

Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission Programmatic Update



History

- Established in 1949 by Congress
- Compact among the five Gulf States (Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida)
- Promote the better utilization of the marine resources in the Gulf of Mexico



Southeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (SEAMAP)

- Federal/State/University cooperative program for the collection, management and dissemination of fishery-independent data and information in the southeastern United States
 - Trawl Surveys – Summer and Fall Shrimp/Groundfish Survey
 - Plankton Surveys – Spring and Fall Plankton Survey
 - Video Survey – Reef Fish Survey
 - Bottom Longline Survey
- Surveys assess the abundance and distribution of fauna in the shelf and slope waters of the US Gulf of Mexico
- Collect size, sex, maturation and life history data of sampled species
- SEAMAP data are used in stock assessments for 24 species/species complexes
- More Information: Jeff Rester, jrester@gsmfc.org, 228-875-5912



Gulf Fisheries Information Network (GulfFIN)

- Cooperative state/federal fisheries dependent monitoring program
- Collection, storage, and dissemination
 - Recreational effort/landings data (MRIP, state surveys, NSAR data, SEFHIER)
 - Commercial landings (trip ticket data)
 - Biological data (age, length, weight)
- Funding vehicle to support field work
- Provide data to SEDAR and states to support stock assessments
- Liaison between state and federal agencies on fishery dependent data collection issues
- More Information: Gregg Bray, gbray@gsmfc.org, 228-875-5912



Interjurisdictional Fisheries Program (IJF)

- The IJF Program is one of the oldest cooperative state/federal management efforts.
 - Originated from the Commercial Fisheries Research and Development Act of 1965 (P.L. 88-309) and the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Act (IFA) of 1986, as amended (Title III, P.L. 99-659).
- IFA funding supports
 - state monitoring and assessment programs and other research efforts to gauge the health of various commercially and recreationally important fish stocks and
 - development of the Commission's management profiles and FMPs which aid the states in maintaining sustainable fishery stocks into the future.
- Commission IJF funds provide additional support to the states for otherwise unfunded data collection and research through the State Research Funding (SuRF) program.
- More Information: Steve VanderKooy, svanderkooy@gsmfc.org, 228-875-5912



Aquaculture Program

- In 2016, the Gulf Commission began a cooperative effort with NOAA's Office of Aquaculture to develop and manage a small grants program to address the technical and regulatory opportunities and challenges of aquaculture in the Gulf region.
 - Off-bottom Oysters (2016 and 2017)
 - Regional Oyster Consortium (2018-present)
 - Aquaculture Pilots (2017-present)
 - Integrated Multi-Trophic Aquaculture (IMTA) (2021-present)
- To date, the program has provided a total of \$8.06M for research and development of aquaculture in the Gulf of Mexico.
- A new round of Pilot projects is currently being solicited with another \$600,000 available for one-year small grants.
- More Information: Steve VanderKooy, svanderkooy@gsmfc.org, 228-875-5912



Sport Fish Restoration Program

- Provides coordination and communication between the five Gulf State's Artificial Reef Programs through annual meetings of the GSMFC Technical Coordinating Committee's Artificial Reef Subcommittee.
 - Address issues related to artificial reef research, development, and management across the region. This Subcommittee also meets jointly with the ASMFC's Artificial Reef Subcommittee to address national issues.
- Gulf Artificial Reef Monitoring and Assessment Program (GARMAP) Pilot Study
 - Collect year-round water quality data off the coast of Mississippi
 - assess seasonal changes in water quality
 - determine the prevalence and duration of low dissolved oxygen events.
 - goal is to develop a program that will provide standardized baseline data for artificial reefs across the Gulf of Mexico.
- More Information: James Ballard, jballard@gsmfc.org, 228-875-5912



Aquatic Nuisance Species Program (ANS)

- Facilitate coordination and communication between the eight coastal states from Texas to North Carolina through biannual meetings of the Gulf and South Atlantic Regional Panel (GSARP) on Aquatic Invasive Species, under the National Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force (ANSTF). The GSARP is authorized by the Non-Indigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990.
- The GSMFC provides administrative support for the GSARP to help it achieve its directives. The program coordinator also serves as a voting member of the ANSTF.
- Provides administrative support for all non-federal projects that are selected for funding under the Region 4 USFWS AIS Small Grants Program. Over the last seven years of this program, it has been able to fund 43 projects totaling over \$1,000,000.
- More Information: James Ballard, jballard@gsmfc.org, 228-875-5912



Fisheries Disaster Programs

Return 'Em Right

Return 'Em Right - collecting data and monitoring the use of descending devices and other release practices used by Gulf of Mexico reef fish anglers

- Human dimensions survey: baseline of current angling beliefs and behaviors
 - Research: investigating survival and depredation for priority reef fish species.
 - Monitoring: began collecting fishery-dependent and -independent data from private and for-hire sectors
 - Outreach & education/Gear distribution: education module providing gear packages to use to help reef fish survive being released.
- More Information: Charlie Robertson, crobertson@gsmfc.org, 228-875-5912



Fisheries Disaster Programs

CARES

CARES- \$600 million in fisheries assistance funding provided to states, Tribes, and territories with coastal and marine fishery participants who were negatively affected by COVID–19.

CARES Act 1 provided roughly \$29M

CARES Act 2 provided roughly \$26M

- More Information: Jeff Rester, jrester@gsmfc.org, 228-875-5912



Questions?

