



STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
TATE REEVES
GOVERNOR
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

April 22, 2022

Mr. Erik Broussard
Mississippi Department of Marine Resources
1141 Bayview Avenue
Biloxi, Mississippi 39530

Dear Mr. Broussard:

Re: Mississippi Department of Marine Resources
St. Louis Bay Oyster Reef Project
Harrison County
COE No. SAM202200182KMN
WQC No. WQC2022015

Pursuant to Section 401 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U. S. C. 1251, 1341), the Office of Pollution Control (OPC) issues this Certification, after public notice and opportunity for public hearing, the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, an applicant for a Federal License or permit to conduct the following activity:

Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, St. Louis Bay Oyster Reef Project:
The applicant proposes to create an approximately 57.3-acre artificial oyster reef between two existing reef sites south of the mouth of the Wolf River in St. Louis Bay. The two existing reefs are located to the west and to the east of the proposed site. The existing reef sites were permitted under number SAM-2015-00644-MJF; SER-2016-17654 as reef areas 38 and 39. Water depths in the area vary from -6 to -8 feet MLLW. Preliminary geotechnical probing in the area indicates that the sediments at the water bottom are firm marine clays, sand, and shell hash. No submerged aquatic vegetation is known to exist within the project area. Oyster cultch materials (limestone, crushed concrete, oyster shell or a combination thereof) would be used to create a vertical reef with relief ranging from 1.5 to 2.5 feet with a minimum of 2 feet of clearance for boats to navigate the reef area. The purpose of the artificial oyster reef would be to increase oyster population seed source to support fisheries. The proposed site is located in an area prohibited to commercial oyster harvesting within St. Louis Bay, Harrison County, Mississippi [SAM202200182KMN, WQC2022015].

The Office of Pollution Control certifies that the above-described activity will be in compliance with the applicable provisions of Sections 301, 302, 303, 306, and 307 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act and Section 49-17-29 of the Mississippi Code of 1972, if the applicant complies with the following conditions:

1. All fill material and excavation areas shall have side slopes of at least 3:1 (horizontal: vertical) and shall be immediately seeded, stabilized, and maintained.
2. Material shall be clean and non-polluting, free of trash, debris, asphalt, etc.
3. Turbidity outside the limits of a 750-foot mixing zone shall not exceed the ambient turbidity by more than 50 Nephelometric Turbidity Units.
4. No sewage, oil, refuse, or other pollutants shall be discharged into the watercourse.

The Office of Pollution Control also certifies that there are no limitations under Section 302 nor standards under Sections 306 and 307 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act which are applicable to the applicant's above-described activity.

This certification is valid for the project as proposed. Any deviations without proper modifications and/or approvals may result in a violation of the 401 Water Quality Certification. If you have any questions, please contact Florance Bass.

Sincerely,



Krystal Rudolph, P.E., BCEE
Chief, Environmental Permits Division

KR: chb

cc: Ms. Kaaren Neumann, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mobile District
Mr. Matthew Murphy, Department of Marine Resources
Mr. Paul Necaise, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Mr. Bill Ainslie, Environmental Protection Agency