

**A Strategic Plan for Economic Recovery:
Using Federal Fisheries Disaster Appropriations
to Help Stabilize the Shrimp Industry in Mississippi.**

Executive Summary

In February 2003, \$35 million in Federal Disaster relief funds were appropriated by the US Congress to aid the southeastern shrimp industry. \$17.5 million is directed to the South Atlantic coast with the same amount for the five Gulf States. Funds are assigned to each state within those regions based on shrimp landings. Mississippi's portion of these funds is \$1,003,307. The text of the congressional bill provides further instruction:

“That 2 percent of funds received by each state shall be retained by the state for distribution of additional payments to fishermen with a demonstrated record of compliance with turtle excluder device (TED) and bycatch reduction device (BRD) regulations, and that the remainder of the funds may be used for only for:”

- A.) personal assistance with priority given to food, energy needs, housing assistance, transportation fuel, and other urgent needs;
- B.) assistance for small businesses including fishermen, fish processors, and related businesses serving the fishing industry;
- C.) domestic product marketing and seafood promotion;
- D.) state seafood testing programs;
- E.) development of limited entry programs for the fishery;
- F.) funding or other incentives to ensure widespread and proper use of turtle excluder devices (TED) and bycatch reduction devices (BRD) in the fishery; and
- G.) voluntary capacity reduction programs for shrimp fisheries under limited access.

Below is a general summary of the shrimp industries input from the four public meetings, personal meetings with industry and written input from shrimp industry representatives regarding qualifying criteria and how the DMR plans on distributing these federal funds to the Mississippi shrimp industry.

Direct Assistance Percentages:

- a) Mandatory TED and BRD Compliance Award 2%
- b) Shrimp vessel owners, captains and fishermen..... 90%
- c) Related businesses (including deckhands and net makers), shrimp marketing, and funding for TED and BRD technology transfer which includes incentives to ensure widespread and proper use of TED's and BRD's 8%

Qualifying Criteria - applicant must provide the following documents:

- 1) A valid state approved photo identification and social security number/ tax identification number for a business.
- 2) Mississippi commercial shrimp license in 2002 or 2001.
- 3) Minimum of 50% of income from commercial shrimp fishing or a minimum of 5,000 pounds of shrimp landed in Mississippi in 2002 or 2001.