



GOVERNOR GREG ABBOTT

March 15, 2023

Ms. Janet Coit
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries
NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service
1315 East-West Highway, Room 14636
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Dear Ms. Coit:

In response to the request for nominations to the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (GMFMC), I wish to submit the following nominees to be considered in descending order of priority for the three at-large seats that will become vacant on August 10, 2023. The three candidates should be considered for all at large-seats.

Dr. Kesley Banks, Corpus Christi — Other Sector
Douglass Boyd, Boerne — Recreational Fisherman
Brenda Ballard, Kingsville — Recreational Fisherman

Enclosed are the nomination packets for the three nominees. These individuals are all knowledgeable of the conservation and management of fishery resources and each possesses a unique background and experience as it relates to resource management.

Kesley Banks, Ph.D. is the preferred nominee for the at-large vacancy. The academic and professional background of Dr. Banks's scientific expertise will add immensely to the conservation of natural resources and other core functions of the Council. Dr. Banks is a marine biologist and an Associate Research Scientist at the Harte Research Institute for Gulf of Mexico Studies at Texas A&M Corpus Christi. Her current research, which focuses on migration patterns of marine life, will assist in understanding the vital role that estuaries and near-shore waters play in sustaining marine life populations. She is a member of American Fisheries Society, American Elasmobranch Society, Coastal Migratory Pelagic Advisory Panel, and Habitat Today Fish Tomorrow Committee, a technical advisor of the International Commission of the Conservation of Atlantic Tunes Advisory Committee, and a member of the Board of Directors of the Coastal Conservation Association.

Douglass Boyd is the owner and president of Doug Boyd Builders, Inc. and a recreational fisherman. Mr. Boyd has served as a Council Member of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery and Sport Fishing Boating Partnership.

Brenda Ballard is a Program Director for the Center of Continuing Education at Texas A&M Kingsville and a recreational fisherman. She currently serves as President for the Coastal Conservation Association-Brush County Chapter, and is a member of Texas Wildlife Association, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Reef Advisory Panel, Texas Parks and Wildlife Coastal Resource Advisory Council, and the Texas SEA Grant Reef Fish Advisory Panel.

In compliance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, 16 U.S.C. § 1852(b)(2)(C), we have conferred with representatives from the recreational and commercial fishing communities. In addition, my staff has consulted with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, which has a significant number of public advisory groups on marine-related issues. My appointments staff actively encouraged and sought qualified nominees from diverse backgrounds and various areas of the state.

I recommend these nominees for the available seats on the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council. I believe each is highly qualified and possesses the talent and experience necessary to make them an effective council member. I appreciate your consideration of Texas's nominees.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Abbott", written in a cursive style.

Greg Abbott
Governor

GA:pv

Enclosures

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

KAY IVEY
GOVERNOR



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STATE OF ALABAMA

March 9, 2023

Assistant Administrator for Fisheries
NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service
Attn: Janet Coit
1315 East-West Highway, Room 14636
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Dear Ms. Daly:

Thank you for the opportunity to nominate persons to fill the At-Large seat on the Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council that is currently held by Dr. Robert Shipp of Alabama. Dr. Shipp has been a very valuable member of the Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council. I am proud of his many years of service, but he has requested that he not be considered for an additional term. I hope an Alabamian will be reappointed to this seat to continue the important work he has done over the last three years. The work of the Gulf Council is very important to the State of Alabama. Alabama has a very large charter fleet, a robust recreational fishery, a small but critical commercial fleet, and is the leader in seafood processing on the Gulf Coast. It is imperative to the economic and conservation interests of our state that Alabama be fairly represented on the Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council.

In accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Act and 50 CFR 600.215, the State of Alabama would like to nominate the following three individuals for the At-Large seat that is to be filled in 2023: Dr. Anthony S. Overton (Academia), Dr. Charles A. Wilson (Academia/Commercial), Captain David Walker (Commercial). **I recommend that Dr. Anthony Overton be appointed to fill this At-Large seat.**

Dr. Anthony Overton is highly knowledgeable in fisheries conservation and management and has been a life-long recreational angler. He currently serves as Chair and Professor for Samford University's Department of Biological and Environmental Sciences and is the Graduate Director for Masters in Environmental Health, Policy, and Management for Howard College of Arts and Sciences in Birmingham, Alabama. He previously served as Chair and Professor for the Department of Biological and Environmental Sciences at Alabama A&M University, one of Alabama's Historically Black Universities (HBCU), and has over 20 years of experience in the academic world. Dr. Overton has authored and co-authored more than 30 scientific papers and manuscripts related to marine fisheries. Additionally, he has experience in region-wide fisheries management as a previous member of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) and an Advisory Member with the International Committee for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT). Over his career he has served on a variety of advisory boards and conservation organizations and still maintains an active role in many of those today.

Dr. Charles (Chuck) Wilson currently serves as Chief Science Officer Gulf of Mexico Research Initiative (GOMRI) and managing partner for Navy Cove Oysters (an Alabama Oyster Aquaculture farm) in addition to

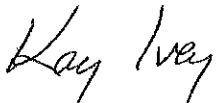
providing consulting on various fisheries issues. He has an extensive background in research in the Gulf of Mexico through his various roles as a faculty member at Louisiana State University (LSU), where he was on staff from 1984-2009. He completed his career there as Vice Provost, Academic Affairs. Many of the papers and manuscripts he has authored or co-authored directly relate to issues of many of the species of concern for the Gulf Council such as red snapper and shrimp as well as habitat issues. Dr. Wilson is very knowledgeable on the workings of the Gulf Council and has served on several Science and Statistical Committees as well as various panels convened by the Gulf Council. In addition to domestic fisheries, he has experience in international fisheries through service on advisory panels and committees in Russia, Japan and Mexico. While Dr. Wilson is listed under academia and commercial, he is also a recreational angler with some experience working in the charter business and as a commercial fisherman for 8 years. He was recommended by a commercial fishing and seafood processing business owner for his experience in oyster aquaculture and knowledge and advocacy for the commercial fishing industry.

Captain David Walker is the owner and operator of the *F/V June Sue*. Captain Walker previously held an At-Large seat on the Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council. Captain Walker did a very good job on the Gulf Council representing the commercial sector during his tenure. He holds federal commercial permits for Gulf Reef Fish, Coastal Migratory Pelagic Fish, and Shark Incidental Catch. Walker has been a commercial fisherman for over 30 years. He is extremely knowledgeable about the fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico. He is a member of the Gulf Coast Professional Fishermen and is a former member of the Gulf of Mexico Shareholders Alliance. He has been an active participant in the Council process. Mr. Walker has served on several advisory panels, including the Red Snapper Advisory Panel, the Reef Fish Advisory Panel, the Ad Hoc 5-Year Red Snapper Review Advisory Panel, and the Ad Hoc Commercial Reef Fish Advisory Panel.

The nomination process is very important to the State of Alabama. The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR) has met with a variety of groups before selecting the above nominated individuals. The following organizations were consulted in the process: the Organized Seafood Association of Alabama, Alabama Seafood Dealers, Coastal Conservation Association, Alabama Coastal Fishermen Association, Orange Beach Fishing Association, Alabama Seafood Marketing Commission, University of South Alabama Department of Marine Sciences, Dauphin Island Sea Lab, Gulf of Mexico Shareholders Alliance, several charter fishermen, recreational fishermen, marina operators, and other concerned and knowledgeable individuals.

ADCNR actively worked to recruit and consider qualified women, people of color, and individuals representative of historically underserved communities. Dr. Overton was identified as a very well qualified person of color, and he is the person I am recommending for this appointment. ADCNR will continue to work with organizations in Alabama to diversify the nominations for future seats on the Council and in nominations for advisory panels. I sincerely hope you will act on my recommendation to appoint Dr. Overton to this critically important At-Large seat on the Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council.

Sincerely,



Kay Ivey
Governor of Alabama

cc: Christopher M. Blankenship
Scott Bannon



RON DESANTIS
GOVERNOR

March 15, 2023

Secretary Gina Raimondo
U.S. Secretary of Commerce
U.S. Department of Commerce
1401 Constitution Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20230

Delivered electronically

Dear Secretary Raimondo:

This letter is in response to your request for nominations to the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council's at-large seat currently held by the State of Florida by Phil Dyskow. Florida has been the Fishing and Boating Capital of the World for many years. It is essential that this at-large seat be maintained by our state. Throughout the past month, my office consulted with members of the recreational and commercial fishing community. This year we received an unprecedented amount of interest in this seat, including individuals and organizations who are deeply invested in the management of our marine fisheries resources. In addition to the feedback from the fishing community and fishing organizations, my office received many comments from the boat manufacturing community, boat related industry, tackle manufacturers, and other fishing related businesses. A subset of those are listed here:

American Sportfishing Association
The Billfish Foundation
Bonfish and Tarpon Trust
Center for Sportfishing Policy
Coastal Conservation Association of Florida
Congressional Sportsman Foundation
Destin Charter Boat Association
Florida Guides Association
Florida Keys Commercial Fishermen's Association
Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association
Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation
Lower Keys Guides Association
The Ocean Conservancy
Old Salts Fishing Foundation
Reef Fish Shareholders Alliance
International Game Fish Association
West Palm Beach Fishing Club
Yamaha Motor Corporation



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Congressman Gus Bilirakis

Boat manufacturers including Maverick Boat Company, Everglades Boats, Correct Craft, Pursuit Boats, Crevalle Boats, Viking Sport Cruisers, Fish Tale Boats, EdgeWater Boats, and Dorado custom boats

Fishing publications including Sport Fishing Magazine, Florida Sportsman Magazine

Numerous fishing related businesses including L&S Bait Company, Dogfish Tackle, and King Plastic Corporation

After careful consideration of each applicant, I am pleased to nominate the individuals listed below for the at-large seat currently held by Phil Dyskow. These nominees are well qualified and would make excellent candidates for appointment to the Gulf of Mexico Council. I am providing my nominations in order of preference and ask that you give strong consideration to the preferred nominee.

I am recommending William "Chester" Brewer as the preferred choice for appointment to the at-large seat on the Gulf Council. He is a seasoned Council member as he has served in the recreational seat for the South Atlantic Council for the last nine years. He previously served as the Recreational Fisheries Advisor to the US delegation for the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT). He has also served as a board member on the National Executive Board for the Coastal Conservation Association. He practiced civil trial litigation in Palm Beach County for 40 years, having earned a bachelor's degree from Vanderbilt University and attended law school at the University of Mississippi. Mr. Brewer represents the recreational sector.

My second recommendation is Stephen Heese. He is the President and Chief Executive Officer of the 145-year-old boat manufacturing company, Chris-Craft Corporation based in Sarasota, Florida. He loves to fish for grouper and red snapper in the Gulf of Mexico as well as inshore species such as snook, sheepshead, and tarpon. His love of fishing has led him to take an active role in supporting the work of the Coastal Conservation Association. Mr. Heese currently serves as Chairman of the National Marine Manufacturers Association, the nation's largest marine industry advocacy organization. He firmly believes the fisheries of the Gulf of Mexico need to be protected and actively managed to safeguard the enduring economic, environmental, and societal values of recreational fishing for the benefit of all Americans as well as future generations of fishermen and women. Mr. Heese represents the recreational and "other" sectors.

My third recommendation is Captain Ed Walker. He has been a charter captain on the Gulf Coast for over 35 years. Captain Walker is also a spearfisherman, an avid tournament



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angler, and a commercial hook and line fishermen. He is a state champion free diver and a 33-time International Game Fish Association record holder. Captain Walker has served as the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council's Reef Fish Advisory Panel Chairman since 2019 and served on the Gulf Council's Coastal Migratory Pelagic Species Advisory Panel for many years. He has worked with many researchers over the years to answer complex fisheries questions with scientists from Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, University of Florida, University of South Florida College of Marine Science, NOAA Fisheries, Sea Grant, Dauphin Island Research Center, and Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute. He has assisted with development and implementation of cooperative research projects studying many fish species of the Gulf including red snapper, gag, amberjack, and red grouper. He has also served on many Gulf Council stock assessment panels over the years for gray snapper, gag grouper, and yellowtail snapper. Captain Walker is also a graduate of the Marine Resource Education Program and now assists with teaching classes that help fishermen understand the federal fisheries management process. Captain Walker represents the recreational and the "other" sectors.

In summary, my recommendation is as follows:

1. William "Chester" Brewer
2. Stephen Heese
3. Ed Walker

I appreciate your consideration of my nominations for Council appointments and look forward to seeing citizens of Florida continue their service on the Council in ways that will help ensure wise and sustainable use of our saltwater fishery resources. Florida continues to include quality candidates for the Gulf of Mexico Council and has had female and minority representation on the Council as well as two women serving on the South Atlantic Council. We continue to solicit applications from all qualified individuals for appointments across the state, including women, minorities, and underserved communities. Please contact my office if you have questions or require additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ron DeSantis".

Ron DeSantis
Governor

RD/ca

Office of the Governor
State of Louisiana

JOHN BEL EDWARDS
GOVERNOR



P.O. Box 94004
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA 70804-9004
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March 13, 2023

Ms. Janet Coit
Assistant Administrator for Fisheries
NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service
1315 East-West Highway, Room 14636
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

Dear Ms. Coit:

Enclosed, please find my nominations for the available At-Large Seat on the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council). Each candidate would be an asset to the Council; their qualifications and applications are enclosed. Consultations regarding these nominees were made with representatives from Louisiana's commercial, recreational, and for-hire fishing communities; please see the enclosed list of individuals consulted.

The following are my nominees for the At-Large Seat currently held by Mr. Phil Dyskow /FL (Recreational); the first name listed is the preferred nominee:

- Haley Bittermann
- Ryan Prewitt
- Harlon Pearce

I recommend this list as the most qualified. Your consideration of these nominees is appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Bel Edwards".

John Bel Edwards
Governor

Enclosures

cc: Jack Montoucet, Secretary, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries