



ENHANCE \* PROTECT \* CONSERVE

# GOMESA PHASE II PROJECT FUNDING

## Request for Funding FY2026

Submission ID: #202509081350

### PROJECT SUMMARY

#### 1. Title of Project

Artificial Reef Enhancement MS Sound

#### 2. Location of Project

State and Federal waters off the coast of Mississippi

#### 3. Requesting Organization:

Mississippi Department of Marine Resources

#### 4. Requesting Agency Representative

a. Name:

Travis Williams

b. Phone:

2285234110

d. Email:

travis.williams@dmr.ms.gov

c. Address:

1141 Bayview Ave

Biloxi Mississippi

#### 5. Funding Requested:

\$1200000

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

Yes

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

\$200000

#### Source of Additional Funds:

In-kind match of donated secondary use construction materials

#### 8. Total Project Funds

\$1400000



# GOMESA PHASE II PROJECT FUNDING

## Request for Funding FY2026

Submission ID: #202509081350

ENHANCE \* PROTECT \* CONSERVE

### 9. Provide Brief Project Description/Overview:

Currently, Mississippi has 15 permitted offshore reef sites which encompass approximately 16,000 acres of water bottom. These reef locations range in size from eight (8) acres to 10,000 acres. To date the material used for offshore reefs consists of both concrete rubble and culverts, material of design (Reef Balls and Florida Limestone Pyramids), armored personnel carriers, steel hull vessels including barges, decommissioned oil and gas platforms and jackets. In Mississippi, artificial reefs are used to conserve natural habitat and the species that occupy it, enhance threatened habitat, and ensure sustainability of recreational and commercial fisheries.

The requested funds will provide the Artificial Reef Program with a means for the accepting donated secondary use materials from local contractors for construction of Artificial Reefs. As infrastructure projects take place along the Gulf Coast, the Artificial Reef Program will work with area contractors to accept the materials that are suitable for artificial reef construction. The funds will also be used to identify vessels and other steel structures that can be utilized as artificial reef habitat.

The funds will provide for the deployment of donated concrete culverts and manholes that are stored at the Artificial Reef Staging Site in Gulfport, MS. These materials will create and enhance habitat for fish and invertebrate species to assist in their overall conservation and management. The materials will be deployed in permitted zones as needed to enhance fishery resources to the maximum extent practicable.

### 10. LIST Project Goals/Objectives:

- Support and enhance fish and invertebrate species important to recreational and commercial fisheries
- Facilitate access and utilization by Mississippi's recreational and commercial fishermen
- Enhance recreational diving opportunities
- Reduce user group conflicts by expanding artificial reef footprints in marine waters
- Promote the use of artificial reefs as management tools
- Ensure that artificial reefs meet the objectives for which they are built
- Minimize environmental risks and risks to personal health and property
- Be consistent with the generally accepted principles of international-law and not create any unreasonable obstruction to navigation

### 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.

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

The existing sand and mud sea floor in the proposed artificial reef zone is void of any hard surface or structure. There is no habitat to which sessile organisms might establish, nor cover for motile organisms to use as protection. The proposed artificial reef will diversify habitat in the area and therefore increase diversity and richness. The hard structure will provide large surface area for invertebrate attachment. The complex structure with its relief will provide many holes and cervices for



ENHANCE ★ PROTECT ★ CONSERVE

# GOMESA PHASE II PROJECT FUNDING

## Request for Funding FY2026

Submission ID: #202509081350

a variety of species to shelter in.

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

The reef complexes will support and enhance populations of important fish and invertebrate species associated with artificial reefs that are typically exploited by recreational and commercial fishing activities, and this is accomplished by expanding artificial reef habitats. This could increase the available Red Snapper harvest of mature adults by more than 15,000 pounds per year. This increase would have an economic impact adding to Mississippi's economy more than a 250 thousand dollars per year in fishing expenditures and durable goods.

**(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.**



ENHANCE ★ PROTECT ★ CONSERVE

# GOMESA PHASE II PROJECT FUNDING

## Request for Funding FY2026

Submission ID: #202509081350

### 12. Project Timetable/Milestones:

Year 1- Begin working with local contractors to accept donated secondary use materials at the staging site.

Year 2- Continue working with contractors on the logistics of delivering and offloading materials at the staging site.

Year 3- Initiate the formal bid process for a contractor to load the materials at the staging site on a barge and deploy them in the permitted artificial reef zones.

### 13. Project Timing

Short-term (3 year or less)



ENHANCE \* PROTECT \* CONSERVE

# GOMESA PHASE II PROJECT FUNDING

## Request for Funding FY2026

Submission ID: #202509081350

### APPLICATION SUMMARY QUESTIONNAIRE

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

##### Group 1:

##### Group 2:

Permits are valid

Paid for

#### 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.?

The goal of the Artificial Reef Program is to establish guidelines and recommendations for planning, siting, constructing, and evaluating artificial reefs in all waters under the jurisdiction of the State of Mississippi and adjacent federal waters for the purpose of creating and enhancing habitat for fish and invertebrate species to assist in their overall conservation and management.

The reef complexes will support and enhance populations of important fish and invertebrate species associated with artificial reefs that are typically exploited by habitat loss and recreational and commercial fishing activities. This is accomplished by expanding artificial reef habitats over open water bottoms. The locations of the sites reduce spatial conflict from surrounding waters. The access of the sites is easily attainable by boat. The benefit factor for the sites provide enhancement to the overall health and sustainability of the marine environment.

Angler participation has increased over the last few years in the Red Snapper fishery in Mississippi. On a single day in 2020 there were 467 completed trips registered in Tails n' Scales. With an average of 3.6 anglers per vessel, over 1,600 anglers were fishing that day with 80% of that effort focused on artificial reefs. Mississippi averaged over 78,000 recreational licenses per year during 2016-2020. As fishing pressure continues to increase across Mississippi's artificial reefs, these sites will enhance fishery resources to the maximum extent practicable while facilitating access to recreational and commercial fisherman.

#### 16. Estimated number of years to completion:

3

#### 17. Estimated Completion Date:

June 30,2028

#### 18. Prioritize if your agency has submitted multiple projects:

NA



# GOMESA PHASE II PROJECT FUNDING

## Request for Funding FY2026

Submission ID: #202509081350

### BUDGET

Category	Total
Salaries	
Travel	
Architecture & Engineering	
Legal	
Consulting	
Construction	1200000
Site Work	
Equipment	
Indirects	
Other	
Total	1200000

#### Attachments

1. offloading-culverts4.jpg
2. unloading-culverts-resized.jpg
3. unloaded-material-resized.jpg

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

Travis Williams

2285234110

09/08/2025





