



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES  
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## News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### ***Secretary of State Returns More Than \$9 Million to Gulf Coast from Tidelands Leases and New Assessment Collections***

BILOXI, Miss. – Secretary of State Delbert Hosemann presented a check for \$7,607,668.28 to the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (DMR) at a ceremony held Dec. 6, 2010, at the Secretary of State's Office in Gulfport. The total amount returned to the Gulf Coast from 2010 tidelands leases and assessments is \$9,302,968.228.

Shortly after the Gulf oil spill this spring, the Secretary of State was able to make an advance payment of \$1,695,294 to the DMR to use for emergency disaster response. The check delivered by Hosemann Dec. 6 represented the balance of more than \$7.6 million.

The tidelands lease revenue was collected on leases on the Mississippi Gulf Coast in the fiscal year that ended June 30, 2010. The Tidelands Assessment revenue is a result of House Bill 44, passed in the 2005 Fifth Extraordinary Session. That bill allowed land-based casinos on the Coast and required them to pay a tidelands assessment, which is based on a casino's capital investment.

"The tidelands check is a crucial component of preserving the culture of the Mississippi Gulf Coast," said Hosemann. "The Mississippi State Legislature and the Secretary of State's Office are committed to maximizing the benefit of our state-owned lands and the preservation of our coastal areas. This \$9,302,962 is an integral part of ensuring that goal."

The people of Mississippi own the public trust tidelands, the land covered by water at high tide. Rent is collected by the Secretary of State's Office from tidelands leaseholders, including casinos. As Secretary of State, Hosemann negotiates tidelands leases on behalf of the state. Traditionally, the Mississippi Legislature appropriates the lease revenue for specific projects. Rent is collected from tidelands leaseholders by the Secretary of State and then returned to the DMR at the end of the fiscal year.

The Tidelands Trust Fund Program consists of funds derived from the lease rentals of tidelands and submerged lands. Revenues collected by the Secretary of State's Office are appropriated by the state legislature and administered by the DMR. Since 1990, the Secretary of State's Office has collected more than \$85 million in tidelands leases.

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“Tidelands Trust funds provide for public access projects that allow citizens and visitors to coastal Mississippi to better access and utilize Mississippi’s marine resources, provide educational programs and enhance management capabilities within the coastal region of Mississippi,” said DMR Executive Director Dr. William Walker. “The funds are awarded annually to a variety of recipients, including cities, counties, academic institutions, non-governmental organizations and state agencies. I thank the Mississippi Legislature for providing these funds to implement these worthy projects.”

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources is dedicated to enhancing, protecting and conserving marine interests of the state by managing all marine life, public trust wetlands, adjacent uplands and waterfront areas to provide for the optimal commercial, recreational, educational and economic uses of these resources consistent with environmental concerns and social changes. Visit the DMR online at [dmr.ms.gov](http://dmr.ms.gov).



**PHOTO CREDIT:** Photo courtesy of the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources

**PHOTO CAPTION:** The Mississippi Secretary of State’s Office presented a Tidelands check for more than \$7 million to the Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (DMR) on Dec. 6, 2010. Pictured are (from left to right): state Sen. David Baria, DMR Office of Coastal Management and Planning Director Tina Shumate, state Rep. Richard Bennett, state Rep. Billy Broomfield, Mississippi Secretary of State Delbert Hosemann, state Sen. Billy Hewes, state Rep. Scott DeLano, state Rep. Randall Patterson, state Sen. Tommy Moffatt, and state Rep. Brandon Jones.

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