

2009 NOAA Fisheries State Marine Directors' Meeting

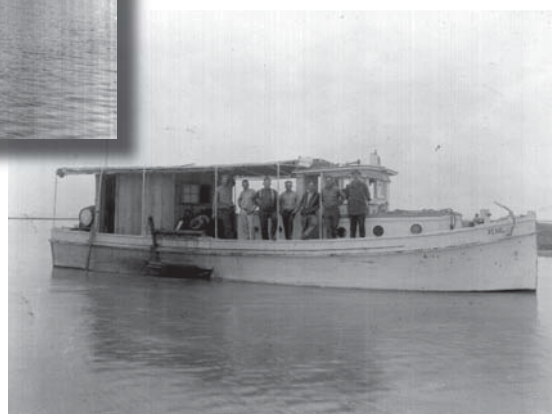
Report of Larry B. Simpson, Executive Director
Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission



*Tonging Oysters, Karankaway Bay, Texas.
Paul Galtsoff collection - NMFS*



*Shucking Houses, Rockport, Texas.
Paul Galtsoff collection - NMFS*



*Survey Boat "Pearl" in Texas
Paul Galtsoff collection - NMFS*

**September 29 – October 1, 2009
Hyatt Regency on the Riverwalk, San Antonio, Texas**

2009 NOAA Fisheries – State Marine Directors’ Meeting

Report of Larry B. Simpson, Executive Director Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission September 29 – October 1, 2009

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The Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission (GSMFC) was formed in 1949 through individual acts of the state legislatures of Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida and the consent of the U.S. Congress. The purpose of the GSMFC is to provide a forum and administrative mechanism to address interjurisdictional fisheries issues and programs. The GSMFC is, however, much more than the sum of its individual state members.

In the past 15 years, the GSMFC has proven its relevance to fisheries governance by significant increases in the scope and number of programs we manage. Our quasi-governmental status provides us an opportunity to serve our member states and federal agency partners in ways that reduce both overall program costs and bureaucratic, administrative burden. The unique position of the interstate marine fisheries commissions afford us the opportunity to work closely with state legislatures, state agencies, federal agencies, the U.S. Congress, and the myriad of constituency groups to achieve consensus on issues that are complicated and often contentious. We have a proven track record of success in fulfilling multi-state, state-federal program coordination needs, as evidenced by the program narratives included in this report.

GSMFC Current Activities – September 21, 2009

EMERGENCY DISASTER RECOVERY PROGRAM I

State Expenditures to Date

• Florida	\$ 1.3 M
• Alabama	\$16.7 M
• Mississippi	\$25.2 M
• Louisiana	\$23.2 M
• Texas	\$ 1.1 M
• Total	\$67.5 out of \$127.0 M (or 52%)

Gulf wide Categorical Expenditures to Date

• Oyster Recovery	\$33.2 M
• Shrimp and Shellfish Recovery	\$13.3 M
• Cooperative Research	\$20.0 M

Accomplishments

- Nearly 2,962 acres of public oyster grounds are being rehabilitated through cultch plants and oyster relays involving an estimated 143,000 sacks of seed oysters and 207,000 cubic yards of cultch.
- Rehabilitation of private oyster lease grounds
 - 3,400 acres of cultch materials
 - re-seeding 55,000 acres of private reefs with 107,000 sacks of oysters and the transplant or bedding of 1,500,000 sacks for grow out and future harvest.
- Over 11,000 derelict and abandoned crab traps removed from nearshore waters
 - Each participant received 50 “environmentally current” replacement traps and included
 - turtle excluder devices
 - escape rings
- 400 square miles of nearshore Louisiana waters were surveyed and cleaned of residual storm debris which impairs fishing efforts and navigation.
- 615 pyramid type and goliath artificial fishing reef structures were installed in offshore waters south of the Mississippi barrier islands along with numerous associated rubble structures and steel hull vessels.
- A total of 29 inshore/nearshore low-profile artificial fishing reefs covering nearly 290 acres of water bottom were installed along Mississippi coastal areas.
- Nearly 47,000 CPUE and stock recovery monitoring reports were received from area commercial and recreational (charter boat and guide boat) vessel operators or owners through the end of 2008.
- Mississippi has completed analysis on both shrimp and crab trip reports.

- An *Oyster Larvae Dispersal* study in Pensacola Bay and on a *Finfish Larvae Impact Study* based on sudden or drastic environmental changes that may be brought on by storm surges and related factors such as temperature and salinity changes.

EMERGENCY DISASTER RECOVERY PROGRAM II

State Expenditures to Date

• Florida	\$620,000
• Alabama	\$10.4 M
• Mississippi	\$12.4 M
• Louisiana	\$32.5 M
• Texas	\$ 0 (pending Ike recovery)
• Total	\$55.04 M out of \$84.0 M (or 69.0%)

Gulf wide Categorical Expenditures to Date

• Assistance to Business and Industry	\$16.1 M
• Assistance to Fishermen	\$37.5 M
• TED/BRD Compliance	\$ 1.5 M
• Product Marketing	\$370,000
• Seafood Testing	\$ 0.6 M

FISHERIES INFORMATION NETWORK (FIN)

- FIN - state-federal cooperative program to collect, manage, and disseminate data
- Consist of seven (7) jobs:
 - Coordination and administration of FIN activities
 - Collecting, Managing and Disseminating Marine Recreational Fisheries Data
 - Conduct of MRFSS survey – sampling for shore, for-hire, and private modes for catch estimates
 - For-hire telephone survey - 10% random sample of charter boat captains for fishing effort estimate for charter boat fishery
 - In 2008, states conducted almost 52,000 interviews and exceeded quota for all modes by 40% Gulf-wide
 - Head Boat Port Sampling in Texas and Florida
 - Sampling of catches and collection of catch reports and effort data for head boat fishery
 - In 2008, samplers conducted over 300 interviews, measured almost 10,000 fish and collection over 500 hard parts for a multitude of species
 - Gulf Menhaden Port Sampling
 - Sampling of gulf menhaden catches where samples are processed for size and age composition for use in coast-wide stock assessments
 - In 2008, four menhaden factories were active - Moss Point, MS, Empire, Abbeville, and Cameron, LA. About 40 purse-seine vessels fished for gulf menhaden and field agents collected almost 600 menhaden samples in 2008. Total purse-seine landings of gulf menhaden for reduction were 425,442 metric tons
 - Operation of FIN Data Management System (DMS)
 - Allows access to data collected under FIN

- System allows access to both confidential and non-confidential data
 - System contains commercial landings (1985-2009); recreational catch and effort estimates (1981-2007) and biological data (2002-2007)
 - Currently almost 23 million records in the system
 - Trip Ticket Program Implementation and Operation
 - Texas, Louisiana, Alabama and Florida are fully operational
 - Mississippi collecting trip-level data on oysters and finfish – working on implementing trip-level reporting for all commercial species.
 - Electronic reporting option
 - Allows for easier and more timely entry of data
 - Currently, over 450 dealers from Texas to Florida using system and this represents about 55% of commercial landings (excluding menhaden)
 - Biological Sampling of Commercial and Recreational Catches
 - Collection and processing of biological data from recreational and commercial fisheries
 - Primary target species include black drum, gag, gray snapper, gray triggerfish, greater amberjack, king mackerel, red drum, red grouper, red snapper, sheepshead, flounders (gulf & southern), spotted seatrout, striped mullet and vermilion snapper
 - In 2008, samplers collected almost 47,000 otoliths from over 90 species.
 - In 2010, cutting this task due to funding shortfall – creates large data gap
 - Data critical to stock assessment
 - Without data – makes stock assessment more difficult
- Funding issues
 - FIN has January 1st start date – however did not receive funding until April
 - Without holding 4th quarter payments to states, FIN could not have conducted business
 - Need to add funding for FIN into federal “Must spend” category for 2nd quarter (fiscal year) – need \$1.3M
 - SEAMAP and IJF need to be added as well – total of \$1.5M needed

This table provides a summary of the number of interviews conducted, by state, by mode.

STATE	SH	PC	PR	Total	x of Base Quota		
					SH	PC	PR
FLORIDA – EAST	4,054	1,319	9,779	15,152	1.31	3.72	1.43
FLORIDA - WEST	5,262	6,249	13,369	24,880	1.50	8.41	1.40
ALABAMA	909	579	1,136	2,624	1.40	2.56	1.05
LOUISIANA	947	738	5,237	6,922	1.32	2.54	1.50
MISSISSIPPI	597	350	1,267	2,214	1.51	2.12	1.44

This table presents the age composition of the gulf menhaden biostatistical samples by port.

AGE	MOSS POINT, MS		EMPIRE, LA		ABBEVILLE, LA		CAMERON, LA		ALL	
	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%	NUMBER	%
1	67	9	218	19	312	20	561	49	1158	25
2	656	85	786	69	1209	76	575	50	3226	69
3+	51	6	142	12	63	4	19	1	275	6
ALL	774		1146		1584		1155		4659	

This table shows the number of hard parts collected for the priority species by state.

PRIMARY SPECIES	FL		AL		MS		LA		TX		TOT
	COMM	REC	COMM	REC	COMM	REC	COMM	REC	COMM	REC	
BLACK DRUM	-	12	-	-	-	23	737	459	83	72	1,386
FLOUNDERS	104	86	65	49	264	153	183	701	257	110	1,972
GAG	-	446	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	446
GRAY SNAPPER	834	868	-	-	6	-	39	513	-	88	2,348
GRAY TRIGGERFISH	73	218	7	20	-	-	36	161	-	37	552
GREATER AMBERJACK	9	29	-	6	2	-	2	211	-	-	259
KING MACKEREL	23	167	4	14	-	-	97	39	-	304	648
RED DRUM	-	417	-	37	-	21	-	-	-	540	1,015
RED GROUPER	-	184	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	184
RED SNAPPER	435	385	123	215	50	2	156	614	370	212	2,562
SHEEPSHEAD	-	110	41	36	186	29	742	570	-	25	1,739
SPOTTED SEATROUT	1,205	619	432	127	26	58	725	-	-	914	4,106
VERMILION SNAPPER	173	542	49	57	-	-	80	50	77	454	1,482
TOTAL	2,856	4,083	721	561	534	286	2,797	3,318	787	2,756	18,699

This table provides an overview of the data that are currently loaded in FIN DMS.

STATE	COUNT	YEARS	LAST UPDATED
COMMERCIAL LANDINGS			
FLORIDA	15,990,208	1985 - 2008	26-FEB-09
ALABAMA	452,010	1985 - 2009	30-JAN-09
MISSISSIPPI	118,256	1985 - 2008	18-FEB-09
LOUISIANA	4,623,632	1985 - 2009	23-MAR-09
TEXAS	194,560	1985 - 2008	17-MAR-09
PUERTO RICO	1,662,378	1985 - 2007	2007
RECREATIONAL CATCH ESTIMATES			
FLORIDA		1981 - 2007	30-MAY-07
ALABAMA		1981 - 2007	30-MAY-07
MISSISSIPPI		1981 - 2007	30-MAY-07
LOUISIANA		1981 - 2007	30-MAY-07
TEXAS		1983 - 2006	30MAY07
PUERTO RICO		2000 - 2007	30-MAY-07
RECREATIONAL EFFORT ESTIMATES			
FLORIDA		1982 - 2007	10-JAN-08
ALABAMA		1982 - 2007	10-JAN-08
MISSISSIPPI		1982 - 2007	10-JAN-08
LOUISIANA		1982 - 2007	10-JAN-08
TEXAS		-	-
PUERTO RICO		-	-
BIOLOGICAL DATA			
FLORIDA	794	2003 - 2005	11-OCT-07
ALABAMA	23,812	2002 - 2007	15-MAY-08
MISSISSIPPI	3,604	2002 - 2007	04-NOV-08
LOUISIANA	50,557	2002 - 2007	10-DEC-08
TEXAS	23,260	2002 - 2007	07-OCT-08

Please note that for the commercial data, the record count roughly represents the number of trips by state and for the biological data, the counts represents the total number of hard parts collected by state.

HABITAT

- The Commission's Habitat Subcommittee along with the Artificial Reef Subcommittee has been developing a best management practices document for inshore artificial reefs in bays and estuaries.
- The Commission's MARFIN sponsored Bottom Mapping Project for the Gulf of Mexico was completed in March. The database contains approximately 275,000 seabed observations characterizing the seabed of the Gulf of Mexico.
- The Commission's Aquaculture project will continue throughout 2009. While the USM Gulf Coast Research Laboratory has been conducting an aquaculture planning exercise and developing a copepod nauplii production system, the Commission has been creating a geographic

information system (GIS) model on suitable areas for siting aquaculture facilities in the Gulf of Mexico. The final report for the GIS model is currently being written.

SEAMAP

- In 2009, SEAMAP begins its 28th year of fishery independent sampling. So far this year, SEAMAP has conducted a Winter Shrimp/Groundfish Survey, a Winter Plankton Survey, a Spring Plankton Survey, and begun their Inshore Longline Survey.
- In FY2009, SEAMAP is funded at \$ 5.098 million for all three components. This is an increase of approximately \$700,000 over FY2008 funding levels. In the Gulf of Mexico, the increased funding will be used to expand the current Inshore Longline Survey and begin a new longline survey for reefish off Florida.
- Current SEAMAP surveys include a Winter, Summer, and Fall Shrimp/Groundfish Survey; a Winter, Spring, and Fall Plankton Survey; a Reefish Survey; an Inshore Longline Survey; and inshore fishery independent sampling.
- The Commission has been handling SEAMAP data management responsibilities for the Gulf of Mexico since 2008. Currently the SEAMAP database contains over 27 years of fishery independent data on the Gulf of Mexico. The Commission is also working on providing access to the database over the Internet.

INTERJURISDICTIONAL FISHERIES

All IJF activities were put on hold or severely reduced due to a lack of funding from NOAA the first half of 2009.

Oyster FMP Revision

Due to a long delay in funding for IJF, the Oyster TTF did not meet at all in early 2009 and had their only meeting in September. In lieu of travel and unfunded meeting costs, the TTF worked since the first of the year utilizing a web-based format. Three webinars were conducted in January, February, and June of this year to address specific sections needing work. It was anticipated that the TTF would have a complete draft revision by the end of 2008, but without IJF funding until June, the schedule has been shifted to a complete draft by the end of 2009. The retirement from the AMRD of the Alabama Representative on the TTF left a vacancy that was only recently filled and the FWC representative has been replaced, following a move this past summer to the NOAA/SERO.

Dr. Rich Fulford, USM/GCRL, has spent some time over the summer running an analysis of the Lake Calcasieu oyster data as a “proof-of-concept” that surplus production models, used successfully in the Chesapeake, could be used here. The September TTF meeting included a half day discussion of the initial results from that effort. Dr. Fulford is looking for a little more information to tune his model, but the results so far are encouraging. While most of the region does not have the appropriate types of data required by the models, the hope is that the recommendations in the FMP could encourage slight modifications to the current data collection programs and additional data collection protocols where necessary.

Arenarius Profile

The *Arenarius* TTF did not meet until August 2009, due to the IJF funding issue. The setback, identified late last year, to the development of a single species profile was the realization that a large component of the commercial fishery is actually a two species complex. The TTF has incorporated the additional information on the biology and habitat requirements for silver seatrout as well as sand seatrout, which has complicated the Profile slightly. The TTF is still highly motivated and moving the drafting process forward. It is hoped that the profile could be completed by late spring of 2010, pending no continued funding issues.

Crab Subcommittee

The Crab Subcommittee is continuing to provide data to Butch Pellegrin at NOAA with landings data in their effort to produce a regional stock assessment using surplus production models. There is still no outside funding for the lipofuscin work proposed in the Gulf to age hatchery and wild caught blue crabs, but the Subcommittee continues to look for funding opportunities.

Law Enforcement Committee

In accordance with *The Gulf of Mexico Cooperative Law Enforcement Strategic Plan*, the GSMFC Law Enforcement Committee continued to work toward regional enforcement goals. In addition, the LEC continues to support the on-going recovery efforts through enforcement and support to the EDRP program. JEAs continue to drive activities throughout the Gulf and the committee holds monthly conference calls to keep communications open and to share information. The publication of the '*Officer's Pocket Field Guide*' for rules and regulations across the five Gulf States was met with overwhelming approval by the LEC. The first waterproof printing included 1000 copies which were quickly distributed to every fisheries officer in the Gulf. Additional paper copies were generated for the inland officers in Texas. In addition, the long standing 'red cover' *Law Summary* was produced in an electronic only format and is available on the GSMFC website for download.

Otolith Manual

In 2003, the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission published the first edition of *A Practical Handbook for Determining the Ages of Gulf of Mexico Fishes*. This manual utilizes standardized protocols and techniques to facilitate consistent, quality age determination of exploited Gulf of Mexico fishes. The *Second Edition* of the manual includes several additional species for which data are currently being collected under the Gulf's Fisheries Information Network (FIN) Program. Those FIN species have been identified for stock assessment in NOAA's Southeast Data Assessment Review (SEDAR) process in the near future. Although we emphasize the use of otolith sections for age determinations, we also provide information on alternative processing and ageing techniques for particular species when appropriate including scales, fin rays, and fin spines. The manual should serve as a valuable training tool for new laboratory personnel and as a guide for ageing species of common interest to the Gulf States. The intent of this document is to be a dynamic resource, one that changes as species-specific processing techniques are developed. Standardization of techniques is a cornerstone of fisheries science, and we believe

that this manual will facilitate the adoption of these techniques and standards for the same and similar species well beyond the Gulf region and will provide comparable information necessary for age structured stock assessments both at state and regional levels.

The IJF Coordinator attended and presented the *Second Edition* at the 4th International Otolith Conference in Monterey, California in August. The manual was well received and 240 CD copies of the *Second Edition* were distributed. Hardcopies in three-ring binders have been generated and distributed to the contributing authors and each of the state marine agencies age-and-growth laboratories. The manual is available as a download from the GSMFC website as well.

Publications

The IJF Staff has almost completed the *2008 Annual Report of the GSMFC* and is only waiting the Audit Report at this time. The *2008 License and Fees* was completed, printed in house, and distributed. It, along with all the GSMFC publications, minutes, and past resolutions are available on-line at the Commission website, or can be reprinted and distributed from the Commission office.

AQUATIC NUISANCE SPECIES PROJECT

High-Priority and/or Emerging Regional Issues

- Zebra Mussel found in Texas Reservoir
On April 3, the local Texas Parks and Wildlife Department District Supervisor received a call informing him that a live zebra mussel was recovered from a communications line beneath a boathouse between Denison Dam and Eisenhower State Park. The local marinas have been warned to be on the lookout for these mussels. The TPWD stopped basin to basin water transfer and have started a monitoring program.
- Lion Fish on East Coast
Lion fish sightings along the east coast have skyrocketed over the last decade. It's range is expanding and recent research indicates that they are reaching densities four times higher than in their native range and are preying heavily on native reef fish. With no predators to slow them down it seems that it is only a matter of time before lion fish invade the rest of the GSARP states.
- Giant Salvinia in Texas and Louisiana
Currently there are ~600 acres on Lake Conroe, 600-700 acres on Lake Caddo, and ~4,200 acres on Toledo Bend Reservoir. They are being controlled using a combination of chemical and biological controls and Texas will be testing a new herbicide (Galeon). There were numerous reports of giant salvinia on boat trailers coming in for the McDonald's Big Bass Splash Tournament on Sam Rayburn Reservoir. Evidence of plants on boat trailers in parking lots suggested the plant's origin. Law enforcement personnel were alerted to the situation since it is illegal to transport prohibited aquatic plant species on boat trailers in Texas.
- North America Brown Tree Snake Control Team (NABTSCT)
The new military base on Guam poses new threat of BTS introduction to the continental US.
- Alternative Funding Sources
The GSARP is exploring other funding possibilities to secure funds for ANS demonstration projects in our region.

Recent ANS Panel activities

- The Rat Lung Worm Study was Completed
The nonindigenous apple snail *Pomacea insularum* is rapidly spreading through the Southeastern United States which can be a host to the rat lungworm parasite (*Angiostrongylus cantonensis*), the cause of eosinophilic meningitis in humans who consume the infected mollusks. A DNA-based detection assay was used to test nonindigenous apple snails for the rat lungworm parasite in Louisiana, Texas, Mississippi and Florida. Only apple snails obtained from a canal in New Orleans, LA, tested positive for the parasite.
- Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers Brochures
The GSARP funded the printing of 10,500 “Help Stop Aquatic Hitchhikers” brochures. These brochures highlight some of the most problematic aquatic invasive species in the GSARP states and outline ways in which environmental user groups (boaters, anglers, hunters, etc.) can help stop the spread of them. At the last meeting in April 2009, approximately 84,000 brochures were distributed to the eight member states and they will be reporting the impact of the distribution at the upcoming meeting in November.
- Safety and Emergency Protocols for Research Institutions
At the GSARP’s fall 2008 meeting an ad hoc workgroup was established to develop a document outlining emergency protocols for research institutions that are working with alien or invasive aquatic species and drafted the *Safety and Emergency Protocols for Research Institutions in the Gulf and South Atlantic States to Prevent the Release of Alien and Invasive Aquatic Species*.
- Rapid Response Plan
The GSARP formed an ad hoc workgroup to rework our current rough draft Rapid Response Plan into a universal final plan, which can be used as a guide in any of our member states to address a variety of emerging AIS issues. A revised plan has been produced and sent out to the member states for review and will be discussed at the upcoming meeting in November.
- Information Management Work Group
The Program Coordinator with help from the GSMFC’s System Administrator, has drafted a new GSARP website that will be presented to the panel at the next meeting in November. At the upcoming meeting, the Program Coordinator will work with the Information Management Work Group to update the text on the new website.
- GSARP Fall 2009 Meeting
The fall meeting will be held in Raleigh, North Carolina November 10-11, 2009.
- State Aquatic Nuisance Species Plans
 - Florida and Louisiana have completed plans and are actively implementing them.
 - Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina have finished plans that are up for approval by the ANSTF.
 - Mississippi and Texas will soon submit final drafts of their plans to the ANSTF.
 - North Carolina has started discussions about getting a plan together.

SPORT FISH RESTORATION PROJECT

General Coordination

- The Program Coordinator continues to provide general coordination for the TCC Artificial Reef Subcommittee and to facilitate work between the TCC Artificial Reef Subcommittee and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Artificial Reef Subcommittee.
- This coordination provides the opportunity to address issues of national scope and importance, such as drafting the National Artificial Reef Plan and developing a partnership with the Department of the Navy and the Maritime Administration for the distribution of decommissioned ships for artificial reef development.

Proposed Federal Ship Reefing Program

- A letter was sent by the GSMFC and the Artificial Reef Subcommittee to the Secretary of Transportation (for MARAD) and the Secretary of the Navy with the following requests:
 - Maintain responsibility for cleaning and preparing all donated ships to EPA-specifications as outlined in “*National Guidance: Best Management Practices for Preparing Vessels Intended to Create Artificial Reefs*”.
 - Maintain responsibility for ship towing, and ensure that they are sunk in a safe manner on permitted reef sites as delineated in appropriate permits.
 - Maintain title to, and liability for, donated ships until such time as they are satisfactorily sunk on permitted artificial reef sites.
 - Ensure that ships are provided to all interested states in as equitable a manner as possible.
- The Navy responded indicating they were unable to meet the requests presented and MARAD has not responded.

Invasive Species Activities

- The Program Coordinator continues to work in conjunction with the National Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force (ANSTF) to determine appropriate actions and roles for the GSMFC and its member states in addressing invasive species issues.
- In addition, the GSMFC provides administration for and participates in the Gulf and South Atlantic Regional Panel on Aquatic Invasive Species (GSARP).
- The Program Coordinator continues to work on several aquatic invasive species issues; including the development of a list of research priorities, the refinement of the strategic plan for the GSARP and trying to secure outside funding for aquatic invasive species demonstration projects.

GULF OF MEXICO FISHERIES ECONOMICS PROGRAM

- The economic program was formed in July of 2008 in an effort to improve economic data collection and management of the recreational and commercial fisheries throughout the Southeast Region.
- The program monitors the economic performance of the fisheries of the Gulf and assesses the economic impacts of these fisheries on the local and regional economy.
- The program is the first of its type to collect economic data and conduct economic research, analysis, and outreach throughout the Gulf of Mexico.
- Funding for this program is only guaranteed for 5 years, which ends in 2013.
- In order to continue the initiatives currently being established and developed, additional funding is needed. Approximately \$500,000 annually would support the goals of the program each year. Potentially, a total of \$1,500,000 annually would support an economic program at each of the three Interstate Marine Fisheries Commissions.
- State Directors and Administrators, Commissioners, and NMFS Division Chiefs have expressed interest and support for the development of a permanent Gulf economic program. The Administrator of NOAA also finds great value in economic information when policy making decisions take place.

Program Components

The program is divided into three components: economic data collection, economic research and analysis, and economic outreach and extension.

Economic Data Collection

- *Inshore Shrimp Fleet Economic Survey (2009)*
 - Collecting economic data throughout the Gulf to determine the economic performance and the economic impact of the inshore shrimp fleet to the local and regional economy.
- *Fishing Related Businesses Economic Survey (2010)*
 - Collecting economic data throughout the Gulf to assess the economic performance and contributions of fishing-related shoreside firms to local and regional economies, and to evaluate the potential economic impacts on these firms from fishery management actions.
- *Marine Angler Recreational Fishery Economic Survey (2011)*
 - Assessing the size of the marine recreational fishing industry throughout the Gulf in terms of saltwater anglers' expenditures' from fishing trips and further understanding how these expenditures translate into jobs and sales for local and regional economies.
- *Marine Recreational Use Economic Survey (2011)*
 - Collecting expenditure data that include access value data, demographics, and attitudinal information for marine recreational activities other than marine angling. The economic contribution of these activities will also be evaluated in order to determine the jobs and sales supported by this industry throughout the Gulf.

Research and Analysis

- *Fuel Prices and Marine Recreational Angler Effort (2009)*
 - Understanding the impact that fuel prices have on marine recreational angler effort (i.e. number of trips) and how it relates to the area fished (e.g. state or federal waters) and the mode of fishing (e.g. shore, charter, or for-hire) that anglers are engaged in.
- *Economic Impact Analysis (Ongoing)*
 - Trying to obtain a better understanding of the economic contribution that specific fishing industries studied within the economic data collection component of the program have on the local and regional economies of the Gulf. This includes taxes, employment, income, value-added, and sales generated from a particular Gulf fishery.

Outreach and Extension

- *Gulf States Fisheries Economic Information Portal (Ongoing)*
 - A web-based tool that will contain fisheries economic literatures resources, final reports, and published literature for a variety of different types of fisheries economic information from throughout the Gulf.
- *Gulf States Fisheries Economics Workshop (Ongoing)*
 - An initiative that is aimed at promoting communication, coordination, and professional development among fisheries economists through the Gulf. This meeting occurs on an annual basis in combination with the spring annual meeting of the Commission.



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