

# Mississippi Gulf Fishing Banks, Inc.

## Partial Activity Report for the Period June 11 - July 8, 2004

### Summary

During this period, there was 1 Reef Monitoring Trip conducted by PRIMOFISH.COM. Spotter Operations for the month may be covered by the DMR under a separate report. On July 3, video and observations were taken of the Casino Magic Barge and a nearby isolated APC (Armored Personnel Carrier) 316F1/APC9D.

### 021119 Casino Magic Barge, 324F1

**Position: 30°03.147'N / 88°36.448'W 12408.0/47035.5/29574.9**

**Bow: 30°03.128'N / 88°36.445'W Stern: 30°03.166'N / 88°36.453'W**

It was desired to get observations and video of some of the armored personnel carriers (APC) and the Casino Magic Barge. Upon arrival a boat was already crowding the barge so a nearby APC was visited first. This APC is located at 30/03.119N/88/36.541W within a field of scattered APCs to the west of the barge. It is identified as 316F1/APC9D on the deployment report. It was hoped to visit 2 or 3 of them and possibly tie a line between them to aide future studies, but limited visibility hampered that effort and only the one APC was visited. The year and a half old reef showed to be progressing nicely. Fish observed included Red Snapper (75-100/1-3lbs.), Sheepshead (4-6/1-5lbs.), Triggerfish (2/1-2 lbs.), and TomTates. Marine fouling was taking hold with Urchins and Hi-Tops setting up residence. In fact, marine fouling was much more significant here when compared with the APCs on the deck of the nearby barge. The barge and its occupant APCs showed very little marine fouling taking hold for reasons unknown. One speculation may be electrolysis between the aluminum APC and the steel barge, but some studies may be warranted to determine the cause. The observations of the barge showed fewer concentrations of game fish but more mid-water fish such as spadefish, hardtails, and other baitfish. The presence of the APCs on the deck did not seem to enhance the reef significantly, however, fish did make use of them when enticed to that location. Populations of fish did not seem to prefer that area over other parts of the barge when first approached. However, the wave attenuator structure that runs the length of the barge does seem to provide significant enhancement. Fish were observed making use of it's presence and preferred to stay within it's proximity. This barge was last visited on May 24, 2003. Comparative observations showed fewer red snapper, redfish, and mackerel. While growth was reportedly progressing well at that time, comparing pictures reveal little growth difference since that visit. Also noted was a significant amount of fouled fishing line, tackle, and lost anchors, indicating the higher utilization of this reef by fishermen and probably accounts for the decreased game fish sightings. In summary, the comparative observations of this trip indicate that it may be more productive to make individual reefs with future APC deployments rather than place them on a barge deck. However, the structure does provide some added interest for divers visiting the barge.

