

# Mississippi Gulf Fishing Banks, Inc.

## Partial Activity Report for the Period August 13 - September 9, 2004

### Summary

During this period, there were 2 Reef Monitoring Trips. On August 22, a trip was made to the Abstract Barge in FH-13 and on September 4, a trip was made to Rubble 020703 (GCRL-NE) in FH-13. Spotter Operations for the month may be 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**

Another visit was made to this reef in an effort to further evaluate the damage caused by a shrimp trawl noted in July. Previous visits were met with poor visibility, but this attempt was greeted with much better conditions. The observations revealed that some of the lower profile FADs were still intact and much of the reef was still being enhanced. However, the tallest structure was toppled and the net itself is posing some problems as 8 fish were observed entangled in the net. These included Red Snapper, Triggerfish, and Spadefish. Four of the fish were still breathing and were successfully released. It was also noted that some of the netting that was used to enhance the reef was also causing similar issues due to it being torn from its original position by the trawl and is now also acting as a trap. As far as overall fish populations, they were very good, although the size of the fish are still somewhat small due to the reef's young age. Sightings included Spadefish (150-200), small Triggerfish (75-100), small Red Snapper (125-150), Blue Runners (150-200), Bluefish (25-30), Mangrove Snapper (20-25), Gag Grouper (8-10/4-12lbs). Also smaller baitfish, Hi-Tops, Urchins, and Damsels were noted taking residence. Overall the reef is doing well for a 1 year old reef, but it may be desirable to discuss a project of removing the shrimp trawl and other netting from the reef. It is evident that the enhancement structures added to the deck of this barge were very worthwhile.



### 020703 Rubble, GCRL2 NE, 264F13

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

On September 4, a trip was made to Rubble 020703 in an effort to collect video and make observations. This rubble was part of 4 placements made for the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory back in 2002 for their red snapper release projects. The reef appeared to be doing well in the area of fish recruitment. Fish observations included Red Snapper (1-5lbs/200-250), small Triggerfish (50-75), Gag Grouper (1-8lbs/6-8), Warsaw Grouper (5lbs/1), and a Scamp (~2lbs). Baitfish sightings included Blue Runners (100-150) and Tomtates (25-30). Damsels and Urchins were seen, but not many arrow crabs. As is typical, a lost shrimp net was entangled in the reef. The maturity of this reef compared to the Abstract Barge was noted (1 year older) as some of the Red Snapper were of keeper size and the Grouper were larger. There was not a great deal of marine fouling on the rubble, but some soft corals were seen and several Urchins were taking residence.

