

Gulf Fishery News

A publication of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council



Fall 2014
Volume 36 Issue 3

Chair and Vice-Chair Elected, New Members Inducted

In August, the Council elected [Kevin Anson](#) of Alabama, as its new Chair. Anson is Chief Marine Biologist for the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources/Marine Resources Division. He has been with the Department for 16 years, and has served as Alabama's representative on the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council since 2008. He is the designee for Chris Blankenship, the Marine Resources Division's Director.



"I look forward to serving as the Council's new Chair and assisting the Council in meeting its responsibilities of managing the Gulf of Mexico's fisheries," said Anson.

Anson would like to focus on improving data used by the Council and enhancing the relationship between managers and stakeholders.



[Roy Williams](#) of Florida was elected Vice-Chair of the Council. Williams served as a Council member for a number of years as the Florida Fish & Wildlife and Conservation Commission (FWC) representative. In 2007, Williams retired from FWC where he was with the Marine Fisheries Management Section.

Williams was appointed to the Council in 2013 and sees his biggest challenge as figuring out how to fairly allocate among users, both among and within fisheries. He is also concerned about how to provide for new entrants in the limited entry fisheries and believes the Council should develop solutions to this problem.

During the Council meeting, Dr. Roy Crabtree, Regional Administrator of NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office, also conducted the investiture ceremony for Pam Dana of Florida, who was reappointed to the Council, as well as two newly appointed members, David Walker of Alabama and Greg Stunz of Texas.

[Pam Dana](#) of Florida was reappointed to the Council to serve her second three-year term. Dana is a lifelong angler and owner of Sure Lure Charter Company. Since being appointed to the Council in 2011, Dana has served on numerous Council committees. She has chaired the Outreach and Education and Mackerel Committees, and served as Vice-Chair of the Coral, Marine Reserves, and AP Selection committees.



Dana is a member of a number of organizations, including the Destin Charter Boat Association, the National Association of Charter Boat Operators, Destin Fishing Fleet, Inc., and Conservative Cooperative of Gulf Fishermen, among others.



[David Walker](#) of Alabama has been a part of the commercial fishing industry since 1984, and is the President of Walker Fishing Fleet. With more than 20 years of experience working with the Gulf Council, Walker has served on the Council's Red Snapper, Reef Fish, Ad Hoc Red Snapper IFQ, Ad Hoc 5-Year Red Snapper IFQ Review, and Ad Hoc Commercial Reef Fish Advisory

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Did you know?

The Gulf Council encourages and accepts public testimony at every stage of the fishery management plan process. Comment opportunities go beyond scoping workshops and public hearings. The Council also takes open public comment during each Council meeting and accepts written comments throughout the process. Written comments can be emailed to: gulfcouncil@gulfcouncil.org, or mailed to:

Gulf of Mexico Fishery
Management Council
2203 N. Lois Avenue
Suite 1100
Tampa, Florida 33607

Questions?

Call Charlene or Emily at
813-348-1630

Continued

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

Doug Gregory
Executive Director

Carrie Simmons
Deputy Director

Appointed Voting Members

Pam Dana Destin, FL 850-650-3212	David Walker Andalusia, AL 334-300-6625
John Sanchez Homestead, FL 786-255-1880	Doug Boyd San Antonio, TX 830-230-5032
Greg Stunz Corpus Christi, TX 361-825-3254	Camp Matens Baton Rouge, LA 225-769-9080
Corky Perret Poplarville, MS 504-722-1366	John Greene Daphne, AL 251-747-2872
Roy Williams Vice-Chair Tallahassee, FL 850-445-0778	Leann Bosarge Pascagoula, MS 228-762-0888
Harlon Pearce Kenner, LA 504-467-3809	

State/Federal Voting Members

Robin Riechers Austin, TX 512-389-4645	Dale Diaz D'Iberville, MS 228-861-3190
Martha Bademan Tallahassee, FL 850-487-0554	Myron Fischer Cut Off, LA 985-632-4525
Kevin Anson Chair Gulf Shores, AL 251-968-7576	Roy Crabtree NMFS SERO 727-824-5301

Non-voting Members

Glenn Constant USF&WS 225-578-4243	Dave Donaldson GSMFC 228-875-5912
RADM Kevin Cook USCG District 504-589-6223	David Hogan OES/OMC 202-647-2335

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New Members

Panels. He also sat on the review panel for the 2013 red snapper stock assessment - SEDAR 31.

Walker also served on the Gulf of Mexico Shareholders' Alliance Board, a group that aims "to unify and strengthen the reef fish industry, achieve sustainability, and accountability through the use of individual fishing quotas to manage the catch." He is a member and co-founder of the Gulf Coast Professional Fishermen, Alabama Co-Chair of Share the Gulf, and a member of the Gulf Fisherman's Association and Fish for America.

Walker understands the importance of fishing to coastal communities and plans to use a fair and balanced approach to fishery management decisions that benefit the health of all renewable living marine resources.

Greg Stunz of Texas is a professor of Marine Biology at Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi. He is also Director of the Center for Sportfish Science and Conservation at the Harte Research Institute, and Endowed Chair for Fisheries and Ocean Health, also at the Harte Research Institute.



Stunz has spent the past 20 years studying marine fisheries and providing science-based data for sustainable fisheries management, and he has served on the Gulf Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee for the past three years. He also serves on the Texas Parks & Wildlife Commission's Coastal Resources Advisory Committee as well as numerous other boards and panels related to fisheries and ocean health.

Stunz has published more than 40 scientific papers along with numerous technical reports directly related to fisheries. He recognizes that fishery management is complex beyond basic biology or scientific understanding, and often involves contentious user conflicts and resource allocation. He believes it is important to provide access to the resource by diverse user groups while promoting conservation and stewardship.



NOAA Seeking Public Comment on Myriad Issues

NOAA Fisheries has announced public comment periods for a number of fishery issues.

Aquaculture

The purpose of this rulemaking is to establish a regional permitting process to manage the development of an environmentally-sound and economically-sustainable aquaculture industry in federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico. A maximum of twenty Gulf aquaculture permits over a period of ten years could be issued under this proposed rule. Find more information [here](#).

You may submit comments on this document by either:

- Visiting <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail:D=NOAA-NMFS-2008-0233>. Click "Comment Now!" to complete the required fields.

Continued

Public Comment

- Sending your comments via U.S. mail to Jess Beck-Stimpert, Southeast Regional Office, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701.

Comments must be received no later than October 27, 2014.

Royal Red Shrimp

The Gulf Council is considering actions to modify the annual catch limit and choose an accountability measure for royal red shrimp. The draft environmental impact statement analyzes the environmental impacts of these proposed actions and is available for review [here](#).

You may submit comments on this document by either:

- Visiting <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail:D=NOAA-NMFS-2014-0030>. Click on "Comment Now!" and complete the required fields.
- Sending your comments via U.S. mail to Susan Gerhart, Southeast Regional Office, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701.

Comments must be received no later than October 6, 2014.

Environmental Impact Statement - Reef Fish Amendment 40

This draft environmental impact statement, developed by NOAA Fisheries in cooperation with the Council, analyzes the effects of creating distinct private-angling and federal for-hire components of the recreational red snapper sector and allocate red snapper resources between these recreational components. Establishing separate components would provide a basis for flexible management approaches tailored to each component and reduce the likelihood for recreational quota overruns, which could jeopardize the rebuilding of the red snapper stock.

The draft environmental impact statement also evaluates how to allocate the recreational red snapper quota between the two components and how season closures provisions would be applied to the two components.

You may submit comments on this document by either:

- Visiting <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail:D=NOAA-NMFS-2014-0107>. Click on "Comment Now!" and complete the required fields.
- Sending your comments via U.S. mail to Susan Gerhart, Southeast Regional Office, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701.

Comments must be received no later than October 20, 2014.

Draft Recovery Plan for Staghorn and Elkhorn Corals

A draft of the recovery plan for staghorn and elkhorn corals is available on the NMFS Web site at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/recovery/plans.htm>. NMFS is seeking public comment and will consider all relevant, substantive comments received during the review period before finalizing the Plan

You may submit comments on this document by either:

- Visiting <http://www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail:D=NOAA-NMFS-2014-0110>. Click on "Comment Now!" and complete the required fields.
- Sending your comments via U.S. mail to Assistant Administrator for Protected Resources, Southeast Regional Office, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701.

Comments must be received no later than October 20, 2014.

October Council Meeting Reminder

The next Council meeting is scheduled for the week of October 20 - 24, 2014, at the Renaissance Battle House in Mobile, Alabama. Please make your reservation under the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council room block to receive the special discounted room rate.

Note that all written comments will be posted on the Council's web site for viewing by Council members and the public.

To help ensure that Council members have sufficient time to consider your written testimony for a specific Council meeting, please submit your comments at least seven business days prior to the start of the Council meeting.

Comments can be submitted online by clicking the thermometer on the Council's homepage - www.gulfcouncil.org. Find your topic of interest and click on the "Submit Your Comments here" link.

Materials submitted to Council members or staff for distribution prior to or during a Council meeting will be treated as all other written comments and will be posted to the web site.

Oral or written communications provided to the Council, its members, or its staff that relate to matters within the Council's purview are public in nature. These communications will be made available to the public in their entirety and will be maintained by the Council as part of the permanent record. Further, knowingly and willfully submitting false information to the Council is a violation of Federal Law.

A draft agenda will be posted on the Gulf Council web site at www.gulfcouncil.org.



Quick Guide to Submitting Online Comments

The Gulf Council wants your input on the many issues under consideration. You can give your input by attending scoping workshops and public hearings held around the Gulf of Mexico. But it's impossible for the Council to hold workshops or hearings in every coastal community, so if you can't make a meeting because it's too far away or because of other commitments, you can watch online presentations and submit comments electronically for each amendment.

- Check it out! Go to www.gulfcouncil.org and click on the thermometer in the middle of the page. From there you can read up on all the pending actions, watch the video presentations, read comments, and submit your own. All comments submitted through the online form are automatically posted on our web site for Council review. Other comments are manually posted every couple of days.

There is also a thermometer for each issue that lets you know where the Council is in the process for that particular amendment, whether its the scoping phase, final action, or implementation.

Let us hear from you!

MANAGEMENT PLANS

Click on the thermometer to:

- review pending fishery management plans and amendments
- review available amendment guides
- review public comments
- submit public comments



Photo of Clyde Jenkins taken by Captain Dalton Kennedy, Due South Charters

Send us Your Fishing Photos

We want to see your favorite fishing photos! Whether from a spear fishing adventure, a charter trip, or a commercial effort, we'd like to see your photos and possibly use them on our web site or in our publications.

Send us your photos and help us build a photo library! To submit your photos, send an e-mail with "Photo Library" in the subject line to gulfcouncil@gulfcouncil.org. Be sure to include your name, address, and phone number, along with a description and proper photo credit, then simply attach the image and send.

Photo descriptions may be edited for grammar, clarity, and/or length. Photos must be in jpeg format and cannot exceed 1.5 MB (200 ppi).

NOTE: By submitting photos, you understand that your photo may be used on our web site, in our newsletter, or in other publications. Photo credit will be given.



Stay in the loop with *Gulf Currents*

Stay up to date on Gulf of Mexico Fishery issues - visit our blog - *Gulf Currents*.

Gulf Currents will keep you in the loop and prepare you to participate effectively in the fishery management process by educating you about current events, possible management considerations, regulatory changes, the fisheries management process, and more.

Check it out at:

<http://gulfcouncil.blogspot.com/>



Study Finds Concurrent Rise and Fall of Fish Lesions and Oil Contamination *from the Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative Web Site*

Florida scientists analyzed over 7,400 Gulf of Mexico fish representing 103 species for skin lesions after fishermen reported diseased fish after the Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

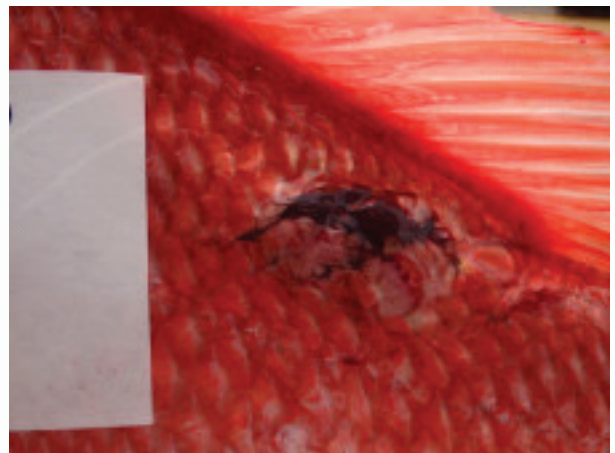
After excluding other potential causes for the lesions, researchers have concluded that oil-related contamination due to the Macondo accident may be the cause. Furthermore, the oil residue in affected fish liver most closely matched the Macondo oil chemical signature as compared with other sources of oil pollution entering the Gulf. Fish caught between 2011 and 2012 experienced a substantial drop in lesion frequency and severity, which coincided with a similar drop in polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon (PAH) metabolites found in fish bile. This suggests that exposure to an elevated hydrocarbon source during 2010 – 2011 is consistent with the increase in fish lesions, while the subsequent decline in hydrocarbon led to their decrease. The researchers published their findings in the July 2014 issue of Transactions of the American Fisheries Society: Prevalence of external skin lesions and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon concentrations in Gulf of Mexico fishes, post-Deepwater Horizon.

Open skin lesions in fish, which are relatively rare in offshore marine fishes, can be influenced by multiple environmental stressors, such as wounds from predators, pathogens, reduced salinity, and contaminants. Gulf fish are chronically exposed to, but can efficiently metabolize, oil contaminants from natural seafloor seeps and anthropogenic sources. Past studies estimate that the average annual input of oil into the Gulf is about 96,000 tons. Oil in the Gulf increased to nearly 700,000 tons after the Deepwater Horizon blowout. In the following winter, fishermen persistently reported lesions in offshore fish, raising concerns that the spill was the cause. This study's goal was to document the frequency and spatial distribution of fish with skin lesions, the level of hydrocarbons in the fish sampled, and the potential source of those hydrocarbons.

In 2011, the team collected over 3,000 fish from 84 sites in oiled and non-oiled areas. They returned in 2012, collecting over 3,400 fish from some original sites and additional sites in areas farther west that had existing oil production, but no evidence of Macondo oil. The majority of their overall catch included Red Snapper, Red Grouper, Gulf Smoothhound, Atlantic Sharpnose Shark, King Snake Eel, and Tilefish.

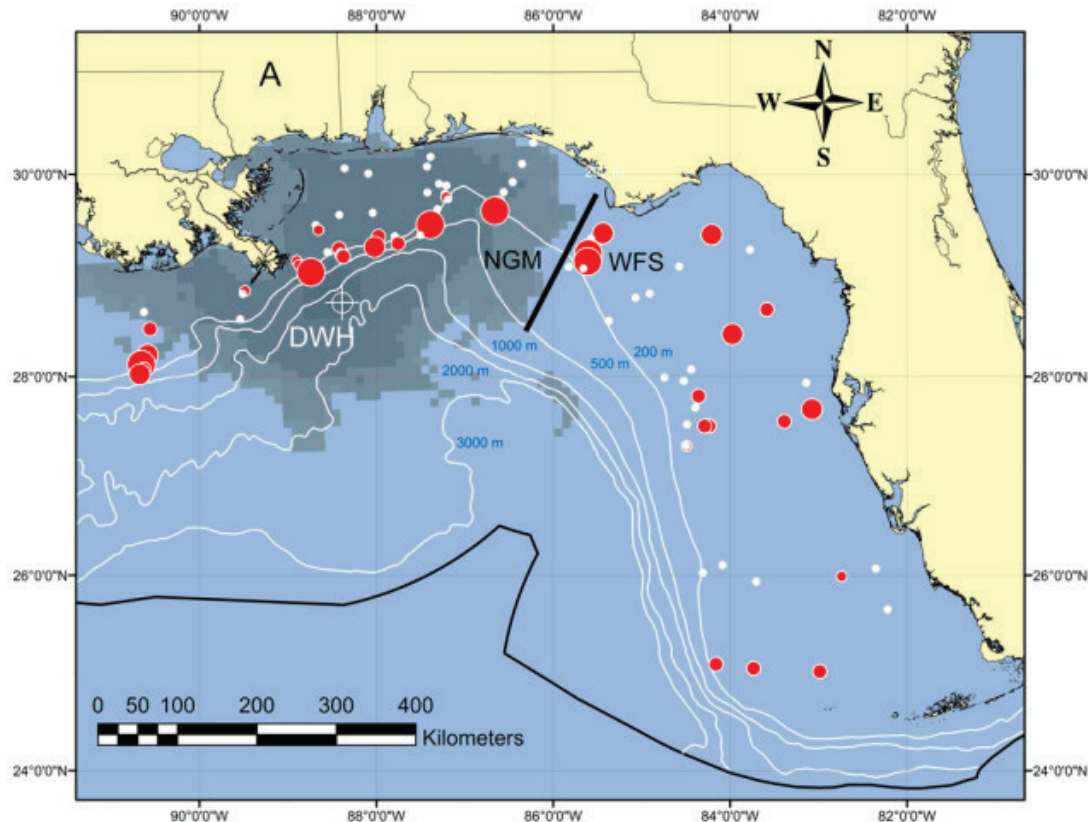
Researchers examined all fish for external skin lesions (ulcers or other eruptions, skin irritations unrelated to mechanical damage); fin rot disease; parasites or tumors on the gills; recent mechanical damage (trauma from the catching process or predators); and other tumors/tumor-like growths on the skin and internal organs. The status of each lesion was evaluated and identified as either an open bloody ulcer, closed skin contusion, healing, or old injury. For Red Snapper and associated species, they extracted muscle, liver, and bile samples. Muscle and liver tissue were analyzed using gas chromatography-mass spectrometry, which detects individual PAH compounds at low levels. Bile was analyzed using a high-performance liquid chromatography-fluorescence method, which determines concentrations of classes of PAH metabolites.

In 2011 sampling, there was a “consistent, relatively high frequency” of skin lesions in some bottom-dwelling species along the continental shelf edge north of the oil spill site; the concentrations of PAHs in liver and muscle were “relatively low” and well below U.S. Food and Drug Administration consumption levels of concern; and there were “relatively high concentrations” of PAH metabolites in bile. By 2012, the overall frequency of lesions in fishes in the vicinity of the Deepwater Horizon had declined 53%, with severity also declining. At the same time, PAH levels in bile were declining by an equivalent percentage.



A close up image of an external skin lesion on a Gulf Red Snapper caught in 2011. (Photo provided by S. Murawski)

Continued



This map details the location of sampling stations and the percent of skin lesions per station during the June to August 2011 surveys. The percent of skin lesions at a station is indicated as follows: white circles=0% and red graduated circles=0.1 - 2.0%, 2.1-4.0%, 4.1-6.0%, and greater than 6% (from smallest to largest). The gray shading is the cumulative distribution of surface oil occurring during the duration of the Deepwater Horizon event. At each 10' square, the number of days oil was observed was multiplied by the daily density of surface oil observed at that location (low=1, moderate=5, high=10) and summed. Oil density per square thus ranges from 0 to 572 "oil days." The heavy black line separates the West Florida Shelf from the northern Gulf of Mexico. (Image provided by S. Murawski)

The average composition of PAHs in Red Snapper liver was "highly correlated with oil collected at the Deepwater Horizon wellhead," despite the nearly one year that elapsed between the end of the spill and sampling, and was "less coherent with other PAH sources" such as natural oil seeps and inputs from rivers in the northern Gulf. The team also ruled out oceanic condition stressors as the cause of lesions by comparing their incidence to recorded salinity and temperature anomalies in the Gulf in 2010 - 2011.

These results led the team to conclude that the lesions were likely caused by an episodic contaminant exposure rather than chronic exposure, though they could not definitively name Macondo oil as the source. "We cannot say with 100 percent certainty that it was the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, but we can say what it was not," said Steven Murawski, marine science professor at the University of South Florida and lead author of this study, "And what it was not was basically everything else we were capable of analyzing."

The study's authors are Steven A. Murawski, William T. Hogarth, Ernst B. Peebles, and Luiz Barbieri.

This research was made possible in part by a grant from BP/The Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative (GoMRI) to the Center for Integrated Modeling and Analysis of Gulf Ecosystems (C-IMAGE). Other funding sources included the National Marine Fisheries Service (NA11NMF4720151- Systematic Survey of Fish Diseases in the Gulf of Mexico to S.A.M. and W.T.H.); the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; and the State of Louisiana.

All research data, findings and publications will be made publicly available. The program was established through a \$500 million financial commitment from BP. For more information, visit <http://gulfresearchinitiative.org/>.



Recipe Rewind

Okay - these recipe were found on BuzzFeed.com under "21 Truly Upsetting Recipes". Enough said!



Here's a less scary recipe for you to try:

Crawfish & Pappardelle Pasta with Ramp Greens Puree and Uni Butter

Recipe by Aaron Burgau, chef-owner of Patois restaurant in New Orleans, and the winning dish at the seventh annual Louisiana Seafood Cook-off.

Ramp Purée:

2 quarts water
12 ramp tops, green part only
1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
Salt and pepper

Uni Butter:

1 lb. high-fat, unsalted butter
8 oz. uni
Salt and pepper

Crawfish Pasta:

12 oz. fresh pappardelle
pasta
1 tbs. canola oil
2 tsp. diced shallot
2 tsp. minced garlic
1/2 lb. crawfish tails
4 tbs. crawfish stock



For the Ramp Purée: Bring 2 quarts of water to a boil. Blanch ramp greens for 10 seconds then shock in ice water. Press greens between two towels to remove excess moisture. To the bowl of a blender or food processor, add blanched ramp greens, olive oil, salt and pepper and blend on high until smooth. Remove to a bowl and set aside.

Prepare the uni butter: Cut butter into small cubes and allow to soften. Add butter, uni, salt and pepper to the bowl of a blender or food processor and blend until smooth. Taste and adjust salt and pepper as needed.

For the crawfish pasta: Bring half-gallon of water to a rolling boil. Add pasta and cook for 3 minutes. Drain. In a sauté pan, add canola oil and place over medium heat. Add shallots and garlic; sweat for 10 seconds. Add crawfish and sauté for another 20 seconds, add stock. Add the cooked pasta and toss well.

Finish the dish: In a large, stainless bowl, add 4 teaspoons of uni butter. Add the prepared crawfish and pasta; toss well. Adjust seasoning. Divide finished pasta into four serving dishes. Garnish each bowl with teaspoon of ramp purée.



The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

Protecting our marine resources

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The Gulf Council would like to hear from you! Please contact us regarding fishery questions, comments, or concerns you would like to see covered in the Gulf Fishery News. Anyone interested in submitting information, such as articles, editorials, or photographs pertaining to fishing or fisheries management, is encouraged to do so. Submissions may be mailed to Charlene Ponce, Public Information Officer, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 2203 North Lois Avenue, Suite 1100, Tampa, FL 33607. Materials can also be sent via fax to 813-348-1711, or by email to charlene.ponce@gulfcouncil.org.

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council is one of eight regional Fishery Management Councils established by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The Council is responsible for the development and modification of fishery management plans (FMPs) that are designed to manage fishery resources in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of the Gulf of Mexico from state boundaries to the 200-mile limit.

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