

Mississippi
LEC/LETC State Report – Fall 2022
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Agency Overview

From January 1, 2022, through August 31, 2022, MDMR enforcement officers conducted 95 commercial fishermen intercepts, 489 recreational fishermen intercepts, 425 for-hire intercepts, 1,382 hours of patrol (combined vessel patrol and shore patrol) and boarded 254 vessels. These numbers reflect our efforts from strictly JEA patrols.

Our state season for the recreational harvest of red snapper is still open. We will remain open until our state quota is met. We utilize Tails ‘n’ Scales to monitor our landings.

MDMR Enforcement continues to work with National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) as part of a Joint Enforcement Agreement (JEA) enforcing fisheries regulations in Mississippi and the federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico. NMFS has set several priorities for enforcing and managing the various fisheries in these two zones. These priorities target patrols to the different types of fisheries management criteria in offshore and near-shore fisheries. The areas targeted by NMFS are Turtle Excluder Device (T.E.D.) gear enforcement; the recreational gulf reef fish fishery; the Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) fishery that targets: red snapper, grouper, and tilefish; marine mammal protection patrols; and the Southeast For-Hire Integrated Electronic Reporting Program (SFHIER). MDMR enforcement officers remain active during and after the charter fishing season, ensuring that the federally permitted vessels follow the SFHIER reporting requirements.

Grants/Projects

We are currently in the performance period of a Port Security Grant. We have used this grant to purchase remote monitoring equipment, patrol vessels, dive equipment, and pay the salaries of specially designated Port Security Officers. Officers have received enhanced training in vessel operations and dive techniques aimed at enhancing the security and continuity of Mississippi’s ports.

Enforcement Issues

We are currently fully staffed. While recruiting and retention has been an issue, we recently hired six new enforcement officers. Two were lateral hires from other agencies, three are currently in the academy, and one is pending academy enrollment.

JEAs

Our JEA contract runs from December 10 – December 9 each year. Our total funding is \$418,097.00. We utilize these funds to purchase equipment to conduct federal fisheries enforcement as well as provide additional pay for enforcement personnel.

2022 JEA Summary	
Contract Priority Enforcement Hours	1,276
Contract General Enforcement Hours	864
Contract SEFHIER Hours	168

Regulatory Changes/Pending Legislation

N/A

Outreach/Community Education

As the Covid-19 precautions have all but been eliminated, MDMR Marine Patrol is once again attending and participating in many of the outreach events that take place in the region. Marine Patrol's opportunities for outreach have continued to increase, thus creating more opportunities to interact with and educate the public.

IUU Concerns/Cases

N/A