

**Gulf States Marine
Fisheries Commission**
2404 Government Street
Ocean Springs, MS 39564

David M. Donaldson, Executive Director



State of Louisiana
Louisiana State Senate

R.L. "Bret" Allain, GSMFC Chairman

MEETING NOTICE

GULF STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION 68th Annual Spring Meeting

March 13-15, 2018 – Panama City Beach, Florida

The Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission's 68th Annual Spring Meeting will be held March 13-15, 2018 at the Sheraton Bay Point Resort in Panama City, Florida. This notice contains meeting details, including the preliminary meeting schedule. All of the business meetings scheduled during this week are open to the public, free of charge. Please note the preliminary schedule is subject to change. Senator R.L. "Bret" Allain, Louisiana State Senate, is the presiding Chairman of the Commission.

ACCOMODATIONS: Florida is our host state and arrangements have been made to convene at the Sheraton Bay Point Resort (4114 Jan Cooley Drive, Panama City Beach, Florida 32408). Surrounded by the emerald green waters of St. Andrews Bay and the Gulf of Mexico, Sheraton Bay Point Resort sits nestled within a 1,100 acre wildlife sanctuary. Boasting a \$30-million renovation and AAA Four Diamond rating, the hotel is a dazzling, award-winning beachfront destination. Amenities include several heated pools, a full-service spa, a 24-hour fitness center and 36 holes of championship golf, including the only Nicklaus Design course in Northwest Florida.

A block of rooms is being held at the negotiated room rate of **\$116.00** plus state/local tax (currently 12%). Rates will be available 3 days prior and 3 days after the Event Dates (subject to availability). The \$25.00 Resort Fee is waived for our group and includes guestroom internet, self-parking, access to 24 hour fitness center, private bay beach and resort pools. Reservations can be made online using this booking link: [68th Annual Spring Meeting](#). You can also contact the hotel directly at 866.912.1042. Hotel reservations must be made before **February 16, 2018**. **Room availability will not be guaranteed beyond this date.** Please be aware that you must guarantee your room reservation with a major credit card or one night's advance payment and you must notify the hotel of any cancellation **72 hours prior to arrival** or you will be billed one night's room plus tax. **If you have any problems regarding accommodations, please contact Nancy Marcellus at 228.875.5912 or nmarcellus@gsmfc.org.**

TRANSPORTATION: The Sheraton Bay Point Resort is located 38 minutes away from Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport (ECP). Taxi services are available at the airport. Complimentary self-parking is available at the hotel.

REGISTRATION: Pre-registration assists us in planning a successful meeting and saves you money on your registration fee. The meeting registration fee is \$95/per participant and \$25/per spouse or guest **if you register by March 1, 2018**. After **March 1st** and in Panama City the fees will be \$110 per participant. You may register online by visiting our website at www.gsmfc.org and selecting GSMFC Upcoming Meetings. If you prefer, you can still pre-register by returning the attached form to our office. Please do not register co-workers or associates as guests. We accept cash, checks, or PAYPAL. **Please note if the Commission pays for your travel, you will only be reimbursed for the regular registration fee; late fees will not be reimbursed.**

PRELIMINARY SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Monday, March 12, 2018

3:00 pm – 5:00 pm Early Registration *Grand Lagoon Ballroom Foyer*

Tuesday, March 13, 2018

8:00 am – 5:00 pm Registration *Grand Lagoon Ballroom Foyer*

8:30 am – 5:00 pm FIN Meeting *Grand Lagoon Ballroom D*

8:30 pm – 5:00 pm LEC/LETC Meetings *Grand Lagoon Ballroom FGH*

8:30 am – 12 noon TCC SEAMAP Subcommittee *Grand Lagoon Ballroom ABC*

1:00 pm – 5:00 pm SFFMC Menhaden Advisory Committee *Grand Lagoon Ballroom ABC*

5:30 pm – 6:30 pm Reception *St. Andrews Terrace*

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

8:00 am – 5:00 pm Registration *Grand Lagoon Ballroom Foyer*

8:30 am – 12 noon *General Session –
“Off-Bottom Oyster Aquaculture in the
Gulf of Mexico” *Grand Lagoon Ballroom FGH*

12 noon – 1:00 pm Luncheon *Grand Lagoon Ballroom E*

1:00 pm – 5:00 pm Sea Grant Extension Program *Grand Lagoon Ballroom ABC*

1:00 pm – 5:00 pm Technical Coordinating Committee *Grand Lagoon Ballroom D*

5:30 pm – 6:30 pm Reception *St. Andrews Terrace*

Thursday, March 15, 2018

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| 8:00 am – 12 noon | Registration | <i>Grand Lagoon Ballroom Foyer</i> |
| 8:30 am – 12 noon | Commission Business Meeting | <i>Grand Lagoon Ballroom D</i> |
| 12 noon – 1:00 pm | <i>Commissioner’s Luncheon</i> | <i>Grand Lagoon Ballroom FGH</i> |
| 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm | Commission Business Meeting | <i>Grand Lagoon Ballroom D</i> |

***GENERAL SESSION: OFF-BOTTOM OYSTER AQUACULTURE IN THE GULF OF MEXICO** – In 2016, the 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 oyster farming in the Gulf region. A total of six projects were funded across the Gulf at a total of \$375,000. Now that those projects have been completed, each of the Principal Investigators will present the extent of their work at the General Session scheduled for Wednesday, March 14. NOAA and the Commission have launched a second year of projects which will begin next month and run through March 2019.

The final agenda and meeting materials will be available March 1, 2018 on the Commission website at www.gsmfc.org – Upcoming Meetings: GSMFC Annual Meeting. In the interim, if there are any questions concerning the 68th Annual Spring Meeting of the Commission, please contact Nancy Marcellus at 228.875.5912 or nmarcellus@gsmfc.org. We look forward to seeing you all in Panama City in March!

**GULF STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION
PRE-REGISTRATION FORM
68th ANNUAL SPRING MEETING
March 13 – 15, 2018**



Please complete and return **with** or **without** your registration fee payable to the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, 2404 Government Street, Ocean Springs, MS 39564. Your registration packet will be ready for you in the registration area on your arrival at the Sheraton Bay Point Resort in Panama City Beach, FL. **Reminder: A \$15.00 late fee will be added after March 1.**

Name _____

Affiliation _____

Address _____

Telephone/E-Mail _____

Date of Arrival _____ Date of Departure _____

- Registration fee of \$95.00 is enclosed.
- Please pre-register me. I will pay upon arrival at the Registration Desk.

Please check events that you plan to attend:

- Reception (Tuesday, March 13)
- Luncheon (Wednesday, March 14)
- Reception (Wednesday, March 14)

SPOUSE/GUEST REGISTRATION: (Do not register co-workers or associates as guests)

Spouse/Guest _____

- \$25.00 registration fee is enclosed.
- Please pre-register my spouse/guest. I will pay upon arrival at the Registration Desk.

Please check events that your spouse/guest plan to attend:

- Reception (Tuesday, March 13)
- Luncheon (Wednesday, March 14)
- Reception (Wednesday, March 14)