# Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission Liaison Report

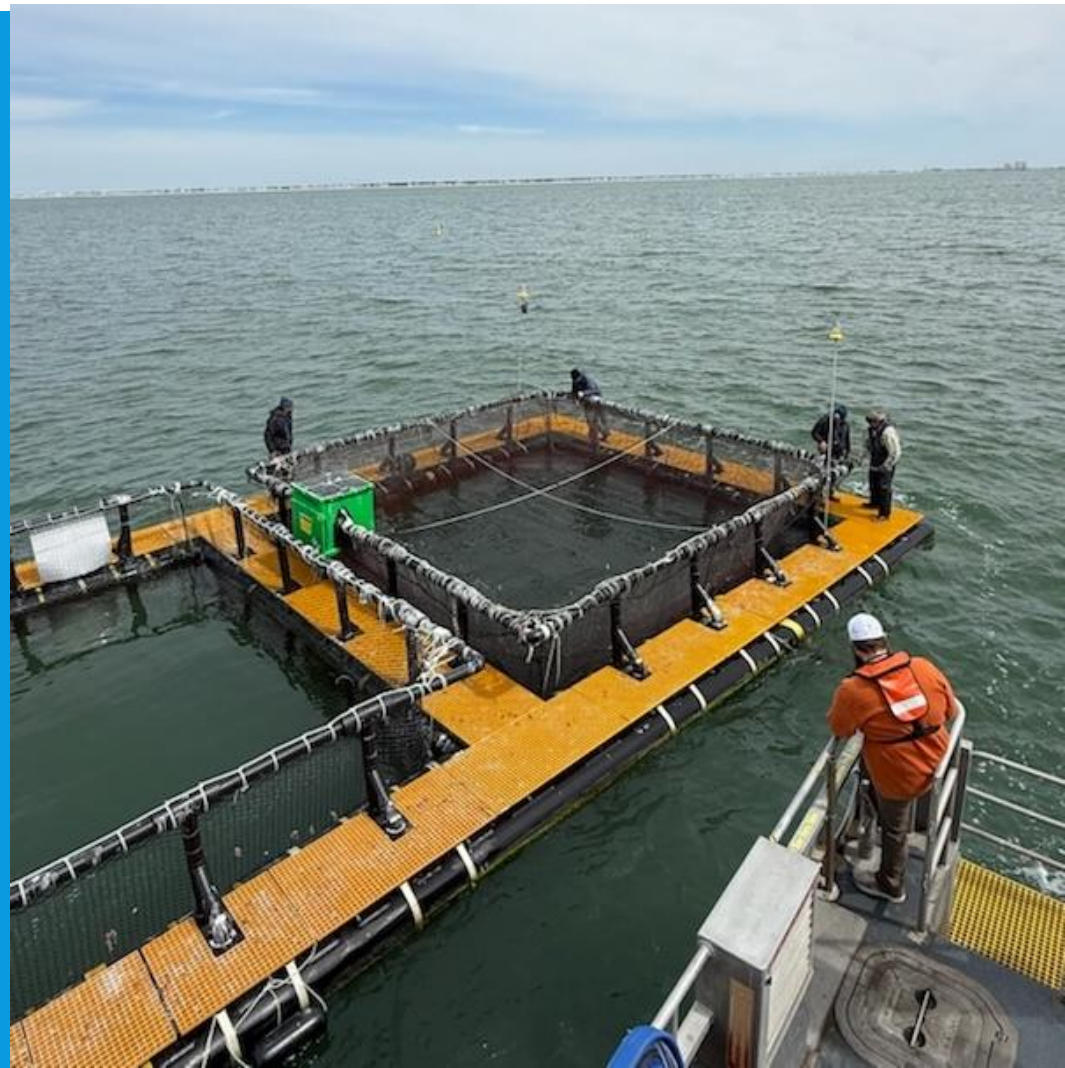
**Gulf Council Meeting**
**Mobile, Alabama**

# 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 reef fish anglers
  - Nearly 50,000 Gulf reef fish anglers trained to use descending devices and other release tools
  - Planning has begun for the next steps of Return ‘Em Right

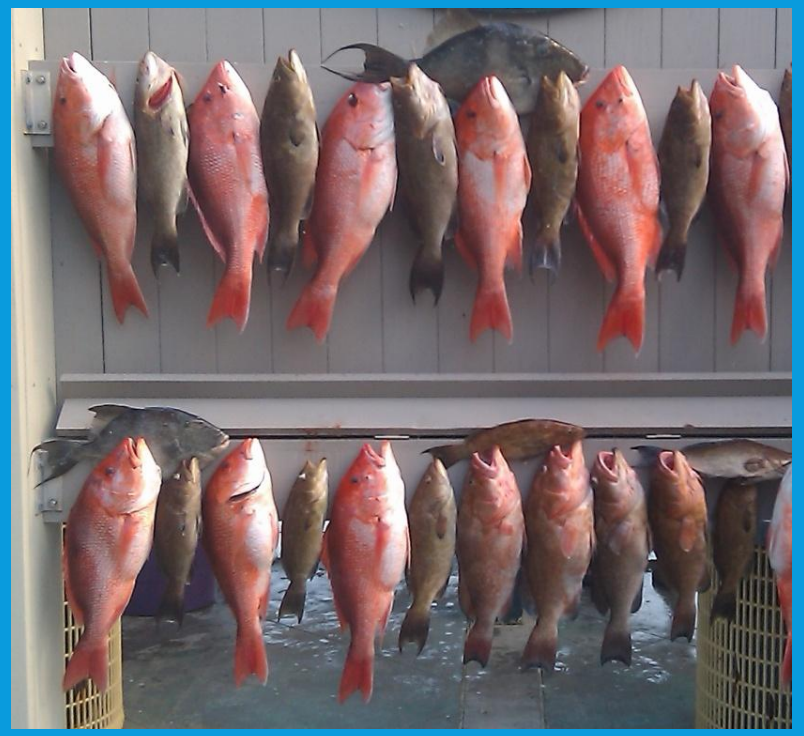
# INTEGRATED MULTI-TROPHIC AQUACULTURE (IMTA) DEMONSTRATION PROJECT

- The IMTA project is testing the Aquafort technology in the Gulf in state waters
- The site is two miles off Fort Morgan, Alabama and includes two 20X20ft nets that extend down 15ft.
- Site has been deployed and fish (red drum), oysters (Eastern) and seaweed (*Gracilaria*) are in the pens



# INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS AGREEMENT

- Work focused on several areas
  - Improve state and commission data management systems
  - Develop site to centralize state recreational data at GSMFC
    - System will be live on April 15th
  - Red snapper recreational research
    - Projects (7) have been awarded and work has begun
    - Results should be available in late 2027
  - At-sea sampling in Louisiana and Texas



# SOUTHEAST FISHERY OBSERVER PROGRAM

- Working with NOAA Fisheries to provide personnel support for the Southeast Fishery Observer Program (SEFOP)
- GSMFC is striving to play a more active role in SEFOP data collection such that these data could be beneficial for state stock assessments efforts

# GULF OF AMERICA MULTI-JURISDICTIONAL FINFISH RESEARCH

- Congress directed the NMFS to partner with the GSMFC to conduct fishery-independent research on data-poor multi-jurisdictional fish species in the Gulf (e.g. Cobia, Tripletail, Tarpon, and Gray Triggerfish)
- A grant was awarded to University of South Alabama consortium
- Work should begin this Spring and results should be available in late 2027/early 2028


QUESTIONS?
GULF STATES MARINE
FISHERIES COMMISSION