

# Mississippi Gulf Fishing Banks, Inc.

## Activity Report for the Period August 9 - September 13, 2012

### Activity Summary

During this period there was 1 Reef Monitoring Trip. On August 25, a dive monitoring trip was made to assess reefs in FH-2. Visits were made to the Colle Tug Boat (950809/147F2), the Corps Barge (011114/259F2), the Marguerite Culverts (090930/508F2), and the Bill Walker Pogey Boat (60F2).

### 950809 Herman Colle Tug Boat 147F2

**Position: 30°05.298'N 88°34.639'W**

This Tug Boat was sunk on August 8, 1995 and sits upright in about 57 feet of water toward the west end of FH-2. During a August 2000 visit it was reported that the wheel house had been torn off, probably by Hurricane Georges in 1998, and lays in front of the bow. At that time, the Smoke Stack still was present and gave a bottom relief of 20 feet. This visit showed much more deterioration, probably due to Hurricane Katrina in 2005. No Smoke Stack, but the lower wheel house is still present and penetrable. There is only a foot or two of freeboard around the perimeter. Growth and encrustation is comparable to nearby reefs. Not a large amount of big game fish, but many juvenile red snapper and baitfish as well as Hi-Hats and Sand Bass. There has always been a higher concentration of shells on this reef.

### 011114 Corps Barge 259F2

**Center Position: 30°04.776'N 88°34.608'W**

This 200 foot work barge was sunk on November 14, 2001 in the southwest corner of FH-2 in 58 feet of water. This barge was once used as a work barge by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The vessel had sunk sometime back in Bayou Portage, Biloxi, and was raised as part of a derelict vessel cleanup program directed by the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources. The bow is facing in a southwest direction and the coordinates were recorded at 30°04.770'N/88°34.624'W. The Stern at 30°04.785'N/88°34.592'W. The Vessel used to have a second story to it that has since been ripped off by Storms, leaving many large square openings on her deck, and dropping the relief by 15 feet. This visit showed much vegetative growth on the deck along with soft corals. Much of this growth has an outer layer of soot and/or sedimentation clinging to it. Fish sightings included 2 Cobia (20-30lbs), Red Snapper (50-75/1-20lbs several large ones), Triggerfish (6-8), Mangrove Snapper (6-8), Sheepshead (4-6), Flounder (1), Spadefish (50-75), as well as a pair of spotfin butterflies, several cocoa damsels, and sea anenomes. Baitfish such as Cigar Minnows, Glass Minnows, and Tomtates were abundant. Water depth measurements were taken as follows: Min 49', Max 65' under Port Stern, surrounding 57', Port Stern Deck 57', Starboard Stern Deck 56', Center Deck 54'. This 12 year old reef is doing very well.

### 090930 Marguerite Culverts 508F2

**Position: 30°05.041'N 88°33.432'W**

These Culverts were deployed just Northeast of the old Marguerite Barge in FH-2 on September 30, 2009. This reef is a little bit scattered around the given coordinates. The Vessel was anchored during this visit at 3005.037 8833.429. The reef is doing well proving to be a good home for a large population of Red Snapper (75-100/2-20lbs.) many of which are over 10 pounds. In addition, Triggerfish, Sheepshead, Mangrove Snapper, and a healthy population of glass minnows and tomtates were observed as well as a lone spotfin butterfly. A large deceased Sea Biscuit sand dollar was also collected.

### 700101 Bill Walker Pogey Boat 60F2

**Position: 30°05.247'N 88°33.157'W Stern, 30°05.256'N 88°33.169'W Bow**

This is probably one of the oldest still viable reefs within MGFB's sites. When FH-2 was created, it's boundaries were created to encompass the Bill Walker, Raven, Marguerite Barge, and the WaterSpout Shrimptoat. Reportedly, the Bill Walker was deployed in the 1960's before actual reef site boundaries were required. This Vessel predates my involvement with MGFB so if anyone has any historical information to add, please comment on it. I first dove this reef in the 1980's and while it is reportedly a Pogey Boat, it's features did not look like any current Pogey Boat. It more resembles what I have heard called a Wire Boat or even a shrimp boat. Anyway, the Storms over the years have broken this Vessel into at least 2 pieces and this piece looks like the Stern Section or part of the Hold. It is very low to the bottom, but it still has enough crevices and holes to attract some larger Red Snapper as seen toward the end of the video. Depth measurements were 58' on the Deck and 61' on the bottom. Fish observations included both juvenile and adult Red Snapper, as well as Glass Minnows, Tomtates, Hi-Hats, Sand Bass, and Cigar Minnows.