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COMMISSION ON MARINE RESOURCES

MEETING OF COMMISSION ON MARINE RESOURCES

December 17, 2013

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TRANSCRIPT OF MEETING OF COMMISSION ON MARINE RESOURCES AT BOLTON STATE BUILDING, PUBLIC MEETING ROOM, 1141 BAYVIEW AVENUE, BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI, ON THE 17TH DAY OF DECEMBER 2013 COMMENCING AT 9:00 A.M. AND REPORTED BY NORMA JEAN LADNER SOROE, CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTER.

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COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

JIMMY TAYLOR, Chairman
RICHARD GOLLOTT
SHELBY DRUMMOND
STEVE BOSARGE
ERNIE ZIMMERMAN

ALSO PRESENT:

JAMIE MILLER, Director DMR
JOSEPH R. RUNNELS, ESQ., Asst. Attorney General
SANDY CHESNUT, ESQ., Asst. Attorney General

A. Call to Order

MR. TAYLOR: I want to welcome y'all to the December meeting if the Commission on Marine Resources. And I want to wish all of y'all, as the rest of the commission, I want to wish the executive director, wish all of y'all happy holidays and hope you have a good one and a safe one and all.

B. Approval of Minutes

MR. TAYLOR: So first on the agenda is approval of the minutes. Are there any changes? Or do I have a motion to accept the minutes?

MR. DRUMMOND: I make a motion we accept the minutes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. TAYLOR: Do I have a second?

MR. DRUMMOND: Second.

MR TAYLOR: All those in favor. Passes unanimously.

C. Approval of Agenda

MR. TAYLOR: Next up is approval of the agenda. Are there any changes to the agenda?

MR. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I've got a request that we add in other business as an Item J-1 for the commission to consider going into executive session to discuss a personnel matter.

MR. TAYLOR: Do I have a second on that?

MR. GOLLOTT: I'll second it.

MR. TAYLOR: There was no motion.

MR. GOLLOTT: I'll make a motion.

MR. TAYLOR: Do I have a second?

MR. DRUMMOND: You have a second here.

MR. TAYLOR: All those in favor. Passes. Okay. So at the end of -- during other business, the commission will adjourn and go -- not adjourn, but retire and go into executive session.

Okay.

MR. GOLLOTT: Mr. Chairman, point of order. We need to accept the agenda as amended. I'll make that motion.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you. Do I have a second?

MR. DRUMMOND: I'll second the motion, Mr. Chairman.

MR. TAYLOR: All those in favor. It passes.

D. Executive Director's Report

MR. TAYLOR: Okay. Next up we have the executive director's report. Mr. Miller.

MR. MILLER: Thank you, Chairman Taylor.

I've just got two items.

The first item is, as you may have saw this morning, Sun Herald was reporting that DMR had made a decision on its consistency for oil and gas leases and seismic activity.

I want to be clear about what our letter states and what it does not state.

First, DMR did not issue blanket consistency for the MDA rules. But rather we recognize them as a lawful permit process mandated by the Mississippi legislature.

The question before our agency was: Do their rules for issuing seismic permits and leases, are they sufficient -- are they a sufficient substitute for DMR's mandated review process for regulated activities?

And our answer is no. My letter states that we recognize MDA as a duly authorized agency. We do not believe their rules should be a substitute for our case by case review.

I believe it's important that DMR retain the right to review each seismic permit application on a case by case basis. And my letter to MDA makes it clear that we will recognize their permit authority, but we will not relinquish ours.

So just want to make that clear. It wasn't clear in the press release we sent out. And I'm sure we can make our letter available to those who may want it.

On another note, just I want to thank the commissioners and those who attended our legislative forum two weeks ago. I thought it was well received. And thank y'all for participating in that.

And then also just want to make you aware, I'm sure you're already aware, that the legislative session will begin January 7. And, of course, we'll have a presence up

there and continue to do the work of the agency in Jackson. So thank you.

E. Office of Marine Patrol

MR. TAYLOR: Okay. Next up is office of marine patrol, Interim Chief Rusty Pittman.

One thing, if you want to speak during public comments, please fill out a form and hand it to one of the staff so we can recognize you. Thanks.

MR. PITTMAN: Good morning, Mr. Chairman, commissioners, Director Miller, Ms. Chesnut.

You have the report in front of you. Last month, we did have a few more citations on the oyster violations.

If there's anything in the report that you see that you would like to ask questions.

MR. GOLLOTT: Chief, what is this failure to call in?

MR. PITTMAN: That's failure to check in is he went out oystering without checking in, turning in his ticket at the check station, and he went out and he didn't turn his ticket in.

MR. GOLLOTT: You mean they have to check in before they go oystering?

MR. PITTMAN: They put a ticket in the box. And that way, when the oyster crew gets down there, they pull all

1 these tickets out, and they check it and write down and check
2 the oyster licenses.
3 We had those in the past happen before. The
4 people didn't have word about it, you know, the word didn't get
5 out. But in this instance, this may have been a new fisherman.
6 I have no idea on that though.
7 MR. GOLLOTT: I'm just trying to get it straight
8 in my mind. Before they leave, they have to fill out something
9 and put it in a box?
10 MR. PITTMAN: And put it in a box.
11 MR. GOLLOTT: At the Pass harbor?
12 MR. PITTMAN: At Pass and at Bayou Cadet. And
13 then when they come back in, they're what they call checking
14 out. Then they get their oyster tags.
15 MR. GOLLOTT: Is that something that we passed?
16 MR. PITTMAN: Yes, sir. That's been in effect
17 for years.
18 MR. GOLLOTT: Okay. Thank you.
19 MR. PITTMAN: You're welcome.
20 MR. TAYLOR: This no commercial fishing license,
21 no Mississippi trip ticket, commercial sale of recreational
22 fish, all the same person, were these fish caught in
23 Mississippi or in another state?
24 MR. PITTMAN: They were caught in Mississippi.
25 It has to do with this big investigation that was going on and

didn't have a commercial license. At first he said that he bought the fish. He couldn't prove that he bought them. Then he said he sold them, they were his fish and he sold them to his restaurant, and he couldn't prove that, so...

MR. DRUMMOND: Rusty, dredging on a tonging reef. What's the penalty for that?

MR. PITTMAN: Minimum is $500. It used to be a hundred to five hundred, but they upped it to make it harder for the fishermen if they get caught dredging, it would be a little bit more stiffer fine.

MR. DRUMMOND: Thank you.

MR. PITTMAN: On the second page, you may want to know about the miscellaneous violations, disorderly conduct. Two of our officers were on patrol one night and here in Back Bay, they noticed four people fishing over by -- behind Gollott's over here on Back Bay. And there's a big sign up there says no fishing, and they pulled up to check them for their license, and they all ran. And they did get one, and he kind of put up a little tussle, so they went ahead and got him for no saltwater fishing license and also disorderly conduct. And the other three got away.

And then on the JEA report on the last page, the weather was pretty bad last month. You notice we only had three trips go out.

Any more questions?

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Rusty.

MR. PITTMAN: Marine patrol would like to wish y'all Merry Christmas and have a safe and Happy New Year, too.

F. Office of Marine Fisheries

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you. Next up is office of marine fisheries, Mr. Joe Jewell.

MR. JEWELL: Good morning, commissioners. I also would like to wish everyone a happy holiday, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Today on our agenda, we have one item. It concerns recreational and commercial fisheries. Matt Hill will be doing that presentation.

1. Commercial/Recreatonal Red Drum Update and Recommendations

MS. HILL: Good morning, commissioners, Director Miller, Sandy. I'm Matt Hill with the finfish bureau director. I'm here to give a red drum update. I'm going to give the commercial first, and then the recreational update.

We'll start with commercial. Our current commercial regulations, we have 18 inch minimum size length. Our fishermen may retain only one red drum over 30 inches. We currently have a 35,000 pound annual quota beginning on January 1 of each year. This 35,000 pound quota has been in place for 23 years now. And the fisherman must possess a current applicable harvester's license to commercially harvest these

1 fish.

2 Like I said, our current quota is 35,000 pounds.
3 It was implemented October 1, 1990. The fishery has met the
4 quota in 11 years since implementation, 1991, '93 through '97,
5 '99 through 2001, late in 2011, and recently here this year in
6 2013.

7 With the ongoing conversations about some of the
8 red drum, and we were asked at the last commission meeting to
9 come up with some options and possibly a recommendation of what
10 to do with the commercial red drum quota, some of the options
11 would be status quo. Leave it at 35,000 pounds. We can
12 increase the commercial red drum quota by a certain amount. We
13 can place the red drum under the species endorsement or the
14 means test. This is what we've done with the spotted sea
15 trout. Or we can increase the commercial red drum quota and we
16 can also place it under the species endorsement. Those are the
17 options that are on the table.

18 For those who aren't familiar or can't recall
19 some of the details of the endorsement, I'm going to go over
20 the endorsement that we do have in place for spotted sea trout
21 just so everybody is clear.

22 Individuals harvesting spotted sea trout for
23 sale must possess a spotted sea trout endorsement at a cost of
24 $10 in addition to a current applicable harvester's license.
25 To qualify for this endorsement, an application must be

1 completed. The fisherman must present proof that $5,000 of
2 seafood product was sold in any 12 consecutive months. Proof
3 will be copies of sales records and a copy of the applicable
4 harvester's license for the appropriate time period, or the
5 fisherman must present proof that 10 percent of their net
6 income came from commercial fishing activities in a previous
7 tax year. Proof will be a form provided by the MDMR completed
8 by a licensed tax preparer possessing a preparer tax
9 identification number. Must be notarized and submitted to the
10 MDMR. This endorsement will be valid for a three year period,
11 at which time a new form must be submitted for a new
12 endorsement.
13 Now, what this is, they can come buy their hook
14 and line or their net license, and however if they plan on
15 harvesting and selling spotted sea trout, they must have this
16 endorsement to go along with it.
17 So that is one of the options that is on the
18 table for the red drum.
19 We'll go back to the options, and here are our
20 options.
21 Do you want to stop here and take care of this?
22 MR. TAYLOR: I want to ask a question, Matt. Go
23 back to the slide that shows the years that the limits were
24 reached. Okay.
25 In these years 2011 and 2013, it wasn't in '12,

1 were the limits reached late in the season, say maybe after the
2 speckled trout season was closed and the fishermen are fishing
3 for other species?
4 MR. HILL: That is correct. And we've actually
5 pulled -- one of the exercises we did prior to this meeting was
6 we pulled some of the tickets that the fishermen are selling
7 red drum on, and these fishermen when they have smaller catches
8 of red drum, you can see that they were almost a bycatch. They
9 caught two or three and they sold them along with their
10 speckled trout. But when the spotted sea trout season closed,
11 you can see these same fishermen shifted to that red drum
12 fishery.
13 MR. TAYLOR: You can go back to the slide with
14 the options.
15 MR. GOLLOTT: Excuse me, Mr. Chairman.
16 Matt, do you have a recommendation on maybe
17 raising the commercial red drum or something?
18 MR. HILL: The staff recommendation at this time
19 would be to -- on the commercial sector would be to just simply
20 increase the commercial red drum quota by a reasonable amount.
21 MR. GOLLOTT: What would you think a reasonable
22 would be? I'm going to pin you down.
23 MR. HILL: That's the million dollar question.
24 MR. DRUMMOND: How about 2,000 pounds?
25 MR. HILL: I don't think that's reasonable.

MR. DRUMMOND: How about 15,000 pounds?

MR. HILL: I like that.

MR. TAYLOR: Under your staff -- you know, a reasonable amount, I assume that this would not I'm going to assume hurt the species in any way.

MR. HILL: No. We're talking about a recreational harvest and commercial harvest combined. We're up between -- it's fluctuating between 500,000 pounds and 800,000 pounds annually. And with a 35,000 pound quota on red drum, it's -- I think it's a one and a half percent increase we're asking for in the total harvest.

The reason we came up with some of the numbers we came up with -- and the 50,000 is not the maximum. That's the number that we are comfortable with. Historically, when the quota was set, if you look at the proportions, they set it back with the catches back in the 1980s, and the 50,000 pounds brings it back into the historical proportion that was set in 1990 using the data from the 1980s.

MR. GOLLOTT: Mr. Chairman, I think I'd like to make a motion that we accept the staff's recommendation on raising the quota to 50,000 pounds on the red drum commercial fishery.

MR. TAYLOR: Do I have a second?

MR. BOSARGE: I'll second his motion.

MR. TAYLOR: Any discussion?

MR. DRUMMOND: Yes. I would like to discuss the motion of raising it to 50,000 as opposed to 45,000. Would you consider, Richard, to 45,000 as opposed to 50,000?

MR. GOLLOTT: Well, the staff has recommended 15,000. I don't think --

MR. DRUMMOND: Recommendations are recommendations.

MR. GOLLOTT: I understand that. But we're going by -- you know, a lot of things we base it based on the staff's recommendation. And I think that's reasonable for us here.

One of the things I'm concerned about is how many red drum is eating all the crabs. There's some reason why the dilution of the crab industry. And the red drum eat a lot of crabs, and there's a lot of drum, red drum, that for 20 years haven't been taken out of the Gulf of Mexico. You can almost walk on them out there. There's plenty of red drum around, so I don't think it's a problem.

If there's a problem in a year, we'll come back and adjust it down, but 50,000 is reasonable, like Matt said.

MR. DRUMMOND: Another thing you have to understand, Richard, too, is that there's a moratorium on red drum offshore. So that population should increase for sure in the last 15 years.

MR. TAYLOR: There hasn't been a red drum taken

in the Gulf in 22 years I believe -- or, excuse me, legally taken in the Gulf in 22 years. And they haven't done a stock assessment, either, which is goofy, too.

MR. GOLLOTT: Again, I think that with so many in the Gulf and any of our recreational, I mean, our charter boat people can defend that, with so many out there, I don't think it can hurt the fishery by increasing to 15,000 pounds. It will boost our commercial fishermen's income, and that's something we can do is to make sure our commercial fishermen can make a living.

MR. BOSARGE: It's only like one and a half percent increase of the total catch of the state. So I think he said we're over 800,000.

MR. HILL: This year -- and this year may be an outlyer, only time will tell, but right -- in 2012 we were at the 800,000 mark and preliminary numbers look like we're going to be pretty close to that mark again this year.

But the five year average, and you can go back to the ten year average if you'd like, we're between four hundred fifty and five hundred thousand pounds. We're definitely on an upward trend now.

MR. BOSARGE: What would be the pros and cons of doing the means test for redfish?

MR. HILL: The means test, we just enacted it. We haven't -- it's not in place yet. We do know we have the

1 EIS 99 percent completed. We're fixing to get it to the
2 Secretary of State. And we should have it in place for this
3 commercial harvest year.
4 My concerns, when I look at the numbers, is I
5 think our short term goal from the last meeting was to extend
6 -- to try to extend the season for these fishermen. And it's
7 very top heavy. The top 20 of our fishermen are accounting for
8 over 90 to 92 percent of the catch in the red drum harvest. So
9 if we're just going to reallocate ten percent, I don't think
10 the means test is going to help us meet our goal of extending
11 the season for these fishermen.
12 MR. TAYLOR: Matt -- did most of the --
13 MR. ZIMMERMAN: So that means that you're
14 predicting that 80 percent of the commercial people would be
15 affected by the means test, from what I took your numbers at.
16 MR. HILL: I think it would be less than eight
17 percent. I think some of those eight percent that are catching
18 eight percent would still qualify for the means test under --
19 because it's sale of any seafood product. It's not just
20 species specific.
21 They could sell $5,000 worth of shrimp or
22 anything.
23 So realistically, I think the means test in this
24 situation would only affect -- it would be less than five
25 percent, five percent at best.

MR. GOLLOTT: Matt, you don't see recreational fishermen selling redfish like you do the speckled trout?

MR. HILL: We don't think that we have, and that's just an observation. I'm just looking at the tickets. I don't think that we have that same type of issue.

I recognize the names on the list, and I've gone through it fairly tediously, and the guys that are selling red drum, the majority of the red drum, we're talking about 90 percent of them, they are the commercial fishermen that will pass the means test without any problem. I mean, it wasn't like the speckled trout when we looked at it. I mean, being around for so long you recognize their names. We were seeing people's names on there that we knew were recreational fishermen.

MR. TAYLOR: So if you do the means test, basically most of the people already meet it that are harvesting the red drum, you're just adding another cost and another I don't want to say aggravation, but another thing to the commercial fishermen that most of them already have anyway.

MR. HILL: We think it may be a tool in the future that we can use, but we would just like to see how it affects the whole fishery, the spotted sea trout endorsement is going to affect.

I think some of the guys when they don't meet the means test for the spotted sea trout, they're not going to

be catching the red drum anyway.

So we'd just like to see, let it have a few years and let's see how it's going to affect the fishery before we add --

MR. BOSARGE: And I just wanted to have the conversation where we all kind of knew what may or may not happen.

MR. HILL: I'm not saying to take it completely off the table. I think right now our goal is to extend the season for these fishermen. The best way to do that is a simple increase in the commercial quota.

MR. TAYLOR: Okay. We have a motion on the floor and a second. Any other discussion?

MR. DRUMMOND: I have one more comment.

MR. TAYLOR: Go ahead.

MR. DRUMMOND: This is a possibility at this point, Matt.

MR. HILL: Yes, sir.

MR. DRUMMOND: I think we ought to state in the regulations that this is a one year deal. And one year.

MR. HILL: It's going to take us a year to get it into effect. We're going to have to run an EIS. This isn't going to happen this coming up year. It's highly unlikely.

We still have to go through the Administrative Procedures Act. And the way things are set up now, we're

1 trying to find a more efficient way to do this.
2 I do think a sunset clause in there may be
3 something that we can support, if that's something that y'all
4 would like.
5 But the time frame, I think, probably should be
6 a little longer.
7 MR. DRUMMOND: So are you asking us to vote on
8 this today?
9 MR. HILL: There's a motion on the table.
10 MR. GOLLOTT: Let me make a statement here.
11 This is one of the things that's hitting me. If we harvested
12 this 800,000 pounds of fish last year, that meant the
13 recreational fishermen got over 750,000 pounds of this thing, I
14 mean. And the commercial fishery only asking for 50,000 pounds
15 is kind of ridiculous. I mean, it's a one-sided deal here. So
16 I don't see a problem in giving the commercial fishermen an
17 increase.
18 MR. HILL: The recreational fishermen harvested
19 786,437 pounds.
20 MR. GOLLOTT: Compared to 35,000 for the
21 commercial fishermen.
22 MR. HILL: It was less than 35,000. We didn't
23 shut the quota down last year.
24 MR. TAYLOR: Okay. We have a motion and a
25 second on the floor. All those in favor. Opposed? Passes.

1 Thank you, Matt.
2 MR. HILL: We'll move to the recreational
3 portion.
4 We'll start by going over our current Gulf
5 states recreational regulations.
6 Florida is currently 18 inch minimum size length
7 with a 27 inch maximum -- it's 18 to 27 inch slot limit, and
8 they allow eight fish vessel limit, one fish over the slot
9 limit.
10 Alabama is 16 inches to 26 inches, three fish
11 per person.
12 Louisiana, 16 to 27, five fish per person.
13 Texas, 20 to 28, three fish per person.
14 And currently we're at 18 to 30 inch slot limit,
15 and we allow one of these fish to be over 30 inches.
16 What we'd like to see and what we are judging
17 currently our stock status on is escapement rate. Our
18 escapement rate is defined as the proportion of fish that
19 survive to a given age in the presence of fishing mortality
20 relative to a population not subjected to fishing mortality.
21 Basically it's the fished population versus the
22 unfished population.
23 We've chosen age four fish as our target age for
24 our escapement calculation, and the reason for this is
25 literature shows and our data shows that 100 percent of these

1 fish are sexually mature at age four.
2 Current Gulf states escapement targets. The FMP
3 or the Fisheries Management Plan escapement rate target
4 recommendation for red drum is 30 percent. Mississippi,
5 Alabama, and Louisiana follow the FMP recommendation of 30
6 percent for stock status and management decisions. Texas and
7 FLorida also follow the FMP regulation of 30 percent escapement
8 as a minimum; however, both states strive for a 40 percent
9 escapement rate when determining stock status and setting
10 regulations. They're just a little more conservative.
11 Here is similar to what I showed at the last
12 meeting, but we were also asked to run it at 16 inches and see
13 what the escapement rate would have been over the same time
14 period with the decreased size limit of 16 inches. And as I
15 said, we're very confident in the green line there. That's the
16 18 inch. That's hard data. That's data that we have. The
17 yellow line at 16 inches, there is some uncertainty in that
18 line. It was hard for us to -- there was many factors that we
19 were going to have to go into to put uncertainty levels on
20 there, so we just wanted to let you know there definitely is
21 some uncertainty in it.
22 However, what it did show is basically over the
23 same time period, you would have had approximate four percent
24 decrease in your escapement rate. The red line is your 30
25 percent. So you see even with the 18 inches we did get below

1 it a few times. But overall, the lines are comparable. The
2 numbers may not be precise, but you can see they do follow the
3 same trend.
4 Our status. The FMP recommendation is an
5 escapement rate of at least 30 percent. Our average calculated
6 escapement rate at 18 inches is -- between 2004 and 2012 is
7 currently 31.8 percent. Our average escapement rate for the
8 same time period at 18 inches excluding the outlyer year of
9 2010 -- this was the BP oil spill and I'll go back to the chart
10 and show you. You can see it bottomed out, there's some other
11 factors we would like to look at. We feel it should not have
12 done that. There's something in the data that is making it --
13 we had some closures and some other things, but we don't feel
14 it should have went that low, so we think we may have an issue
15 somewhere that we'd like to find.
16 But what we were tasked to do is run it at 16
17 inches. So the average calculated escapement rate of 16 inches
18 for 2004 to 2012 is 27.9 percent. The average escapement rate
19 for the same time period at 16 inches, and we excluded the
20 outlyer year of 2010 again, is 30 and a half percent.
21 Our conclusions are current regulations are
22 effective in maintaining the recommended 30 percent escapement
23 rate set forth in the FMP. However, the calculated escapement
24 rate with a minimum size limit set at 16 inches would have also
25 been effective in maintaining the recommended 30 percent

escapement rate set forth in the FMP for the same time period.

The staff is requesting to further evaluate Title 22 Part 7 to determine maximum flexibility in setting new regulations to allow for more timely changes and to also consult additional predictive models to better manage our fisheries stocks.

MR. TAYLOR: So I gather from that you would like for us to table this.

MR. HILL: Yes, sir.

MR. TAYLOR: Okay.

MR. GOLLOTT: Just one question. On each side of us, Alabama and Louisiana both have 16 inch limits.

MR. HILL: Yes, sir.

MR. GOLLOTT: And what we're doing with the escapement rate is we're enhancing the federal fishery; is that correct?

MR. HILL: That's one way to look at it. We're allowing more fish to escape to the spawning stock which is said to stay in federal waters.

MR. GOLLOTT: When they get out there, nobody can catch them in federal waters.

MR. HILL: That's correct currently.

MR. GOLLOTT: So, you know, why not let the sister states feed the fishery and take advantage of it? That's just a statement, you know. If you want more time, I'm

for that.

MR. HILL: We're not opposed -- I mean, we're not recommending the power, we're not opposed to it, we'd just like more time to consult some of the other models that we can go a little bit more in depth in and create some more assumptions that we're a little more comfortable with.

MR. GOLLOTT: I don't have a problem with that. I'd like to get it right if we do it.

MR. BOSARGE: You're going to bring it back to us maybe next couple of meetings or so?

MR. HILL: We're going to need more than a month this time if that's okay.

MR. DRUMMOND: I make that in the form of a motion.

MR. TAYLOR: Hold on a second. Mr. Eicke, can I talk to you? Do you want to wait and talk, or --

MR. EICKE: Not if y'all are going to act like you're talking about.

MR. TAYLOR: Okay. Go ahead. I'm sorry.

MR. DRUMMOND: I just wondered if you need that in the form of a motion.

MR. TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. DRUMMOND: Well, I'll make that motion to table it until Matt and his group a year from now gets the information to us.

MR. GOLLOTT: We aren't going for that.

MR. HILL: I'll compromise with you. How about six months?

MR. DRUMMOND: Mr. Eicke, you got something?

MR. EICKE: Yes. I think we would like to --

MR. TAYLOR: Come forward and state your name and who you're with and what.

MR. EICKE: My name is F.J. Eicke. I'm the chair of the government relations committee for Coastal Conservation Association, Mississippi.

If this motion is tabled, that would be fine. What we would request is that I have provided the commission with a statement that kind of details many of our concerns about any action that would affect the regulations of red drum and would ask that the commission consider making this a part of the record so that we're on record and also that the DMR staff will consider our comments, as well, as they study this issue.

MR. TAYLOR: So done. Thank you.

MR. DRUMMOND: Mr. Eicke --

MR. GOLLOTT: Would you like to withdraw your motion for a year? I mean, that's kind of ridiculous.

MR. DRUMMOND: Wait just a minute, Richard.

Mr. Eicke, I've solicited some recreational fishermen over in Jackson County, and I found that most of them

1 want to reduce the size of the redfish to 16 inches for catch
2 purposes.
3 So the CCA is contradicting that to me. And I'm
4 a member of the CCA.
5 MR. EICKE: We're really not. What we're saying
6 is that action at this point, based on the data that we have
7 available right now, is not justified. But we're not opposing
8 the change if a change were to be warranted based on what we
9 have available.
10 When I was taking statistics in my doctoral
11 program, the statistics professor had a way of describing what
12 statistics is. And he described it -- he identified it or
13 defined it as methods we use to make decisions in the face of
14 uncertainty.
15 I think there's a lot of uncertainty here. And
16 with that uncertainty, we need to look further, which is what I
17 think y'all have in mind which we support.
18 But in terms of proposing a change just on the
19 face of it, that's not what we're doing. In that document that
20 we presented to you, we clearly say that we're not opposed just
21 on the face of it to a change. We're opposed to making a
22 change at this point based on what we know.
23 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you very much.
24 MR. DRUMMOND: You can do anything with
25 statistics, Mr. Eicke.

1 MR. EICKE: I agree. And that's why the
2 uncertainty is always a part of it.
3 MR. TAYLOR: Okay. We have a motion on the
4 floor. Is there a second?
5 MR. DRUMMOND: I second the motion.
6 MR. TAYLOR: You made it.
7 MR. DRUMMOND: I really want to change my motion
8 to eliminate that year time frame.
9 MR. JEWELL: And it sort of addresses your
10 concern, Shelby, about the time frame.
11 I want to talk -- make one statement. You know,
12 our staff supports and has a lot in common with the CCA
13 position now, and also some of the concerns that the commission
14 has mentioned to us.
15 And so that's part of the reason why we want to
16 take some more time to consider this issue. There are other
17 models that we are looking at that we want to work with our
18 associates at Gulf Coast Research Laboratory. We want to look
19 at the data, do a little more data analysis, and we certainly
20 want to take time to refocus the language in Title 22 Part 7.
21 So we have a lot of common interest here. And I
22 think we're moving in that right direction. But I think what
23 Matt is trying to say that this should take two or three
24 months. It shouldn't take a year. It will be a couple of
25 months before we're able to put all that together and come

1 forward with a stronger recommendation.
2 But I do want to keep in mind that any of these
3 potential changes that impact titles and parts, those take
4 quite a bit of time now under the new Administrative Procedures
5 Act with economic impact. They take anywhere between 12 and 14
6 months as our previous track history has indicated.
7 So please keep that in mind. When the
8 commission votes on the recommended changes that impacts the
9 regulations, it takes a while for that to go into force.
10 MR. GOLLOTT: What kind of time frame were you
11 looking at, Joe or Matt?
12 MR. JEWELL: I think we're looking at least a
13 minimum of two months, not more than about three months.
14 MR. GOLLOTT: Okay.
15 MR. JEWELL: So I think Shelby was about to
16 amend his motion just to tell the staff to table the issue and
17 to come forward at an appropriate time with the updated data.
18 MR. DRUMMOND: That's fine with me.
19 MR. GOLLOTT: I'll second the motion.
20 MR. TAYLOR: Okay. The motion is to table it
21 until the staff comes back with the appropriate time and data,
22 at the time and data. We have a motion and a second on the
23 floor. All those in favor. Opposed? Passes unanimously.
24 Thank you, Matt.
25 MR. DRUMMOND: Thank you, Matt.

F. Office of Coastal Zone Management

MR. TAYLOR: Next up is office of coastal zone management, Jan Boyd.

MR. BOYD: Good morning, Mr. Chairman, commissioners, Director Miller, Ms. Chesnut.

The office of coastal zone management has one action item for your consideration this morning, and Greg Christodoulou will be presenting that for you.

1. Bureau of Wetlands Permitting

a. Jackson County Board of Supervisors

MR. CHRISTODOULOU: Good morning, everyone. We have a request for a permit extension by the Jackson County Board of Supervisors. It's located -- there's three locations on the Sound: Front Beach in Pascagoula and Front Beach and East Beach in Ocean Springs. It's in a general use district.

Here is the area showing the Front Beach and the red arrow, and East Beach and Front Beach in Ocean Springs. Of course, we have the bridge.

The applicant is requesting a renewal and extension of DMR 0329 until July 31st of 2019. That is to correspond with the date of the expiration of the Corps of Engineers permit for this project.

And that permit allowed for renourishment of beach areas in the following areas and amounts.

Pascagoula Front Beach for 7500 cubic yards.

1 Ocean Springs Front Beach for 17,500 cubic
2 yards.
3 And East Beach in Ocean Springs of 16,000 cubic
4 yards.
5 Chronology.
6 In March of 2003, a permit was approved by the
7 commission that the work be completed by March 20,2008.
8 DMR received a request to renew and extend that
9 permit for an additional five years. And the commission did
10 approve that request in September of 2008 which extended the
11 permit until March 20, 2013.
12 And then in November, we received a request to
13 renew DMR 03298 until July 31, 2019, to correspond with the
14 Corps of Engineers permit.
15 Here's a diagram, a typical diagram, of what
16 we're looking at in these areas. Basically, the permit area
17 would be total of 100 feet from the existing seawall. That's
18 the way it was permitted previously. This will also, the areas
19 that do contain any marsh vegetation will be avoided and so
20 there won't be a renourishment that would impact those marsh
21 areas.
22 And based upon staff's review, the project is
23 consistent with the Coastal Program because it serves a higher
24 public purpose by restoring public beach areas for recreational
25 use and helping protect the seawall and the associated

1 roadways. So staff recommends approval of the requested
2 extension until July 31, 2019.
3 Any questions?
4 MR. TAYLOR: Do I have a motion?
5 MR. ZIMMERMAN: I'd like to make a motion to
6 accept what they're recommending.
7 MR. TAYLOR: Do I have a second?
8 MR. DRUMMOND: I'll second the motion, Mr.
9 Chairman.
10 MR. TAYLOR: All those in favor. Passes
11 unanimously.
12 Thank you.
13 H. Office of Finance and Administration
14 MR. TAYLOR: Next up is office of finance and
15 administration. Bill Feidt.
16 1. FY14 Monthly Report
17 MR. FEIDT: Good morning, everyone. Take you
18 through the financial picture of the agency as of the end of
19 November.
20 Revenues so far this year on the state side were
21 about $4.4 million, predominantly that's offroad fuel tax of
22 over three million and then it's half of our state
23 apportionment which is five hundred sixty thousand. And we're
24 about five hundred thousand on the license sales year to date.
25 I mentioned last month we'll be adding some

things to these reports as we go through. I've added a couple of headings on here for this month for a couple of the small items just to line it up to the budget as we get into the new year. That's one reason those have been added here. But the general content is still the same.

Any questions on the revenue side?

On the expenditure side, we're just over $3 million year to date. The bulk of it is on salaries and wages, $2.2 million. And the contractual services were almost six hundred thousand, commodities just under $200,000.

And then I was asked to mention that for Shelby's benefit the travel has picked up a little bit this month.

MR. DRUMMOND: Thank you, Bill.

MR. FEIDT: I do what I can to help.

Any questions on the expenditure side?

The last two slides are unchanged from last month. This is our projected position at the end of the year. As I mentioned, we'll be looking to update this as we get into the new year.

On the revenue side, we're about $5.6 million. Again, I've got the categories lining up with the first page.

And then here's our expenditures staying put at the end of this year as we projected right now.

Any questions?

1 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Bill.
2 MR. FEIDT: Thank you.
3 I. Directorate
4 1. Public Affairs
5 MR. TAYLOR: Next up is public affairs, Melissa
6 Scallan.
7 MS. SCALLAN: Good morning, commissioners,
8 Director Miller, Ms. Chesnut.
9 We also would like to wish everyone a Merry
10 Christmas and Happy New Year.
11 We had since the last commission meeting, the
12 department has been mentioned 46 times in the media. That
13 includes newspapers, TV stations, radio stations on the coast
14 and in this region.
15 I think we had one or two more this morning. So
16 it probably is 48 as of this morning.
17 I wanted to mention something to you that our
18 marine patrol did that we got some recognition for. There was
19 some -- about 100 pounds of redfish that were caught illegally.
20 And our marine patrol officers gave that to the Salvation Army
21 in Gulfport for them to feed people. It was the day after
22 Thanksgiving. So people got some good fish. Someone did
23 something wrong, but there was benefit from it. So there were
24 lot of people who thanked us for that, and we want to thank
25 marine patrol for thinking of that to do that with those fish.

1 We have had several events. We're kind of
2 winding down at the end of the year, but we did have a few
3 things that have gone on. We participated in an event in Ocean
4 Springs to encourage local shopping, and they had a place at
5 the Mary C where they had chefs fixing some food, and we
6 contributed some seafood to that so people would continue
7 shopping and they would be able to do that. And they enjoyed
8 our seafood.
9 That night, our DMR wellness team ran its first
10 5K. So everybody finished and, you know, it was cold as
11 anything. I think they ran to keep warm that night. But that
12 was a nice event.
13 The Charley Norwood House in Ocean Springs, we
14 had our first open house for that home on December 8. Very
15 well received. We had probably I would guess a couple hundred
16 people that passed through in the three hours they were open.
17 It's also open if you're interested on Friday
18 and Saturday afternoons from 2:00 to 5:00 during the month of
19 December. And we'll decide -- they're going to work with us
20 and decide when we're going to keep that open after the first
21 of the year.
22 We also had the Grand Bay NERR last Friday had a
23 star gazing event. And we had about 60 people that attended
24 that. So that was well received also.
25 This Friday we want to let you know about

1 something going on. There will be a reinterrment ceremony on
2 the west side of the Biloxi Visitors Center at ten o'clock. A
3 professor, Marie Danforth from USM and her students, did a dig
4 there and excavated remains of about 31 European settlers who
5 were here in the 17th Century. And they -- Hurricane Katrina
6 disrupted their burial spot. So we are going to have a
7 ceremony with Bishop Morin and some state and local officials,
8 so you guys are welcome to join us for that, also.
9 We did want to tell you about some things going
10 on in January at the legislature. On January 8, typically
11 every year the Coast Chamber and the tourism group sponsor a
12 coast reception. And so that's going to be January 8, and all
13 of you are invited to that event.
14 We are having on January 23, we're going to have
15 DMR day at the Capitol in Jackson from 7:30 to noon.
16 On January 29, we will be participating in a
17 Best of Mississippi Seafood Edition. There's a group in
18 Jackson doing a -- sponsoring events called Best of
19 Mississippi. This one is seafood, and so that's going to be at
20 the Old Capitol Inn from 6:30 to 8:30. And I'll send you guys
21 e-mails about that so you can be aware of that.
22 Any questions?
23 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you very much.
24 MS. SCALLAN: Thank you.
25 J. Other Business

1 MR. TAYLOR: Next up, any other business to come
2 before the commission?
3 MR. GOLLOTT: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make a
4 motion that we go into closed session to determine the need to
5 go into executive session to discuss personnel matters.
6 MR. TAYLOR: We have a motion on the floor. Is
7 there a second?
8 MR. DRUMMOND: I second the motion, Mr.
9 Chairman.
10 MR. TAYLOR: Those in favor. Passes
11 unanimously. Thank you.
12 (Off the record 9:53 a.m.)
13 MS. ROYALS: The commissioners are in executive
14 session to consider personnel matters.
15 (Off the record.)
16 (On the record 10:54 a.m.)
17 MR. TAYLOR: We'll come back into session, but
18 we're going to wait a minute until one of the commissioners
19 gets back.
20 Okay, Sandy.
21 MS. CHESNUT: At 9:53, a motion was made by
22 Commissioner Gollott to go into the closed session to discuss
23 the need for executive session to discuss personnel matters.
24 The commissioners present were Jimmy Taylor,
25 Richard Gollott, Shelby Drummond, Steve Bosarge, and Ernie

1 Zimmerman.
2 Oh, and that motion by Gollott was seconded by
3 Mr. Drummond.
4 Also present in the room during executive
5 session or the closed session was Joseph Runnels and myself and
6 the executive director.
7 At ten o'clock, a motion was made also by
8 Commissioner Gollott to go into executive session to discuss
9 personnel matters. And that motion was seconded by Ernie
10 Zimmerman.
11 Legal counsel and executive director briefed the
12 commissioners during the executive session on several different
13 personnel matters. No motions were made.
14 And then at 10:52, Commissioner Gollott made a
15 motion to end the executive session and return to regular
16 session. That motion was seconded by Mr. Zimmerman.
17 MR. TAYLOR: Okay. Thank you, Sandy.
18 K. Public COmments
19 MR. TAYLOR: Next on the agenda is public
20 comments. And when I call your name, pease come to the podium,
21 state your name and who you represent and your subject matter,
22 please.
23 First up is Louis Skrmetta.
24 And it's three minutes, y'all.
25 MR. SKRMETTA: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

1 In 1971, Gulf Islands National Seashore was
2 established to ensure that the Mississippi barrier islands are
3 preserved and protected for future generations.
4 The current proposal to open up state waters to
5 oil and gas drilling is a direct threat to a 40 year effort to
6 conserve these exquisite sand islands for our children.
7 As it stands now, the thousands of coastal
8 residences and businesses that depend on tourism could be
9 impacted by this complex proposal.
10 We shouldn't risk spoiling a proven economic
11 resource like our national seashore just to please Governor
12 Barbour and Governor Bryant and the oil and gas lobby. This is
13 pretty much who's pushing this thing.
14 Any potential oil and gas royalties MDA claims
15 will be forthcoming to the county supervisors, municipalities,
16 and state agencies will be wiped out by the loss of tourism
17 dollars, and the unknown cost to regulate and manage this very
18 complex and hazardous industry.
19 The people of the Gulf Coast are not opposed to
20 oil and gas drilling. Those of us that live in this region
21 understand how important offshore drilling is to our economy.
22 There are more than 3,000 drilling sites south of Ship Island
23 and Fort Massachusetts. But the drilling platforms associated
24 with the current operations do not dominate the unimpaired
25 viewshed found on the south side of the Mississippi barrier

1 islands like they do off Dauphin Island, Alabama.
2 A visit to Dauphin Island is proof positive that
3 allowing drilling platforms within the three miles of state
4 controlled waters south of Petit Bois, Horn, and Ship and Cat
5 Islands is not a sufficient distance to prevent the noise and
6 visual impacts from affecting one's visitor experience to the
7 national seashore.
8 Elements such as wilderness, solitude, and
9 unaltered night sky are what make national parks so special and
10 like thousands of people from all around the nation and the
11 world visit Mississippi islands each year.
12 Mississippi Development Authority's own public
13 comment record shows overwhelming opposition to their proposal
14 to lease Mississippi waters to oil and gas drilling. Over 85
15 percent of the comments received during the official comment
16 period were in opposition. The public has spoken clearly, this
17 proposal is a bad bet for our expanding tourism industry, bad
18 for the health of our beleaguered Mississippi Sound, and bad
19 for the future of Mississippi's barrier islands and national
20 seashore.
21 Is Jackson going to force the Mississippi Gulf
22 Coast to become a gas drilling destination like Mobile Bay and
23 Dauphin Island, Alabama?
24 Or are we going to become a premier tourist and
25 gaming destination?

1 We can't have it both ways.
2 Billions of dollars have been spent and will be
3 spent transforming the Mississippi Gulf Coast into a premier
4 tourist destination. Tourism alone counts for 17 percent of
5 the area's employment. Local tourism leaders are currently
6 engaged in one of the most ambitious advertising campaigns in
7 state history thanks to millions of dollars in restitution
8 money provided by BP.
9 Resources are finally available to properly
10 showcase the wonderful culture, history, and natural resources
11 of South Mississippi to the nation and world.
12 Instead of officials pushing offshore drilling
13 next to the state's most valuable waterfront property, MDA is
14 pushing this, as you know, they should be working on ways to
15 bring more visitors to the area by promoting and not
16 diminishing the value of some of the state's most precious
17 tourism assets, Gulf Islands National Seashore.
18 I hope that this commission will look at this
19 very carefully, the economic study prepared by Dr. Jeff Bounds,
20 Ph.D. states that we can expect a three percent drop in tourism
21 if one drilling platform is set up south of Horn Island.
22 That's just a start.
23 So I know that the commission somehow -- I'm not
24 sure exactly what your authority is in this case, but I
25 respectfully request that this commission look at this very

1 carefully and not allow this to take place.
2 Thank you so much.
3 MR. TAYLOR: Mr. Skrmetta, I'm going to let Mr.
4 Miller respond to some stuff, to the comments, because there is
5 a separation of power there.
6 MR. MILLER: Well, I just want to speak again to
7 the possible confusion about what the agency's response to MDA
8 was.
9 After several months now, or at least three
10 months, since we've got MDAQ's request for coastal zone
11 consistency, we just basically said we're going to follow the
12 law. And we believe that the state legislature has absolutely
13 given MDA as a duly authorized agency the authority to issue
14 permits. But that is not a substitute for what this agency is
15 here to do. Through phone calls and a lot of conversations
16 with people on the coast and in Jackson, what our letter says,
17 and I don't know if you've had a chance to read the actual
18 letter, but what the letter says is, you know, MDA's rules and
19 regulations are not a substitute for this agency's
20 responsibility to review those potential impacts through
21 seismic activity leasing and that we will retain our mandated
22 authority to do that independently from commenting on what
23 MDA's rules may or may not say.
24 So I just want to restate that anyone who asks
25 or applies for a seismic permit will absolutely go to MDA to

1 get one. They will also absolutely have to apply to us to get
2 one.
3 MR. SKRMETTA: Thank you, sir.
4 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Louis.
5 Next up is Jennifer Wittmann.
6 MS. WITTMANN: Just really quickly. I'm sorry.
7 Jennifer Wittmann. I'm with Christmas on the Bayou in
8 Gulfport. And just wanted to take an opportunity to publicly
9 thank our marine patrol officers for once again providing for a
10 safe parade this Saturday night. I know that they worked
11 parades all up and down the coast, but we had about 45 boats in
12 the parade. It was not the greatest weather in the world. But
13 they were there. They kept us safe. They had officers and
14 reserves there, and sometimes the people overlook the fact
15 that, you know, it's their job, but they're out there, and they
16 keep everyone safe.
17 So thank you.
18 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you.
19 Next up is Steve I believe it's Shepard.
20 MR. SHEPARD: Yes. My name is Steve Shepard.
21 I'm from Gautier, Mississippi. I represent the Sierra Club
22 Gulf Coast Group Chair. Was there something else you wanted in
23 advance?
24 MR. TAYLOR: That's fine.
25 MR. SHEPARD: I'm here again on the drilling in

1 the Sound issue. And I do like it sounds like Jamie Miller did
2 the best he could for us and that he is not giving away the
3 power that we on the coast need. And I understand that power
4 is going to come through this commission.
5 So I'm frankly looking for three votes that are
6 going to say no every time a seismic permit comes in and every
7 time an oil rig permit comes in, I'm hoping that three on this
8 commission will vote against it and try to keep it out of our
9 Sound.
10 I want to make one point that we have --
11 different representatives of this issue have brought up a
12 number of times, and the fact that we have an economic report
13 by Jeffrey Bounds, a completely qualified guy, got a Ph.D.,
14 completely qualified to analyze that he thinks the outcome of
15 drilling in the Mississippi Sound is going to have on our
16 economy. And his results are definitely suggesting that when
17 we drill, yes, a few drilling jobs will be created, but that at
18 the same time at least the same number, and it sounded like his
19 analysis was that more jobs would be lost from our tourist
20 activity.
21 And so we won't gain an economy from any of this
22 drilling activity. And I'm hoping that our commissioners will
23 protect our economy.
24 I want to say, why doesn't the MDA hire
25 somebody, I'm sure they can, and dispute our findings? They

1 don't dispute it.

2 So what you have is you have one economist who

3 has analyzed this question. The MDA has never analyzed this

4 question. They have not come up with their own report where

5 you would have a chance to say, hey, you're wrong about that.

6 The tourism will increase when we get oil rigs. The more oil

7 rigs, the more economic activity from tourism and the other

8 areas of our economy.

9 I mean, I would worry about seafood. I think

10 you've got to ask yourself how many tourists are buying

11 seafood. I know my sister comes down from Nashville, and she

12 goes over to Quality Seafood and buys seafood. What if she's

13 discouraged by the oil rigs? What if she starts thinking, you

14 know, gosh -- I say oil rigs, gas rigs. It's almost certainly

15 be gas. What about the water quality? I think I'll go buy my

16 seafood over at Gulf Shores or somewhere else. I don't know,

17 but I do think you ought to ask that question: Will it affect

18 seafood sales?

19 I also want to say in terms of fishing, we've

20 got this notion that the rigs could possibly increase the

21 fishing. If we didn't already have some really wonderful

22 rubble out there, we definitely need more habitat, if we didn't

23 already have rubble reefs, I'd say, well, maybe, you know, if

24 you had a completely empty bottom covered with sand and mud and

25 an oil rig showed up, yeah, I wouldn't be surprised if a few

more fish showed up.

But right now, I can't see that happening because we've already got pretty good habitat. And, of course, they're going to be dumping drilling mud. Drilling mud is going to create turbidity, and that turbidity is likely to at least make the fish get displaced to some extent. So we could be affecting fishing directly, not including what the tourist impact could be.

At any rate, I'm asking our local people that are on this commission to definitely seriously look out for us and consider what our findings show, what Dr. Jeffrey Bounds showed, which is that we won't gain anything from these rigs, that we will lose. And so we need to -- I hope that three of you on there will vote this way, and that's what we're going to be looking for.

So thank you very much.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you.

MR. DRUMMOND: Mr. Shepard, who is Dr. Bounds and what is his affiliation?

MR. SHEPARD: I'm not sure I can answer that as well as someone else.

Does someone have his credentials? Do you have it, Helen?

MR. TAYLOR: State your name when you come forward, Helen.

1 MS. PATTERSON: Hi. I'm Helen Rose Patterson.
2 I'm the Mississippi organizer with the Gulf Restoration
3 Network.
4 Jeff Bounds is up at MIT, but he is local. He
5 was here, and I'm not 100 percent sure on all the details, he
6 was here post-Katrina helping to do economic impact assessment
7 work as far as our rebuilding. And, of course, the issue of
8 drilling had first come up right before that. And so when the
9 rules for seismic testing and leasing were released back in
10 December 2011, he did a full economic impact report on
11 detailing exactly what drilling would mean for the coastal
12 economy. And it's available on the Twelve Miles South
13 Coalition website, and I believe it's been made available to a
14 number of decisoinmakers over that time.
15 But he's a professor at MIT, I believe these
16 days, but local, originally grew up here.
17 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you.
18 MR. SHEPARD: And anyway, like I say, why
19 doesn't the MDA come up with their own that disputes it?
20 That's all I'm asking. When you don't have anyone disputing
21 it, can't we just go ahead and believe Jeffrey Bounds?
22 Thank you.
23 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you very much.
24 Next up is Ms. Carol Lightner.
25 MS. LIGHTNER: My name is Carol Lightner. I'm

1 from D'Iberville, Mississippi.
2 And we, the people of the already wronged
3 scarred battered and bruised Gulf Coast, don't want oil
4 drilling.
5 It is ludicrous to say it will help the Gulf
6 Coast tourism, environment, economic future, etcetera, for two
7 days worth of oil or gas.
8 The impact on the historical resources, natural
9 scenic qualities, wetlands, due to oil equals four to five
10 story rigs within a mile of our barrier islands visible from
11 the towns along the coast, oil activity so close not in line
12 with environment or economic future of the coast.
13 Please protect our future of the coast. Please
14 protect our natural resources for our health and the future of
15 the coast.
16 If the whole environment is demolished, what
17 good is a boat?
18 A wronged scarred battered and bruised region
19 already, 170 million plus gallons f crude oil in the Gulf
20 habitat, wildlife, employment, health, family welfare. Ask:
21 Are we any safer or better off today?
22 Congress has failed to act, misjudgment,
23 operation failure, oversight and mistakes.
24 Washington allies are resisting reform.
25 We cannot continue to place lives of our

1 workers, health of our waters, survival of the coast economics,
2 wildlife of the Gulf in harm's way.
3 Our leaders in Washington and local leaders must
4 restore the Gulf and make its people whole again.
5 Oil discovered on the bottom of the Gulf
6 contaminated slash smothered tracts of the soft bottom sponges,
7 sea fans, coral reefs, rich bottom habitats of the Gulf.
8 There are less than 2,000 sperm whales left.
9 Whales are like dolphins. Surface to breathe and can ingest
10 oil.
11 Oil impacts the whole prey like fish and squid.
12 One hundred seventy million plus gallons of
13 crude oil flooded the Gulf. The rest in the environment,
14 dispersed in the water columns, floated to the surface,
15 deposited on the coast and sank to the bottom.
16 Large portions in the air included hazardous
17 chemicals, benzene hydrogen sulfate. Winds carried the toxic
18 chemicals and hydrocarbons to shore threatening health of
19 humans and wildlife.
20 The oil slick threatened the health of humans
21 and wildlife. And the oil slicks around the Gulf and islands
22 harming marine animals such as turtles, birds, marine mammals,
23 and larva fish, as well as coastal habitat such as rich
24 marshland.
25 Tar balls traveled hundreds of miles and will

1 continue to wash on the beaches for years.
2 Thank you for your time in letting the citizens
3 comment.
4 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you very much, Ms. Lightner.
5 Next up, Ms. Helen Rose Patterson.
6 MS. PATTERSON: As I said before, I'm Helen Rose
7 Patterson. I'm the Mississippi organizer with the Gulf
8 Restoration Network.
9 Thanks for allowing us the opportunity.
10 MR. TAYLOR: We're going to dock you a minute
11 because you spoke earlier. I'm just kidding.
12 MS. PATERSON: I'm going to be brief anyway.
13 MR. TAYLOR: Take your time.
14 MS. PATTERSON: I'm not going to ramble on, I
15 promise.
16 I do want to thank you for making an effort to
17 maintain the authority of this agency and this commission as
18 far as the rules for seismic testing and leasing go.
19 Obviously, there are still major concerns about
20 what drilling really does mean for our coast, and I think
21 that's the fundamental issue that has not yet been addressed.
22 No one has looked at anything beyond
23 seismic testing and leasing. And those two things lead to
24 drilling. And we have to know what drilling means.
25 I think Steve's point about making sure that the

1 state does do an adequate economic impact assessment is
2 incredibly important and it's something that this commission
3 and this agency should call for because it's an important tool
4 in forming your decisions about allowing permits for these
5 things to move forward.
6 I do want to know when we'll be able publicly to
7 see the document that you've provided to MDA. I don't know if
8 you want to answer that now or...
9 MR. MILLER: It should be available now. I
10 don't know if the Sun Herald has posted it, but it should be.
11 MS. PATTERSON: They have not.
12 MR. MILLER: I'll make it available to you
13 before you leave if you would like.
14 MS. PATTERSON: I'd appreciate that. Thank you.
15 I do want to mention that I think one of the
16 things that we really must consider is that there's been a
17 national paradigm shift over the last five or six years to this
18 notion that exploiting all of our fossil fuel resources in this
19 country is mandatory. And I think what that really fails to
20 take into account is the incredibly important historic and
21 natural resources that individual communities have. And while
22 there are valid reasons to make sure that this nation is energy
23 independent, I don't think we can sacrifice our soul and what
24 makes our communities whole, what gives us the quality of life
25 that we really expect, especially in unique places like the

1 Gulf Coast to this national ideal of using all of our possible
2 fossil fuel resources.
3 And I think it's very important for anyone
4 making decisions regarding drilling to consider where that
5 decision is really coming from, if it's coming from a place
6 that, you know, going with this national idea or if it's coming
7 from a place of protecting communities.
8 So keeping that in mind, we need a good economic
9 impact assessment so we know what this means for our
10 communities. And that should be the driving force behind any
11 decision that this state, this agency, this commission makes as
12 far as drilling is concerned.
13 Thank you all so much.
14 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you very much.
15 Next up, Manny Skinner.
16 MR. SKINNER: Good morning. Been a long
17 morning. Thank y'all for hearing us.
18 I'm a commercial fisherman. I tong oysters down
19 in the Pass. And I'm going to state my comments on something
20 that Richard said just a while ago that he would like to see
21 the commercial fishermen make a living.
22 And we are kind of having a hard time doing that
23 right now.
24 And I've also heard that a lot of folks talking
25 about a Merry Christmas. I don't think it's going to be such a

1 Merry Christmas for the oystermen because we opened this thing
2 up in October, and we closed it down in November, and we got
3 two days in this December so far. And we just can't make
4 enough money to pay our bills and feed our families.
5 I know that down in the Pass we have a water
6 problem with the Pearl River. It's been a water problem for
7 years. And it will continue to be a problem for years until
8 somebody fixes the Pearl River.
9 Now, there's a way to fix the Pearl River, but
10 it would have to go through Washington first to get it fixed.
11 But we ain't going to talk about that today.
12 What I propose and I've proposed before and
13 other people that have been here has heard this proposal and
14 some of them are still here and some of them ain't here no
15 more, but I'm suggesting that we not put all our eggs in one
16 basket down at the Pass. We have spent millions and millions
17 of dollars down there trying to refurbish all these oyster
18 reefs down there. And it takes anywheres from three to four
19 years before you can even harvest a oyster off them reefs after
20 they put the shells and the limestone and all that stuff down
21 there.
22 And in that period of time, three years, we
23 could have a hurricane, we could have the Bonnet Carre
24 Spillway, we could have another oil spill, we could have a lot
25 of things happen.

1 What I suggested in the past is build a reef out
2 here on the south side of Deer Island between the Katrina jetty
3 and south side of the island.
4 Now, this reef could be a very large reef, and I
5 heard here the last meeting I was at here, a gentleman came up
6 and suggested to build a reef on the west end of Cat Island.
7 And he wasn't building it there for the commercial fishermen;
8 he was building it there for the recreational fishermen.
9 And somebody, I think it was Mr. Diaz, said that
10 we had plenty rocks still left over from the barges that didn't
11 dump on the Pass reef that we could build a new reef on the
12 west end of Cat Island.
13 Now, that's for the recreational fishermen.
14 Here we are, we're trying to make a living feeding our families
15 on these reefs that's never open. It's a sad plight.
16 This reef I'm talking about could be put in between
17 the jetty and the island, a strip through there, it would be a
18 fantastic fishing reef for everybody. A fantastic fishing
19 reef.
20 And later on in maybe a couple of years, if we
21 put oysters out of the Bay here that they're destroying over
22 here on the Ocean Springs side, all them little pocket reef
23 that we have along Davis Bayou and all that, they're all being
24 covered up because they're dredging sand up on the beach up
25 there so somebody can go out there and lay in a bathing suit

for the tourists.

But the commercial fishermen, such as I and others, I don't know why these other guys don't say anything about -- I have ever heard -- about not having no work. We can't make a living. This industry that we are in is diminishing. A young man is not going to stay here and not be able to feed his family.

But they want to take and they dredge this thing up and they covered these oyster reefs right up out there, what few we got left. I say take the oysters and dredge them up out of that bay and put them somewheres where the commercial fishermen can catch them.

But I don't know. It's just -- it's a terrible plight for us. We can't make a living. We can't feed our families. We just need help is what we need.

And I suggested it many times that we build a reef out here where we can even work when the wind blows. When the north wind blows and when the south wind blows and the waves are down at the Pass so high you can't stand up in your boat, you can work here whenever -- when the water comes out of the Pearl River and floods that place for two or three weeks, we can work here.

Give us a place to where we can feed our families.

Thank you very much.

1 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you very much, Manny. Your
2 comments are always welcome and to the point.
3 I believe if I'm not mistaken that we have
4 looked at putting -- we've had the fisheries people look at
5 putting reefs in those areas. Some of the bottoms are not good
6 I'm told. I don't know. I don't oyster. But we are very
7 concerned about the oyster harvest. We've also -- and if my
8 memory serves me right -- last meeting or the meeting before
9 last instructed some of our staff to look at sources of
10 pollution to the east so that we could find and solve what some
11 of the pollution is so these oysters can be harvested to the
12 east.
13 So your comments are not falling on deaf ears by
14 any means. I know Mr. Gollott has, you know, worked to try to
15 get some reefs. As a matter of fact, we did put some oysters
16 on the old White House reef. I don't know if you remember
17 that, Mr. Skinner. I do as a kid.
18 And I'm not sure about Katrina. But we'll look
19 at it. You know, your comments -- and none of your comments,
20 y'all, are on deaf ears. And we appreciate them.
21 Thank you.
22 Next up, Richard Gable.
23 MR. GABLE: Hello. My name is Richard Gable.
24 I've come to ask y'all about the nylon net again, the use of
25 nylon versus cotton.

1 I think it was last December I was here asking
2 for the use of nylon because I couldn't find the cotton
3 webbing.
4 Well, fisheries helped me find it. It was in
5 Florida which it come out of China. But I was able to get
6 some.
7 I bought 90 pounds of it. I brought this bag
8 that has never been opened. Just the humid air will cause it
9 to rot. It's been left in the original bag that it was shipped
10 to me in. It's been inside the shop. And it's done started to
11 deteriorate.
12 When I take my boat out, every time you use that
13 net you got to take it and hang it. When you take it and hang
14 it, then you dry it out or it's supposedly dry or supposed to
15 be dry. But then it goes back to the humid air.
16 I put it inside of our shop which is 30 by 80
17 foot long, and I hung it in there. You can go out there in the
18 morning and feel it, and it's wet. And steadily, by it being
19 wet, it's steadily rotting.
20 Now, the money I had to spend on this, it was
21 $10 a pound, this is a 32 pound bundle, $320 basically went to
22 poop. That's what I'm being made to fish with.
23 And I can't see why we can't use nylon. I don't
24 want monofilament. I don't think monofilament should be
25 brought back. But cotton is as useless as a boar hog having to

1 be able to fish. It just don't make good sense.
2 I wanted y'all, if you would, pull on this. I
3 can show you or let y'all do it, so you won't think I'm lying
4 or I've altered it. Just that easy.
5 MR. BOSARGE: Show them again, Mr. Gable. Pull
6 a little bit out where they can actually see what you're doing.
7 MR. GABLE: (Complies.)
8 MR. BOSARGE: How would you like to know you
9 were casting with cotton material?
10 MR. GABLE: For me to have to buy the 90 pounds
11 that come from China whenever there's a man in Biloxi, George
12 Booth, that has a nylon company in Ocean Springs that I could
13 buy my webbing local.
14 The gill net, back in the day I was called an
15 outlaw and a thief because I used a gill net. And all I was
16 doing was trying to make a living for my family.
17 Now this, I have to be a half mile off the beach
18 with a sport fisherman when I don't want to be around them.
19 They don't want to be around me. And I'm being forced to fish
20 out there and use stuff like this that's no good, that don't
21 work.
22 And what I'm asking for is to be able to use
23 nylon and at certain times of the year, say like when mullet
24 season opens, from October to Lent, let us fish the shoreline
25 west of Bayou Cadet. During the summer months when the sport

1 fishermen are out there, I don't have to be nowhere around
2 them. I don't fish in the summer months. I try to crab. Then
3 I could fish a half mile off the beach and catch pogeys if the
4 crabs have come back to use for my bait. Fish don't get fat
5 until the fall of the year anyway. That would give me a chance
6 to catch redfish.
7 For two years, I haven't been able to work,
8 catch crabs, catch fish, and I think in fisheries they said
9 that there was 73,000 pounds of fish that was caught
10 recreational and thirty something thousand pounds commercially.
11 Rod and reel don't fit in my hand. I was raised
12 to fish with a net. Why can't I do that?
13 Whenever the commissioners or the commission
14 meeting back in the day was out of Jackson I could fish.
15 I fussed and raised all kind of Cain because I
16 didn't think that the commissioners should be from north
17 Mississippi where they grow cotton. I thought they should be
18 from the coast.
19 But what I did is, I think I shot myself in the
20 foot because whenever it come back to the coast or it come to
21 the coast, then I was called an outlaw and a thief, and I can't
22 fish no more.
23 And they give me stuff like this and tell me
24 this is what I got to use. And I've wasted a lot of money on
25 building a big building to hang a net that's going to rot

anyway.

And I was just looking at the bag. If you take, the bag is sitting in the building, there's little water droplets in it. It went straight from the shop, straight inside my truck, and straight in here. And it's got moisture in it now, and it's supposed to be dry. And it's not. And you seen how it tore.

And like I said, all I'm asking for to let us have our nylon back and to seriously consider seasonal place that we can fish that I don't have to be around the sports because, like I said, they don't want to be around me, and I don't want to be around them.

MR. TAYLOR: Thank you very much.

MR. GABLE: Thank you.

MR. GOLLOTT: Mr. Chairman, could I ask a question, please?

MR. TAYLOR: Yes.

MR. GOLLOTT: Is this state statute or is it regulation the commission came down?

Corky, could you answer that? Or Matt?

MR. HILL: The half mile is in state statute. That was set by the legislature.

The degradable material ordinance, regulation, whatever you want to call it, is in Title 22 Part 5. That was set through the commission.

1 MR. BOSARGE: Matt, just from fishing, honestly,
2 cotton was way before my time. That's how long it's been since
3 there was any nets made out of cotton. But I have fished with
4 nylon, and I have fished with monofilament.
5 And most anybody -- I mean, this man is asking
6 to fish with nylon which was something that when we got away
7 from it, it was like, wow, because when you strike nylon,
8 especially if you put it around the wrong thing, you've got
9 your work cut out for you because it doesn't work as well as
10 monofilament.
11 But I guess my point I'm trying to make is that
12 you saw what -- I mean, that's it. I don't see how you can
13 strike it without tearing it up, to be honest with you. But
14 still and all, that is a biodegradable material, but that's
15 impossible material to work with.
16 MR. HILL: I do have one comment. I talk to
17 Richard on a regular basis.
18 There has been some confusion with the nylon
19 what he's asking me, and I was confused in the beginning. But
20 what he's asking for is undipped nylon. They don't want to be
21 able to dip it or so it will become like a shrimp trawl or
22 something. But there still would be some degradable qualities
23 to it. I don't think it would meet our standards that are
24 currently in our regulations. But I think that is one
25 important thing and he has pointed that out to me that if he

1 came before the commission that it would be undipped nylon.
2 And one reason that this has become so hard to
3 get, we did a little bit of research, and there's only a
4 handful of places that are actually -- you can get the
5 material. There was a misconception. You can get the material
6 anyway. If you want cotton linen twine, get on the internet,
7 you can find it wherever you want.
8 If you want cotton linen mesh to fish with,
9 that's a different story. The manufacturer stopped making it
10 because their machines would generate so much heat spinning the
11 cotton and nylon, they would catch on fire. So it was a safety
12 hazard. So there's very few of them that do any more, and they
13 only do it in limited quantities, and the two that I've spoken
14 to say that's their biggest reason is because just the safety
15 of the factory.
16 So it is in limited quantity. Can you get it?
17 Obviously, you can get it.
18 Are there some problems with it? If I was a
19 commercial fisherman, yeah, I would think there were some
20 problems with it.
21 MR. GOLLOTT: What's the objection to
22 monofilament?
23 MR. GABLE: Do what?
24 MR. GOLLOTT: Why wouldn't you go back to
25 monofilament if you could?

1 MR. GABLE: I don't want monofilament for two
2 reasons. I want to speak plain and blunt. I don't want to --
3 it's kind of brown nosing. The sports is the ones that was
4 objecting to the gill net to begin with.
5 A crab can eat nylon. I believe that there's
6 enough water out there that we all can share it.
7 And I give a little; they give a little.
8 Now, the monofilament, a crab can't eat out of a
9 monofilament net as good as he can a nylon.
10 Now, if you catch a fish, they said that there
11 were so many lost nets. A true commercial fisherman will not
12 lose his net. You just don't do it. There's too much money in
13 it.
14 But if it catches a fish, a crab is going to go
15 there and eat the fish. When the crab gets tangled up in it,
16 he's going to eat hisself out that nylon. When you pick your
17 net up, you're going to have a hole big enough that you can
18 drive your truck through. Monofilament won't do that.
19 MR. BOSARGE: I guess really to answer his
20 question, if you had your choice, you would rather have a
21 monofilament net, but you're trying to --
22 MR. GABLE: If I had my druthers, I would ask
23 for monofilament. But to -- there's been enough bickering and
24 fussing and lies told about the commercial fishermen that I
25 think that I could deal with a nylon net and still be able to

1 work and make a living, and I could do without the
2 monofilament. That's why I said, well, I can give in, and I
3 don't -- monofilament I don't -- I cut my teeth on nylon.
4 MR. BOSARGE: And that's my point, you know, you
5 couldn't take just anybody and hand him a nylon net and say go
6 fish because nylon gets you in trouble.
7 But a true fisherman that knows what he's doing
8 can take that nylon net and make it work.
9 MR. GABLE: Well, that's the point.
10 MR. BOSARGE: Even though it's not going to fish
11 as good as that monofilament, but at least you can -- that
12 right there, that's nothing.
13 MR. GABLE: Well, this thing is 23 foot deep.
14 Me and my wife fish. And she ain't no bigger than a minute.
15 And for us trying to handle a 23 foot deep net on cotton that's
16 rotting away just does not make good logical sense.
17 And like I said, to go along with the sports,
18 too, because they got the right to go out there and fish just
19 as I think I have the right.
20 But I would be happy if I could use a nylon that
21 it could be wet and I could put it in a pile somewhere. It
22 eventually would rot, but not like this. It's not going to
23 deteriorate to nothing.
24 MR. BOSARGE: Especially undipped.
25 MR. GABLE: I don't want -- you see, if it's

1 dipped --

2 MR. BOSARGE: It will last longer and dipped

3 would actually somewhat fish better, but I understand you're

4 willing to sacrifice and willing to take the undipped nylon

5 net, something that you could use to actually work with.

6 MR. GABLE: Right. I got a piece. It's not

7 that old.

8 But dye it, don't dip it. You'd have to change

9 the color because if you put that in the water white, fish is

10 going to see it, it's like putting a picket fence up. You

11 couldn't beat them in it.

12 But, I say that the nylon you could dye the

13 color of it red, brown, green, whatever, but if you dip it, it

14 would be kind of like trying to beat a fish into a chain link

15 fence. He's going to bounce off of it.

16 So I don't want it dipped. I just -- and a crab

17 could still eat the nylon if it's not dipped. And if you dip

18 it, it's going to be harder -- it would be like a shrimp trawl.

19 I guess that may be why they dip shrimp trawls so it lasts

20 longer and makes it stronger to where it don't tear up as

21 quick.

22 MR. BOSARGE: It doesn't rot.

23 MR. GABLE: Right. But that's why I was asking

24 for the nylon, but be allowed to not dip it, not to dip, but to

25 dye it so that it would change the color of it.

MR. GOLLOTT: Matt, how many commercial fishermen have we got, gill net fishermen?

MR. HILL: Right now on record, we've given out 12 net tags. We've actually certified the material that they're using on 12 of them. But that's going back to right after the storm. Some of these nets are seven, eight years old, and they -- if I had to guess, I'd say five or six of them may still be --

MR. GOLLOTT: Are they licensed yearly?

MR. HILL: They buy a license yearly but if they are claiming they're still using -- we only have to -- once we tag the net, it's for that specific net, and we get the packing list, we get the material, and they don't have to come back in and re-tag that net. It's tagged. And so they're saying that they're -- and it becomes an enforcement issue then.

MR. GOLLOTT: How long can the net be?

MR. HILL: Twelve hundred foot.

MR. GOLLOTT: Twelve hundred feet?

MR. HILL: Yes, sir.

MR. GOLLOTT: A fisherman can have how many nets?

MR. HILL: One 1200 foot.

MR. GOLLOTT: Let us take this under advisement and then come back. We'll look at it.

MR. BOSARGE: Can we ask Matt to look into it

1 and tell us what we -- we're going to put it on you again.
2 MR. HILL: I don't think we'll give a
3 recommendation. How about an option? We'll look into it and
4 take some things under advisement, and when we get ready, it
5 may not be a bad idea to --
6 MR. GOLLOTT: In those seasons that they can
7 fish mullet and avoid catching speckled trout and redfish and
8 something like that, or is that...
9 MR. HILL: I don't think you're going to avoid
10 catching the other species when you're catching mullet. You
11 can target, you can make the gear selective toward the mullet
12 with the larger mesh sizes and things. There are some ways to
13 look at it, but there's also both sides of the fence. And I
14 think a little bit more research on this and possibly down the
15 road having a public hearing just to get some comments and see
16 how everybody feels.
17 MR. DRUMMOND: Are we talking strictly about
18 gill nets, not trammel nets?
19 MR. GABLE: Gill net and a trammel net is
20 basically the same thing.
21 MR. DRUMMOND: No, i's a little different.
22 MR. GABLE: It's --
23 MR. DRUMMOND: That's okay. I just wanted --
24 MR. GABLE: Well, it's basically they're about
25 the same way, except the trammel net will catch, say like a

1 sheephead. I think Mississippi state law says it has to be a
2 stretch limit of three inches. Well, if you had a trammel net
3 that had three inch inside wall and three inches outside wall
4 and it's got 14 inch mylutes on it, it would be able to catch
5 sheephead, black drum, flounder, or whatever that the type of
6 fish that you're targeting.
7 I wanted to say about an area to fish, and that
8 goes back to the length of the net.
9 Saying like if we was able to fish west of Bayou
10 Cadet down in the marsh where most of the sports go offshore
11 and fish, that's them rock piles, instead of us having 1200
12 foot of net, you can catch more fish with a 300 foot piece of
13 net along the shoreline than you can with a 1200 foot piece of
14 net. You don't need 1200 foot.
15 Well, if we're able to fish inside that half
16 mile along the shoreline, then we wouldn't have to have so much
17 net, and we could still -- if we were setting it. Now, if you
18 was hauling a net going from point to point to point to work,
19 then you would want to have at least six, eight hundred foot of
20 net. I'm getting too old to be pulling on 1200 foot of net.
21 But I could make it -- me, myself. Now, others, they may
22 prefer the 1200 foot piece.
23 But that's where it goes back to where I was
24 wanting to give -- I'm willing to give if something could be
25 give to me.

1 MR. DRUMMOND: Thank you, Mr. Gable.
2 MR. GABLE: Thank you.
3 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you very much.
4 Any other business?
5 What is the name, ma'am?
6 MS. RAMSEY: Maxine Ramsey.
7 MR. TAYLOR: I'm sorry. Come on up.
8 MS. RAMSEY: I wouldn't let you forget. It's
9 afternoon, probably. Good morning or good afternoon, whatever
10 you want to say.
11 I'm Maxine Ramsey, and I live in Ocean Springs.
12 We are really not surprised that Mr. Miller went along with MDA
13 on the rules, but we'll just have to wait and see what really
14 is being said.
15 In April of 2009, myself and several others from
16 the coast attended an economic development meeting promoting
17 more oil and gas drilling in the Gulf and New Orleans. It was
18 attended by numerous lawyers in their thousand dollar plus
19 suits, workers and peons, also, all claiming that oil drilling
20 in Louisiana was in essence the best thing since sliced bread.
21 They claim no damages to the wildlife, the seafood industry,
22 the environment, and so forth. They gave such a glowing report
23 of the gas and oil industry.
24 Two weeks after this meeting, I read and saw on
25 TV where the same people with the grounds and wetlands in

1 Louisiana are sinking and they are losing acres every year due
2 to manmade canals and other problems that occur with the
3 monumental project of oil and gas drilling.
4 They were begging for federal assistance.
5 Then two years later, the worst oil spill in
6 Gulf Coast history happened. Lieutenant Governor Phil Bryant,
7 now Governor Bryant, claimed we were smelling our lawn mower
8 gas. What an intelligent remark.
9 And when 11 men lost their lives (inaudible).
10 In reference to the leasing and drilling
11 project, may I add that Gulf Islands National Seashore is
12 hallowed ground. In case you all want a history lesson,
13 hallowed ground is where our ancestors and forefathers died in
14 battle for their country. Fort Massachusetts was a Civil War
15 prison camp. Men died from mosquitoes, starvation, disease,
16 heat and so forth on this sand covered land, both southern and
17 northern soldiers.
18 Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, was the largest battle
19 of the Civil War in 1862, I think, a three day battle with
20 165,000 men with 52,000 plus died in that battle.
21 In Orange County, Virginia, in the whole state
22 of Virginia, probably had more Civil War battles than any.
23 These two states refuse to let tourism deal be
24 decimated, I guess would be, by the casinos and the Wal-Marts
25 and whatever that was going to impede the hallowed ground of

1 their ancestors.

2 Tourism and tourists who visit our coast and

3 especially Fort Massachusetts do not expect and do not want to

4 see oil rigs. There is little gas and oil in the Gulf. I

5 don't know if you all will falsify your comments and claim hat

6 drilling will lower the price of gas at the pumps because it

7 hasn't so far.

8 I know that many of our elected officials

9 receive thousands of dollars from the oil and gas companies,

10 including Senator Wicker that is the top dog in our state, and

11 I guess it's just a coincidence that his son-in-law, Manny

12 McPhillips, is the big wig at MDA.

13 Will you, the commission, sell your souls to

14 okay the leasing and drilling in the hallowed grounds of

15 Mississippi?

16 Quoting from the late Nelson Mandela, good and

17 evil are always at war, and you must choose.

18 Thank you.

19 MR. TAYLOR: Thank you, Ms. Ramsey.

20 Any other business?

21 Do I have a motion, Shelby?

22 MR. DRUMMOND: I'll make a motion we adjourn.

23 MR. GOLLOTT: Second it.

24 MR. TAYLOR: All those in favor.

25 (Meeting adjourned 11:51 a.m.)

COMMISSION ON MARINE RESOURCES

COURT REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

I, Norma Jean Ladner Soroe, Certified Shorthand Reporter, do hereby certify that to the best of my skill and ability I have reported the meeting of the Commission on Marine Resources and that the foregoing 69 pages constitute a true and correct transcription of said meeting held on the 17th day of December 2013.

I do further certify that my certificate annexed hereto applies only to the original and certified transcript. The undersigned assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of any reproduced copies not made under my control and direction.

Witness my signature this the 9th day of January 2014.

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