



Overview of Database of Potential Sources on Fisheries, Tourism, and Oil Spill Claims

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Background

Since the 2010 Deepwater Horizon (DWH) oil spill, there has been extensive data collection across the Gulf of Mexico region to better understand the impacts the disaster has had on fisheries and tourism in the U.S. Gulf region. There has also been a need to locate claims—made or paid out—related to the oil spill.

To date, much of the publicly available information on the fisheries and tourism sectors comes from existing, standardized data sets that cover economic activity in these sectors, such as the U.S. Census Bureau’s Economic Census and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages. However, other sources of information—particularly at the state and local level—may also provide valuable information about these sectors and may not be as well known to users as the standard data sets.

To this end, the Consortium for Resilient Gulf Communities (CRGC) is developing a database to assist business owners and employers, researchers, community members, and other stakeholders to locate information on the fisheries and tourism sectors and on oil spill claims from a wide variety of potential sources.

Objective

The objective of the *Database of Potential Sources on Fisheries, Tourism, and Oil Spill Claims* is to make users aware of sources of information that may be less widely known than standard databases of economic activity such as those published by the U.S. Census Bureau. Users will

thus have a potentially wider range of resources to integrate for their own studies and projects. The database was built using sources that CRGC was able to identify using the data-collection strategy discussed below.

CRGC's aim in disseminating this database is to provide an easy-to-navigate introduction to an array of sources that have the potential to assist users in finding data on the fisheries and tourism sectors in the Gulf states and to locate information on claims related to the oil spill. CRGC researchers have not reviewed the data from all of these sources and cannot provide any information about their quality, completeness, or internal or external validity. Researchers and other interested individuals who wish to obtain and use one or more of these data sets should perform their own analyses to determine whether the data sets are appropriate for use in the intended applications.

Data Collection Strategy

The CRGC research team received an initial list of contacts for tourism and fishing industries around the Gulf from the Gulf of Mexico Sea Grant oil spill science outreach team. Beginning in 2015, CRGC researchers contacted the organizations in this list, as well as other federal, state, and local government agencies and community organizations likely to have information about the fisheries and/or tourism sectors as well as oil spill claims. Agencies and organizations related to fisheries included the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service, state-level wildlife and fisheries agencies, and local community organizations. For tourism, CRGC researchers contacted state tourism agencies, local chambers of commerce and visitors' bureaus, and private tourism-promotion organizations. For the oil-spill claims information, the team identified potential sources through a review of publicly available documents on the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. These initial lists of sources were extended through a "snowballing" process—that is, in many cases, a contact at one source would point the team to another potential source of information.

CRGC researchers attempted to contact key local organizations likely to have information on fishing and tourism throughout the Gulf states. However, users should note that the database may not be comprehensive and is meant to provide a starting point for future research or data searches, rather than to serve as a comprehensive listing of all potential data sources.

Database Construction

Each data source was cataloged according to industry (fisheries or tourism) or topic (oil spill claims); in some cases, sources were cataloged as being relevant to multiple categories. Each resource was marked with a short description and its primary data source, if relevant. Descriptive scales were provided as necessary. For example, sources on fisheries might include

the species covered and sources for tourism data may indicate if the data are at the visitor level. Where relevant, the spatial (location) and temporal scales of the data source and the time period covered were marked. Data for fisheries were further categorized according to commercial or recreational use. The information on the organization from which the data source was identified was noted, and is included in the database along with a website where available.

As noted, these descriptions were constructed based on information provided to the CRGC research team by the contacts identified through the data collection strategy. The CRGC research team has not obtained and assessed all of these potential data sources for quality or completeness.

Using the Database

The database is provided as an interactive, searchable spreadsheet [that can be browsed or searched to identify specific information](#). Users can filter the results by industries(s), spatial scales (e.g., county, community, or state; name of state or region), temporal scales (for example, annual, weekly, one-time), and keywords. For example, the user may choose to only consider data sources relevant to the fisheries industry by selecting “fisheries” from the “industry” category. Note that a few data sources are relevant to all industries and have “industry” listed as “all.”

Limitations of the Database

The database does not include the major, standard data sets such as those produced by the U.S. Census Bureau, but focuses on smaller—often state or local—data sources. The database lists those sources that were identified by the team during their search but is not designed to be exhaustive and may not include all possible sources of information on the fisheries and tourism industries and on oil spill claims. Users should also be aware that these resources are potential sources of information; the team has not actually obtained all data and information listed in the database or evaluated it for quality or completeness. Individuals seeking to use one of these data sets should be cognizant of the need to verify that the data set is appropriate for the intended purpose.