

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Audubon's Gulf United for Lasting Fisheries (G.U.L.F.) Partners with the  
Mississippi Commercial Fishermen Union (MSCFU)  
to Promote Sustainable Fisheries**

(New Orleans, La.) - Audubon Nature Institute's sustainable seafood program, Gulf United for Lasting Fisheries (G.U.L.F.) is pleased to announce a partnership with the Mississippi Commercial Fishermen Union (MSCFU) to increase awareness of sustainable fishing practices that will ultimately result in a more robust fishery and foster community knowledge of sustainably managed Gulf seafood. MSCFU has joined as a participant in the Marine Advancement Plan with Audubon G.U.L.F.

"MSCFU is a representative of the Commercial Shrimp Industry of Mississippi,

and we look forward to working with G.U.L.F. and other special interest groups to ensure them the dedication our commercial fishermen have towards the Industry,” said Frank Parker, a founding member of MSCFU and the Shrimp King at this year’s Blessing of the Fleet in Biloxi.

This partnership will promote sustainable commercial fisheries throughout Mississippi and along the Northern Gulf of Mexico. Audubon Nature Institute is emerging as a leading trusted partner in the global sustainable fishing movement. Their projects through G.U.L.F. include third-party certification, fishery improvement projects, and outreach and education to consumers, food service businesses, and fishermen.

Audubon G.U.L.F. provides a unique platform for all five Gulf States to participate in the advancement of seafood industry interests by engaging all stakeholders in the sustainability discussion. Audubon Nature Institute created Gulf United for Lasting Fisheries (G.U.L.F.) in 2012 after recognizing the need for a home-grown champion for Gulf seafood.

“We are so excited to be working with Mississippi Commercial Fishermen’s Union,” said Ashford Rosenberg, Outreach Manager at G.U.L.F. “Often, sustainability is talked about at the retail and restaurant level and the fishermen get left out of the conversation. G.U.L.F. is happy to be working with an organization led by fishermen who are dedicated to sustaining their livelihoods and the Gulf of Mexico on which they rely.”

Effective immediately, MSCFU agrees to participate in conjunction with Audubon G.U.L.F. on fishery sustainability projects for Mississippi territorial waters and the Gulf of Mexico fishery as a whole. Additionally, both MSCFU and Audubon G.U.L.F. have signed a Participant Letter of Agreement for a Mississippi Shrimp Marine Advancement Plan (MAP) to further advance sustainability practices amongst the shrimp industry in Mississippi. This plan serves to bridge the

information gap between harvesters and consumers by bringing together all members of the shrimping industry including fishermen, dealers, processors, scientists, and fishery managers to help strengthen the historic Mississippi commercial shrimp fishery.

Additionally, under the Mississippi Shrimp MAP, commercial shrimpers and MSCFU members will be encouraged to use Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) and Bycatch Reduction Devices (BRD) on all shrimping nets. Shrimpers using skimmer trawls are also reminded of the current tow time limits (55 minutes April-October and 75 minutes November-March) and are encouraged to use “Tow the Time” window decals so all crew members on participating shrimping vessel will be aware of tow time restrictions.



“Mississippi shrimp is a sustainable fishery and should be recognized as such,” said Rick Burris, Director of the Mississippi Department of Marine Resource (MDMR) Shrimp and Crab Bureau.

“Mississippi fishermen do a good job of following the regulations set in place including TED requirements and applicable tow times. The MDMR Office of Marine Fisheries recently featured G.U.L.F.’s “Tow the Time” campaign, federal TED regulations, and official TED Enforcement Boarding Form in the 2016 Mississippi Shrimp Newsletter, which was sent to all resident licensed commercial shrimp fishermen in the state. The MDMR’s Office of Marine Patrol also thoroughly enforces all related regulations and provides year-round courtesy TED inspections to assure proper compliance.”

All Mississippi fishermen are encouraged to participate in the MAP regardless of membership in the MSCFU. These projects are completely voluntary and participants do not receive any direct compensation; although, the consensus is that sustainability certifications will eventually add value to the Gulf’s natural

marine resource. For a full list of participants, visit [www.audubongulf.org](http://www.audubongulf.org).

The Mississippi Commercial Fishermen Union seeks to lead in the sustainable seafood movement through community involvement, education, research, outreach, and by leveraging technologies to provide trusted digital traceability that will compliment certifiable sustainable fisheries to ensure consumers are getting the absolute best sustainably harvested wild Mississippi seafood.

“As many of us are generations deep in this industry, we realize that this is not our grandfathers' shrimp business anymore,” continues Frank Parker. “We should be held to a higher standard of more efficient, sustainable, and responsible fishing measures. Our opinions, based off of years of real life experiences, should be held in higher regard than those out of a book. We look forward to helping ensure our industry moves forward with the future.”

This is the first step in a long term MSCFU commitment to conserve, advance, and promote the Gulf Coast's wonderful natural marine resources.



#### Audubon Nature Institute

Audubon Nature Institute operates a family of museums, parks and research facilities dedicated to celebrating the wonders of nature. Through innovative live animal exhibits, education programs, and scientific discovery, Audubon makes a meaningful contribution to preserving wildlife for the future. Audubon Nature Institute flagships include Audubon Park, Audubon Zoo, Audubon Aquarium of the

Americas, Entergy Giant Screen Theater, Audubon Butterfly Garden and Insectarium, Audubon Louisiana Nature Center, Freeport-McMoRan Audubon Special Survival Center, Woldenberg Riverfront Park and Audubon Wilderness Park. Ron Forman is President and CEO of Audubon Nature Institute.

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