

On the Cover

Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary: Stetson Bank

The Flower Banks National Marine Sanctuary is one of 18 national marine sanctuaries and the only marine sanctuary in the Gulf of America. The Sanctuary owes it's name to turn of the 20th century snapper and grouper fisherman who referred to the area as the "Texas Flower Gardens" in reference to the colorful marine life they saw below. By the time the sanctuary was designated in January of 1972 the term "Banks" was added as a reference to the salt dome formations upon which the reefs are perched.

Located approximately 80 to 125 off the coasts of Louisiana and Texas, the Sanctuary is composed of disjunct, relatively small, sub-sea mountains, ridges, troughs and hard bottom patches along the continental shelf, created by underlying salt dome formation and extending from the South Marsh Island South Addition protraction area westward to High Island Area, South Addition protraction area along the mid continental shelf. Water depth to the reef pinnacle ranges from 56ft (17m) at Stetson and



West Flower Garden Banks to 722ft (220m) at Elvers Bank in the northernmost portion of the Garden Banks protraction area. The Sanctuary covers an area of 160 square miles (414 square kilometers) divided between 19 distinct areas.

Stetson Bank, featured on the cover, is the westernmost area in the sanctuary. It is oblong in shape and composed of uplifted fine sandstone, siltstone, claystone and mudstone. The hard, relatively thin, more resistive layers are composed of fine sandstone and siltstone with inter-bedded, thicker, less resistive claystone and mudstone. Stetson Bank is located further North than the Flower Garden Banks to the southeast with slightly cooler water temperatures in the winter. These condition do not support much reef-building coral and instead it is dominated by algae, sponges, and fire coral leaving portions of the underlying formations exposed. These rocks are of latest Oligocene or earliest Miocene in age (~24 million years old). The nearly vertical rock formations at Stetson Bank are nearly flat lying and 10,000ft below sea level a few miles away from the effects of salt movement. Foraminifera assemblages collected from these rocks indicate an original depth of deposition of 3000ft.

Resources: <u>Frequently Asked Questions | Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary; About | Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary; Stetson Bank | GulfBase; Geology of Stetson Bank Richard Zingula, PhD. Retired Geologist, Volunteer, Recreational Diver</u>

From the Editor

Hello again,

Thank you, Chip Kline, VP of Federal Affairs for GIS, Engineering for the April technical presentation: "The Mid-Barataria Basin". Photos of Chips presentation are in this issue of the NOGS Log. Come join us virtually May 28th or at Zea's in Covington for a delicious lunch, engaging conversation and a presentation by Dr. Carol A. Wilson "Subsidence Rates Mid-Barataria Basin".

SPE Delta Section meeting be held May 22, 2025, at Expert office, Madisonville, LA. Nefeli Moridis, PhD, Development Relationship Manager, Head of Subsurface, Global Energy Team, Nvidia Corp. will present "Generative AI Demystified: What it is and how we can leverage it in energy".

The 28th Annual Deepwater Technical Symposium will be held at the Hilton New Orleans Riverside, New Orleans Louisiana July 15th - 17th 2025. Early-bird registration is now open, and abstract submission is open until June 1, 2025. This event is co-sponsored by American Association of Drilling Engineers (AADE) New Orleans Chapter, New Orleans Geological Society (NOGS), and Society of Petroleum Engineers (SPE) Delta Section. In addition, NOGS will offer Geology short courses on Tuesday July 15, 2025. Additional information, detailed course descriptions and discount course registration fees are available to NOGS members through the NOGS website.

The New Orleans Geological Society has a new Editor Elect! I am pleased welcome James G. Duncan to the New Orleans Geological society Board of Directors, and we appreciate the donation of your time and talents to the continuation and health of our organization.

I encourage professionals, academics, and graduate students to grow your network and share your research. Become an active NOGS Member, consider writing a short article in the NOGS Log or, better yet, provide a short lunchtime presentation at a monthly meeting. Volunteer to work NOGS events. Board positions are currently open for nominations, please consider offering your services as a Board Member.

(Brian Bothner

Until June.....

Brian Bothner 2024/2025 NOGS Log Editor



JARED BULLOCK

A MESSAGE FROM THE 2024/2025 NOGS PRESIDENT

Greetings everyone,

The GCAGS held their annual conference last month in Nacogdoches, TX on the campus of Stephen F Austin. GeoGulf25 sounded like a huge success after talking to several people who attended. They said the conference was well run and attendance was nearly double what was expected. On the same topic as GCAGS' GeoGulf Annual Conference, we're happy to share that GeoGulf26 will be co-hosted by NOGS alongside the Lafayette and Baton Rouge Geological Societies. It will be held in Baton Rouge March 23-25, 2026, and it will be GeoGulf's 75th year anniversary. In addition, Mark Wonja, NOGS previous-president, will be the conference Chairman and is already months into planning efforts for the GeoGulf26 conference. If you would like to volunteer on behalf of NOGS please reach out to us (admin@nogs.org). There are several different types of positions available including conference Board Member positions, session chairs, and technical judges among others.

Our next monthly luncheon will be Wednesday, May 28th at Zea's in Covington. The speaker will be Dr. Carol Wilson. The luncheon begins informally at 11:30a with networking followed by announcement and the presentation at 12p noon. We hope to see everyone there or online.

As a reminder, NOGS will be co-hosting a golf tournament with PLANO and SPWLA in October. The tournament will be October 6, 2025 at Bayou Oaks City Park New Orleans. This group of societies joined forces in 2023 for a golf tournament that turned out to be a huge success. Over \$8,000 was given to charity that year. Please mark your calendar with the golf tournament date and check out the NOGS website for more details.

The search has begun for candidates to serve on the 2025-2026 NOGS Board. We are grateful to have a couple people step forward as candidates to serve on the next board, but there are still a few positions that remain open. If you are interested or would like to nominate someone to serve on the NOGS Board of Directors, please reach out to us. The new board will begin their term in July.

Jared Bullock

NOGS 2024-2025 President

Promoting NOGS

Carol Avery; NOGS Director

As mentioned in a past issue of the LOG, the NOGS Board of directors are actively promoting the value and benefits of membership in The New Orleans Geological Society. To this end, NOGS will sponsor a booth at the upcoming "State of the Coast"



conference. The conference will be held at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans, May 20-22. Plan to attend the conference and come visit our booth, grab a few "Join NOGS" flyers and meet our incoming President, Brian David of The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM).

The State of the Coast "is the largest gathering of scientists, policymakers, planners, business interests, educators and private residents concerned with the future of the Louisiana coast. Anyone interested in discussing how we restore, protect and live along Louisiana's coast is encouraged to attend." The State of the Coast is the definitive conference on the restoration and protection of our coast. It is a partnership of The Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana, the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority and The Water Institute.

For more information and a complete list of exhibitors visit the website:

www.stateofthecoast.org.

NOGS Campus Outreach

The University Of New Orleans

In association with the Louisiana Board of Professional Geoscientists and the faculty of the University of New Orleans (UNO), members of The New Orleans Geological Society (NOGS) Board of Directors Jared Bullock, Emmitt Lockard and I met with 20-30 students of the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences. We made a formal presentation and discussed the importance of obtaining a professional geologists license to achieve future career goals.

Most states, 32 and counting, require a professional license to practice geology. In Louisiana the first step of the process is to receive a Geoscientist-in-Training (GIT) certification by passing the Fundamentals of Geology (FG) exam administered by the Louisiana Board of Professional Geoscientists (LBOPG). This exam, compiled by the National Association of State Boards of Geology (ASBOG), is designed to measure competency related to the practice of the profession.

- Educational requirements set for the FG in Louisiana include: 30 semester hours of credit in geoscience, of which at least 20 semester hours of credit must be in upper-level college courses in that discipline.
- The FG should be taken around your senior year college or immediately upon graduation.
- Future exam dates are October 2, 2025 (Fall 2025 Exam) and March 19, 2026 (Spring 2026 Exam).

The NOGS board of directors recently approved the reimbursement of exam cost of UNO students who <u>PASS</u> the FG exam. In addition, NOGS board of directors has also agreed to waive the first year of NOGS membership dues for new student members upon graduation.

The students responded well to the presentation and suggested future presentations take place during the fall semester to give qualifying students additional time to prepare for the exam, a suggestion we plan to incorporate into similar outreach events at other local and regional universities. As a result of the NOGS presentation, twelve (12) students have registered to take the exam in October 2025! Study hard and good luck to the UNO students!! For more information about the FG exam visit the Louisiana Board of Professional Geoscientists (LBOPG) website or contact Brenda Macon at (225) 505-3766 to answer any questions/issues. Refer to ASBOG: Exam Schedule for future exam dates.

Chase Cromwell, PG Director, New Orleans Geological Society



Mark Wojna

I recently attended Geogulf2025 in Nacogdoches, TX. The annual technical conference was cohosted by the East Texas and Shreveport Geological Societies and was held on the beautiful campus of Stephen F. Austin University (SFA). Julie Bloxson, a very dynamic and passionate earth science professor at SFA was the General Chair for the convention. Geogulf is the rebranding of the old GCAGS convention.



Eocene outcrop from "Exploring Geology of Nacogdoches" field trip. Photo: Julie Bloxson

The annual GCAGS, now Geogulf convention has always been one of my favorites to attend. The entire focus of the conference is on Gulf Coast geology and Gulf Coast energy resources. A primary focus of Geogulf2025 was on the local geology of the upper gulf Coast. Fourteen different technical sessions provided a diverse selection of topics. I attended several talks on lithium exploration in southern Arkansas and East Texas. Other talks included exploration history of Texas gulf coast salt domes, deepwater geology, the development of AI in the oil field, and Haynesville and Eagle Ford activity. Our local society was represented by Cantium's Stefanie Frelinger and Luke Pierce. They presented Cantium's latest drilling success at MP 313 Field. A special session was held on the East Texas Basin which included a core workshop. Julie Bloxson heads up the East Texas Core Repository on the campus of SFA. Diagnostic whole core samples were provided for all of the major East Texas producing formations.



Wilcox outcrop along Toledo Bend reservoir. Photo: Julie Bloxson



Mark Wojna

The conference also had 43 posters presented during 4 different poster sessions. The posters not only featured the work of various companies, USGS and researchers but also gave an opportunity to university students to showcase their research and interact with industry professionals. SFA students had a large presence at the poster sessions. Other students from schools represented were from Tulane, Ole Miss, Texas A&M, Texas, Houston and UL-Lafayette.





A highlight of the conference was an evening social at The Fredonia Brewery, which included Texas BBQ, music by Austin musician Seth James and the opportunity to drink locally crafted beer and socialize with over 150 geologists from throughout the gulf coast. Another reason for attending this year's conference was to promote next year's Geogulf2026.







Celebrating 75 Years of Gulf Coast Geology

March 23 - 25, 2026

Mark Wojna

The Gulf Coast Association of Geological Societies (GCAGS) was formed in 1951. GCAGS consists of 13 geological societies in the Gulf Coast area and serves as the Gulf Coast Section of the American Association of Petroleum Geologists (AAPG). The first GCAGS convention was held in New Orleans in 1951. Next year's conference will be the 75th anniversary of GCAGS. Geogulf2026 will be co-hosted by New Orleans (NOGS), Lafayette (LGS) and Baton Rouge (BRGS) Geological Societies in Baton Rouge from March 23-25, 2026. I will be serving as the General Chair for the convention, with Travis Helms, (Cantium) serving as Vice Chair. We're currently seeking additional committee chairs, session chairs, judges and volunteers and sponsors to make the 75th anniversary Geogulf2026 a success. Several members have already stepped forward.

Sessions will include Regional Gulf Coast geology, South Louisiana-Geopressured Exploration, Salt Dome geology and storage, Deepwater Geology, Lithium Exploration, Coastal Processes-Diversions-Land Restoration, MAFLA (Mississippi, Alabama & Florida) energy resource activity. A session is also being planned for Louisiana Carbon Capture Underground Storage (CCUS). We anticipate all of the major earth science departments form Louisiana schools will participate. To all university faculty, Geogulf2026 presents a great opportunity for your students to share their research by presenting a talk or doing a poster sessions. More information on the conference will be coming out soon including a webpage. I'll be using LinkedIn to post additional information on the conference. If you would like to volunteer, sponsor, contribute a technical presentation to the conference or have any questions please contact me at markw@llox.com. I look forward to seeing everyone next year in Baton Rouge.





MEETING MELTING

The underlying architecture of the Mid-Barataria Diversion receiving basin, and implications for modern-day marshes of the Mississippi delta





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DR. CAROL A. WILSON

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR, LSU



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The New Orleans Geological Society (NOGS) is on the hunt for passionate, curious, and committed geoscientists to join our Board of Directors!

Since 1941, NOGS has been more than just rocks and reservoirs — we've been a driving force in advancing the science of geology, especially in the energy sector. And since Hurricane Katrina, we've expanded our mission to include flood control, environmental geoscience, and the science behind keeping our beloved Gulf Coast resilient.

Now, we're looking for a few great geoscientists to help lead the charge. Serving on the board isn't just a resume booster — it's your chance to:

- Shape the future of geology in New Orleans and beyond
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 - S Elevate awareness around critical geological issues
 - © Steer the Society's programs, events, and impact
- Give back to the community that shaped your career

Whether you're a seasoned explorer or a rising rock star, if you care about the science, the society, and the spirit of NOGS — we want YOU!

Nominate yourself or a colleague today! Let's keep the energy flowing, the science strong, and the future bright.

Email us today - admin@nogs.org

DRILL BITS



OFFSHORE GULF OF MEXICO SHELF AND DEEPWATER ACTIVITIES BY AL BAKER

During March 2025, the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) approved 82 Gulf of America (GoA) drilling permits. Seventeen of the permits were for a shelf wells, and the remaining 65 permits were for deepwater wells. There were 4 new well permits issued in deepwater.

The 4 deepwater new well permits included 3 development wells and one exploration well. The exploration well permit was granted to Hess Corporation for their Garden Banks 259 #GE-1 well. BP Exploration & Production received 2 development well permits for their Green Canyon 868 #2 and #3 wells in the Mad Dog Phase 2. Shell Offshore obtained an exploration well permit for their Alaminos Canyon 813 #GE-1 well in Great White Field.

On March 28th, S&P Global Petrodata indicated that the GoA mobile offshore rig supply stood at 44, which is the same as last month. The marketed rig supply consisted of 33 rigs, of which 26 were under contract. The marketed rig supply and the contracted rig supply were both the same as month. The marketed contracted versus total rig supply utilization rate remained at 59.1%, and the marketed contracted versus marketed supply utilization rate remained at 78.8%. By comparison, the March 2024 total fleet utilization rate stood at 82.9% with 35 rigs in the marketed supply out of the 48 rigs in the fleet.

On March 28th, Baker Hughes reported that there are 12 active mobile offshore rigs in the GoM, which is 1 more than last month and 46.2% of the rigs under contract mentioned above. A year ago, there were 18 rigs working in the GoA. Currently, 1 rig is drilling on the shelf, and 11 rigs are drilling in deepwater. The single shelf rig is located in the Eugene Island Area. The deepwater rigs include 5 rigs in the Mississippi Canyon Area, 2 rigs each in the Alaminos Canyon and Green Canyon Areas, and 1 rig each in the Keathley Canyon and Garden Banks Areas.

On March 28th, the Baker Hughes total U.S. rig count stood at 592 rigs, which is 1 less rig than last month. Of the 592 rigs, 484 (81.8%) are oil rigs and 103 (17.4%) are gas rigs. Five rigs are listed as miscellaneous. Of the 592 wells being drilled, 529 (89.4%) are horizontal and 13 (2.2%) are vertical. A year ago, there were 621 rigs working in the U.S. inferring that the current 29 rig decline corresponds to an 4.7% decrease in rigs year over year. Nationally, Texas has the largest number of rigs with 280, which is 47.3% of the total number of rigs in the U. S. Louisiana currently has a total of 30 rigs and is ranked fifth behind New Mexico, Oklahoma and North Dakota, which have 101, 53 and 32 rigs, respectively.

On March 27th, a federal judge from the U.S. District Court in the District of Columbia Circuit blocked the 299 leases that were awarded in the OCS Sale 259 offshore lease sale held on March 29, 2023. The court ruling stated that the BOEM did not fully address the environment impacts on the endangered Rice's whale population and the greenhouse gas emissions from new drilling. The leases have not been canceled but are subject to additional environmental review by the BOEM in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act.

DRILL BITS



NEW WELL PERMITS OFFSHORE GULF OF MEXICO SHELF AND DEEPWATER ACTIVITIES MAP BY KEVIN TROSCLAIR



Recent Energy Headlines

April 2025 Recap

4/24/2025 - Interior Boosts Offshore Oil Production with New Commingling Policy - In a significant step forward for American energy production, the Department of the Interior today announced a critical policy advancement that will boost offshore oil output in the Gulf of America. Following President Donald J. Trump's Executive Order, Unleashing American Energy, the Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement implemented new parameters for Downhole Commingling in the Paleogene (Wilcox) reservoirs, expanding the allowable pressure differential from 200 psi to 1500 psi. Read Full Article

4/21/2025 - Chevron adds Gulf of Mexico production with Ballymore subsea tieback startup - Chevron has started producing oil and natural gas from the Ballymore subsea tieback in the deepwater Mississippi Canyon area of the US Gulf of Mexico. Chevron Corp. has started producing oil and natural gas from the Ballymore subsea tieback in the deepwater Mississippi Canyon area of the US Gulf of Mexico, the company said in a release Apr. 21. Chevron Corp. sanctioned the Ballymore project in 2018, four years after its discovery. Read Full Article

4/18/2025 - US BOEM begins process to replace current OCS lease sale plan - The 11th National OCS program will replace the current 10th Program (2024–29), which includes only three oil and gas lease sales over 5 years—all in the Gulf, Burgum said in a release Apr. 18. US Interior Secretary Doug Burgum directed the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) to start developing a plan for offshore oil and gas lease sales on the US Outer Continental Shelf (OCS), including likely sales in a newly established 27h OCS planning area offshore Alaska in the High Arctic. Read Full Article

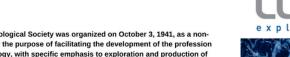
4/18/2025 - Trump administration kicks off plan for expanded offshore drilling - The U.S. Interior Department on Friday said it would begin taking public input for a new five-year offshore oil and gas leasing program that could include new zones in the Arctic and elsewhere to maximize energy development. President Donald Trump has ordered government agencies to identify ways to increase already record high U.S. oil and gas production, arguing past administrations had unnecessarily curtailed drilling to combat climate change. Read Full Article

4/16/2025 - Two tiebacks under review to Who Dat platform in US Gulf of Mexico - According to partner Karoon Energy, the joint venture aims to take a final investment decision on the Who Dat East and/or Who Dat South projects by early 2026. Development studies have started for the Who Dat East and Who Dat South discoveries in the Gulf of Mexico. According to partner Karoon Energy, the joint venture aims to take a final investment decision (FID) on at least one of these projects by early 2026. Read Full Article

4/10/2025 - Interior Department says more oil discovered under Gulf of Mexico - Interior Secretary Doug Burgham touts ramping up oil and gas drilling in coastal areas. The Department of Interior on Thursday released an analysis of fossil fuel deposits showing an additional 1.30 billion barrels of oil in the Gulf of Mexico's Outer Continental shelf. According to the Interior Department, the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management analysis shows "an estimated 7.04 billion barrels of oil equivalent" under the water. Read Full Article



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The New Orleans Geological Society was organized on October 3, 1941, as a nonprofit organization for the purpose of facilitating the development of the profession
and science of Geology, with specific emphasis to exploration and production of
petroleum and natural gas. Secondary related objectives include the dissemination
of pertinent geological and environmental technological data, and the maintenance
of a high standard of professional conduct of its members. The full history of the
Society can be found at nogs.org.

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Meeting?

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DELTA SECTION MAY 2025 MEETING

WHAT: "Powering the future: Is AI (Artificial Intelligence) just buzz or the real deal in energy?"

WHO: Nefeli Moridis, Global head of subsurface energy - NVIDIA

WHEN: Thursday, May 22, 2025, at 11am networking & lunch; 11:30am Presentation

WHERE: ExPert E&P Consultants, LLC office, 2nd Floor, 101 Ashland Way, Madisonville, LA, 70447 on the

Northshore

HOW: In person and via Teams link

FOOD: Light lunch

COST: FREE

RSVP to Mary O'Neill at <u>cyberbrat@msn.com</u> or Kevin Landry at <u>Klandry@expertep.com</u>. Please advise if you will be in person or via TEAMS.

Regarding parking, use the parking lot on the west side of the building and if full, park along Ashland Way. There is no cost for parking.

BIO

Nefeli Moridis is the global head of subsurface energy solutions at NVIDIA. She focuses on accelerating high-performance computing applications and leads the AI initiatives for subsurface problems. These include seismic, reservoir, and CCUS solutions for the energy industry. Prior to joining NVIDIA, Nefeli worked in the oil and gas industry as a reservoir engineer and consultant, focusing on projects in unconventional reservoirs in the U.S. and internationally. She has been invited to present at over 80 energy events since joining NVIDIA, and has published eleven SPE papers that she has presented at SPE conferences worldwide. Additionally, Nefeli was selected as SPE's 2024 Young Engineer of the Year.

Nefeli holds Ph.D. and M.Sc. degrees in Petroleum Engineering from Texas A&M University, a M.Sc. from the French Institute of Petroleum (IFP School) in Reservoir Engineering, and a B.Sc. from the University of Texas at Austin in Petroleum Engineering.

ABSTRACT

As global demand for more efficient energy solutions rises, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly touted as a transformative force in the energy sector. But is AI truly driving meaningful innovation, or is it simply the latest industry buzzword? This presentation explores the current and potential roles of AI across the energy value chain—from predictive maintenance to reservoir management, to renewables in the energy sector. By examining real-world case studies, emerging technologies, and the challenges of implementation, we aim to separate the hype from the reality. Attendees will gain a critical understanding of AI's tangible impact on energy systems today, and the strategic considerations necessary to harness its full potential in powering the future.





School of Science & Engineering







June 23-27 & July 7-11

Registration is now open for the annual LSU Energy Fundamentals course. Energy Fundamentals is designed to provide an overview of the U.S. energy sector, with a focus on Louisiana and the Gulf Coast region. Participants will be exposed to the history, science, and economics of producing and consuming energy.

This is a week-long course offered in two sessions, one June and a second in July covering all aspects of current energy markets. Two days on "Molecules" (oil, gas, coal, uranium, lithium, hydrogen and biomass), two days on electricity (how markets work, rates are set and future outlook) and one day on government policy moderated by former congressman Garret Graves. The congressman is working one lining up some impressive participants to talk about policy.

The event will take place in the Energy Information Center Dalton J. Woods Auditorium located in the Energy Coast & Environment Building, 93 S. Quad Drive Louisiana State University Baton Rouge, LA 70802.

Short field trips are being planned to the LSU Cogeneration Plant and the Petroleum Engineering Research, Training, & Testing Lab on the LSU campus.

CPD and MCLE hours will be available. Each day will have six hours of possible credit hours.

For questions, contact us at <u>ces@lsu.edu</u>.

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- Mark your calendar for GiveNOLA Day and help us make the ground shake (in a good way)!
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