

Marine Research Scientist / Postdoctoral Scientist

We seek to hire a postdoctoral researcher to play a leading role in a 5-year project, [Cooperative Research and Management for Fish Spawning Aggregations in the Gulf of America, recently funded by the RESTORE Science Program](#). The project team of scientists, fishers, and resource managers will work cooperatively to verify, characterize, monitor, and model multi-species fish spawning aggregations (FSAs) in the Gulf aiming to produce actionable science to facilitate FSA management and conservation. Sustainable Marine Solutions, LLC (SMS) is leading the field component of the project which complements modelling led by Rebecca Asch, PI, at East Carolina University, engagement led by The Nature Conservancy, and in partnership with managers at the Gulf Council and the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary.

The team endeavors to characterize, verify, and monitor FSA sites via cooperative research with fishers, visual/video surveys, and long-term biophysical monitoring. The project includes installation and bi-annual maintenance of six priority, multi-species FSAs, “sentinel sites” that will be monitored using telemetry and active acoustics, passive acoustics, temperature and salinity loggers, and in some cases, video. Biological sampling at these sites will also occur bi-annually to verify FSAs. The project also supports development and management of a study fleet of professional fishermen that will be contracted to try to verify predicted FSAs through targeted sampling. Fish samples will be delivered to project scientists for biological workup. The selected postdoctoral researcher will lead the field work and manage the study fleet with extensive support from the PIs, doctoral students, fishermen, technicians and others. The researcher will also lead data analysis and dissemination of project results through publications and presentations at scientific and management-related meetings.

The position is considered entirely remote and will involve relatively extensive travel for field work and meetings around the Gulf Coast. Ideally, the postdoctoral researcher will be based in Galveston, Texas, allowing for extensive collaboration with the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary and participating fishermen. We are seeking an ambitious, detailed-oriented self-starter with a broad skill set, a willingness to learn, and excellent written and oral communications skills.

Requirements for this position include:

- 1) A Ph.D. in marine ecology, oceanography, fisheries science, or a closely related field
- 2) Extensive offshore marine research experience, including field data collection, instrument deployment and retrieval, sample processing, analysis, publication and presentation.
- 3) Experience with data analysis including passive acoustics, oceanographic data, and scientific computing programs (e.g., ArcGIS, R, MATLAB, Python)
- 4) A track record of publishing peer-reviewed manuscripts and presentation at scientific and management meetings.
- 5) Physical ability to live on commercial fishing boats (2 – 4-day trips), and able to handle physically demanding tasks (e.g. lifting 50 lbs.).

Desired Qualifications

- 1) Experience with cooperative research with stakeholders, particularly fishermen.
- 2) Experience with and interest in offshore fisheries in the Gulf

- 3) Scuba certification
- 4) Willingness to re-locate to the Gulf coast, ideally Galveston, TX
- 5) Collaborative and flexible working style

Primary Job Functions and Responsibilities

- 1) Lead the installation and maintenance of underwater monitoring stations at 6 sentinel sites at multi-species spawning aggregations in the Gulf of America
 - a. Program, deploy, download, clean and reinstall instruments 2 times/year.
- 2) Lead biological sampling at each sentinel site 2 times/year to include fish sampling, telemetry tagging, morphometric measurements, otolith extraction, gonad sampling for reproductive studies and reproductive
- 3) Lead data analysis and publication of results generated from the sentinel sites, primarily focused on documenting multi-species spawning aggregations in light of biophysical environmental conditions.
- 4) Lead coordination of a study-fleet of participating fishermen that will conduct some targeted sampling at predicted FSAs sites.
- 5) Participate occasionally in management and scientific meetings and present project results.
- 6) Participate with other project scientists and contribute on modelling studies.
- 7) Other relevant duties as assigned.

Job Particulars and Application Process

To apply for this position, applicants should submit a cover letter, a curriculum vitae, a two-page statement of interest, and names and contact information for three references. Applications should be submitted by email to Will Heyman, Sustainable Marine Solutions, LLC. wehman@sustainable-marinesolutions.com. Applications will be considered on a rolling basis but should be submitted by April 24th for full consideration.

Funding is available for the selected candidate to start work on this project immediately. The initial contract will be for a one-year period, with renewal for up to five years pending job performance. The base salary for the position is \$60,000 per year plus benefits to be negotiated.

The selected candidate will work for Sustainable Marine Solutions, LLC under the supervision and in collaboration with Dr. Will Heyman, PhD students, and other project partners. This project builds on Heyman's thirty years of experience leading and managing similar projects that involve the cooperative monitoring and management of FSAs. These projects have led to various scientific [publications](#), reports, and the declaration of 25 marine protected areas with the support of fishermen, within the US South Atlantic and the Wider Caribbean Region. More about Heyman and SMS can be found [here](#). The selected candidate will also work closely with a broad set of project partners and an advisory team.

Questions about this position can be addressed to William Heyman, CEO, Sustainable Marine Solutions, LLC wehman@sustainable-marinesolutions.com