

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

David M. Donaldson, Executive Director



**ADCNR/Marine
Resources Division**
P.O. Box 189
Dauphin Island, AL 36528

Chris Blankenship, GSMFC Chairman

MEETING NOTICE

GULF STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION 68th Annual Meeting

October 16-19, 2017 – Mobile, Alabama

The Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission's 68th Annual Meeting will be held October 16-19, 2017 at The Battle House Renaissance Hotel Mobile. 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. Chris Blankenship, ADCNR/Marine Resources Division, is the presiding Chairman of the Commission.

ACCOMODATIONS: Alabama is our host state and arrangements have been made to convene at The Battle House Renaissance Hotel Mobile (26 North Royal Street, Mobile, Alabama 36602). Capturing the classic southern charm of Mobile's glorious social center of a century ago, The Battle House takes you back to a time when elegance reigned supreme, service was sublime and opulent surroundings made every guest feel special. Located in the heart of Mobile's reemerging downtown, the hotel offers a timeless and classic hospitality experience – yet subtly enhanced by 21st century sensibilities.

A block of rooms is being held at the negotiated room rate of **\$91.00** plus state/local tax (currently 14%). Reservations can be made online using this booking link: [Book your group rate for Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission \(GSMFC\) - 68th Annual Meeting](#). You can also contact Marriott Central Reservations at 866.316.5957. Hotel reservations must be made before **Sunday, September 17, 2017**. **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 **48 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 Battle House is 14 miles from Mobile Regional Airport (estimated taxi fare \$46 one way), 57 miles from Pensacola International Airport (estimated taxi fare \$150 one way) and 72 miles from the Gulfport-Biloxi International Airport (estimated taxi fare \$188 one way). There are numerous taxi and limousine services available at the airports. Only valet parking is available at the hotel for \$19 per night or \$14 day valet.

LYLES – SIMPSON AWARD: The Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission is pleased to announce that the 2017 Lyles-Simpson Award has been awarded to Joseph Gill. This prestigious Award is presented annually to an individual, agency, or organization which has contributed to the betterment of the fisheries of the Gulf of Mexico through significant biological, industrial, legislative, enforcement, or administrative activities.



Joe has been involved in the fisheries arena for over 44 years, and he is currently the CEO of Joe Gill Consulting, LLC. Over his distinguished career, he has worked for the Mississippi Bureau of Marine Resources/Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks, and Mississippi Department of Marine Resources in various capacities, including Chief of Wetlands Division, Deputy Director of Coastal Operations, and Executive Director. In addition, he served as a Commissioner for the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission for 22 years, including several times as Chairman, as well as being a voting member of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council. It is with great pride that the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission presents this year's Lyles-Simpson Award to such a worthy recipient.

A luncheon to present this award and honor Joe is scheduled for Wednesday, October 18, 2017 at 12 noon in the Crystal Ballroom. All participants and guests are invited to attend.

Gulf of Mexico Regional Shellfish Initiative (GoMexSI): The regionally-based Gulf of Mexico Shellfish Initiative (GoMexSI) is a project funded by NOAA through the GSMFC to provide a platform to avoid and/or resolve user conflicts related to oyster aquaculture, while also promoting coordination of off-bottom (and on-bottom) oyster aquaculture with other oyster fishery and restoration efforts. Development of a regional shellfish initiative that includes all of these sectors may help with issues of concern (or 'social license') of off-bottom oyster farming in each Gulf state.

To solicit input into the development and advancement of the GoMexSI, the investigators are holding a special session in conjunction with the GSMFC Annual Meeting on Monday, October 16 from 4:40-5:30 pm. All interested shellfish stakeholders are encouraged to attend and provide input on oyster fisheries, aquaculture, and restoration.

General Session "Terrapins and Crab Traps": The Diamondback Terrapin is a species of turtle native to the brackish coastal tidal marshes which have been declining over the last 50 years in the Gulf of Mexico and elsewhere. Along much of the Atlantic coast, terrapins are listed as endangered or threatened but not in the Gulf. While most of the decline to the Gulf terrapin population is related to the loss of nesting areas due to human encroachment and nest predation, commercial blue crab traps have become the first source of mortality when discussing terrapin conservation. It is far easier to regulate and manage fishermen than homeowners, developers, municipalities, and terrestrial predators such as raccoons.

Members of the Commission’s Crab Subcommittee have attended two different workshops of the Diamondback Terrapin Working Group (DTWG) and it was clear in those meetings that our region faces a negative view of the crab fishery from the terrapin research community as well as certain sustainable fisheries programs like Seafood Watch®.

In an effort to improve communication with the terrapin research community and to work to change the narrative and approach to terrapin recovery, the GSMFC is hosting a special session to address these gaps in communication on Wednesday morning, October 18. Several presentations will be made by both members of the DTWG and the Crab Subcommittee. It is hoped that more coordinated research will take place in the future, utilizing the working knowledge of the Subcommittee to meet the research needs of the DTWG. It is hoped that collaboration like this will begin to change the tone regarding interactions between terrapins and the Gulf’s crab industry.

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 October 1, 2017**. After **October 1st** and in Mobile 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, October 16, 2017

3:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Early Registration	<i>Moonlight Foyer</i>
4:30 pm – 5:30 pm	Gulf of Mexico Regional Shellfish Initiative	<i>Tree House</i>

Tuesday, October 17, 2017

8:00 am – 5:00 pm	Registration	<i>Moonlight Foyer</i>
8:30 am – 5:00 pm	Data Management Subcommittee	<i>Moonlight B</i>
8:30 am – 12 noon	SFFMC Menhaden Advisory Committee	<i>Tree House</i>
1:00 pm – 5:00 pm	TCC SEAMAP Subcommittee	<i>Bienville Square</i>
1:00 pm – 5:00 pm	TCC Crab Subcommittee	<i>Tree House</i>
5:30 pm – 6:30 pm	Reception	<i>Oakleigh Garden</i>

Wednesday, October 18, 2017

8:00 am – 5:00 pm	Registration	<i>Moonlight Foyer</i>
8:30 am – 5:00 pm	LEC/LETC Meetings	<i>Bienville Square</i>
8:00 am – 12 noon	General Session – “Terrapins & Crab Traps”	<i>Moonlight D & E</i>
12 noon – 1:00 pm	Luncheon –“Lyles-Simpson Award”	<i>Crystal Ballroom</i>
1:30 pm – 5:00 pm	Sea Grant Extension Program	<i>Tree House</i>
1:30 pm – 3:00 pm	Technical Coordinating Committee	<i>Moonlight B</i>
3:30 pm – 5:00 pm	State-Federal Fisheries Management Committee	<i>Moonlight B</i>
5:30 pm – 6:30 pm	Reception	<i>Oakleigh Garden</i>

Thursday, October 19, 2017

7:00 am – 8:30 am	Executive Committee Breakfast	<i>Ashland Place B</i>
8:30 am – 12 noon	Commission Business Meeting	<i>Moonlight B</i>
12 noon – 1:00 pm	<i>Commissioner’s Luncheon</i>	<i>Moonlight D & E</i>
1:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Commission Business Meeting	<i>Moonlight B</i>

The final agenda and meeting materials will be available October 1, 2017 on the Commission website www.gsmfc.org – Upcoming Meetings: GSMFC Annual Meeting. In the interim, if there are any questions concerning the 68th Annual Meeting of the Commission, please contact Nancy Marcellus at 228.875.5912 or nmarcellus@gsmfc.org. We look forward to seeing you all in Mobile in October!

**GULF STATES MARINE FISHERIES COMMISSION
PRE-REGISTRATION FORM
68th ANNUAL MEETING
October 16 – 19, 2017**



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 Battle House Renaissance Hotel in Mobile, AL. **Reminder: A \$15.00 late fee will be added after October 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, October 17)
- Lyles-Simpson Award Luncheon (Wednesday, October 18)
- Reception (Wednesday, October 18)

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, October 17)
- Lyles-Simpson Award Luncheon (Wednesday, October 18)
- Reception (Wednesday, October 18)