

Gulf of Mexico Regional Sediment Management Master Plan

George Ramseur Jr.¹ and **John Bowie**²

¹Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, Biloxi, MS, USA

²U.S. EPA, Gulf of Mexico Program, Stennis Space Center, MS, USA

Issues surrounding sediment management, both natural movement and dredged sediments, have significant impact on the ability to restore and sustain coastal habitats. The Gulf of Mexico Alliance has recognized that sediment resources are integral to and a critical resource necessary in accomplishing many conservation and restoration initiatives and objectives in the Gulf. The Gulf Regional Sediment Management Master Plan (GRSMMP) was initiated as a result for managing this valuable resource and verifies the need for a comprehensive understanding of regional sediment systems and processes. The effort involves a range of state and federal agencies as well as NGO representatives. The plan provides guidelines using the understanding of sediment dynamics (inputs, outputs, movement) to manage sediment resources towards accomplishing environmental restoration, conservation, and preservation while enhancing abilities to make informed, cooperative management decisions.

The first step in the development of such a plan is to identify the technical framework that provides an understanding of the foundation associated with regional sediment management (RSM) processes. These processes are critical for establishing management guidelines that balance sediment dynamics and available sediment resources with sediment needs. Sediment management must occur on a regional scale unencumbered by agency, state, or national boundaries. Guidelines and recommendations resulting from this effort will aid the Gulf States in more effective management of sediment resources, recognizing they are a part of a regional system involving natural processes and manmade activities.

Contact Information: George Ramseur Jr., Mississippi Department of Marine Resources, 1141 Bayview Avenue, Biloxi, MS 39530, Phone: 228-216-0719, Fax: 228-374-5008, Email: George.ramseur@dmr.ms