



ALLIANCE UPDATE

The latest from the Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Shareholders' Alliance

August 27, 2019



2019 is flying by and the Shareholders' Alliance has been hard at work to protect commercial reef fish fishermen and our important Gulf of Mexico resources. Whether we're going to Washington DC to protect the integrity of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act or reducing discards and supporting the next generation of reef fish fishermen by providing access to red snapper allocation, we continue to advocate for the commercial fishing industry and promote sustainable fishing, fisheries, and fishing businesses.

Keep reading for more detail on these and other Shareholders' Alliance initiatives.

Upcoming Events

Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission
Baton Rouge, LA
September 5

Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources
Biloxi, MS
September 17

Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission
Baton Rouge, LA
October 5

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Cape Canaveral, FL
October 2-3

Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources
Biloxi, MS
October 15

Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission
Gulfport, MS
October 14-17

Thanks,



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GULF UPDATES



Gulf Council News

We were excited to see that the Secretary of Commerce, Wilbur Ross, reappointed Dr. Tom Frazer and Ms. Leann Bosarge to an additional term on the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Gulf Council) this year. [Dr. Frazer](#), a renowned environmental scientist from the University of Florida and the state's first Chief Scientific Officer, will be serving his second term on the Gulf Council while [Ms. Bosarge](#), whose family runs a well known commercial shrimping business in Mississippi, will be serving her third term on the Gulf Council. Both of these Gulf Council members have a strong track record of promoting science-based management, fairness, and sustainability; we look forward to continuing to work with them. Secretary Ross also appointed [Mr. Troy Williamson](#) Gulf Council to fill a vacated Texas Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) seat. Mr. Williamson is an attorney and recreational fisherman from Texas, and this is his first term on the Gulf Council. We look forward to working with him in his new role and to find common ground on our shared priorities of healthy fish stocks, stable and profitable commercial and charter businesses, and sustainable and accountable access for private anglers.

The Gulf Council met in New Orleans, Louisiana on August 12-15, 2019. [Amendment 52](#), the latest attempt to reallocate red snapper, was delayed by recreational Gulf

Gulf of Mexico Fishery
Management Council
Galveston, TX
October 21-24

Louisiana Wildlife and
Fisheries Commission
Baton Rouge, LA
November 7

National Electronic
Monitoring Workshop
New Castle, NH
November 13-14

Mississippi Commission on
Marine Resources
Biloxi, MS
November 19

Louisiana Wildlife and
Fisheries Commission
Baton Rouge, LA
December 5

Florida Fish and Wildlife
Conservation Commission
Stuart, FL
December 11-12

Mississippi Commission on
Marine Resources
Biloxi, MS
December 17

In the News

Louisiana's Reckoning Tide:
As the state's land-loss crisis
threatens fish and
fishermen, chefs are looking
for what comes next.

The Local Palate
[READ MORE](#)

Gulf Organizations Join in
Call for Gulf-Wide Seafood
Specific Disaster Relief
Gulf Seafood Foundation
[READ MORE](#)

Gulf commercial fishermen
celebrate Capitol Hill Ocean
Week, 2019.
*Shareholders' Alliance Press
Release*
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Celebrating National Ocean
Month

Council members until the January 2020 meeting, which will take place back in New Orleans. CCA appears to be delaying the Amendment because they are waiting for additional information that could support their attempt to take fish away from accountable commercial fishermen and the seafood consumers that benefit from a sustainable fishery. Progress on [Amendment 36B](#), which discusses modifications to the individual fishing quota (IFQ) programs, continues to be slow and a specific goal of the Amendment has yet to be defined. Despite this, the Gulf Council is showing some interest in making changes and requiring some form of reef fish permit ownership tied to IFQ shares. The Gulf Council also discussed values and metrics to consider during reallocation debates, reviewed improvements to commercial data collection systems, voted to maintain a 9% buffer on the federally-permitted charter/for-hire industry, set gray snapper limits, saw a [presentation](#) on quota banking throughout the U.S., and asked for more information on the [electronic video monitoring](#) work being done in the Gulf. For a full summary of the August Gulf Council meeting, [click here](#).



Impacts of the Bonnet Carre Spillway Opening

The Bonnet Carre spillway is a flood control mechanism located just outside New Orleans, Louisiana. The spillway is opened by the [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers](#) when the Mississippi River reaches flood levels. Due to unusually high rainfall across the Mississippi River valley this year, the spillway was open on two separate occasions and remained open for over 115 days, sending a huge freshwater influx into the Gulf of Mexico off Louisiana and Mississippi. Impacts on inshore fisheries are being closely monitored by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and by Mississippi Department of Marine

Marine Fish Conservation Network

[READ MORE](#)

Bill will educate new generation of fishers.

Tallahassee Democrat

[READ MORE](#)

From boat to New Orleans table - and fast. How fishermen, chefs chart a new seafood path.

Times Picayune

[READ MORE](#)

FCC Applauds Senate Commerce Committee Approval of Young Development Act

Fishing Communities Coalition

[READ MORE](#)

Video Spotlight

Through the [Fishing Communities Coalition](#), the Shareholders' Alliance works with commercial fishing organizations across the country. Check out this video from a young fisherman from the [Maine Coast Fishermen's Association](#) making her own way in the Maine lobster fishery.

[WATCH HERE](#)

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- [Get Involved](#)
- [Events](#)
- [Industry News](#)
- [Know A Fisherman Who Should Be A Member?](#)

Resources but initial data indicate that oyster mortality is high in some areas, certain areas are experiencing [lower shrimp landings](#), and there has been an [increase in dolphin strandings](#). Long-term impacts remain to be seen but both [Mississippi](#) and [Louisiana](#) have requested a Federal Fisheries Disaster Declaration. The Shareholders' Alliance is monitoring the situation as more information is released about the impacts of the Spillway. We strongly support the Gulf States' efforts to obtain a [Federal Fisheries Disaster Declaration](#).

New Rule for Sea Turtle Release Gear

In June 2019, NOAA finalized a new rule that approved new types of release gear that can be carried by commercial and charter-for-hire fishermen. All commercial and charter/for-hire vessels are required to have gear on board that allows for the safe release of incidentally caught sea turtles.

A summary of the new rule and approved new gear can be found [here](#).

Electronic Video Monitoring with Mote Marine Lab

The Center for Fisheries Electronic Monitoring at Mote (CFEMM), a program of Mote Marine Laboratory in Sarasota, Florida, works with vessels in the reef fish



fishery to pilot electronic video monitoring (EM) systems and to better study fishery bycatch. CFEMM is the only program dedicated to developing and assessing EM as a valid data collection tool in the Gulf of Mexico snapper-grouper fishery to better meet the strong demand for accurate fishing industry data and to eventually offer

fishermen a voluntary alternative to federal (human) observers. The Shareholders' Alliance has partnered with Mote for a number of years and is excited to see this work progress.

Read more about the CFEMM [here](#).

Fishermen Teaching Farmers



In July, [Texas Sea Grant](#) invited the Shareholders' Alliance to help put AgriLife Extension Agents in the shoes of a commercial fisherman for a day in Galveston, Texas. [AgriLife Extension](#) is a program of Texas A&M that provides programs and tools that

teach Texas farmers and communities how to improve agriculture and food production. Approximately 30 extension agents got the opportunity to go trawling, toured a working fish house ([Katie's Seafood Market](#)), and jumped on Captain Kenny's commercial reef fish vessel. They learned about the role commercial fishermen have played in protecting and rebuilding the red snapper stock, the regulations that commercial fishermen must follow on each trip, and how fishermen ensure

top quality fish arrive at the dock and are delivered fresh to consumers across the country. The Extension Agents also got to enjoy a lunch of [Gulf Wild](#) vermilion snapper. AgriLife Extension agents work with the public and farmers, and will be able to take their new knowledge of commercial fishing



back to their communities and help spread our commitment to sustainability and accountability, and the importance of supporting domestic conservation-minded fishermen.

LATEST LEGISLATION

Young Fishermen's Development Act

In May, the Shareholders' Alliance flew to Washington DC with a handful of Gulf fishermen to walk The Hill and meet with members of Congress about the [Young Fishermen's Development Act](#) (YFDA, [H.R. 1240/ S. 496](#)). The YFDA would make critical funding available to develop training and education programs for the next generation of commercial fishermen. We have been working diligently on this piece of legislation for a number of years with other like-minded [commercial fishing organizations](#) and are happy to report that in July, the Senate Commerce Committee [approved the YFDA](#), an important step forward to getting the bill on the Senate floor for a vote. We greatly appreciate the efforts of Chairman Roger Wicker and the rest of the Committee toward moving the YFDA forward in the legislative process and giving young fishermen more hope for the future.



*Young fisherman Shan Roper Jr.
with Representative Ted Yoho (R-FL)*

Federal Fisheries Disaster Bills

In response to flooding and the Bonnet Carre Spillway opening, Senator Roger Wicker (R-Mississippi) introduced the [Fishery Failures: Urgently Needed Disaster Declarations Act](#) (S. 2346) and Senator Cindy Hyde-Smith

(R-Mississippi) introduced the [Commercial Fishing and Aquaculture Protection Act](#) (S. 2209). Both bills aim to provide rapid financial assistance to fishermen in the case of a natural or man-made disaster; however, the mechanisms by which they would achieve that goal are slightly different between the two bills. The Shareholders' Alliance will monitor the progress of these important bills as they advance through Congress and will keep you updated on any new developments.

ORGANIZATION NEWS

Quota Bank Update



The [Reef Fish Quota Bank](#) is on track to lease over 70,000 pounds of red snapper allocation to eligible fishermen this year. We built this program to help reduce discards in the eastern Gulf and to support the hardworking next generation of reef fish fishermen. At 25 members to-date (in 2019), more fishermen are benefiting from this program than any year since it first began in 2015. If you're interested in learning more and applying to be part of this initiative, check out the updated Quota Bank [website](#). Applications for eligible fishermen are now being accepted for Quarter 4, which has a deadline of October 15, 2019.

Gulf Wild Update

Check out what's new with [Gulf Wild](#) these days, where your seafood comes with certainty!



Shareholders' Alliance Marketplace

We developed [Shareholders' Alliance Marketplace](#), or SAM, to provide fishermen with a dependable and transparent platform to buy or sell quota, permits, and other industry essentials. We believe that having a reliable and transparent marketplace allows fishermen to more easily buy and sell the things they need for their business. Having a trusted online platform makes these transactions simple and straightforward. By managing it as part of the Shareholders' Alliance website, we will provide users the opportunity to access timely news and updates on relevant threats and opportunities for your business and your fishery. The Shareholders' Alliance is working hard to protect what you've built and wants to ensure that you are aware of decisions that are being made that impact your businesses.

Please visit the [site here](#).

The Shareholders' Alliance is the largest organization of commercial snapper and grouper fishermen in the Gulf of Mexico. We work hard to ensure that our fisheries are sustainably managed so our fishing businesses can thrive and our fishing communities can exist for future generations. We are the harvesters that provide much of the American public with a reliable source of domestically caught wild Gulf seafood, and we do this through a philosophy that sustainable seafood and profitable fishing businesses depend on healthy fish populations.

www.shareholdersalliance.org

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