR staff pulls otter trawls coast-wide to sample juvenile (26-40 mm or 1.02-1.57 inches) and adult brown shrimp (greater than 40mm or 1.57 inches). For a shrimp to be of legal size (68 count per pound), it must be approximately 100 mm or 3.94 inches long. The brown shrimp season’s opening date can be determined when most of the shrimp are of that legal size. Environmental factors such as salinity, water temperature, rainfall and moon phase are also considered when setting the opening of the season. The optimum growing conditions for brown shrimp occur when the salinities are above 10 parts per thousand (ppt) and water temperatures are greater than 68 degrees Fahrenheit (°F).
Figure 1. Biloxi Bay Water Temperature (January 2016-March 2021)

Figure 2. Biloxi Bay Salinity (January 2016-March 2021)
Figure 3. Monthly Rainfall for Biloxi Bay (January 2016–March 2021)

Photo courtesy of Charlie Taylor
COMMERCIAL FISHERMEN
TRIP TICKETS - MONTHLY SUBMISSION FORMS REQUIRED

A Fresh Product Permit is required if you sell your catch to anyone other than a licensed seafood dealer or processor and/or transport your catch out-of-state. This is a reminder that while in possession of a Fresh Product Permit, you must submit a Monthly Submission Form by the 10th of the following month indicating the number of trips taken, even if that number is zero. See example Mississippi trip ticket – single trip form on page 10. If you sell your catch to anyone other than a licensed seafood dealer or processor and/or transport your catch out-of-state, you must fill out a trip ticket for each trip and submit it with your Monthly Submission Form. See example trip ticket monthly submission form on page 13. Your reports are valuable to fisheries managers for catch monitoring and documentation of effort in the fishery. The regulatory authority is provided below.

TITLE 22 PART 09 - RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR STATISTICAL REPORTING AND CONFIDENTIALITY OF STATISTICAL DATA FOR MARINE FISHERIES

IN THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

CHAPTER 05 FRESH PRODUCT PERMIT/SECONDARY FRESH PRODUCT PERMIT

100 A licensed commercial fisherman may only sell to a seafood dealer/processor. A validly licensed commercial fisherman may sell only their catch to a consumer if they have in their possession a fresh product permit obtained from the MDMR. A secondary fresh product permit may be obtained from the MDMR for a commercial fisherman’s spouse or family member that will allow them to sell their catch to consumers while the commercial fisherman continues to fish. There will be no fee for this permit.

CHAPTER 06 SEAFOOD REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

100 Each seafood dealer/processor is hereby required to complete Mississippi trip tickets provided by the MDMR. Commercial fishermen, who sell their catch to individuals other than a Mississippi dealer/processor or transport their catch out-of-state, are hereby required to complete Mississippi trip tickets provided by the MDMR and be in possession of a fresh product permit. A completed Mississippi trip ticket is only required for the initial point of sale of the seafood product. All trip tickets shall be returned to the MDMR or electronically submitted on or before the 10th of each month for actual transactions from every commercial fisherman during the preceding month. A trip ticket summary form that states the total trips taken in a given month shall be submitted by the 10th of each month by the seafood dealer/processor or commercial fisherman.

CHAPTER 13 SECTION 100 PENALTIES

Any unlawful act under this Part committed by any person, firm, or corporation shall be deemed a violation of the provisions of this Part and shall constitute a misdemeanor and upon conviction, said person shall be punished in accordance with Mississippi Code Ann. § 49.15.63, as amended, unless a penalty is specifically provided elsewhere in the Mississippi Code Ann. of 1972, as amended.

If you have any questions or need help, please contact the Trip Ticket Office at 228-374-5000.
**EXAMPLE**

MISSISSIPPI TRIP TICKET - SINGLE TRIP

**Ticket No. 1314482**

**Vessel Name** Lady Delta

**FISHERMAN PROVIDED INFORMATION**

Commercial Fisherman's Name (Please Print)  
John Doe

Fisherman's Lic. 1001234

Date Left Dock 04/08/19

**VESSEL NAME** Lady Delta

Coast Guard Documented Vessel Number

State Vessel Registration Number

Primary Area Fished 119

Fishing Time 18

Primary Gear Used 095

Quantity of Gear 2

**SEAFOOD DEALER OR FRESH PRODUCT PERMITTEE PROVIDED INFORMATION**

Seafood Dealer or Fresh Product Permittee's Name (Please Print)  
ABC Seafood

Transaction Date 04/10/19

State Landed 28

County Landed 47

Dealer's Lic. or Fresh Product Permit No. 1000321

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**ITEM**

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</table>

| Total Purchases | Total Deductions | Total Paid |

**DMR Copy**

**SEAFOOD DEALER OR FRESH PRODUCT PERMITTEE SIGNATURE**

*Example of Single Trip Ticket*
TRIP TICKET
MONTHLY SUBMISSION FORM
Mississippi Department of Marine Resources
Trip Ticket Coordinator
1141 Bayview Avenue
Biloxi, MS 39530
(228) 374-5000 or (800) 374-3449

This report must be submitted monthly in order to comply with the requirements of MS Title 22 Part 9 and rules and regulations adopted pursuant to those statutes. Completed trip tickets for the time period should accompany this form. DO NOT STAPLE TRIP TICKETS.

USE BLUE OR BLACK INK ONLY

License No: 1000321

Current Date: 06/04/15

Reporting Period
From: 05/01/15
To: 05/31/15

No of tickets:

By signing this document I hereby certify the following:
the attached trip tickets represent all transactions of fish and shellfish obtained from anyone other than a licensed dealer for the reporting period described above.
all records (receipts) submitted in this report constitute all transactions required to be reported by law.
all the attached information is accurate and accounts for all actual business transactions required to be submitted in this report.
I understand that providing false information may result in criminal consequences.

PRINT
Dealer/Processor or Fisherman Name:

John Doe

SIGNATURE
Licensed Dealer/Processor or Fisherman:

John Doe

▲ Example of Monthly Trip Ticket
This Derelict Trap Removal Program is being led by Mississippi State University (MSU) Extension Service, Mississippi Commercial Fisheries United (MSCFU), Mississippi Coalition for Vietnamese-American Fisher Folks & Families (MSCVAFF) and the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Marine Debris Program. The program was designed to encourage proper disposal year-round of derelict crab traps being trawled up by Mississippi shrimpers. Shrimpers who participate in the program can dispose of derelict traps that they encounter while shrimping in exchange for a reward. The program continues through January 2021. You can qualify for the program if you possess a current Mississippi shrimping license. There are four disposal locations along the coast.

For more information about this program, visit coastal.msstate.edu(crab-traps.)
2021 MARINE MAMMAL AUTHORIZATION CERTIFICATE

The shrimp fishery has been reclassified from a Category III to a Category II fishery under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) by NOAA’s National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). This means all commercial shrimp vessels must be registered and have an authorization certificate onboard. Commercial shrimpers with valid federal permits are automatically registered for the program.

Commercial fishermen who believe they should be registered but have not been or who want to verify they are registered in the NMFS Southeast Region, should contact the NMFS Southeast Regional Office MMAP Hotline at 727-209-5952. For convenience, a copy of the certificate follows this article. The MMPA certificate issued in 2020 remains in effect, valid through December 31, 2021, for vessel or gear owners participating in all Category I and II fisheries as of the final 2021 List of Fisheries.

More information can be found online at fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/marine-mammal-authorization-program.

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NOAA’s NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE (NMFS)
2020 MARINE MAMMAL AUTHORIZATION CERTIFICATE

Authorization:

Pursuant to Section 118 of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) (16 U.S.C. 1387), the implementing regulations at 50 CFR Part 229, and subject to the terms and conditions below, NMFS issues this Authorization Certificate, which, when presented in combination with a current and valid federal fishing permit, authorizes the taking of non-endangered marine mammals incidental to commercial fishing in Category I or II fisheries.

Terms and Conditions:

- All incidental mortality or injury of marine mammals occurring in the course of commercial fishing operations must be reported to NMFS within 48 hours after the end of each fishing trip in which the incidental mortality or injury occurred.
- This Authorization Certificate, or a photocopy, must be on board the vessel during commercial fishing operations.
- Authorization Certificate holders must comply with any applicable take reduction plans and emergency regulations.
- If requested to do so by NMFS or a designated contractor providing observer services to NMFS, an Authorization Certificate holder must take aboard an observer to accompany the vessel on fishing trips.
- When necessary to deter a marine mammal from damaging fishing gear, catch, other private property, or from endangering personal safety, the vessel owner, operator, or crew members may use measures which do not result in serious injury or mortality of the animal, as required by the deterrence provisions of the MMPA.
- A marine mammal may not be intentionally killed in the course of commercial fishing operations except where imminent necessity in self-defense or to protect the life of a person in immediate danger. Such lethal taking must be reported to NMFS within 48 hours. Any marine mammal accidentally taken must be immediately returned to the sea unless NMFS directs otherwise.
- This Authorization Certificate, or copy, must be made available upon request to any state or federal enforcement agent authorized to enforce the MMPA, any designated agent of NMFS, or any contractor providing observer services to NMFS.
- This certificate is not transferable. In the event of a change in vessel ownership, the Authorization Certificate is void and a new Authorization Certificate must be obtained by the new owner.
- If the registered vessel is sold or destroyed or is replaced by a new designated vessel, an authorization must be obtained for the new vessel.
- Any person who violates these Terms and Conditions, regulations under 50 CFR Part 229, or any provisions of Section 118 of the MMPA shall be subject to the penalties set forth in the MMPA.
- This certificate is valid from January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020.
BONNET CARRÉ 2019 FISHERIES DISASTER DECLARATION

On September 25, 2019, then Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross approved the Disaster Declaration for American Fishing Communities. For 2019, Congress appropriated $165 million for fishery disasters. MDMR staff continues to work with NOAA to develop a comprehensive recovery program using $21 million dollars awarded to Mississippi to address the impacts to marine fisheries as a result the opening of the Bonnet Carré Spillway allocated in 2019. The MDMR accepted public comments in late 2020 on 12 proposed programs to help the fisheries recover from the freshwater impacts in 2019. As of March 2021, NOAA is reviewing the MDMR proposed spend plan.
Gulf United for Lasting Fisheries (GULF) is the sustainable seafood program out of Audubon Aquarium of the Americas in New Orleans. Since 2012, GULF has been dedicated to promoting and advancing the sustainability of Gulf of Mexico fisheries.

While there is rigorous fisheries management in the U.S., many retail and food service companies have developed strict sourcing policies requiring third-party assurances of seafood sustainability. To meet this need, GULF works with MDMR and local fishermen in Mississippi and around the Gulf to help fisheries advance sustainability with consideration for the local culture and economy. GULF also supports the seafood industry in demonstrating and communicating their sustainability and improvement efforts.

**GULF’S INITIATIVES:**

**GULF Responsible Fisheries Management Certification** - Seafood certification offers an objective and neutral assessment of a fishery, and third-party certification is increasingly a requirement for products in the marketplace. Audubon GULF created the GULF Responsible Fisheries Management (RFM) Certification to meet the needs of Gulf of Mexico fisheries seeking third party certification. GULF RFM is recognized by the Global Sustainable Seafood Initiative (GSSI), a requirement in most retail sustainable sourcing policies.

**Fishery Improvement Projects (FIPs)** - Retailers recognize that many fisheries face challenges in achieving certification for a variety of reasons. FIPs provide a tool for these fisheries to demonstrate a commitment to sustainability. FIP stakeholders participate in the development and implementation of a workplan to advance the fishery against sustainability certification standards, with the option to become certified in the future. See GULF’s website for details on the Mississippi Shrimp FIP.

**WAYS TO BE INVOLVED IN SUSTAINABILITY:**

| JOIN A FIP | GULF currently leads shrimp FIPs in Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi. The Mississippi FIP is currently working on a transition to a comprehensive FIP, which is a more rigorous project with greater market recognition. A Marine Stewardship Council pre-assessment is underway for the Mississippi and Alabama shrimp fisheries. Once its completed, GULF will work with the fishery to develop an action plan to address any barriers to certification. Contact GULF if interested in providing input during this process and/or FIP membership. |
| OTTER TRAWLS | Schedule a courtesy gear check to have your TEDs inspected while the vessel is at the dock to ensure they are fully compliant. There are no penalties associated with these courtesy inspections and they demonstrate the industry’s commitment to sustainability. Courtesy checks are conducted by GULF’s expert consultant or the NOAA Gear Monitoring Team (separate from NOAA enforcement). Contact GULF for more information. NOTE: Courtesy checks are on hold during COVID-19 closures and will resume when they can be conducted safely. |
| SKIMMER TRAWLS | Display a tow time decal on your vessel. This is an easy step to demonstrate the industry’s dedication and compliance with tow times. To receive a decal, contact Laura Deighan at ldeighan@auduboninstitute.org or Jason Saucier with MDMR at jason.saucier@dmr.ms.gov. |

If you have any questions about GULF or our projects, contact Laura Deighan at ldeighan@auduboninstitute.org or 504-717-0737 or visit audubongulf.org.
INVASIVE ASIAN TIGER SHRIMP DATA WANTED

Asian Tiger Shrimp (*Penaeus monodon*) is an invasive species which may pose environmental threats, such as spreading disease, aggression toward native shrimp and competition for food and habitat.

CHARACTERISTICS

• Distinct dark and light “tiger” striped pattern along their shell

• Can grow to more than 10 inches long and weigh more than one-half pound

• Smaller juveniles may be found in the bays and near the shore

REPORTING YOUR TIGER SHRIMP

STEP 1: Write down the trawl information

• Captain’s name and/or vessel name

• Date and time

• Location (latitude and longitude)

• Water depth

STEP 2: Give us a call or email the information to us

Call MDMR 228-523-4038, or email jason.saucier@dmr.ms.gov.