

Mississippi Gulf Fishing Banks, Inc.

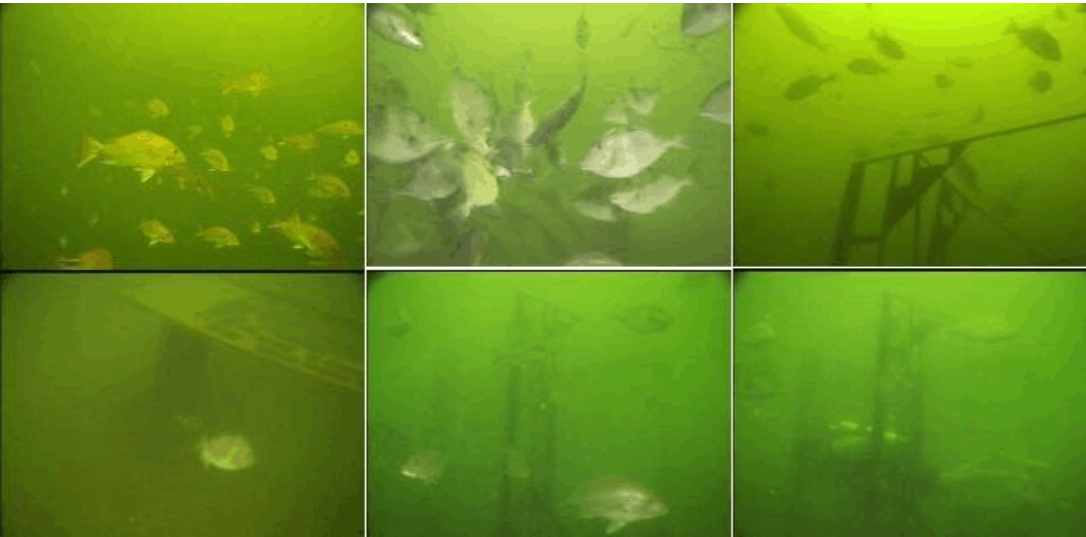
Partial Activity Report for the Period July 11 - August 14, 2003

Summary

During this period, there was 2 Dive Trips conducted. On July 19, a trip was made to the recently deployed Abstract Barge 409F13, 030708 in the north end of FH-13. Video and observations were obtained and revealed this reef is already holding a good concentration of juvenile red snapper and trigger fish. On August 3, a trip was made to FH-13 and FH-2 where video and observations were made of rubble 020703 in FH-13, APC 298F2 in FH-2, the Chicken Coop Towers in FH-2, and the Jackson County Barge in FH-2. Spotter Operations for the month are covered by the DMR under a separate report.

030708 Abstract Barge, 409F13

Position: 30/03.673'N / 88/32.137'W 12452.0/47038.0



On July 19 a visit was made to this new reef, just deployed on July 8. This 130'X45'X6' deck barge was enhanced by welding a mirage of steel designs on the deck. Some of the designs used net webbing in an effort to provide a place for very small fish to escape from predators, but observations revealed all fish seem to avoid the webbing and it seems to provide a negative effect. The taller steel profiles with openings for fish to swim in and out of appear to provide very effective enhancement. Most of the fish congregated near the largest one close to the

end of the barge. This barge was placed near existing low profile concrete deployments and appears to be performing as a aggregator, drawing the fish off the older reefs. Most of the fish hover above the structure indicating there may still be water quality issues near the bottom. However, several reefs visited this month are starting to show sea urchins, arrow crabs, hi-tops, and damsels that had vanished after the hypoxic wave of 2001. While most of the fish were relatively small, it is encouraging to see such production from an 11 day old reef. Fish observations included red snapper (175-200/1-3lbs.), Trigger Fish (50-75/1-2lbs.), Blue Runners (200-250/<1lbs.), and a couple Hi-Tops.

020703 Rubble GCRL-2 NE 264F13

Position: 30°02.404'N/88°30.504'W 12468.4/47032.8-9/29631.8



On August 3, a visit was made to this year old rubble pile placed here for the Gulf Coast Research Lab to use for their red snapper cultivation project. Fish observations included red snapper (50-75/1-3lbs.), Triggerfish (25-50/1-2lbs.), Gag Grouper (4/3-6lbs.), and Tom Tate (10-15). Most of the fish were hovering in the upper mid-water, but several followed to the bottom. The reef appears to be progressing well.



APC 298F2

Following the rubble dive and enroute to the Chicken Coop Towers, it was decided to stop and take some video of this APC in FH-2. Fish observations included Red Snapper (50-75/1-3lbs), Triggerfish (20-25/1-2lbs.), Mangrove Snapper (6-8/1-3lbs.), and Tom Tates (10-15). The reef is progressing well, with encrustation beginning and the fish are freely swimming in and out of the structure. Visibility was not great (5-10 feet), but better than previous attempts of getting video footage.

010125D Chicken Coop Towers 16-19 241F2

Position: 30°05.314'N/88°34.376'W 12428.9 47044.3-2 29604.7



These 3 Steel Towers have a concrete base of about 5 feet square and a steel cage of about 10 feet in height. Deployed in late January of 2001 and visited once in June of 2001, it was deemed time for an inspection. The towers in FH-13 are believed to have been hauled off by a shrimp boat, but these 3 towers still remain. However, two of them have laid over in the sand and no longer stand upright. Nevertheless, they still provide some fish habitat, but not as effective. By laying over, the sand has buried over about 30% or more of the structure. Soft corals were observed attached to the concrete base, but don't seem to attach to the steel. Fish observations included Red Snapper (25-50/1-3lbs.), Triggerfish (4-6/1-2lbs.), Spadefish (50-75/1lbs.), sheephead (1/5-7lbs.), and a large sting ray buried at the base of the reef. Sea Urchins were also observed making a come back here. While these reefs do seem to provide some decent habitat, they seem to be too frail and too small when compared to materials of opportunity.

Other Dives

Following this dive, a dive was made on the Jackson County Barge to obtain video only. It is worth noting that fish observations were good, but fishing pressure does seem evident when compared to other reefs in the area. Also on August 10, a dive was made on 020919 rubble in FH-13 to take some video. Observations were encouraging as many snapper and grouper were in the area and smaller animals like arrow crabs, hi-tops, and damsels were seen making a come back.

