



GOMESA PHASE II PROJECT FUNDING

Request for Funding FY2026

Submission ID: #202507141335

PROJECT SUMMARY

1. Title of Project

Mississippi Coastal Fishery Resource Assessment Program

2. Location of Project

Jackson, Harrison, and Hancock Counties 703 East Beach Drive Ocean Springs, MS

3. Requesting Organization:

University of Southern Mississippi

4. Requesting Agency Representative

a. Name:

Erica Kennedy

b. Phone:

601-266-4119

d. Email:

ORA-PAM@usm.edu

c. Address:

118 College Drive #5157

Hattiesburg Mississippi

5. Funding Requested:

\$709869

6. Have any other State or Federal funding sources been identified for the project?

No

7. If yes, enter amount and source of additional funds:

\$

Source of Additional Funds:

8. Total Project Funds

\$709869



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9. Provide Brief Project Description/Overview:

This project proposes to continue the independent scientific and management efforts that have been conducted annually by USM's Center for Fisheries Research and Development. These efforts are all coordinated and requested by the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources and are essential for the effective management of Mississippi's coastal fisheries.

Specific components of this proposal are:

MISSISSIPPI STOCK ASSESSMENT - Compile data and conduct a stock assessment on the species of MDMR request, to aid in enhanced management of coastal finfish.

FISHERY TRAWL MONITORING - This long-term monitoring trawl effort is in place to support species-specific and ecosystem level assessments and track species/population variability in Mississippi Sound waters.

FISHERY ACOUSTIC TELEMETRY - USM and MDMR have established an acoustic array in Mississippi waters. This array allows for monitoring of movement patterns, habitat utilization and population connectivity of target fish species.

REEF FISH VIDEO MONITORING - This video recording survey will target important reef sites in the Mississippi Bight following GFisher protocols. Resultant video will be assessed for species and max n.

EDUCATIONAL VIDEO: SAFE FISH HANDLING - Short videos will be developed to educate the public on safe handling, tagging, and release efforts of coastal species, as well as to educate the public on how ethical fishing activities can enhance the sustainability of our sport fish species.

10. LIST Project Goals/Objectives:

MISSISSIPPI STOCK ASSESSMENT PANEL

- 1) Combine and coordinate data for assessment of species of MDMR interest
- 2) Conduct an assessment of the stock of interest
- 3) Provide MDMR with management scenarios as well as research recommendations to improve future assessments

FISHERY TRAWL MONITORING

- 1) Conduct routine trawl sampling in the Mississippi Sound and adjacent waters
- 2) Provide catch data to MDMR

REEF FISH VIDEO MONITORING

- 1) Coordinate a sampling universe and frequency with MDMR
- 2) Conduct the video recording survey
- 3) Read the resultant video
- 4) Provide data to MDMR

FISHERY ACOUSTIC TELEMETRY

- 1) Maintain the established acoustic array
- 2) Provide download data to the Andres lab

EDUCATIONAL VIDEO: SAFE FISH HANDLING

- 1) Develop short educational videos
- 2) Provide to MDMR for social media or web posting

11. Which of the following authorized uses set forth in the GOMESA Act does this project fall under? Explain SPECIFICALLY and in detail how the project meets the required criteria. Check all that apply - At least one must be checked.



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(A) Projects and activities for the purposes of coastal protection, including conservation, coastal restoration, hurricane protection, and infrastructure directly affected by coastal wetland losses

This project has and will continue to provide MDMR with the data that is essential to make effective management decisions. We have worked in collaboration with MDMR for decades to target and collect the data needed to set fishing limits that will ensure the conservation of Mississippi's fisheries resources.

(B) Mitigation of damage to fish, wildlife, or natural resources.

The proposed project components directly address mitigation of damage to fish, wildlife, or natural resources. These projects will continue to provide the necessary data to ensure sustainability of Mississippi natural resources. They will also provide a means to analyze the impacts to marine resources from environmental and anthropogenic factors when/if they occur.

(C) Implementation of a federally-approved marine, coastal, or conservation management plan

(D) Mitigation of the impact of Outer Continental Shelf activities through funding of onshore infrastructure projects.



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12. Project Timetable/Milestones:

The following timetable/milestones will be conducted for each project year. Each project component is listed:

MISSISSIPPI STOCK ASSESSMENT PANEL

Month 1-2: Identify stocks in need of assessment, in collaboration with the MDMR

Months 4-6: Evaluate the scientific data available and identify data gaps in the indices of relative abundance and life-history information needed to complete a robust and defensible (to peer review) stock assessment

Month 8: Address data inadequacies and recommend protocols and methods to address them

Month 11-12: Evaluate current assessment models used for understanding the stock under consideration

Month 12: Conduct assessments and present results to MDMR

Month 12: Provide MDMR with management scenarios as well as research recommendations for future assessments

FISHERY TRAWL MONITORING

Months 1-2: Order necessary gear and prepare equipment for sampling; train technicians

Months 1-12: Conduct sampling efforts

Months 6-11: QA/QC data, combine data with previous project years, conduct analysis.

Months 11-12: Submit final project report

REEF FISH VIDEO MONITORING

Month 1-3: Calibrate video pod, finalize protocols, conduct trial sea day

Months 3-10: Conduct survey based on protocol, read videos from survey, QAQC

Months 10-12: Analyze data and submit final report

FISHERY ACOUSTIC RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT

Month 1: Discuss current array placement and potential shift in scope

Months 1-12: Routine maintain deployed array and download data

Month 12: Submit downloaded data to Andres lab

EDUCATIONAL VIDEO: SAFE FISH HANDLING

Months 1-2: Meet with visual team to plan videos

Months 2-6: Conduct vessel time to obtain clips

Months 2-8: Generate digital media and voice overs

Months 8-11: Compile and finalize production

Month 12: Offer videos for posting

13. Project Timing

Short-term (3 year or less)



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APPLICATION SUMMARY QUESTIONNAIRE

14. Current status of architectural/engineering plans & specifications for this project (if applicable):

Group 1:

Group 2:

n/a

Funds not budgeted

15. In what way does this project meet the goals and objectives of the Department of Marine Resources, which includes enhancing, protecting and conserving the marine interest of Mississippi for present and future generations.?

This project proposes to continue the independent scientific and management efforts that have been conducted annually by USM's Center for Fisheries Research and Development. These efforts are all coordinated and requested by the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources and are essential for the effective management of Mississippi's coastal fisheries.

Specific components of this proposal are:

MISSISSIPPI STOCK ASSESSMENT - Compile data and conduct a stock assessment on the species of MDMR request, to aid in enhanced management of coastal finfish.

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16. Estimated number of years to completion:

1

17. Estimated Completion Date:

6/30/2027

18. Prioritize if your agency has submitted multiple projects:

n/a



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BUDGET

Category	Total
Salaries	387636
Travel	7010
Architecture & Engineering	0
Legal	0
Consulting	0
Construction	0
Site Work	0
Equipment	0
Indirects	214873
Other	100350
Total	709869

Attachments

1. cfrd_gomesa_mdmr_assessment-program-application_07.2025---signed_flattened.pdf
2. cfrd_gomesa_mdmr_budget_07.2025.pdf
3. sow_gomesa-mscfrap-fy26.pdf

I hereby certify under penalty of perjury that all information contained in this application packet is true and correct. I have not knowingly or intentionally provided any false information. I understand that a false statement on this application may be grounds for rejection of my application or termination of the award. In addition, a false statement may be punishable under applicable state or federal laws, which may also result in a fine and/or imprisonment.

I certify that the above referenced agency / entity has given me the authority to submit this application.

Name

Phone

Date

Cassidy Jacquet

228-818-8821

07/14/2025

CFRD Mississippi Coastal Fishery Resource Assessment Program FY26

Total per sub-project:

Stock Assessment	111,442
Trawl Monitoring	138,687
Acoustics	186,468
Reef Fish Video	145,339
Educational Video	127,934
TOTAL	709,869

Categories for GOMESA App:

Salary + fringe	387,636
Travel	7,010
Equipment	0
Indirect	214,873
Other	100,350
TOTAL	709,869

Categories for Internal record:

Salary	291,490
Fringe	96,146
Commod	33,820
Travel	7,010
OTCSVC	480
RENTS	65,250
Equip	0
Comcat	800
Indirect	214,873

PIs
Project Title

Jill Hendon, Robert Leaf, Jeremy Higgs
Mississippi Stock Assessment Panel
CFRD Mississippi Coastal Fishery Resource Assessment Program FY26

Year 1

SALARIES	Months	
Jill Hendon	1	10,029
Robert Leaf (summer)	1	9,818
Jeremy Higgs	1	7,420
Research Scientist or Associate	1	6,563
Graduate Assistant (LEAF)	12	25,200
	Sub	59,029

FRINGE	%	
Jill Hendon	26.00%	2,607
Robert Leaf (summer)	30.05%	2,950
Jeremy Higgs	33.34%	2,474
Research Scientist or Associate	34.32%	2,252
Graduate Assistant (LEAF)	5.57%	1,403
	Sub	11,686

TOTAL PERSONNEL 70,715

Travel

Local Travel Mileage @ \$0.70/mi	200
MS AFS (Registrations \$100; lodging \$300; per diem \$150, total per person \$550, total request is \$1,100 for 2 people)	1,100
GSMFC Biennial meeting (Registrations \$50; lodging \$300; mileage \$100, per diem \$350, \$800 per person, for two people \$1,600)	1,600
Total Travel	2,900

PROJECT SUPPLIES

Lab Consumables	200
TOTAL PROJECT SUPPLIES	200

CONTRACTUAL SERVICES

Dropbox (n = 1)	180
Adobe Acrobat Pro (n=1)	300
TOTAL CON SERV	480

COMMUNICATIONS 0

BOAT RENTALS 0

TUITION 0

TOTAL DIRECT COSTS 74,295

F&A (Indirect) 50% MTDC 37,147

TOTAL PROJECTS COSTS 111,442

PI
Project Title

Jill Hendon, Jeremy Higgs
Monitoring Mississippi's Marine Resources
CFRD Mississippi Coastal Fishery Resource Assessment Program FY26

	Year 1	
	Months	
SALARIES		
J Hendon	0.5	5,014
J Higgs	1	7,420
L Collins	4	15,361
TBD Tech	4	13,297
TBD Tech	4	11,726
	Sub	52,819
FRINGE	%	
J Hendon	26.00%	1,304
J Higgs	33.34%	2,474
L Collins	39.86%	6,123
TBD Tech	41.94%	5,577
TBD Tech	44.01%	5,161
	Sub	20,639
TOTAL PERSONNEL		73,458
TRAVEL		1,500
Truck Use (1,500mi @ \$1.00/mile) (CFRD towing mileage rate \$1.00/mi)		1,500
COMMODITIES/SUPPLIES		1,500
Field and Lab Supplies		1,000
YSI Consumables		500
COMMUNICATIONS		0
EQUIPMENT (\$5,000)		0
PARTICIPANT COSTS		0
PROFESSIONAL FEES		0
SUBCONTRACTS		0
CONTRACTUAL SERVICES		0
TUITION		0
MODIFIED TOTAL DIRECT COSTS		76,458
F&A (Indirect) 50% MTDC		38,229
BOAT RENTALS		24,000
CFRD Grav I: 30 @ \$800/day		
TOTAL PROJECTS COSTS		138,687

PI Jill Hendon, Jeremy Higgs
 Project Title Acoustic Telemetry of MS Fishes
 Date GOMESA MCFRAP FY26

Year 1

SALARIES	Months		
Jill Hendon	10,029	0.5	5,015
Jeremy Higgs	7,420	1	7,420
Paul Grammer	4,277	4	17,108
Caleb Wilson	2,774	4	11,095
Angie Hoover	4,186	4	16,744
		Sub	57,381

FRINGE	Fringe Rate		
Jill Hendon	26.00%		1,304
Jeremy Higgs	33.34%		2,474
Paul Grammer	38.50%		6,587
Caleb Wilson	45.01%		4,993
Angie Hoover	38.76%		6,490
		Sub	21,847

TOTAL PERSONNEL 79,229

TRAVEL	Miles	Rate	1,750
Truck mileage	1750	1	1,750
(CFRD towing mileage rate \$1.00)			

COMMODITIES/SUPPLIES			29,200
Batteries (60x\$20)	60	20	1200
Array consumables (e.g., shackles, cable, anchors)			3000
Receivers (10 @ \$2,500ea)	10	2500	25000

COMMUNICATIONS 800
 Innovasea shipping

EQUIPMENT (\$5,000) 0

PARTICIPANT COSTS 0

PROFESSIONAL FEES 0

SUBCONTRACTS 0

CONTRACTUAL SERVICES 0

TUITION WAIVER (USM) 0

MODIFIED TOTAL DIRECT COSTS 110,979

F&A (Indirect) 50% MTDC 55,489

BOAT RENTALS 20,000
 CFRD Grav I - 25 days @ \$800/day

TOTAL PROJECTS COSTS 186,468

PI
Project Title

Jill Hendon, Jeremy Higgs
Reef Fish Video
CFRD Mississippi Coastal Fishery Resource Assessment Program FY26

		Year 1
SALARIES	Months	
J Hendon	2	20,057
Tiffany Weidner	5	25,373
Dyan Gibson	2	7,011
P Grammer	1	4,277
Technician	1	2,932
Technician	1	2,932
	Sub	62,581
FRINGE	%	
J Hendon	26.00%	5,215
Tiffany Weidner	36.61%	9,289
Dyan Gibson	41.14%	2,884
P Grammer	38.50%	1,647
Technician	44.01%	1,290
Technician	44.01%	1,290
	Sub	21,615
TOTAL PERSONNEL		84,196
TRAVEL		210
Truck Use (300 mi @ \$0.70/mile)		210
COMMODITIES/SUPPLIES		1,920
Field/camera supplies		1,420
YSI Consumables		500
COMMUNICATIONS		0
EQUIPMENT (\$5,000)		0
PARTICIPANT COSTS		0
PROFESSIONAL FEES		0
SUBCONTRACTS		0
CONTRACTUAL SERVICES		0
TUITION		0
MODIFIED TOTAL DIRECT COSTS		86,326
F&A (Indirect) 50% MTDC		43,163
BOAT RENTALS		15,850
R/V Jim Franks - 5) 12-hr days @\$3,170		
TOTAL PROJECTS COSTS		145,339

PI: Hendon, Jill
Co-PIs: Higgs, Jeremy
Proposal Title: Fish Safe Handling and Release Educational Videos
Agency: MDMR - GOMESA MCFRAP FY26
Start Date: 7/1/2026
End Date: 6/30/2027

		Year 1	
		Agency	USM
SALARY (SALARY)	Monthly Pay Rate	# of Mos	# of Mos
Jill Hendon	10,030	1	0
Jeremy Higgs	7,420	1	0
Brandt Sleeper	6,274	2	0
Austin Lindsey	3,276	2	0
Tavia Marinovich (PT)	1,977	4	0
Paul Grammer	4,277	2	0
CFRD Tech TBD	3,334	2	0
	Subtotal	59,680	0
FRINGE (FRINGE)			
Jill Hendon	26.00%	2,608	0
Jeremy Higgs	33.34%	2,474	0
Brandt Sleeper	34.68%	4,352	0
Austin Lindsey	42.17%	2,763	0
Tavia Marinovich (PT)	26.86%	2,124	0
Paul Grammer	38.50%	3,293	0
CFRD Tech TBD	41.16%	2,745	0
	Subtotal	20,359	0
TOTAL PERSONNEL		80,039	0
COMMODITIES (COMMOD)		1,000	0
Field and lab supplies			
COMMUNICATIONS (COMCAT)		0	0
CONTRACTUAL SERVICES (OTCSVC)		0	0
PROFESSIONAL FEES (PROFES)		0	0
TRAVEL (TRAVEL)		650	0
Local mileage - 300mi @ \$1 mi towing		300	
Local mileage - 500mi @ \$0.70 mi		350	
EQUIPMENT (EQUIP) (>\$5,000)		0	0
PARTICIPANT COSTS (PARTIC)		0	0
RENTS (RENTS)		5,400	0
CFRD Grav I - 5 days @\$800/day		4,000	
Local Fisherman Charter Rental - 2 half days @\$700		1,400	
SUBCONTRACTS (SUBCON) (F&A charged on first \$25K/sub)		0	0
Sub A (add total sub amount; need separate detailed budget)		0	0
Sub B (add total sub amount; need separate detailed budget)		0	0
Sub C (add total sub amount; need separate detailed budget)		0	0
TUITION (SCHOL)		0	0
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS		87,089	0
MTDC		81,689	0
F&A (INDIRT) MTDC Rate* =		50%	40,845
*Adjust % as needed			
TOTAL PROJECTS COSTS		127,934	0

Proposed Academic-Agency Partnership to Support GOMESA Priorities
Mississippi Coastal Fishery Resource Assessment Program - FY26
The University of Southern Mississippi, Center for Fisheries Research and Development
As guided by the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources

This project, Mississippi Coastal Fishery Resource Assessment Program, proposes to continue the independent scientific and management efforts that have been conducted annually for decades by The University of Southern Mississippi (USM), Center for Fisheries Research and Development (CFRD). These efforts are all coordinated and requested by the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR) and are essential for the effective management of Mississippi's coastal fisheries.

PROGRAMMATIC COMPONENTS:

MISSISSIPPI STOCK ASSESSMENT PANEL – Compile data and conduct a stock assessment on species of MDMR request, to aid in enhanced management of coastal finfish and shellfish resources. Investment in improved data sources and stock assessments routinely returns a high yield on investment, as constraints on quotas, seasons and bag limits primarily come from precautionary - or misinformed - management as an outcome of inadequate data and assessment resources. Assessment actions will be coordinated with and directed by the MDMR Office of Marine Fisheries. Deliverables will include peer-reviewed assessments of the MDMR-identified fishery stock, including details on assessment construction, documentation and results and evaluation of peer-review comments.

FISHERY TRAWL MONITORING – This long-term monitoring effort is in place to support species-specific and ecosystem level assessments and serve as a source of baseline data for Mississippi resources. Efforts allow MDMR to observe interannual variability in species dynamics and have a sound means for baseline data when environmental disturbances occur (i.e. hurricane, Bonnet Carré opening, oil spill) to inform impact and recovery efforts. Deliverable will include a final report for trawl efforts.

FISHERY ACOUSTIC TELEMETRY – USM and MDMR have established an acoustic array in Mississippi waters. This array allows for monitoring of movement patterns, habitat utilization and population connectivity of target fish species. These data are helpful in informing management strategies for ensuring sustainable population levels in state waters. This project will include tagging of target species (as designated by MDMR), maintaining and regularly downloading the array, and analyzing resultant data. Deliverable will include a summary of tagged fish and their respective movement patterns.

REEF FISH VIDEO MONITORING – For this effort, we will conduct a video monitoring survey at a survey universe encompassing the Mississippi Bight following GFisher protocols. Resultant video will be assessed for species and max n. Deliverable will include an analysis of the survey and summary of the resultant data.

EDUCATIONAL VIDEO: SAFE FISH HANDLING – Develop short videos to educate the public on safe handling, tagging, and release efforts of coastal species. Videos will also be developed to educate the public on how ethical fishing activities can enhance the sustainability of our sport fish species. These videos will be appropriate for social media and web platforms.

Full Program Cost Estimate
Mississippi Coastal Fishery Resource Assessment Program - FY26

MS Stock Assessment Panel	\$111,442
Fishery Trawl Monitoring	\$138,687
Fishery Acoustic Telemetry	\$186,468
Reef Fish Video Monitoring	\$145,339
Educational Video	\$127,934
Total	\$709,869