



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, MOBILE DISTRICT
P.O. BOX 2288
MOBILE, ALABAMA 36628-0001

CESAM-RD-M
PUBLIC NOTICE NO. SAM-2019-00619-RCV

August 25, 2019

JOINT PUBLIC NOTICE
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
OFFICE OF POLLUTION CONTROL

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

**PROPOSED IMPACTS FOR THE CONTINUED USE OF ARTIFICIAL REEF MAIN PASS 132
(MP 132) WITHIN THE GULF OF MEXICO**

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: This District has received an application for a Department of the Army permit pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Please communicate this information to interested parties.

APPLICANT: **Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (DMR)**
1141 Bayview Avenue
Biloxi, Mississippi 39530

AGENT: **Department of Marine Resources**
Office of Marine Fisheries
Attention: **Mr. Travis Williams**
Artificial Reef Bureau Director
1141 Bayview Avenue
Biloxi, Mississippi 39530

LOCATION OF WORK: **Artificial Reef Main Pass 132 is located approximately 70 miles south of Biloxi. The project is located in Mississippi Sound at the following coordinates:**

NW: 29.37735/ -88.675
SW: 29.3655/ -88.675

SE: 29.3655/ -88.661667
NE: 29.37735/ -88.661667

PROJECT PURPOSE: **The basic project purpose of the continued development of artificial reef Main Pass 132 (MP132). This reef was previously permitted under SAM-2000-02430. The overall project purpose is to provide artificial reef habitat to enhance fishing and diving opportunities and to provide a more diverse and essential habitat for reef dependent/ associate fish and invertebrate species. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has initially determined this project to be water dependent.**

EXISTING CONDITIONS: **The existing Artificial Reef Main Pass 132 (MP132) is located approximately 70 miles south of Biloxi. Water Depth on the project site is approximately 175 feet. The seafloor in this reef zone is mud and sand. To date, there is no evidence,**

nor has there been any observance of submerged aquatic vegetation near any of the proposed sites.

PROPOSED WORK: The proposed MP 132 reef zone is four-sided polygon that will cover approximately 420 acres. All deployments shall maintain a minimum of 90 feet clearance at mean low water (MLLW) of all structures deployed in the reef zone. Of the four structures currently on the site the clearances range from 48.4 feet to 25.4 feet MLLW.

The applicant is proposing to deploy three additional structures on the site. The three additional jackets/rigs will be placed at the following locations:

The first jacket will be placed at Latitude 29.37355 North and -Longitude -88.67152 West. The jacket is 112 feet long and 66 feet wide at the base. It will placed on its side in 175 feet of water with a navigation clearance of 61 feet MLLW.

The second jacket will be placed at Latitude 29.37376 North and Longitude -88.66507 West. The jacket is 112 feet long and 66 feet wide at the base. It will placed on its side in 175 feet of water with a navigation clearance of 61 feet MLLW.

The third jacket will be placed at Latitude 29.36993 North and Longitude -88.66516 West. The jacket is 112 feet long and 66 feet wide at the base. It will placed on its side in 175 feet of water with a navigation clearance of 61 feet MLLW.

Material to be used for the construction of the structures within the MP-132 will consist of oil and gas platforms, jackets, and structures. Decommissioned oil rigs, platforms, and structures will be towed and deployed according to protocol developed by contractors hired to perform the work.

MITIGATION: No mitigation will be necessary for this project as the objective of the project is to create an artificial reef site by periodic deployments of approved reef material in a manner that does not adversely affect the surrounding environments or the organisms inhabiting those environments. Overall this project purpose is to enhance existing habitat. The USACE has not verified the adequacy of this mitigation proposal at this time.

The applicant has applied for certification from the State of Mississippi in accordance with Section 401(a)(1) of the Clean Water Act, and upon completion of the required advertising, a determination relative to certification will be made by the Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

HISTORIC PROPERTIES: The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) will be consulted for properties listed in or eligible for the National Register, which would be affected by the proposed work. Copies of this notice are being sent to the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, and Division of Archeological Services for further consultation and comments. **Previous investigations for the facility have determined that no properties are listed in or eligible for listing in the NRHP.** In accordance with Appendix C of 33 CFR Part 325, the USACE has determined the

permit area is the full area of development for the overall project footprint. Copies of this public notice are being sent to the SHPO.

ENDANGERED SPECIES: Preliminary review of this application and the U.S. Department of the Interior List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants indicate the proposed activity may require additional coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). The sites are within the boundary of the area listed as Gulf Sturgeon Critical Habitat and the range of several listed species, including Gulf Sturgeon, Green, Hawksbill, Kemp's Ridley, Loggerhead, and Leatherback Turtles. Additional coordination will be performed with the FWS on the proposed project and is subject to review by and coordination with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).

This notice initiates the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) consultation requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The proposal is expected to enhance EFH by creation of this artificial reef. Our initial determination is that the proposed action would not adversely impact EFH or federally managed fisheries. Our final determination relative to project impacts and the need for mitigation measures is subject to review by and coordination with the NMFS.

This public notice is being distributed to all known interested persons in order to assist in developing facts on which a decision by the USACE can be based. For accuracy and completeness of the record, all data in support of or in opposition to the proposed work should be submitted in writing setting forth sufficient detail to furnish a clear understanding of the reasons for support or opposition. The decision whether to issue a permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact, including cumulative impacts, of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources.

The benefit, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered, including the cumulative effects thereof; among those are conservation, economics, aesthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values, fish and wildlife values, protected species, flood hazards, flood plain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food production and in general, the needs and welfare of the people.

The USACE is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the USACE to determine whether to issue, modify, condition or deny a permit for this proposal. To make this decision, comments are used to assess impacts on endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act.

Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity. Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held for consideration of this application. Requests for public hearings shall state with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing.

Correspondence concerning this Public Notice should refer to Public Notice Number **SAM-2019-00619-RCV**, and should be directed to USACE, Mobile District, Regulatory Division, Attention: Mr. Rudolph C. Villarreal, Post Office Box 2288, Mobile, Alabama 36628-0001, with a copy to the Department of Environmental Quality, Office of Pollution Control, Attention: Ms. Florance Bass, P.E., Post Office Box 2261, Jackson, Mississippi 39225-2261, and the Department of Marine Resources, Attention: Mr. Chris Pickering, 1141 Bayview Avenue, Suite 101, Biloxi, Mississippi 39530.

All Comments should be received no later than 30 days from the date of this Public Notice. If you have any questions concerning this publication, you may contact the project manager at (251) 690-3246, or at rudolph.c.villarreal@usace.army.mil. Please refer to the above Public Notice number.

For additional information about our Regulatory Program, please visit our web site at www.sam.usace.army.mil/Missions/Regulatory.aspx.

MOBILE DISTRICT
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Enclosures



Gulfport

Biloxi

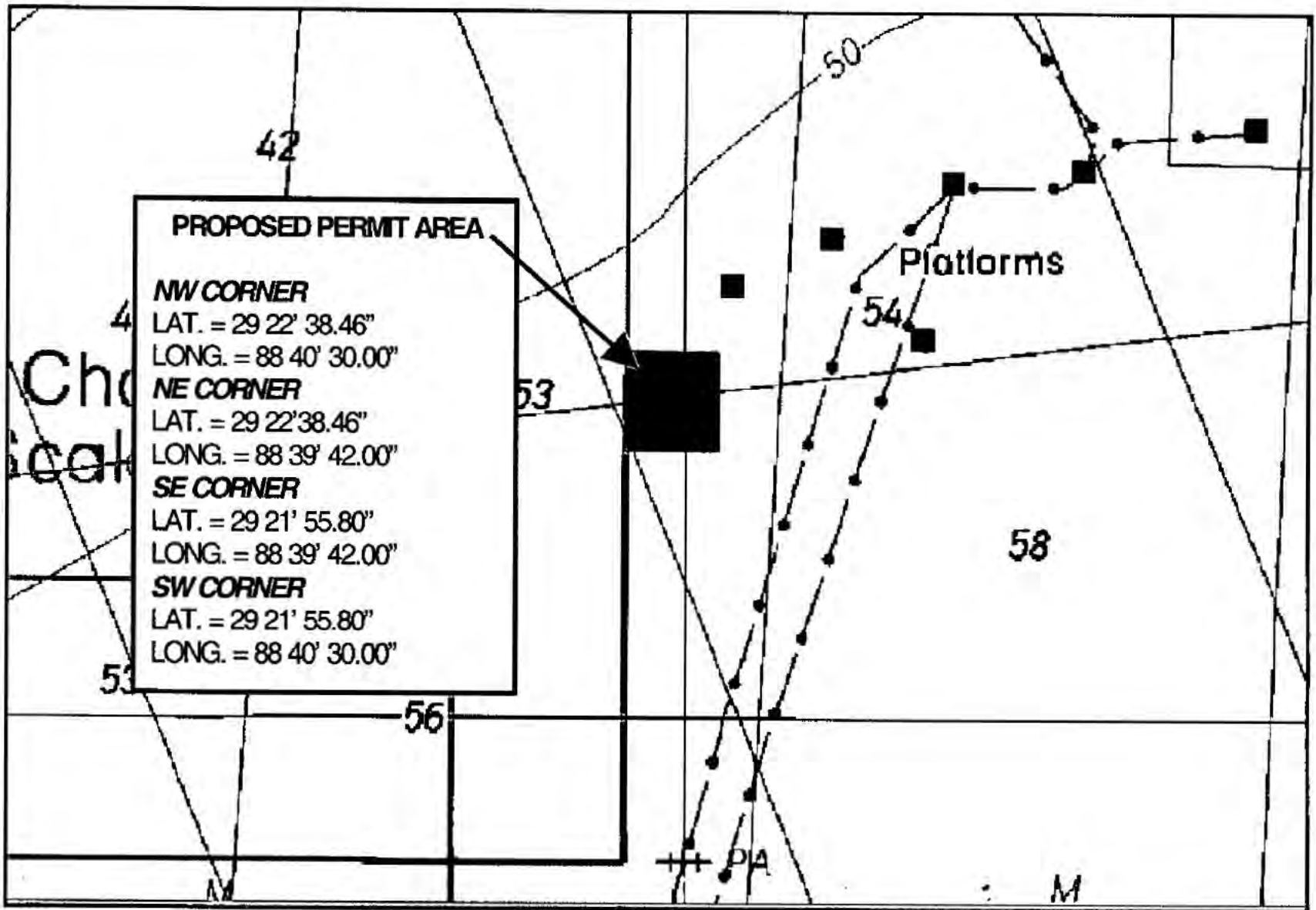
MP 138

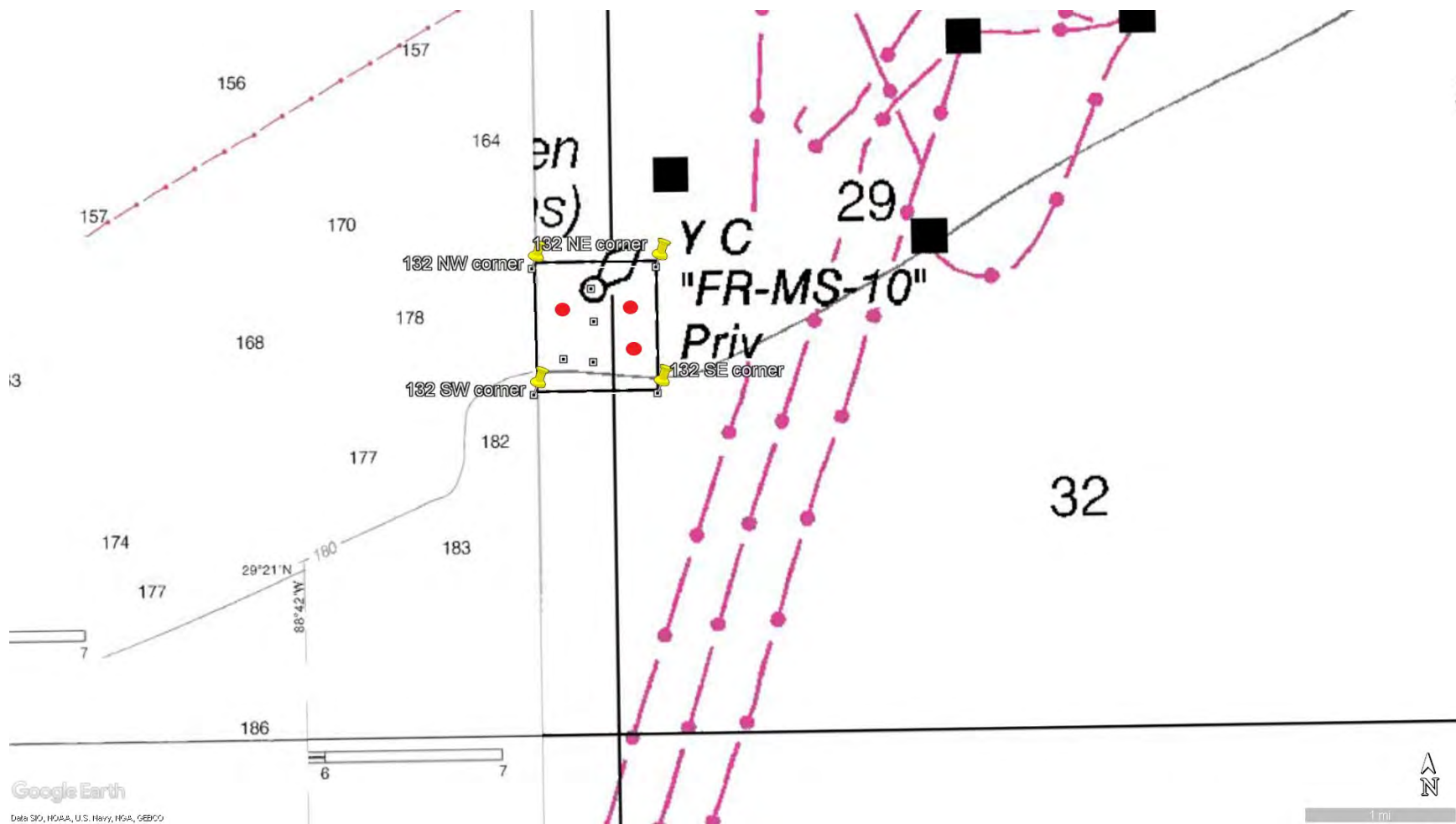
MP 132

MP 312

SP 62 B

SP 62 A

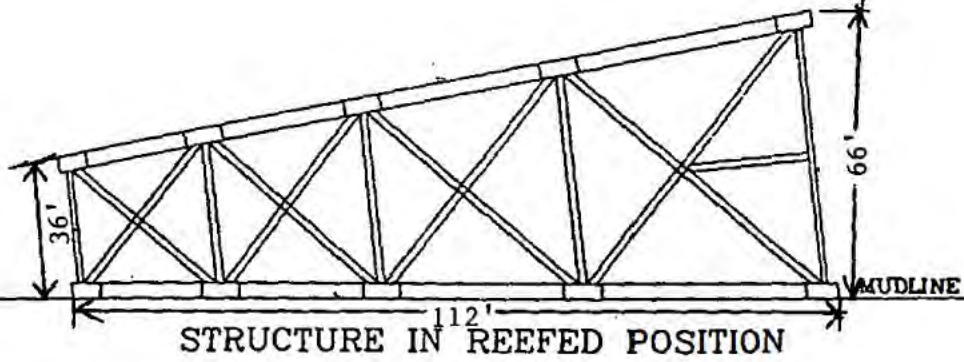




Location of the newly proposed deployments within Main Pass 132

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SURFACE



NOTE:
STRUCTURE REEFED IN DOWNED POSITION.

Typical view

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