



Alaska Fishing Industry Relief Mission Inc.

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Alaska Donates Icemaking Equipment to Mississippi

Alaska's fishing industry is helping the Gulf of Mexico fishing industry in the continued efforts to rebuild the region's seafood industry infrastructure. The Alaska Fishing Industry Relief Mission (AFIRM) is donating essential ice making equipment to the State of Mississippi for use by fishermen in and around Biloxi.

The Northstar Model 60 ice making unit can produce up to 30 tons of ice per day, and will be installed at the "Lighthouse Docks" in Biloxi, a public harbor facility where some 100 commercial shrimp boats dock to unload cargo and to receive fuel and supplies. The ice plant was donated to AFIRM by Aleutian Spray Fisheries of Seattle, and reconditioned for use in Mississippi by Wescold, Inc., a Seattle-based refrigeration company with many seafood industry customers. The unit will remain the property of the Mississippi Department of Natural Resources and will continue to serve the needs of the fishing public in the Biloxi area.

The ice plant was previously in Unalaska, Alaska, a fishing and processing community in the Aleutian Islands. Samson Tug and Barge, an Alaska company, provided transportation from Unalaska to Seattle by barge. Another Alaska-based company, Lynden Transport, will carry the unit to Mississippi by truck. Both companies are donating their services. Alaska Sea Grant also recently donated a percentage of winter gift sales to AFIRM.

"AFIRM thanks Aleutian Spray, Alaska Sea Grant, and the Alaska seafood industry for donations that make our efforts possible. We have a lot in common with the Gulf fishing industry," said AFIRM Chairman Mark Vinsel.

Together with United Fishermen of Alaska and others, Senator Lisa Murkowski led the effort to establish AFIRM, and continues to be active as the chair of its advisory panel. Senator Murkowski commented, "This is incredibly important to our friends on the Gulf Coast. So far, there's been almost no government assistance toward rebuilding the fishing infrastructure so people can get back to work. The Alaska industry knows how important that is, and that's why AFIRM is concentrating in that area.

In March, Senator Lisa Murkowski and Louisiana Senator Mary Landrieu attended the dedication of a Marine Travel Lift from the City of Valdez, Alaska, that is now helping move stranded fishing boats back to the water in Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana.

AFIRM continues its efforts to provide meaningful help to Gulf of Mexico fishing communities, and is seeking additional ice making equipment, as well as monetary contributions to help further its efforts.

AFIRM is a 100% volunteer, 501(c)(3) qualified non-profit organization of the Alaska seafood industry created to help the Gulf of Mexico fishing industry in the wake of 2005 hurricanes. AFIRM is seeking donations from fishermen, processors, and other fishing industry participants that recognize the importance of a healthy and unified domestic U.S. seafood industry.

For more information see the AFIRM website at www.akgulphelp.org .



Ice making equipment prepared for shipment to help in the restoration of a public commercial dock in Biloxi Mississippi, from the Alaska fishing industry.

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