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GULF STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT
1949 - 50

To the
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES

And to the

GOVERNORS AND LEGISLATORS

of

**ALABAMA
FLORIDA
LOUISIANA
MISSISSIPPI
TEXAS**

**FIRST ANNUAL REPORT (1949-50) OF THE
GULF STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION**

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of

**ALABAMA
FLORIDA
LOUISIANA
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TEXAS**

**Presented in compliance with the terms of the
Compact and the state enabling acts creating
such commission and Public Law 66-81st Con-
gress assenting thereto.**

Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission

312 Audubon Building

New Orleans 16, Louisiana

GULF STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

ROSTER—OCTOBER 1950

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HOWARD D. DODGEN
Vice-Chairman

W. DUDLEY GUNN—Secretary-Treasurer
BEULAH G. MIKESELL—Office Secretary

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State of Texas, Angleton, Texas

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Order of listing—Administrator—Legislator—Governor's
Appointee

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BERT E. THOMAS vice JAMES H. FAULKNER

WALTER J. GEX vice NAIF JORDAN

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IN RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTING THIS FIRST ANNUAL REPORT THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE GULF STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION WISH TO EXPRESS THEIR MOST SINCERE GRATITUDE TO THE VARIOUS CONTRIBUTING AGENCIES OF THE FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS AND STATE SPONSORED ORGANIZATIONS, INCLUDING THE DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, OFFICE OF THE UNDER SECRETARY, THE CONSERVATION DEPARTMENTS OF THE COMPACTED STATES, THE COMMISSION ADVISORY COMMITTEES, THE COUNCIL OF STATE GOVERNMENTS, THE ATLANTIC STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION AND THE PACIFIC MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION. THIS ACKNOWLEDGMENT IS ALSO EXTENDED TO THE NATIONAL FISHERIES INSTITUTE, THE NATIONAL CANNERS ASSOCIATION, THE NATIONAL SHRIMP CANNERS AND PACKERS ASSOCIATION, THE OYSTER INSTITUTE OF NORTH AMERICA AND THE MAGAZINES, NEWSPAPERS AND PRESS ASSOCIATIONS SERVING THE GULF AREA. FURTHER ACKNOWLEDGMENT IS MADE OF THE VALUED AND WHOLEHEARTED COOPERATION OF ALL SEGMENTS OF THE FISHING INDUSTRY ON THE GULF WHO HAVE SO GENEROUSLY CONTRIBUTED TO THE SUCCESSFUL INITIAL OPERATING YEAR OF THE COMMISSION.

BERT E. THOMAS, Chairman

HOWARD D. DODGEN, Vice-Chairman

W. DUDLEY GUNN, Secretary-Treasurer

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

PRE-COMPACT ACTIVITIES (Resume)

During the late war, the fishing industry of the Gulf established an enviable record of production. With the coming of the peace, more time was to become available for activities in the fields of exploratory fishing and marine biological research and for developing sound interstate legislation for the long-run good of the industry and the peoples served by the industry.

It was in May of 1946, at an exploratory intercoastal fisheries conference in Washington, that the need for a Gulf states compact was discussed and definitely decided to be essential to the development and proper utilization of the Gulf fisheries. The Council of State Governments was requested to handle all matters requisite to the activation of a fisheries compact between the states of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas.

In response to a call by the Council of State Governments, state conservation delegates and others interested in the fisheries of the Gulf, met in New Orleans October 10th, 1946 to initiate plans for the establishing of a Gulf Fisheries Commission.

Still exploring into the possibility for concentrated effort through interstate cooperation, state conservation delegates, together with state legislators and representatives of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, conferred again in New Orleans on December 5th and 6th, 1946. A tentative draft compact was adopted at this meeting and a Continuing Conference Committee, with one delegate from each of the five Gulf states, was appointed.

Some four months later, April 10th and 11th of 1947, representatives from the Gulf States held a third meeting at New Orleans to take final action on the draft of the compact which was prepared at the December conference. This meeting was attended by legislators, attorneys general, representatives of conservation agencies, commissions on interstate cooperation and fishing interests. The result of this conference was that of endorsing a final draft compact and recommending it for approval by the interested Gulf States and the Congress. The life of the Continuing Con-

ference Committee was at this meeting extended until such time as the compact commission was to be established.

Subsequent meetings followed at New Orleans, Edgewater Park and Montgomery. The principal concern of the conferees at these meetings was that of working out the innumerable details of the proposed compact.

The Gulf States Marine Fisheries Compact was ratified as Public Law 66 of the 81st Congress and approved by the President on the 19th day of May 1949 three years to the month from the mentioned exploratory intercoastal fisheries conference at Washington. Just one week thereafter the Continuing Conference Committee on Arrangements met at Montgomery to set a date and meeting place for the formal signing of the compact by the several states.

COMPACT ACTIVITIES (Resume)

REGULAR MEETING—MOBILE, ALABAMA— JULY 16, 1949.

The first scheduled meeting of the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission was at Mobile on July 16th, 1949, at which meeting the states of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana and Texas became parties to the Compact. Mississippi was destined to enter the Compact in January 1950, following the necessary enabling legislation. However, Mississippi representatives attended all meetings prior to that state becoming party to the Compact and enjoyed all privileges accorded representatives of member states. Further business conducted at the meeting included the electing of a Chairman and a Vice-Chairman, and preliminary work was accomplished in matters of administration, organization and financing.

REGULAR MEETING—HOUSTON, TEXAS— OCTOBER 13-14, 1949.

At the next regular meeting, which was held at Houston, October 13th and 14th, 1949, the Commission concerned itself principally with the completing of the organization, including the appointing of a Secretary-Treasurer, the selecting of a city for the

permanent headquarters of the Commission, the designating of an official depository and making initial observations into the matter of over-all marine investigations.

**SPECIAL MEETING—MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA—
NOVEMBER 15-18, 1949.**

The interest of the federal government in developing the fisheries of the Gulf of Mexico was further evidenced in the passage of Public Law 163—81st Congress, which legislation transferred from the Reconstruction Finance Corporation to the Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service the motor powered trawlers Oregon and Alaska. Legislation was passed making available to the Fish and Wildlife Service \$83,000.00 for exploratory fishing activities and \$51,000.00 for fishery biological research. The Service designated the Oregon for fisheries explorations and the Alaska for research activities.

It was the suggestion of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service that the Commission Committee to Correlate Research and Exploratory Data meet with representatives of that federal agency at the Gulf and Caribbean Institute, Miami Beach, November 15th through 18th. The meeting was held as suggested and further details in connection with the vessels were made available to the Commission conferees.

**SPECIAL MEETING—NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA—
JANUARY 6, 1950.**

A special meeting of the Commissioners and Commission biologists and attorneys was held at New Orleans on January 6th, 1950. The purpose of this special meeting was to discuss possible initial commercial exploratory fishing endeavors to be undertaken by the Oregon.

**REGULAR MEETING—TAMPA, FLORIDA—
JANUARY 19-20, 1950.**

Following the Houston conference by three months, the next regular meeting of the Commission was held at Tampa on January 19th and 20th, 1950. The Commission, in cooperation with the Fish and Wildlife Service and representatives of the fishing industry, developed and adopted an initial program of Gulf exploratory commercial fishing. The program was initiated in April,

following repair and conversion of the motor vessel Oregon and the establishing of the Service's Exploratory Fishing and Gear Development Section offices at Pascagoula. Also, at the Tampa meeting, the Commission adopted a resolution urging the Congress to appropriate sufficient funds for continuing scientific research at the Fish and Wildlife Service Pensacola laboratory. Necessary funds have been provided and the Pensacola laboratory is continuing its important research activities. Realizing the importance of landing records to the proper utilization of the fisheries of the Gulf, the Commissioners adopted a resolution at the Tampa meeting petitioning the commissions of the several member states to assist and aid in the collection of statistical information and data regarding the quantity and species of fish and marine life taken from the waters of the several states and, to make such statistical information available to the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission and to the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. With the assistance of the Service and industry, the state commissions have complied with this request and, additionally, the states of Florida and Alabama, in cooperation with the Service, are now making available a monthly summary of landing records similar in make-up to that which Texas was already publishing at the time the resolution was adopted. It was also at the Tampa meeting that the Commission approved the adoption by the Congress of the Resolution S.1545, introduced by Senator McCarran on behalf of himself and thirty other Senators, for quit-claiming to the five Gulf States full title and ownership in and to all waters and tidelands within their respective borders, as well as the aquatic and marine life and the products of such waters. In this same resolution the Commission went on record as being opposed to the transfer of such title to the federal government, as contained in Resolution S.923, introduced by Senator O'Mahoney.

**REGULAR MEETING—BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI—
APRIL 14-15, 1950.**

Continuing with the plan of holding regular quarterly meetings during the first year of operation, the next regular Commission meeting was held at Biloxi, April 14th and 15th. The primary objective of this meeting was to develop a Gulf biological research program. The biologists of the Commission, working with the biologists of the Fish and Wildlife Service, recommended

both a long and a short range program and their recommendations, after due consideration, were approved by the Commission. Due to the extensive repairs and conversion necessary in the case of the motor vessel Alaska, it was learned at this meeting that it would probably be fall of 1950 before the vessel could become active in the research program. At the Biloxi meeting the Commission adopted a resolution designed to urge adoption of S.2801 Green, International Conference of the Northwest Atlantic, in substantially the form originally presented to the Senate Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, with emphasis on that part of the Bill relating to fishery jurisdiction of the states and the preservation of the principle of state representation on the International Commission. At the Houston meeting of the Commission, which has been previously mentioned as having taken place in October of forty-nine, a Committee composed of attorneys of the conservation departments of the several states was appointed. This Committee, known as the Committee to Correlate Fisheries Laws, had, since that time, been studying the laws of the states and it was decided by the Commissioners at Biloxi that, at the next regular meeting of the Commission, priority would be given the matter of developing a program of joint interstate fisheries laws, particularly, those concerning the important shrimp fishery.

**REGULAR MEETING—MOBILE, ALABAMA—
JULY 20-21, 1950.**

The next regular conference of the Commission was held at Mobile July 20th and 21st, 1950, just a few days over a year from the signing of the compact in the same city. It was the decision of the Commissioners at this meeting that insufficient scientific background had been accumulated to draft regulations common to the five Gulf States and it was decided that a special meeting of scientists and attorneys be held in New Orleans on August 17th and 18th to continue the study with a view of preparing a suggested draft for presentation to the Commissioners at the annual meeting. Coming up for discussion at the Mobile meeting was the need for technological investigations on the Gulf. The Commission adopted a resolution setting out the urgent need for such investigations and requested that the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service give consideration to the assigning of a full time technologist to work exclusively in the Gulf area, and on problems

peculiar to the area, and that the technologist be furnished with an adequately equipped mobile laboratory. The Service has recognized the need for technical work on the Gulf and has assured the Commission such investigations will be undertaken at such time as funds and personnel are available. At this meeting the Commission also went on record in the form of a resolution to the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service as favoring the substituting of shrimp for shark in the initial program of exploratory commercial fishing and suggested that strenuous effort be made to locate offshore concentrations of shrimp in the waters of the Gulf contiguous to the coast lines of the five compacted states.

**SPECIAL MEETING—NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA—
AUGUST 17-18, 1950.**

At the special New Orleans meeting of the Commission Committee to Correlate Research and Exploratory Data and the Committee to Correlate Fisheries Laws, together with representatives of the Fish and Wildlife Service, a draft of proposed shrimp regulations was developed and approved for consideration at the annual meeting. Also, and in line with the establishing of joint regulations, a resolution was adopted at this committee meeting, for possible approval by the Commission at the annual conference, recommending to the Governors and Legislatures of the compacted states the enactment of laws permitting entry of the states, into reciprocal agreements with one another affecting shrimp, oysters and fish.

**FIRST ANNUAL MEETING—NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA—
OCTOBER 19-20, 1950.**

The first annual meeting of the Commission was held at New Orleans October 19th and 20th. The principal concern of the Commissioners at the annual meeting was to study the proposed regulations in the form as recommended by the biologists and, from industry, to learn its opinion of the economic effect the application of such regulations would have upon the shrimp industry. In executive session, the Commissioners decided additional information of a purely economic nature was desirable before uniform shrimp regulations would be recommended to the several states. Ranking next in importance at the conference was the matter of reciprocal agreements among the states. It was decided that this subject should likewise receive further consideration

from an economic standpoint. Both the suggested shrimp regulations and the matter of reciprocal agreements will be the principal topics for consideration at the next meeting of the Commission, which was voted to be held at Brownsville, Texas, on January 11th and 12th, 1951.

The Commission Chairman and Vice-Chairman were elected to serve a second one-year term of office and the Commission Chairman re-appointed all committee members to serve an additional term.

SUMMARY

The Commission has concluded six regular meetings:

- Mobile, July 1949
- Houston, October 1949
- Tampa, January 1950
- Biloxi, April 1950
- Mobile, July 1950
- New Orleans, October 1950.

There have been three special meetings:

- Miami Beach, November 1949
- New Orleans, January 1950
- New Orleans, August 1950.

By way of accomplishments attributable to the first year of operation, the Commission has:

- Witnessed the compact becoming a reality.
- Completed the organizational structure and operating directives.

- Activated a permanent headquarters office.

In cooperation with U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Commission committees and industry, completed research essential to the development of Gulf exploratory fishing and biological research programs, and has seen the initiation of these two long range programs.

Received favorable action on the continued operation of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service research laboratory at Pensacola.

Received assurance for technological work on the Gulf as soon as funds and personnel are available to its primary research agency, the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Made real progress in direction of compacted states gathering and making available catch statistics—three of five states now publishing monthly landing figures, and in this connection is assured by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service future annual landing records for the United States will show South Atlantic and Gulf totals separately.

Requested and is receiving cooperation of the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service in study of the commercial possibilities in salvaging so-called scrap fish.

Made inquiry into and is continuing the study of the inshore fin fishes, particularly, those considered of primary importance to the commercial and sports fishing industry, and also, the oyster and crab.

Progressed study of shrimp near to point of making recommendations to the several state legislatures relative to joint regulations.

Recognized the over-all need for reciprocal fisheries agreements among the states and is progressing the study.

Entered into the exchange of meeting minutes and other informative material with its sister Commissions on the Atlantic and Pacific, and is cooperating with those organizations in other ways for the mutual good.

Laid foundation for a direct mail and personal contact educational program, for the benefit of the commercial and sports fishing industry, and the edification of the public at large, and expects to inaugurate the procedure in the immediate future.

OFFSHORE FISHERIES

EXPLORATORY FISHING



M/V OREGON

Length 100' — Beam 25' — Draft 13' — Diesel-powered
Operated by U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Exploratory
Fishing and Gear Development Section, Pascagoula, Mississippi.

INITIAL EXPLORATORY PROGRAM

- TUNA
- SHARK
- SNAPPER

Above program adopted by the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, Tampa, Florida, January 20, 1950, following joint study and recommendations by the Committee to Correlate Research and Exploratory Data and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Branch of Commercial Fisheries. Although Tuna, Shark and Snapper were listed as species of primary concern, it was agreed that other species, such as the mackerel-like and flat fishes, menhaden and shrimp, would be investigated concurrently.

EXPLORATORY FISHING CRUISES—1950

SHAKE DOWN CRUISE

ITINERARY AND OBJECTIVES

The exploratory fishing vessel Oregon sailed from Pascagoula on April 17th and returned April 21st, after having operated in the area between Mobile Bay and the mouth of the Mississippi River over depths from 20 to 50 fathoms. The purpose of the cruise was to acquaint the crew with the vessel and its equipment before the first regular exploratory cruise, and also to determine whether the vessel could be maneuvered for satisfactory results with light trawling rigs and for conventional snapper fishing.

OPERATION OF VESSEL AND GEAR

Rough weather was encountered on the first two days and on the fourth day of the trip but under these relatively unfavorable conditions a 40-foot shrimp trawl was used successfully and bait was obtained for snapper fishing. The vessel rolled considerably when anchored for snapper fishing and this, in combination with the relatively high free-board, made snapper fishing difficult. A total of 360 pounds of red snapper was taken from two spots in 32 and 48 fathoms. In addition, 54 pounds of black grouper, 55 pounds of scamp and 270 pounds of shark were taken incidental to snapper fishing.

OBSERVATIONS OF FISH

No indications of the presence of tuna or mackerel-like fish were observed. Schools of menhaden were sighted over 15 to 30 fathoms east of Pass a Loutre, Louisiana. Weather conditions did not permit estimate of the size of the schools. Trolling with artificial bait was done from the Oregon and from the launch tender without results.

CRUISE NO. 1

ITINERARY

The Oregon left Pascagoula May 8th and proceeded west of the Mississippi River to shallow water off the Louisiana coast.

About three days were spent in attempts to get a good supply of live bait for tuna. Following this, the Oregon worked westward along the continental shelf and put in at Galveston May 17th for repairs to radio and depth sounding equipment. The cruise was continued on May 23rd off the Texas and Louisiana coasts along the 50 fathom curve and the Oregon returned to Pascagoula on May 29th.

OBSERVATIONS ON TUNA

Off the Louisiana and Texas coasts a large number of small schools of the little tuna, *Euthynnus alletteratus*, were encountered over depths greater than 30 fathoms, frequently among scattered schools of the common jack, *Caranx hippos*. Attempts to attract the little tuna with live bait were unsuccessful and trolling with artificial bait met with limited success. The little tuna captured were gorged with percomorph fish about one and one-half inches long. Dolphin, barracuda, and one wahoo, as well as common jacks were taken while trolling with artificial bait for little tuna. A school of larger fish, possibly tuna, was sighted but could not be approached closely enough to permit identification or accurate estimate of the size of the fish.

The tuna bait fish located were in water too shallow for use of the typical lampara bait seine. Collection of a small quantity of bait was made with a shrimp trawl. The bait remained alive in the tanks until the return to Pascagoula but many of the fish obtained were not suitable for bait.

OBSERVATIONS ON SNAPPER

Surface and bottom temperatures were recorded from snapper banks and snapper stomachs were collected for examination. One shrimp trawl drag contained six snappers under 10 inches long and snappers weighing 16 and 29 pounds were taken in other drags at night on mud bottom.

CRUISE NO. 2

ITINERARY

The Oregon left Pascagoula on June 8th and worked east of the Mississippi River mouth near the 100 fathom curve and south to Dry Tortugas. It was necessary to return to Pascagoula on

June 17th for repairs to the main engine. The cruise was continued on June 22nd and was concluded on June 29th.

OBSERVATIONS ON TUNA

Little tuna, *Euthynnus alletteratus*, were taken on trolling lines frequently between Pascagoula to Tortugas, inside the 100 fathom curve, but the maximum number taken from any one school was six. Those taken south of the latitude of Tampa, Florida were larger (average weight 11 pounds) than specimens taken in the north Gulf off Pascagoula and Pensacola.

A school of larger species of tuna was sighted about 45 miles southeast of Pensacola feeding along a drift of sargassum weed, but the fish were too wild to approach.

SHRIMP

Shrimp trawl drags were made at two stations in depths from 16 to 120 fathoms. Commercial species were not taken in any of these at depths of over 50 fathoms. A few specimens of grooved shrimp, *Penaeus duorarum*, were taken in a drag in 28 fathoms near Dry Tortugas and both *P. duorarum* and *P. aztecus*, another of the grooved species, were obtained from hauls made in about 15 fathoms off Mobile. In this area approximately thirty percent of the shrimp were *P. duorarum* and the *P. duorarum* taken were appreciably larger than the *P. aztecus* from the same drags.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS

A single set with a long-line on the bottom in 105 fathoms produced only a few sharks but many of the lighter hooks were torn off.

All four drags with a shrimp trawl in 100 to 120 fathoms produced a few flatfish, *Paralichthys* sp, thus indicating the need for further investigation of the possibilities for use of an otter trawl for fish in the deeper Gulf waters.

Two specimens of a fish related to the tile fish were secured. These fish, *Caulolatilus* sp. are large enough to be of commercial interest if obtainable in quantity.

CRUISE NO. 3

ITINERARY

The Oregon departed Pascagoula July 5th and returned August 31st. Explorations were carried on during this period in waters south of the Alabama-Mississippi coasts in depths from 10 to 232 fathoms. Most of the area explored lies east of the delta of the Mississippi.

OBSERVATIONS ON GROOVED SHRIMP

Exploratory drags were made with 40 foot and 55 foot shrimp trawls used with a single cable and a bridle to weighted trawl doors. After locating shrimp, drags were made with a 100 foot shrimp trawl. This was used with 12 foot trawl doors set with two cables. The style of rig used was similar to that employed extensively by larger shrimp boats in the northwest Gulf.

Relatively higher concentrations of grooved shrimp were found at night with the 40 foot trawl between 10 and 20 fathoms and between 35 and 50 fathoms, and no grooved shrimp were taken in deeper water in this series of drags. The grooved shrimp taken in the 10 to 20 fathom range were mixed *Penaeus aztecus* and *Penaeus duorarum*, and the smaller ones were mostly *P. aztecus*. In the 35 to 50 fathom range the grooved shrimp taken were all *P. aztecus* running from 7 to 14 count, heads on.

A series of five night time drags in 36 to 45 fathoms with the 100 foot shrimp trawl produced shrimp at the rate of 128 pounds per hour. These drags were made at widely spaced intervals between longitude 88 degrees West and longitude 88 degrees 50 minutes West, and indicate that the shrimp in the area were widely scattered. In one drag the weight of shrimp exceeded the weight of scrap but a ration of approximately one pound of shrimp to three pounds of scrap was usual in 35 to 50 fathom depth range.

Out of 52 drags made in this series, trawls were damaged six times and one trawl was lost. Rocks or coral were encountered in 48 fathoms.

OBSERVATIONS ON OTHER SHRIMP

White shrimp, *Penaeus setiferus*, were taken in small quantity as would be expected since the shallower water drags were

made at night. None were taken in more than 20 fathoms. Try drags in 195 and 232 fathoms produced 8½ and 12 pounds of a bright red species of shrimp, *Hymenopeneus robustus*.

(SHRIMP substituted for SHARK in initial exploratory fishing program—Mobile, Alabama, Meeting, July 20-21, 1950).

CRUISE NO. 4

ITINERARY

The Oregon trawled for shrimp, during the period September 11-26, in the area near the mouth of the Mississippi River between the 88th and 91st meridians.

OBSERVATIONS ON GROOVED SHRIMP

Following a short period of strong winds at the beginning of September the bottom water temperatures in 30 to 50 fathoms were generally a few degrees lower than in the preceding period. The larger brown shrimp, *Penaeus aztecus*, 16 count heads-on, and larger, were found to be most abundant in 32 to 34 fathoms; that is, in water somewhat shallower than in the preceding period. The Oregon caught 12 to 16 count shrimp for eleven hours in 32 to 34 fathoms, about 15 miles west to west by south of Southwest Pass at the mouth of the Mississippi River, on the night of September 14th at a rate of 240 pounds per hour. The depth, distribution and size of the shrimp were apparently the same in the areas immediately east and west of the mouth of the river but in September the concentrations appeared to be greater west of the mouth. Although the brown grooved shrimp is known from deeper water, none were taken by the Oregon in more than 46 fathoms during September. In this September cruise, as well as in the July-August cruise, the largest shrimp were found in the deepest water with slightly smaller shrimp in a few fathoms shallower. However, examination of all of the information available from these cruises shows a closer and more consistent relation between bottom water temperature and size of the shrimp than between depth and size. Studies are being continued on movements of populations of shrimp.

MISCELLANEOUS OBSERVATIONS

Comparatively little bottom suitable for trawling was found near the mouth of the Mississippi in depths from 50 to 150 fathoms.

One drag of 45 minutes duration in 195 fathoms with a 40 foot shrimp trawl produced 60 pounds of 28 count, heads-on, red shrimp, *Hymenopeneus robustus*, along with 61 pounds of scrap.

While a shrimp trawl was being pulled on deck from 258 fathoms on September 23rd, a school of tuna, not identified as to species, came to the surface around the Oregon briefly and sounded, accompanied or followed by silky sharks. Trolling was not successful. In this location the surface temperature was 83.5 degrees, the temperature at 50 feet 84.5 degrees, and at 100 feet 77 degrees. Observations such as this suggest the possibility that stocks of tuna may exist in the north Gulf but that they are confined to cooler layers of water below the surface unless driven upward by unusual circumstances.

SUMMARY AND PLANS

From May 8th through September 26th, the Oregon completed four (4) exploratory cruises.

TUNA—It has been found Tuna do inhabit Gulf waters. Further explorations in each of the calendar months will be necessary before definite conclusions can be reached as to the existence of these fishes in commercially profitable concentrations.

SHARK—Prior to the substituting of Shrimp for Shark in the initial exploratory program, sufficient numbers were taken to determine that such a fishery could be developed in the upper Gulf.

SNAPPER—While no concentrations of Snapper have been located in the upper Gulf which give promise of production comparable with the fishery on the Campeche Banks, the explorations are continuing. Experiments are being made with electric reels and trawls with a view of developing methods of take to supplant the time consuming process of handline fishing.

SHRIMP—The trawling operations of the Oregon on Cruise No. 2 confirmed the presence of grooved Shrimp in large concentrations off the coasts of Alabama, Mississippi and Louisiana. The grooved Shrimp fishery in the 15-25 fathom range off the

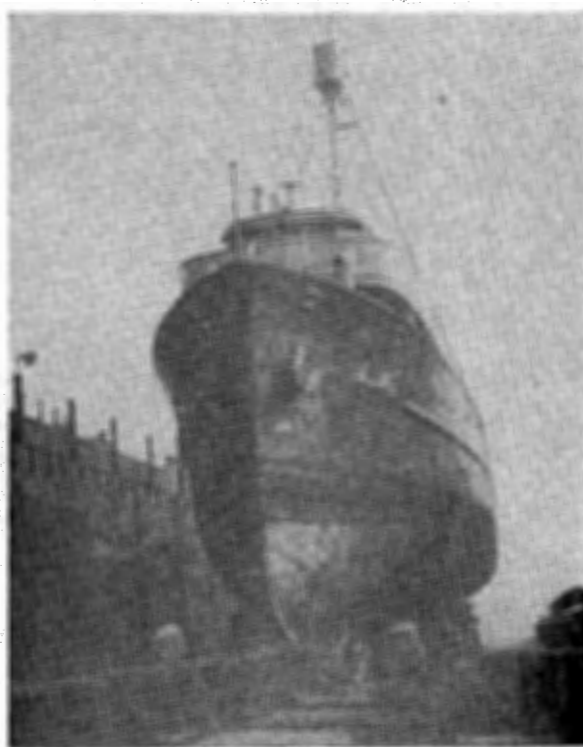
coasts of the mentioned states was prosecuted during the summer months to a degree which brought a high measure of prosperity to the industry, not formerly enjoyed during the so-called off-season. Commercially profitable concentrations of another species of grooved Shrimp have been found in the 30-50 fathom range. While this new Shrimp discovery has not been explored by industry, its existence has been publicized and doubtless the fishery will be brought into commercial production in the near future. Still another species of Shrimp has been located in the 200-250 fathom range but the feasibility of working this fishery commercially must yet be determined. It is believed concentrations of the grooved species exist in the 30-50 fathom range off the Texas and Florida coasts and explorations will be conducted on Cruises 5 and 6 and those areas.

OTHER—It is thought mackerel-like fishes can be taken with purse seines in sufficient volume from offshore Gulf waters to greatly enhance the value of this fishery. The Exploratory Fishing and Gear Development Section expects to procure a purse seine shortly for use in explorations of the mackerel-like fishes and to be employed in an attempt to expand the area now covered in Menhaden fishing. More intensive explorations are planned during the coming year in an endeavor to locate commercial quantities of flat and other ground fishes.

BIOLOGICAL RESEARCH

Length 100' — Beam 25'
Draft 13' — Diesel-
powered

Operated by U. S. Fish
and Wildlife Service
Gulf Fisheries
Investigations,
Galveston, Texas



M/V ALASKA

INITIAL RESEARCH PROGRAM

Program set out below was adopted by the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, Biloxi, Mississippi, April 15, 1950, following joint study and recommendations by the Committee to Correlate Research and Exploratory Data and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Branch of Fishery Biology.

LONG RANGE PROGRAM

Ascertain the normal oceanographic pattern of the Gulf throughout the year. This will include studies of currents, salinities, temperatures, nutrients and their biological significance.

Ascertain the distribution and relative abundance of fish eggs and larvae, and associated organisms through the year. This is to be directed toward an understanding of the adult stages of the fishes.

Ascertain the nature of the Gulf bottom as related to fisheries.

SHORT RANGE PROGRAM

Species to be given first consideration include TUNA, SHARK, SNAPPER, MENHADEN AND SHRIMP (GROOVED).

EMERGENCY PROGRAM

The emergency program cannot be anticipated.

The short range and emergency programs must fit within the framework of the long range program and must not be permitted to impair the efficiency or integrity of the long range program.

PLANS

The delay in placing the Alaska in service is attributable to the extensive repairs required for the seaworthiness of the vessel, to the problem of converting the trawler into a sea-going laboratory and to the task of procuring highly specialized items essential to the program of scientific marine investigations. It appears the Alaska will not be in readiness for service prior to March 1951.

With reference to the long range portion of the program mentioned above, the ground work for determining the normal geographic pattern of the Gulf has been completed. This project will be conducted by the Department of Oceanography of the Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas in cooperation with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Gulf Fisheries Investigations, and the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission.

In the near future plastic covered postcards will be dropped at various locations throughout the area of the Gulf for the purpose of determining surface drifts.

When the Alaska goes into service, offshore sea temperatures will be recorded and these data will be available for comparison with the near-shore temperatures now being compiled from records which have been maintained by lighthouses located along the continental shoreline of the Gulf.

The initial cruise plan of the Alaska has been prepared in such a manner that the entire Gulf can be covered in three cruises, each lasting approximately two weeks with a two-week interval between cruises. The objective of these three cruises will be that of obtaining information as to surface and sub-surface currents, salinities, nutrients and, as mentioned above, temperatures, all of which are requisite to a complete analysis of the marine life of Gulf waters. In addition, extensive plankton collections will be obtained for study of the distribution of fish eggs and larvae, and associated organisms.

INSHORE FISHERIES

During the first year of operation the Commission has given attention to both the offshore and inshore fisheries, the former being considered in terms of the programs of exploratory commercial fishing and marine biological research. The first part of the year was devoted principally to the drafting of programs incident to the long range plan for developing the fisheries of the Gulf. During the latter part of the year primary consideration was given the fisheries common to the shallower waters.

OBJECTIVES

SHRIMP—Conservation needs for the proper utilization of the shrimp fisheries has been a continuing subject of study during the year. The scientific study culminated August 18th at a special meeting in New Orleans. With the assistance of industry, the Commission is progressing a study of the economic value of the interstate regulations adopted by the Commission scientists at the mentioned New Orleans conference. The regulatory requirements of the industry were thoroughly discussed at the Annual meeting and discussions will be continued in January at Brownsville, Texas. In the interim, the State Delegations of the Commission will present the matter to the industry of the several states for further consideration.

OYSTER AND CRAB—Preliminary studies of the Oyster and Crab have been accomplished and it is expected investigations during the coming year will lead to suggested programs for the betterment of these industries.

FIN FISHES—The Committee to Correlate Research and Exploratory Data is expected to continue gathering information relative to those fishes having as their habitat the bays, bayous and estuaries and considered of primary importance to the commercial and sports fishermen. Following correlation and digesting of available data, the Committee will propose a program designed to develop and perpetuate species of the subject designation.

TECHNOLOGY—The long and growing need for technological work on the Gulf has been fully recognized, as has been previously stated, and it is anticipated an initial program will be developed early in the new year to assure work beginning when necessary funds become available to the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

RECIPROCAL AGREEMENTS—The matter of reciprocal agreements between the compacted states will continue to receive prominent position on the agenda of each Commission meeting until mutually satisfactory agreements are reached, following which the Commission will present recommendations to the governors and legislatures of the several states.

FINANCIAL REPORT

MOSES, RITTLER & DIENES

Certified Public Accountants

Audubon Building

New Orleans

July 17, 1950

To the Commissioners
Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission
New Orleans, Louisiana

Gentlemen:

We have examined the accounts of the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, New Orleans, Louisiana, for the period from November 1, 1949 to June 30, 1950, inclusive. Our examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and accordingly included such tests of the accounting records and such other auditing procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

We now submit our report on the examination together with the following statements:

Exhibit "A"—Balance Sheet as at June 30, 1950

Exhibit "B"—Statement of Income and Expenses for the period from November 1, 1949 to June 30, 1950, inclusive

Exhibit "C"—Statement of Cash Receipts and Disbursements for the period from November 1, 1949 to June 30, 1950, inclusive

ORGANIZATION

The Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission was organized pursuant to the provisions of Public Law No. 66 of the Eighty-First Congress of the United States, to promote the better

utilization of the fisheries, marine, shell and anadromous, of the seaboard of the Gulf of Mexico, by the development of a joint program for the promotion and protection of such fisheries and the prevention of the physical waste of the fisheries from any cause. The states entering the compact were Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Texas.

The compact was approved on May 19, 1949 and was ratified by the legislatures of the member states.

FINANCIAL CONDITION

The financial condition of the Commission as at June 30, 1950 is set forth in the Balance Sheet, submitted as Exhibit "A."

The cash in the National American Bank, New Orleans, Louisiana, was confirmed by a certificate obtained by us direct from the bank.

All recorded cash receipts were traced to deposits in the bank and the expenditures were verified by inspection of cancelled checks, properly approved authorizations, and other data.

The contributions receivable of \$3,000.00 were due from the following:

State of Mississippi	\$ 500.00
State of Texas	2,500.00
	<hr/>
Total	<u>\$3,000.00</u>

Expenditures for furniture and fixtures were found to be proper. No depreciation has been included in the accounts as the greater portion of these purchases were of comparatively recent dates and the depreciation charges relative thereto would only have been of small amount.

The prepaid bond premium of \$50.00 represents the portion of expenditures for bond premiums which are applicable to operations subsequent to June 30, 1950.

The Federal income tax of \$193.70 withheld from employees is in respect of amounts withheld from employees during the three months ended June 30, 1950.

OPERATIONS

The operations of the Commission for the period from November 1, 1949 to June 30, 1950, inclusive, resulted in a net income of \$11,977.66. Details of the operations are given in the Statement of Income and Expenses, Exhibit "B," and are summarized as follows:

Income	\$21,000.00
Expenses	9,022.34
	<u> </u>
Net Income	<u>\$11,977.66</u>

Under the provisions of Public Law No. 66, the several member states are to make annual contributions for defraying the expenses of the Commission. The amounts of these contributions and their annual due dates are as follows:

	Amount	Annual Due Date
Florida	\$ 3,500.00	July 1
Alabama	1,000.00	October 1
Mississippi	1,000.00	July 1
Louisiana	5,000.00	July 1
Texas	2,500.00	September 1
	<u> </u>	
Total	<u>\$13,000.00</u>	

CASH RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS

Particulars of the cash receipts and disbursements for the period from November 1, 1949 to June 30, 1950, inclusive, are given in the Statement of Cash Receipts and Disbursements, Exhibit "C". A summary of this statement is as follows:

Cash Receipts	\$18,482.60
Cash Disbursements	9,944.54
	<u> </u>
Cash Balance as at June 30, 1950	<u>\$ 8,538.06</u>

GENERAL

Fidelity Bond. The officers of the Commission are covered under a fidelity bond as follows:

Chairman—Bert E. Thomas	\$10,000.00
Vice-Chairman—Howard D. Dodgen	10,000.00
Secretary-Treasurer—W. Dudley Gunn	<u>10,000.00</u>

Appreciative acknowledgment is made of the courtesies extended our representatives during the examination.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Edw. S. Rittler, C.A., C.P.A.

BALANCE SHEET

GULF STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

As at June 30, 1950

ASSETS

Current Assets:

Cash in Bank and on Hand:

National American Bank\$8,525.90

Cash on Hand 12.16

\$ 8,538.06

Member States Contributions

Receivable

3,000.00

Total Current Assets

11,538.06

Other Assets:

Revolving Travel Fund—

W. Dudley Gunn 250.00

Meter Deposit 10.00

260.00

Fixed Assets:

Furniture and Fixtures

452.94

Prepaid Expense:

Bond Premium

50.00

Total

\$12,301.00

LIABILITIES

Current Liabilities:

Accounts Payable

\$ 129.64

Federal Income Tax Withheld

193.70

Total Current Liabilities

323.34

Net Worth

11,977.66

Total

\$12,301.00

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES

GULF STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

For the period from November 1, 1949 to June 30, 1950, inclusive

Income:

Contributions from Member States:

Florida	\$ 3,500.00
Alabama	2,000.00
Mississippi	500.00
Louisiana	10,000.00
Texas	5,000.00
	<hr/>
	21,000.00

Expenses:

Salaries	\$5,039.78	
Compensation, Acting Secretary	1,050.00	
Traveling, Secretary-Treasurer	1,423.08	
Rent	495.00	
Stationery, Printing & Office Supplies	485.29	
Telephone and Telegraph	242.33	
Bond Premiums	100.00	
Postage	46.53	
Dues and Subscriptions	36.60	
Meeting Expense	30.00	
Electric Lights	21.29	
Miscellaneous	52.44	
	<hr/>	
Total Expenses		9,022.34
		<hr/>
Net Income		\$11,977.66

Exhibit "C"

**STATEMENT OF CASH RECEIPTS AND DISBURSEMENTS
GULF STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION**

For the period from November 1, 1949 to June 30, 1950, inclusive

Cash Receipts:

Contributions from Member States:

Florida	\$ 3,500.00
Alabama	2,000.00
Louisiana	10,000.00
Texas	2,500.00

Total Contributions from

Member States \$18,000.00

Collections of Federal Withholding

Tax 482.60

Total Cash Receipts 18,482.60

Cash Disbursements:

Salaries	5,039.78
Compensation, Acting Secretary	1,050.00
Traveling, Secretary-Treasurer	1,325.04
Purchases, Furniture and Fixtures ..	452.94
Rent	495.00
Stationery, Printing & Office Sup.	485.29
Federal Withholding Tax Remitted ..	288.90
Revolving Travel Fund—	
W. Dudley Gunn	250.00
Telephone and Telegraph	242.33
Bond Premiums	150.00
Postage	46.53
Meeting Expense	30.00
Electric Lights	21.29
Meter Deposit	10.00
Dues and Subscriptions	5.00
Miscellaneous	52.44

Total Cash Disbursements .. 9,944.54

Cash in Bank and on Hand
as at June 30, 1950

\$ 8,538.06

BUDGET

GULF STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION

Fiscal Year 1950-51

Salaries—Secretary-Treasurer	\$ 6,000.00
Office Secretary	2,100.00
Rent—Office	1,140.00
Bond Premiums	130.00
Insurance Premium	1.50
Accounting Fees	125.00
Telephone and Telegraph	360.00
Electric Lights	60.00
Travel—Personal and Auto	3,000.00
Postage	250.00
Stationery, Printing and Office Supplies	500.00
Subscriptions	99.60
Miscellaneous	75.00
Meeting Expense, Court Reporter fee, Mobile, Alabama Meeting, July 20-21, 1950	237.38
Furniture and Fixtures	500.00
	<hr/>
	<u>\$14,578.48</u>

APPROVED By The Commission
October 20, 1950.