



AAPA Lighthouse Award Project Highlight Advancing Environmental Excellence through Green Marine Certification



Port Pascagoula
Pascagoula, Mississippi

Project Overview

Advancing Environmental Excellence through Green Marine Certification

Award Category: Excellence in Environmental Practices

Completion Date: 5/16/2025

Description: “Advancing Environmental Excellence through Green Marine Certification” highlights the Port of Pascagoula’s successful enrollment and progress in the Green Marine Environmental Certification Program. Since joining in 2023, the port has implemented a structured, transparent, and verifiable framework for improving environmental performance across greenhouse gas emissions, underwater noise, stormwater, aquatic ecosystems, and community impacts. Within two years, the port advanced to Level 4 in Spill Prevention, Level 3 in Community Relations, and Level 3 in Environmental Leadership. This initiative demonstrates that small ports can deliver outsized environmental gains through innovation, cost-effective practices, and stakeholder collaboration

Inspiration

The port was motivated by a responsibility to protect the Gulf of Mexico’s marine ecosystems while maintaining its role as Mississippi’s largest seaport. Increasing environmental challenges—climate change, marine habitat stress, and air quality concerns—demanded more than baseline regulatory compliance. The Green Marine program offered a proactive, measurable path forward that aligned with the port’s commitment to leadership in sustainability

Challenges

Challenges included limited resources as a small port, the need to embed new environmental policies into existing operations, and balancing regulatory obligations with ambitious voluntary commitments. The port overcame these obstacles by leveraging internal staff for training and monitoring, pursuing partnerships with NOAA, MDEQ, and federal agencies, and adopting low-cost but high-impact measures such as no-idling zones, stormwater systems, and portable spill kits

Lessons Learned

Voluntary frameworks accelerate innovation: Green Marine provided both structure and accountability.

Community engagement is essential: Feedback directly shaped policies like the No Idling Policy.

Small ports can lead: With creativity and partnerships, environmental excellence is scalable regardless of port size

Value

This project makes the Port of Pascagoula proud because it reflects a cultural shift—from compliance to leadership. By embedding environmental practices into every level of governance, operations, and tenant engagement, the port has become a model for scalable sustainability. It proves that even modestly resourced ports can set industry benchmarks and inspire broader environmental stewardship

Quotes

“Green Marine has transformed how we think about our responsibility to the environment. We’re not just meeting regulations—we’re setting new standards for our community and the Gulf Coast.”

— Joseph Powell, MPE, Port of Pascagoula

Additional Information

Click or tap here to enter text. Future plans include:

- Achieving Level 4 or higher across all Green Marine indicators by 2028.
- Expanding invasive species monitoring partnerships with NOAA and local universities.
- Enhancing climate resilience in infrastructure planning.
- Growing youth engagement through integration with the port’s Maritime Awareness Program

Contact

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Resources

<https://green-marine.org/>

<https://portpascagoula.com/>