



REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:

**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS, MOBILE DISTRICT  
P.O. BOX 2288  
MOBILE, AL 36628-0001

**May 4, 2023**

**CE3AM-RD-211**  
**PUBLIC NOTICE NO. SAM-2022-00534-KMN**

**JOINT PUBLIC NOTICE**  
**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS (USACE)**

**MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY**  
**OFFICE OF POLLUTION CONTROL (MDEQ)**

**MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES**  
**DMR22-000684**

**PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION OF MISSISSIPPI REEF COMPLEX, GULF OF MEXICO**

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

This District has received an application for a Department of the Army (DA) permit pursuant to Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 USC 403). Please communicate this information to interested parties.

**APPLICANT: Mississippi Department of Marine Resources**  
**Attention: Mr. Travis Williams**  
**1141 Bayview Avenue**  
**Biloxi, Mississippi 39530**

**WATERWAY AND LOCATION:**

Gulf of Mexico, approximately 15 miles south of the Pascagoula River in Federal and/or International Waters adjacent to Fish Haven 13.

**Western Reef Complex:**

Northwest Corner: Latitude 30.066667° North, Longitude -88.594250° West  
Southwest Corner: Latitude 29.986667° North, Longitude -88.594250° West  
Southeast Corner: Latitude 29.986667° North, Longitude -88.540000° West  
Northeast Corner: Latitude 30.066667° North, Longitude -88.540000° West

**Southern Reef Complex:**

Northwest Corner: Latitude 29.986667° North, Longitude -88.540000° West  
Southwest Corner: Latitude 29.950000° North, Longitude -88.540000° West  
Southeast Corner: Latitude 29.950000° North, Longitude -88.488333° West  
Northeast Corner: Latitude 29.986667° North, Longitude -88.488333° West

**PROPOSED WORK:** The applicant is requesting a 10-year Department of the Army Permit to construct an approximately 16,575-acre reef complex for the placement of artificial reefs in the open waters of the Gulf of Mexico. The purpose of this project as stated by the applicant is to enhance juvenile and adult reef fish habitat and increase

productivity of reef associated fin fish off the coast of Mississippi. The proposed artificial reefs would provide a more diverse and essential habitat for reef dependent/associated fish and invertebrate species. The reef complex would accommodate commercial fishing, recreational fishing, and sport diving. The site would be located within the Gulf of Mexico on the western and southern sides of Fish Haven 13. The proposed western reef complex would be composed of approximately 11,500 acres, with depths ranging from 62 feet to 83 feet, and would contain approximately 70 artificial reefs sites. The proposed southern reef complex would be composed of approximately 5,075 acres, with depths ranging from 80 feet to 92 feet, and would contain approximately 20 artificial reefs sites. Artificial reefs constructed within the proposed reef complex would be constructed from limestone aggregate, fabricated reef modules, repurposed concrete, vessels/barges, or structured steel. In addition, miscellaneous materials such as dry-docks, and military equipment may be deployed upon availability. Artificial Reefs placed within the proposed reef complex would be constructed with a minimum of 500-feet between the reefs. Buffers of approximately 500-feet would be maintained between the artificial reefs and any shipping channels, safety fairways and active or inactive pipelines.

The applicant has applied for coastal zone (CZ) consistency in accordance with the State Coastal Zone Management Program. A determination relative to CZ consistency will be made by the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources. (DMR22-000684).

The applicant has applied for certification from the State of Mississippi in accordance with Section 401(a)(1) of the Clean Water Act and upon completion of the required advertising; a determination relative to certification will be made.

This public notice is being distributed to all known interested persons in order to assist in developing facts on which a decision by the USACE can be based. For accuracy and completeness of the record, all data in support of or in opposition to the proposed work should be submitted in writing setting forth sufficient detail to furnish a clear understanding of the reasons for support or opposition.

The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefit which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historic properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food and fiber production, mineral needs, consideration of property ownership and, in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

The USACE is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the USACE

to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act. Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider this application. Requests for public hearings shall state with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing.

Evaluation of the probable impacts involving deposits of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States will include the application of guidelines established by the Administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

In accordance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and Appendix C of 33 CFR 325, the undertaking defined in this notice is being considered for the potential to affect historic properties. In accordance with Appendix C of 33 CFR 325, the Corps has determined the permit area consists of the 16,575-acre project site. The National Register of Historic Places will be consulted for properties listed, or eligible for listing, in the National Register, which are known to exist and would be affected by the proposed work. The Mobile District is seeking comment from the State Historic Preservation Officer regarding the existence, or the potential for existence, of significant cultural and historic properties within the permit area.

Preliminary review of this application and the U.S. Department of the Interior's List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants indicate the following federally-listed species are known or expected to occur within the project area: Green Sea Turtle (T), Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle (E), Loggerhead Sea Turtle (T-CH), Hawksbill Sea Turtle (E), Leatherback Sea Turtle (E), Giant Manta Ray (E), Bryde's Whale (P), and Gulf Sturgeon (T-CH). At this time, the USACE, Mobile District has made no determination with regard to potential effects of the project on the above-listed species. Further coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and NMFS will be performed as determined to be appropriate.

This notice initiates the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) consultation requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The proposal would impact the 16,575-acre project site of marine substrate utilized by various life stages of species. Our initial determination is that the proposed action would not adversely impact EFH or associated fisheries managed by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council or the National Marine Fisheries Service. Our initial determination is that the proposed action would have no effect to EFH or Federally managed fisheries. Our final determination relative to project impacts and the need for mitigation measures is subject to review by and coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Correspondence concerning this Public Notice should refer to Public Notice Number **SAM-2022-00534-KMN** and should be directed to the District Engineer, U.S. Army Engineer District, Mobile, Post Office Box 2288, Mobile, Alabama 36628-0001, Attention: South Mississippi Branch (cesam-rd@usace.army.mil), with a copy to the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, Office of Pollution Control, Attention Ms. Carrie Barefoot (CBarefoot@mdeq.ms.gov), Post Office Box 2261, Jackson, Mississippi 39225, and the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, Attention: Ms. Katie Nelson (Katie.Nelson@dmr.ms.gov), 1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, Mississippi 39530, in time to be received within **30 days** of the date of this public notice.

If you have any questions concerning this publication, you may contact the project manager for this application, **Kaaren M. Neumann (Kaaren.M.Neumann@usace.army.mil), phone (228) 386-8293**. Please refer to the above Public Notice number.

For additional information about our Regulatory Program, please visit our website at: [www.sam.usace.army.mil](http://www.sam.usace.army.mil) and please take a moment to complete our customer satisfaction survey while you're there. Your responses are appreciated and will allow us to improve our services.

MOBILE DISTRICT  
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Enclosures



Site map displaying the proposed reef sites.







