

# Abstract

## **Supporting Essential Fish Habitat Mapping for the Gulf of Mexico**

**Track:** Ocean, Coastal, and Marine Resources

**Author(s):** David Ward, Kari Kulaas, Chris Friel

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (GMFMC) is required to complete a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Generic Amendment for Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) for managed species. GIS Solutions, Inc. supported GMFMC using ArcGIS to delineate areas of ecological importance, habitat rarity, and fishing impacts, which were indicative of the creation of potential EFH "zones" in the Gulf of Mexico. Relationships between human impacts, ecological sensitivity, and species preference were identified using spatial analysis techniques, providing the GMFMC with areas of critical concern to enhance conservation management.

### **David Ward**

GIS Solutions, Inc.

111 2nd Ave NE

Suite 900

St. Petersburg , FL 33701

USA

**Phone:** 727-896-5913

**E-mail:** [dward@gis-solutions.com](mailto:dward@gis-solutions.com)

### **Kari Kulaas**

GIS Solutions, Inc

111 2nd Ave NE

Suite 900

St. Petersburg 33701

USA

**Phone:** 727-896-5913

**E-mail:** [kkulaas@gis-solutions.com](mailto:kkulaas@gis-solutions.com)

### **Chris Friel**

GIS Solutions, Inc.

111 2nd Ave NE

Suite 900

St. Petersburg 33701

USA

**Phone:** 727-896-5913

**E-mail:** [cfriel@gis-solutions.com](mailto:cfriel@gis-solutions.com)