

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

MISSISSIPPI ADVISORY COMMISSION ON MARINE RESOURCES

COMMISSION MEETING

Tuesday, June 17, 2025, 9:03 a.m.,

Bolton Building Auditorium

1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, Mississippi 39530

COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Ronnie Daniels
Matthew Mayfield (via teleconference)
Jonathan McLendon
Jason Osborne
Cammack "Cam" Roberds

ALSO PRESENT:

Joe Spraggins
Sandy Chesnut, Esquire
Steven Eckert, Esquire

REPORTED BY:

Melissa Burdine-Rodolfich
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CAM ROBERDS:

I want to welcome everybody to the Mississippi Advisory Commission on Marine Resources for Tuesday, June 17th, 2025.

Commissioner Daniels, will you please lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance?

(Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)

CAM ROBERDS:

Director, you want to lead us in a prayer?

JOE SPRAGGINS:

Yeah. And before we go to prayer, let's all remember the things that are going on over in the Middle East there. And, you know, a lot of things are happening and let's hope it doesn't escalate too much further than what it is. You know, people have to do what they have to do, and it's not our call. It's God's will, so let's pray for the people and pray for the people that are in harm's way.

(Moment of prayer.)

CAM ROBERDS:

Do we have any questions on the approval for minutes of May 20th? No questions.

1 Do we have a motion?

2 RONNIE DANIELS:

3 Motion.

4 JONATHAN MCLENDON:

5 Second.

6 CAM ROBERDS:

7 All those in favor?

8 (Unanimous vote.)

9 CAM ROBERDS:

10 All right. Has everybody had an
11 opportunity to look at the agenda and if so, do we
12 have any questions?

13 If not, do we have a motion?

14 JASON OSBORNE:

15 I make a motion.

16 JONATHAN MCLENDON:

17 I'll second.

18 CAM ROBERDS:

19 All those in favor?

20 (Unanimous vote.)

21 CAM ROBERDS:

22 All right, Director. It's all yours,
23 sir.

24 JOE SPRAGGINS:

25 Okay. First thing we'll look at is some

1 employment contracts.

2 Brianna and Dylan.

3 Well, never mind. It went on and it
4 went off. Crystal just shot them off.

5 Maybe they'll put them back up.

6 CAM ROBERDS:

7 One second, Director.

8 For the record, I want to put -- is
9 Matthew, Commissioner Mayfield online? He is via
10 phone conference.

11 Go ahead, Director.

12 JOE SPRAGGINS:

13 We have client support technician,
14 Camron, is over here. We've got Reed, who -- law
15 enforcement. We've got a new -- and then we've
16 got several new law enforcements, but -- and then
17 we've got Tabitha with accounting and Cameron is
18 in law enforcement and then we've got Jacob, who's
19 also in law enforcement, come with us.

20 So we're -- thank goodness for the new
21 deal that the legislature -- or the personnel
22 board let us bring our law enforcement on at a
23 reasonable price that we're able to get people now
24 to be able to look at DMR and want to be a part of
25 it.

1 Any other ones? Is that all? Is that
2 all of the -- Okay. And no contracts? I guess
3 not.

4 All right. Agency update. Well,
5 legislation, you know, we got a budget and, you
6 know, everything was passed. And, now, we don't
7 have any additional funds this year for a GOMESA
8 as far as any projects. The legislature decided
9 to hold that out for next year, so any of the
10 projects that were in the portal to be able to be
11 funded this year will just go into the projects
12 for next year. And that will give us around --
13 we'll have 80 -- 84, \$85 million in the bank now
14 to be able to put out next year, and so it will be
15 up to the legislators what they want to do with
16 that and the Governor.

17 As far as our tidelands, they gave us
18 the funds to operate the agency and to pay our
19 bond debt, but they did not give us any additional
20 funds to be able to fund any of the cities or
21 counties or any of the projects that was there.

22 I'm sure the money will still be there.
23 I don't know -- I guess we'll get a check from the
24 Secretary of State, but I'm not sure if they'll
25 just make it for what they authorized us this year

1 or whether or not it will be for the full amount
2 and we'll just hold it for next year.

3 Any questions on those?

4 (No response.)

5 JOE SPRAGGINS:

6 Also on the legislative update, we'll
7 talk about a couple of other things down the way
8 here. But we did have the on-bottom, you know,
9 leases update on it, and what happened was that
10 they did change the rules in it. I don't
11 remember. It was the Senate Bill 2963 or
12 something like that. I can't remember.

13 But they changed rules to say that we
14 don't have to lease 80 percent. We have the
15 authority to lease up to 80 percent now, so that's
16 going to give us a little leeway to do what we
17 need to do.

18 We're working with the Horne Group. The
19 Horne Group is going through and talking to people
20 on a daily basis to try to -- as far as the
21 leases. We have not had any issues, anything come
22 up yet that was major. And so as soon as they get
23 all their stuff together, then we'll sit down and
24 go over it with them and decide where we'll go
25 from that point.

1 Any questions on the on-bottom?

2 (No response.)

3 JOE SPRAGGINS:

4 2019-2020 Bonnet Carré. The '19 Bonnet
5 Carré, you know, is going very well, but they're
6 still working it as we talk on different things.
7 And I think the Round 3, as I call it -- you know,
8 we've had Round 1 and Round 2 of the Bonnet Carré
9 and then now we're in Round 3, which I look at as
10 basically the 2020, and that's where -- for the
11 fishermen. Now, that's only oystermen and
12 shrimpers, about \$3 million.

13 We just had a meeting with that the
14 other day. We have 226 eligible from the '19
15 Bonnet Carré have certified and 17 new applicants
16 have been -- you know, for the 2020.

17 We held a public meeting on June 10th at
18 5:30 and didn't have any major issues there.

19 It will be a process. I think it goes
20 through the 30th of this month -- is that right --
21 that we'll be able to take applications. And so
22 if you haven't put your application -- if you're
23 an oysterman or a shrimper, that's the only two
24 that's qualified for the 2020. And then we'll go
25 forward with that.

1 Any questions on the Bonnet Carré?

2 (No response.)

3 JOE SPRAGGINS:

4 All right. Red snapper, I tell you
5 what, they went crazy the first weekend. Caught
6 33 percent of our allocation. And we had
7 beautiful weather and the fish were just out there
8 looking for something to eat, but we caught
9 27,747 pounds that weekend. But as we stand right
10 now, we're at 56,348 pounds of our 82,343 -- -2
11 allocation, so we're looking good right now.
12 Hopefully, everything will hold up to be able to
13 carry us all the way to the 6th of July like we
14 have planned and then we'll look at it at that
15 point.

16 They're doing good. The CPU is about
17 the same and the number of anglers is -- there was
18 3,200 anglers out that first weekend, and so
19 that's a lot for Mississippi. And so just to give
20 you an idea, it was about 764 the third weekend
21 compared to that.

22 All right. A lot of people got out.
23 Beautiful weekend, Memorial holiday weekend.
24 There was a lot of things and I'm glad it worked
25 out.

1 Any questions on the snapper?

2 (No response.)

3 JOE SPRAGGINS:

4 We have our interns that started on
5 June 2nd, so we have got about 10 of them that
6 have started here. And we love to have our
7 interns because a lot of them wind up coming back
8 to work with us and that's very good for us to be
9 able to -- two things, Number 1, they get to see
10 about the agency and what we do here and if that's
11 part of something they would like to do in their
12 life and also we get the opportunity to evaluate
13 them and see if they would work good with us. So
14 this is a great deal and glad to do that.

15 Any question on that?

16 (No response.)

17 JOE SPRAGGINS:

18 All right. We had a Gulf Council
19 meeting in Tampa June 2nd through the 4th.
20 Nothing major. It just proves that we can do Gulf
21 Council pretty quick, so hopefully, we'll set that
22 as a precedent to be able to do some shorter Gulf
23 Council meetings, rather than four or five days.

24 But things went fine. We've got it in
25 the end of August in San Antonio, and then we'll

1 be here in November, so everything is looking
2 good.

3 Billfish tournament, boy, was it a
4 success for Mississippi. It was beautiful. And
5 we were able to be able to serve dinner to the
6 people who were fishing in the tournament and part
7 of their groups, about 450 of them on that night
8 before, on the Wednesday night and cooked some
9 good flounder out there and some oyster -- I mean,
10 shrimp and all and then we -- I tell you, it was
11 good.

12 And Golden Nugget did a fantastic job.
13 Our people did a great job. A lot of them are
14 standing there in the back right there, so let's
15 give them a round of applause because they did a
16 fantastic job.

17 (Round of applause.)

18 JOE SPRAGGINS:

19 You know, I think -- I don't think I
20 heard a single soul say but one thing, that they
21 was so full they couldn't walk away. That was
22 about it, you know. You know what, it was a great
23 time and had a -- you know, a lot of tournament --
24 I think there was 82 boats, if I'm not mistaken,
25 82 or 87, something like that that were in the

1 tournament, but beautiful.

2 And I tell you what, I was watching them
3 take off on that Thursday morning at McElroy's and
4 that's just a beautiful sight to sit there and
5 look at that, and -- but it worked out great.
6 Beautiful weather for to us, too, so that's
7 perfect, great.

8 Talking about fishing, we've got the
9 Governor's Gulf Coast Tournament coming up, and
10 we -- the fishing tournament will be here on the
11 24th, 25th of June and we have six boats that are
12 sold out and we're going to do snapper and cobia.
13 I think it will be a great deal. It's going to
14 be -- it's the first -- this is our first
15 fundraiser that we've had since we've been a part
16 of the Wildlife Foundation. It's the Mississippi
17 Wildlife, Fisheries, Parks and Marine Foundation
18 now, and this is our first fundraiser for it and,
19 hopefully, everything is going good.

20 And the Golden Nugget, once again, has
21 been fantastic to help us with that. And we're
22 working it out, but it's going to be a great time.
23 And I think -- I think we're going to get a lot of
24 participation and a lot of people have donated
25 great prizes and things for us to auction off, so

1 it's going to be a good deal for us.

2 Any questions on it?

3 (No response.)

4 JOE SPRAGGINS:

5 Our next meeting will be June the -- oh,
6 no. Our Gulf Coast Advisory meeting was on
7 June 6th. We talked about what we need to do and
8 what we're looking at with the Governor's RESTORE
9 funds, and a couple of things that we put in there
10 was to be able to do some more looking at speckled
11 trout and other things that we're trying to grow
12 out.

13 And we want to look at cobia. That's
14 another thing. I want to look at cobia and figure
15 out what it could be to be able to put some cobia
16 in the water, maybe 12 to 15 inches long. And so
17 that's another project that I'm going to work with
18 Southern Miss on and see what we can do with our
19 group and Southern and see about putting that in
20 because Mississippi is still the best fishing in
21 the world for the cobia and so let's kind of keep
22 it moving.

23 And, you know, it's worked good with our
24 speckled trout. Our flounder is looking good, so
25 let's see what we can do with cobia and see what

1 will happen there.

2 Any questions?

3 (No response.)

4 JOE SPRAGGINS:

5 All right. We've got a seafood labeling
6 conference on -- we had one on June 10th, the
7 press conference. Commissioner Gipson was here
8 with us, and we went -- basically talked about the
9 House Bill 602 and our labeling. We're going to
10 have a couple of meetings that are coming up on
11 that, and I've got it written down somewhere on
12 here.

13 But anyway, the meetings are -- if I
14 wanted them, they'd be right in front of me, but
15 they're not.

16 CRYSTAL MATTA:

17 Number 10.

18 JOE SPRAGGINS:

19 Huh?

20 CRYSTAL MATTA:

21 Ten.

22 JOE SPRAGGINS:

23 Do what, now?

24 Oh, I've got them right here. Thursday,
25 June 19th at 2:00, Thursday, June 26th at 9:00

1 a.m. and Tuesday, July 1st at 2:00 p.m. That's --
2 meetings will be here in this room.

3 So anybody -- if you have a restaurant
4 or if you have a seafood business or anything and
5 you would like to know what the labeling rules
6 are, you can come here and we will sit down and go
7 over it. And we will go over the labeling rules
8 and what we're doing and how we're going to do the
9 labeling.

10 It's basically if you've got anything
11 that's a fish or a shrimp or an oyster or a crab
12 and it's on a menu as an item, then it's got to be
13 labeled.

14 If it's out in front and you're selling
15 it at a seafood market, it's got to be -- have a
16 label. Is it imported or is it domestic? And
17 that's what it's got to have. It's got to have
18 those labels on it.

19 Now, if you have something like a gumbo,
20 which may have a mixture of things, you can say
21 this contains both foreign and domestic, okay, and
22 you can put that on there and be able to do it.

23 But we want people to be able to
24 understand what's happening here, and if -- you'll
25 come and be able to sit down if you've got people

1 for your restaurants and all if you have any
2 questions at all.

3 Also, we have it on the website, if --
4 you can go on DMR's website and if you'll go on it
5 and the first thing you will see will be the
6 seafood labeling. It's a big pop-up, and you can
7 click on it and it has a bunch of questions and
8 answers. And it will tell you -- you know, if
9 there is something that you've got -- maybe you
10 can answer your question from that right there,
11 and it will go over it pretty good and be able to
12 tell people how we're operating this.

13 You know, our goal is not to hurt
14 anybody. Our goal is to get everybody compliant.
15 I was on WXXV yesterday and he asked me a question
16 of how we're going to be able to do this, enforce
17 it, and I told him it's just like the law
18 enforcement of anything we do. It's just like
19 speeding. We can't stop everybody from speeding,
20 but we can tell them what the law is and what
21 they're supposed to do, and that's what we're
22 going to do. And we're going to get the word out
23 to you and we're going to explain to you what the
24 law is, what you're supposed to do and how you're
25 supposed to label it and what you're supposed to

1 be able to put out for people.

2 This is the right thing for Mississippi
3 because when you come to South Mississippi,
4 especially as a tourist or visiting or whatever
5 with a family, the first thing you see is -- you
6 know, in restaurants and all, you're thinking
7 you're getting fresh seafood. You're thinking
8 you're getting American. You're probably thinking
9 you're getting Gulf of America seafood.

10 And now, if you're getting crab legs,
11 snow crab legs, kind of hard to grow them out
12 here, but -- you know, but if you're getting
13 shrimp and oysters and fish and crabs, they're
14 thinking they're coming straight from the Gulf of
15 America, and a lot of them are. And we just want
16 people to able to know what they're getting and
17 what they're paying for.

18 So any questions on that?

19 (No response.)

20 JOE SPRAGGINS:

21 All right. And we'll be closed on the
22 July 4th, so, you know, we also have our rodeo for
23 the July 4th weekend.

24 So what dates is that, Charmaine?

25 CHARMAINE SCHMERMUND:

1 The 3rd through the 6th.

2 JOE SPRAGGINS:

3 3rd through the 6th. So we will be down
4 at Jones Park where they -- and being able to work
5 that and since -- it's a big annual thing that's
6 going on.

7 Our next Commission meeting is the 15th
8 of July at 9:00 a.m. Any questions? Any
9 problems?

10 (No response.)

11 JOE SPRAGGINS:

12 All right. The last thing I'm going to
13 go over is the derelict vessels. We have 195
14 derelict vessel cases that have been reported; 169
15 have been removed; 26 are pending; and eight have
16 received court orders to be removed as we speak
17 right now.

18 Any questions on that?

19 (No response.)

20 JOE SPRAGGINS:

21 All right. And actions update is the
22 last thing.

23 STEVEN ECKERT:

24 Good morning, Director and
25 Commissioners.

1 At our last May 2025 meeting, the
2 Commission recommended and the Director approved a
3 motion for the proposed changes for Rule 3.1 to be
4 sent to the Secretary of State's office for notice
5 of intent. That was involving the live bait
6 activity.

7 And then the second was a motion to
8 approve the state saltwater finish record, which
9 was for vermillion snapper, 6 pounds, 9.6 ounces
10 to Joseph Hoang.

11 And that is all of the actions update
12 for today.

13 JOE SPRAGGINS:

14 Okay. Any questions?

15 (No response.)

16 JOE SPRAGGINS:

17 All right. If not, Mr. Chairman, that's
18 my report.

19 CAM ROBERDS:

20 Thank you, sir.

21 I think the labeling -- very, very happy
22 to see that. I feel like -- I hope at some point
23 it makes an impact with the local shrimpers and
24 maybe drives that price up a little bit for them
25 and we can see those numbers go up.

1 Commissioners, anything to report?

2 JONATHAN MCLENDON:

3 General, I didn't know. Do we have any
4 update on the shrimp sampling, shrimp season?

5 JOE SPRAGGINS:

6 Yeah, we have it. Jason, is he here or
7 Rick?

8 Jason, can you come give an update real
9 quick if you'd like, but I think we're looking at
10 23rd, next Monday, right?

11 JASON SAUCIER:

12 Yes, sir.

13 Good morning, Commissioners, Director.

14 Yes, that's correct. Monday, the 23rd
15 at 6:00 a.m. That's all state waters that are
16 currently closed will be open.

17 And we did put that out on social media.
18 It's on our web page, on the home page and we
19 updated our shrimp hotline and then a press
20 release went out, so hopefully, the folks are
21 aware of it. We are going to check with them this
22 week. Most of our shrimpers should be aware of
23 it. We're going to check with some of them to
24 make sure and check with the icehouse too.

25 JOE SPRAGGINS:

1 Jason, if you don't mind, since you're
2 here, right there, give them a little bit of an
3 update as to why we're a little bit later than
4 Louisiana and Alabama.

5 JASON SAUCIER:

6 So yeah. We typically open later than
7 Louisiana. Historically, it tracks a few weeks
8 later than them. I think they opened their zone
9 that's nearest to us the 22nd of April, and that
10 typically occurs because they're opening on
11 100-count shrimp. And so it's a little different
12 from them because they're opening on a smaller
13 shrimp. They're sampling and shrimping in waters
14 that are more in-shore than a lot of our harvest
15 areas, so they're fishing in the bayous and canals
16 too.

17 So in Alabama for the last few years --
18 I think they changed their law maybe in 2020 or --
19 that they open on the 1st of June by statute, so
20 they don't -- they no longer do sampling to
21 determine when it's time.

22 And so we still sample to get to a
23 68-count shrimp and that's what we're looking for
24 and make sure they're legal when they open it.

25 So they did track a little late. We've

1 had a lot of rain this year, especially the last
2 couple of weeks, and so I think that's had a
3 bearing on the size and the growth.

4 JONATHAN MCLENDON:

5 Thank you.

6 JOE SPRAGGINS:

7 Yeah. And, you know, I know that
8 everybody is like, well, they're catching them
9 south of the island. Well, yeah, that's because
10 they're migrating there and there is not a whole
11 lot we can do about it. You know, everybody
12 can -- anybody can fish. Once you get three miles
13 south of the island, that's federal waters and
14 that's open. And it's -- and you can fish and do
15 that and they can bring them back here or they
16 take them to Louisiana. They can take them to
17 Alabama. They can take them wherever they want
18 to, but there is not a whole lot we can do about
19 it.

20 The -- sometimes the tides and the moon
21 and everything else turn the way that the shrimp
22 are moving and when they move, sometimes they move
23 a little bit before they get grown as we would
24 like to have them, you know, in Mississippi to be
25 able to harvest them in the Sound.

1 But, yeah, that's a good sign there. If
2 you can look at it, the blue area, light blue area
3 and the dark blue area is what we'll be opening
4 soon. The dark blue area stays open a little bit
5 longer than the light blue area, and so -- if you
6 can see, there is good overall of it.

7 But the biggest thing, the half a mile
8 around the -- you know, the mile around the
9 islands and all, the shoreline, it's always there,
10 you know. We never open that, the gray -- the
11 kind of beige-looking. And the green area is open
12 right now, you know. It's been open. And then,
13 obviously, we've got the area for shrimp bait,
14 too, which is the dark green area.

15 Does that help y'all?

16 CAM ROBERDS:

17 Yeah.

18 JONATHAN MCLENDON:

19 Yes, sir.

20 JOE SPRAGGINS:

21 But doing the best we can and, you know,
22 the law says 68. That's what we have to follow.

23 CAM ROBERDS:

24 Thank you, Director.

25 Chief, report on citations, sir.

1 KYLE WILKERSON:

2 Good morning, Commissioners, Director,
3 Legal.

4 You know, May was a good month.
5 Memorial Day is always the culmination at the end.
6 It was a very -- I was very pleased with Memorial
7 Day weekend, the enforcement efforts and the
8 people in general, for that matter. I mean, we
9 wrote five BUIs the entire holiday weekend, folks.
10 I mean, that right there is -- it just shows me
11 compliance. Everybody is doing right.

12 We checked up -- we checked -- I say "we
13 checked." We had 14 percent -- 14.4 percent
14 compliance rate with the Tails and Scales. We
15 wrote 16 citations for failure to apply to Tails
16 and Scales, which is -- it happens, but that's a
17 little higher than I would have figured. We
18 checked 3,500 people.

19 So at the end of the day, these officers
20 are -- they are, every day, out there and they are
21 busting their tails, and I'm very pleased with
22 them. I'm proud of them.

23 But other than that, everything else
24 looks like it's in line. I mean, I will field any
25 questions that I can.

1 RONNIE DANIELS:

2 The new offshore landing permit, that's
3 still voluntary, right?

4 KYLE WILKERSON:

5 Yes.

6 JOE SPRAGGINS:

7 It is. It's still --

8 RONNIE DANIELS:

9 Are y'all asking about that?

10 KYLE WILKERSON:

11 Yes.

12 RONNIE DANIELS:

13 Are we -- is everybody pretty much
14 seeming to have that along with Tails and Scales?

15 KYLE WILKERSON:

16 Yes.

17 RONNIE DANIELS:

18 Good.

19 KYLE WILKERSON:

20 Yep, yep. They're doing good with that.

21 CAM ROBERDS:

22 Well, your team has a presence, and I
23 think that shows the -- that's the reason why. I
24 mean, people are going out on Memorial or whatever
25 weekend, then you guys are going to be there, so

1 people are going to be complaint.

2 KYLE WILKERSON:

3 Yeah. I think they're doing a great
4 job. Now, really, July 4th weekend is coming.
5 We're going to really see how good they're doing.

6 CAM ROBERDS:

7 Hopefully, they do well.

8 KYLE WILKERSON:

9 Yep.

10 JOE SPRAGGINS:

11 You know, Chief, I think the average
12 is five percent checks, right?

13 KYLE WILKERSON:

14 Yes, sir.

15 JOE SPRAGGINS:

16 And so we're at 14 percent, so that just
17 tells you how much further Mississippi is than the
18 rest of the Gulf.

19 KYLE WILKERSON:

20 Yep.

21 CAM ROBERDS:

22 Thank you. Any questions for the Chief?

23 (No response.)

24 CAM ROBERDS:

25 All right. Appreciate it.

1 KYLE WILKERSON:

2 Thank you.

3 JONATHAN MCLENDON:

4 Thank you, Chief.

5 CAM ROBERDS:

6 All right. Moving down to Ms. Willa
7 Brantley, update on reorganization of the
8 Mississippi Coastal Program.

9 WILLA BRANTLEY:

10 Good -- sorry. My voice is not working.

11 Good morning, Commissioners and Director
12 and Legal.

13 This morning, I have a presentation on
14 changes -- proposed changes to Title 22, Part 23,
15 the Mississippi Coastal Program.

16 So I just wanted to give a little bit of
17 an overview of what wetlands permitting does.
18 It's a lot, so I'm going to try to keep it very
19 short and you can ask any questions if you have
20 them.

21 We have the Coastal Zone Management Act
22 at federal level. This is a law that Congress
23 established in 1972 that said that all Coastal
24 states can establish a Coastal zone, come up with
25 a program and enforceable policies for managing

1 that Coastal zone and get a grant from NOAA to
2 manage that program. We've had that in place
3 since 1984.

4 We also have the implementation of our
5 state law in coastal wetlands. That's the Coastal
6 Wetlands Protection Act, which is our state
7 statutes. And our state statutes also mandate
8 coming up with a Mississippi Coastal Program for
9 management of coastal wetlands, which the quick
10 definition of those is publicly-owned waters below
11 mean high tide. So we directly regulate those
12 coastal wetlands, and we indirectly regulate
13 everything within our coastal zone that federal
14 agencies do, which is established as our three
15 coastal counties.

16 So just justification for this change:
17 We did have a 312 evaluation by NOAA. We got the
18 results in December of 2024. This is something
19 they come do every few years. We report to them
20 every six months some basic information on our
21 program, and then every five years, approximately,
22 they come and do a full, very in-depth evaluation.

23 And the only necessary action that we
24 had was that we should get our Coastal Program
25 updated, our program document to address the

1 change in the role of the Mississippi Advisory
2 Commission on Marine Resources.

3 As I said, this -- the Coastal Program
4 was adopted in 1980. It was revised in '88 and
5 then again in 2020.

6 This time, we have updated that to
7 reflect also the Secretary of State numbering
8 format to remove information that is already
9 covered in our state statutes, so this will be
10 uploaded on the Secretary of State website and
11 available to the public if we get a notice of
12 intent after this.

13 Some of the main things we are
14 updating -- this is just a quick overview. We are
15 updating the wording to reflect the
16 responsibilities of the Executive Director and the
17 Advisory Commission on Marine Resources.

18 Again, we're removing information that's
19 already covered by state statutes so that we don't
20 have that duplication. We are adding some
21 statutory authority references under each rule.
22 It has the source of the state statute that gives
23 us the authority for that rule.

24 We have updated all of the mean high
25 tide and mean high water line references to

1 reflect the statutory change to the coastal
2 wetlands definition. That is now based on the
3 ordinary high water mark rather than the mean high
4 tide line or water line.

5 And we are proposing some minor
6 procedural updates and those are the ones I'm
7 going to go through in detail. I'm not going to
8 go through those top four bullet points because
9 that would take a lot of time.

10 So in Chapter 1, that covers the purpose
11 of the Coastal Program. The only thing we've done
12 is deleted specific chapter information. We sort
13 of had a table of contents there that directed
14 people, depending on what kind of authorization
15 they were getting, to a specific chapter.

16 We've taken that out because now that
17 there will be some in the Coastal Program and some
18 that's only in statutes, we didn't want it to
19 sound like Coastal Program, Title 22, Part 23 was
20 the only place to find that information.

21 Chapter 2, our justification authority,
22 we've condensed that for clarity. We've removed
23 the requirements for submittal of an application
24 and we've removed the list of authorities of the
25 Commission.

1 Now, anytime I use the word "removed" in
2 this presentation, that means we removed it
3 because it's already in the statute. It hasn't
4 gone away. It's still there. It's just in the
5 statute, so it doesn't need to be covered here.

6 In Chapter 3, which is definitions, we
7 updated the Commission to the Advisory Commission.
8 We updated a coastal wetlands definition to
9 reflect the updated statute. We added a
10 definition for ordinary high water mark to reflect
11 our updated state statutes. We updated the
12 definition of water bottoms to also reflect that
13 updated statute, and we have replaced and revised
14 the definition for major coastal rivers and
15 streams.

16 We actually took that definition out in
17 the 2020 revision because it wasn't -- we deleted
18 the part that referenced that, so we didn't need
19 it anymore. And now we've put it back in. There
20 is a change later on that I will go over, that
21 depends on that definition, so we've put it back
22 in and added a few water systems to that. And I
23 will go over that in detail.

24 So this is the new definition of major
25 coastal rivers and streams. We've added the

1 Jourdan River, Catahoula Creek, Hickory Creek. We
2 moved the Biloxi River. It was already on there,
3 but we moved it so that they would be in order
4 from west to east. We added Tuxachanie Creek,
5 Tchoutacabouffa River, Big Cedar Creek and Big
6 Creek.

7 And we base that on the hydrologic unit
8 codes, the HUC 10s, if you're familiar with those.
9 This gives us all of the water systems that extend
10 throughout the counties and a tiny bit outside of
11 the counties, but not too far outside of the
12 counties.

13 My slide is -- okay. Hold on.

14 Okay. Chapter 4 in the permit
15 application procedures, we have added some
16 specific information on how to obtain an
17 application, so we put our website in there and
18 some phone numbers for how to contact us and get a
19 copy of an application or to apply online. We
20 removed the list of requirements for a complete
21 application. Again, that is in statute, so it's
22 still there.

23 Chapter 5, that covers public notices
24 and hearings. We removed the requirements for the
25 public notice publication and also for public

1 hearing notices, scheduling and implementation
2 because those are all covered in the statute.

3 In Chapter 6, which covers how we
4 evaluate applications, we added that the Executive
5 Director's decisions will be based on findings of
6 the Department and any recommendations provided by
7 the Advisory Commission. Of course, that used to
8 say that the Commission's decisions would be based
9 on findings of the Department, so we needed to
10 reword that based on statute.

11 We removed the allowance that permits
12 can be conditioned, performance bonds can be
13 required, the coverage of when permits would
14 expire and charges for materials removed from
15 coastal wetlands, which is all covered in statute.

16 And Chapter 7 is our Coastal Wetlands
17 Use Plan. We have made some specific changes to
18 that. We have specified that the plan is binding
19 only on coastal wetlands. I don't think that was
20 ever intended to apply to things like manmade
21 canals, so we made that specific.

22 We have updated it to allow commercial
23 purposes in General Use Districts if city or
24 county zoning allows the proposed use. I'm going
25 to go over the wording of that one on the next

1 slide.

2 And then we've updated our Special Use
3 Districts 1, 3, 4 and 5 so that the footprint of
4 approved projects will automatically update to the
5 relevant use plan without having to go through
6 special steps for that.

7 So this is the wording for General Use
8 Districts. It's always allowed construction of
9 piers, docks, bulkheads, and then boat launching
10 ramps was lower in the wording. We moved it up
11 with those piers, docks and bulkheads as those are
12 all similar types of projects.

13 We changed this in 2020 to say that they
14 had to be -- those had to be for non-commercial
15 purposes and our intention was to keep industrial
16 locations out of the General Use Districts because
17 a lot of times industrial companies will come in
18 and they'll only build a pier to support it. And
19 so we didn't want them being able to say, I can
20 use -- I can do this in a General Use District,
21 even though I'm in industrial and I'm moving into
22 somebody's neighborhood because all I'm doing is
23 building a pier.

24 But we ran into some problems with that
25 because it also cut out things like restaurants

1 and we never intended to cut those out. So we've
2 added this wording back in so that if the city or
3 county allows that restaurant or, say, a bait shop
4 or something like that, then it would be allowed
5 within our General Use District without having to
6 get a use plan change.

7 And then in the Special Use Districts,
8 S2 always had that leased coastal wetlands for
9 oyster cultivation would become that designation
10 on the coastal wetlands use plan map once that
11 project was approved, so now we have changed it so
12 that all of those Special Use Districts follow
13 that same format.

14 Any new artificial oyster reefs under S1
15 approved by the Executive Director will
16 automatically become S1. Same with S3, S4, 5 and
17 6, so any of those that are specifically approved
18 by the Director for those very specific purposes
19 would come -- become that use plan on the map
20 automatically.

21 In Chapter 8, this is our requirements
22 for conducting regulated activities. We've
23 reworded some for consistency of grammar and
24 better clarity. We deleted a section that lists
25 activities that DMR would not assert authority

1 over because we don't have authority of those
2 projects anyway, so it didn't need to be stated
3 for that to be true.

4 We also deleted sensitive coastal
5 wetlands must not be filled because it's
6 redundant. We already have a requirement that
7 coastal wetlands must not be filled and sensitive
8 coastal wetlands are included in that.

9 We added that dredging can take place
10 within five feet of wetlands if a turbidity
11 curtain is in place for the entirety of the
12 dredging operation. Right now, all dredging has
13 to stay 10 feet off of any wetlands vegetation,
14 but we have -- the Commission and the Director
15 have approved variances quite a few times that
16 allow dredging within five feet if there is a
17 turbidity curtain in place.

18 The biggest danger to those SAV is
19 that -- that silt that would fall on them. Even
20 just a little bit of silt on them can kill them,
21 so putting that turbidity curtain in place will
22 protect those.

23 In Chapter 9 and 10, we had no changes.
24 Chapter 11, we removed the application
25 time and the list of excluded activities and

1 entities. Those are in statute.

2 We did retain the certificate of waiver.
3 That is not in statute. That allows the Director
4 to issue a certificate of waiver in the case that
5 a project qualifies for a nationwide or general
6 permit from the Corps if the staff has looked at
7 the project and determined that it would have
8 minimal impacts to coastal wetlands or for very
9 specific emergency activities. That -- those
10 things are not included in the statute, so we did
11 keep those here.

12 Chapter 12 on enforcement, we made no
13 changes.

14 Chapter 13 and then 14, 15, 16, and 17
15 cover federal consistency reviews. We've deleted
16 a majority of this. We really don't need it in
17 our state statutes. We need it in that coastal
18 program that NOAA approves, but we don't need it
19 in here so we've deleted most of that here.

20 And Chapter 14, the only change we've
21 made is that we limited state actions that are
22 subject to review to actions that are in the
23 coastal zone, which, again is the three coastal
24 counties, or actions that take place in those
25 listed major coastal rivers and streams.

1 So the new wording is: All state
2 actions listed in this section are considered
3 reviewable unless otherwise determined to be
4 consistent. The following list of actions have
5 been determined to be consistent activities
6 outside of the coastal zone with the exception of
7 activities taking place in major coastal rivers
8 and streams.

9 So that gives us the ability to review
10 certain state agencies that could affect the flow
11 in those rivers and streams. That's our main
12 concern, is to make sure that the flow is
13 maintained and the balance of freshwater and
14 salinity coming down into our waters is
15 maintained.

16 And the rest, we made no changes. 15,
17 16, 17 18, and 19 no changes are proposed for
18 that.

19 And so at this point, what we need is a
20 motion for the Director to proceed with a notice
21 of intent to adopt the changes to the Title 22,
22 Part 23.

23 And I will answer any questions that you
24 have about any of those changes.

25 CAM ROBERDS:

1 Do we have any questions?

2 If I understand, is -- the area that
3 this, you know, encompasses is basically tidal
4 areas only. We're not looking at inland wetlands
5 in the state, like away from streams and rivers
6 and bodies of water?

7 WILLA BRANTLEY:

8 Our state regulation and statutes cover
9 coastal wetlands. Our coastal zone, which will be
10 covered in that NOAA federal program, extends for
11 the full three coastal counties, but we only
12 review federal actions. Examples would be the
13 Corps issuing a permit for fill of non-tidal
14 wetlands or the Corps doing a project like the one
15 that was presented recently on Deer Island.
16 Things like that we get to review, but we don't
17 directly regulate those.

18 CAM ROBERDS:

19 Understood.

20 Any other questions?

21 (No response.)

22 RONNIE DANIELS:

23 I'll make a motion to approve.

24 JONATHAN MCLENDON:

25 I'll second.

1 CAM ROBERDS:

2 All those in favor?

3 (Unanimous vote.)

4 CAM ROBERDS:

5 Opposed?

6 (None opposed.)

7 CAM ROBERDS:

8 All right, Ms. Willa. Thank you.

9 WILLA BRANTLEY:

10 Thank you.

11 CAM ROBERDS:

12 Looks like we're moving -- looks like
13 we're moving down to Ms. Charmaine, Public
14 Affairs.

15 CHARMAINE SCHMERMUND:

16 Good morning.

17 The Mississippi Department of Marine
18 Resources had 37 media mentions since the May
19 MACMR meeting. News items included the opening of
20 red snapper season, free fishing weekend, last
21 month's fish record and Mississippi's seafood
22 labeling law that goes into effect July 1st.

23 Marine Patrol participated in Safe Kids
24 Gulf Coast Summer Safety Fest in Pass Christian on
25 May 24th, Camp Believe in Biloxi on June 9th and

1 Pascagoula Fire Cubs program on June 11th.

2 The Grand Bay NERR's Brianna Andrews and
3 Jennifer Cumbest participated in a career fair at
4 Trent Lott Academy on May 21st. I actually have
5 those backwards. That one. On May 21st -- the
6 Harrison County Soil and Water Teacher workshop on
7 June 5th. Brianna also gave presentations at the
8 Singing River Yacht Club summer camp on June 2nd
9 and 9th. Jennifer gave presentations for the
10 Jackson County and George County Summer Library
11 Program on June 9th and June 11th as well.

12 And then back to Sand Jam. The staff
13 from the NERR and Shrimp and Crab Bureau
14 participated in this year's Sand Jam held at
15 Pascagoula's Beach Park on May 31st. The event
16 was a day of family fun, celebrating our Coast
17 wildlife and habitats.

18 On June 11th, the GenSea program at USM
19 visited the aquaculture hatchery in Lyman and then
20 came to the Bolton Building for presentations from
21 Coastal Resources Management, the Office of Marine
22 Fisheries and the Office of Marine Patrol about
23 careers at DMR. Following the presentations, the
24 group took a tour of the microbiology lab.

25 Finfish Director Trevor Moncrief and

1 Shrimp and Crab Bureau Director Jason Saucier gave
2 a presentation to attendees of the Sociable Senior
3 Event at St. Rose de Lima Catholic Church on
4 June 12th.

5 All bureaus in the Office of Marine
6 Fisheries, the Office of Coastal Resources
7 Management and the Grand Bay NERR participated in
8 Marine Discovery Day on June 7th at the
9 Mississippi Museum of Natural Science in Jackson.
10 Our agency, along with other coastal
11 organizations, programs and institutions, took
12 part in the event providing fun and educational
13 activities for attendees. The event served as a
14 great opportunity to share information about our
15 local species, ecosystem and waters with an area
16 of our state not near our marine resources.

17 And the agency's cooking team, the
18 Mississippi Seafood program and the agency
19 volunteers participated in the Billfish Classic's
20 captain's reception on June 4th at the Golden
21 Nugget where boiled shrimp and fried fish filets
22 were cooked and served to 500 guests in
23 attendance. The evening served as a great
24 opportunity to talk with attendees and promote
25 Mississippi's wonderful local seafood.

1 CAM ROBERDS:

2 All right. Any questions?

3 (No questions.)

4 JONATHAN MCLENDON:

5 No. I just want to say thank you,
6 Charmaine. I love seeing the pictures with the
7 report. Giving you an idea of all the hard work
8 going on out there.

9 CAM ROBERDS:

10 Absolutely.

11 All right. Office of Marine Fisheries,
12 looks like, Jason Saucier.

13 Jason, some folks pronounce it Saucier
14 (So-sure) and some pronounce it Saucier (So-shay).
15 Which one are you so I can make sure I pronounce
16 it correctly?

17 JASON SAUCIER:

18 Saucier (So-shay) for sure. I'm from
19 Biloxi. We do live in Saucier (So-sure),
20 ironically.

21 CAM ROBERDS:

22 I grew up in Orange Grove, so that's why
23 it's -- I asked.

24 JASON SAUCIER:

25 All right. So I'm presenting to you --

1 good morning again.

2 I'm presenting to you the final adoption
3 of proposed changes to Title 22, Part 6, live bait
4 regulations.

5 On May 22nd, 2025, the Advisory
6 Commission recommended to the Executive Director
7 that the new format changes to Title 22, Part 6 be
8 sent to the Secretary of State's office for notice
9 of intent. The Executive Director approved the
10 recommendation, and the notice for the proposed
11 regulation was filed with the Secretary of State's
12 office on May 22nd.

13 The notice of the proposed regulation
14 was published in the *Sun Herald* on June 1st. The
15 notice of the proposed regulation was also posted
16 on the MDMR website on May 27th.

17 So here is some screen shots of the
18 publications. You will see the notice of intent
19 there to the left. Publication on the website,
20 and there is the affidavit of publication with the
21 *Sun Herald*.

22 No public comments were received.

23 And so at this time, the proposed
24 regulation, what we filed with the Secretary of
25 State's office for final adoption and the proposed

1 effective date for the regulation -- for the
2 revised regulations will be 30 days from filing.
3 So whenever it's posted and stamped, it can be
4 effective as soon as 30 days.

5 And I'll take any questions.

6 CAM ROBERDS:

7 Looks good. Thank you, Jason.

8 JASON SAUCIER:

9 Thank y'all very much.

10 SANDY CHESNUT:

11 We do need a motion for that.

12 JONATHAN MCLENDON:

13 I'll make the motion.

14 CAM ROBERDS:

15 I'll second.

16 All those in favor?

17 (Unanimous vote.)

18 CAM ROBERDS:

19 Opposed?

20 (None opposed.)

21 CAM ROBERDS:

22 All right. Thank you, Jason.

23 Looks like we've got Tim in here for
24 the -- or a replacement for Trevor. I'm sorry. I
25 don't know your name.

1 ERIC GIGLI:

2 Okay. I'm Eric Gigli. I'm filling in
3 for Trevor this morning.

4 CAM ROBERDS:

5 Thanks, Eric.

6 ERIC GIGLI:

7 So we have a salt water record for an
8 almaco jack, *seriola rivoliana*. Weighed in at
9 40 pounds, 15.20 ounces by Mr. Tim Shivers.

10 There is the fish. There is Mr. Shivers
11 with the almaco jack. That was a good one.

12 CAM ROBERDS:

13 That's a beast.

14 ERIC GIGLI:

15 And so we'll take a motion to adopt the
16 new state record.

17 RONNIE DANIELS:

18 Motion.

19 JONATHAN MCLENDON:

20 Second.

21 CAM ROBERDS:

22 All those in favor?

23 (Unanimous vote.)

24 RONNIE DANIELS:

25 Can we get somebody to check on Rodie

1 Armes, make sure everything is good?

2 CAM ROBERDS:

3 Oh, man. He might be tearing some
4 Louisiana records or something up right now. Who
5 knows.

6 All right. Thank you, man. Appreciate
7 it, Eric.

8 All right. Moving down, it looks like
9 Ms. Ayesha.

10 AYESHA GRAY:

11 Good morning. I just wanted to
12 introduce y'all to some of the folks that are
13 visiting the NERR this summer, and so we have kind
14 of a record number of extra projects. So the --
15 NOAA has a program called the Hollings
16 scholarship, and this program is designed so that
17 scholars from all over the nation can apply and
18 get real work experience at different NOAA
19 stations.

20 And we have put in requests for these
21 Hollings scholars for the past 10 years that I've
22 been there, but we've never gotten any. And then
23 this year, we got three, so we have three Hollings
24 scholars that have come. They're going to be here
25 for nine weeks working on different projects.

1 Now, these are projects that we
2 submitted that we said, hey, we're interested in
3 these things. Do you have a scholar that's
4 willing to work on them?

5 So our first Hollings scholar is Coen
6 McGarrah, and she's working on a bachelor's degree
7 in marine biology and English from the University
8 of South Florida.

9 And her project is a field survey of
10 oyster drills in the NERR to determine their
11 distribution based on the sediment type, depth,
12 water quality, precipitation and how close they
13 are to the oyster reef restoration site.

14 She's also doing a mesocosm study where
15 she's looking at their preferences in the lab for
16 different sediment size.

17 Ooh, my picture didn't come out. Just
18 on this side. Go back? Try it again.

19 There we go. There's Justin. So Justin
20 Osborne has come to us from South Carolina where
21 he is pursuing a bachelor's degree at Coastal
22 Carolina University.

23 He's looking at the spatial and temporal
24 patterns of the phytoplankton community across the
25 NERR, and so he goes out and collects weekly water

1 samples to assess the phytoplankton community
2 changes over time. Also, looks at water quality
3 and precipitation. And he's working closely with
4 our Davidson fellow, Jeneil Patel, who's also
5 looking at phytoplankton.

6 And then finally, we have Jessica
7 Yesensky from New York, and she has a -- is
8 pursuing a bachelor's degree in biochemistry and
9 environmental science at Elmira College.

10 And her project is going to be using
11 geographic information systems to look at marsh
12 elevation change between two years, 2013 and
13 2017-2018. These are the digital elevation models
14 that were collected using LIDAR, and some of them
15 were ground derived.

16 And so what we'd like to do is compare
17 those two datasets so we can understand the
18 utility of using LIDAR to do these digital
19 elevation models, which are really handy in terms
20 of if we're able to collect it that way, we can
21 get a lot more information over a larger area. So
22 understanding what that error is in those datasets
23 is really important.

24 And so, yeah, she is doing a great job
25 helping us address a lot of the management

1 goals -- or this management goal at the Grand Bay
2 NERR.

3 And then every year, we have a DMR
4 intern that also comes, so our DMR intern this
5 year is Alexis Gentry. She is working on a
6 bachelor's degree in marine biology at the
7 University of Southern Miss in Hattiesburg.

8 And she is focused on sorting and
9 identifying the micro -- that's supposed to be
10 macrobenthic invertebrates from our downstream
11 effects of restoration project.

12 So we have a lot of upstream restoration
13 that's going on and we know very little about what
14 impacts that might have downstream in terms of
15 sediment flow, in terms of water quality, in terms
16 of invertebrate communities, how those things
17 interact. And so we have an internal research
18 project where we are working on this, and Alexis
19 is helping us go through those samples. And so
20 this will help us really understand what that
21 upland work, how that impacts our aquatic
22 ecosystems.

23 Any questions?

24 CAM ROBERDS:

25 Excellent. I'm glad to see those young

1 people getting involved and being able to choose
2 their path by having some OJT like that. That's
3 pretty nice.

4 AYESHA GRAY:

5 Yeah. Yeah. They're all doing really
6 great, too, and really excited to be there. So
7 appreciate the opportunity.

8 CAM ROBERDS:

9 Appreciate it. Any questions?

10 (No response.)

11 CAM ROBERDS:

12 Thank you. Appreciate it.

13 AYESHA GRAY:

14 You're welcome.

15 CAM ROBERDS:

16 Commissioner Mayfield had mentioned
17 there is a -- there is a shrimp boat wreck that's
18 basically southeast of -- in Ocean Springs.
19 Basically, I think, it's about a mile or two to
20 the east of the entry to Davis Bayou. It was
21 actually sunk underneath the water, like the low
22 tide, right underneath the surface.

23 Who would be involved in possibly
24 marking that? Would that be Marine Patrol?

25 KYLE WILKERSON:

1 Yeah. We can look at it.

2 CAM ROBERDS:

3 Are you familiar with that?

4 KYLE WILKERSON:

5 We're familiar with it.

6 CAM ROBERDS:

7 Okay. Good. Good. Yeah. I think it
8 was probably rotted out enough just to where the
9 rigging has went under the water so it's not
10 visible.

11 KYLE WILKERSON:

12 Yeah. It's been there a while.

13 CAM ROBERDS:

14 And Commissioner Mayfield mentioned it,
15 so I figured I'd bring it up.

16 KYLE WILKERSON:

17 Yeah. We'll entertain it. It was
18 marked at one time.

19 CAM ROBERDS:

20 Was it? Okay. Thank you, Chief.

21 KYLE WILKERSON:

22 All right.

23 CAM ROBERDS:

24 So do we have any -- are there any other
25 business or public comments?

1 If not, if somebody wants to make a
2 motion to close us out.

3 JONATHAN MCLENDON:

4 I will make a motion to adjourn.

5 JASON OSBORNE:

6 I'll second.

7 RONNIE DANIELS:

8 Second.

9 CAM ROBERDS:

10 All those in favor?

11 (Unanimous vote.)

12 (Adjourned at 9:57 a.m.)

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CERTIFICATE OF COURT REPORTER

1
2 I, MELISSA BURDINE-RODOLFICH, Court Reporter
3 and Notary Public, in and for the County of
4 Harrison, State of Mississippi, hereby certify that
5 the foregoing pages, and including this page,
6 contain a true and correct copy of my stenotype
7 notes and/or electronic tape recording of the
8 public meeting witness, as taken by me at the time
9 and place heretofore stated, to the best of my
10 skill and ability.

11 I further certify that I am not in the employ
12 of, or related to, any counsel or party in this
13 matter, and have no interest, monetary or
14 otherwise, in the final outcome of the proceedings.

15 Witness my signature and seal, this the 7th
16 day of July, 2025.

17
18 /s/ Melissa Burdine-Rodolfich

19
20 Melissa Burdine-Rodolfich
21 My Commission Expires 4/03/28
22
23
24
25