



## For Immediate Release

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## Fishing the bays of Rockport-Fulton plentiful after Hurricane Harvey

### Public piers, marinas and professional fishing guides ready

ROCKPORT-FULTON, TX — As the Rockport-Fulton area swings into spring, the Hurricane Harvey economic impact on fishing the bays of the Rockport-Fulton has taken its toll but seems to be making a return to normalcy.

The tourism industry is making a comeback for the Rockport-Fulton area as more and more hotel rooms, rental units and homes, cottages and recreational vehicle (RV) spaces are becoming available. Sportfishing, a well-known Rockport-Fulton activity for visitors, is gaining strength post Hurricane Harvey as the word gets out about the productive fishing in the Rockport-Fulton area. “Along with reports from guides that frequent the local fishing spots, we have observed that opening the Gulf of Mexico passage from Cedar Bayou and Vinson Slough to Aransas Bay continues to have positive impact on fishing in the region through numerous recreational fishing opportunities.” said Aaron Horine of Mott MacDonald.

#### Public Fishing

Aransas County Navigation District Harbor Master, Keith Barrett states “Fishing has been phenomenal this year since the hurricane. Even those people who are not fishing from a boat have been reporting better than average catches.” Barrett says, “Although a few public piers are not back in order - Copano Causeway pier which is permanently closed, and Fulton Pier which is currently awaiting reconstruction, Breakwater Piers on the South side of Rockport Beach and at the end of Market are free, lighted, open and great places to fish.” Rockport Beach North pier and Leggett Channel are also available with a paid beach pass (through the entrance booth located at the north end. Beach Fees are \$5 per Day or \$20-year Beach pass. The Rockport Harbor seawall is a popular fishing spot as well as the shoreline at Little Bay. The Bulkhead at Fulton Harbor, Copano bay Kayak Site at Airport Rd, Howard Murph Park on 1781 and The Copano Causeway Boat Launch are also good spots. Barrett says, “Fishing is easy on the wallet and a great way to break away from the electronic world. Record numbers of Drum, Trout and Redfish have been caught in our local waters after the storm.”

Goose Island State Park offers shoreline fishing along the bayfront on the righthand side of the island. Wade or kayak fishing is also available. Goose Island is located on Park Road 13 off Hwy 35 N in Lamar.

Many Hotel/Motels, Cottages, and RV parks have their own walk-on piers for the use of their guests.

### **Harbors and Marinas Open for Business**

The harbors and marinas of the Rockport-Fulton area are well-maintained by the Aransas County Navigation District. “We have made great strides in building back our launch sites after Hurricane Harvey,” states Harbormaster Keith Barrett. The most active boat launch site is Cove Harbor Marina accounting for 75 percent of all boat launches. Prior to Hurricane Harvey, Cove Harbor Marina launches totaled up to 200 boat launches per day on weekends. The majority of the launch sites are maintained by the Aransas County Navigation District. Those sites are: Copano Causeway Ramp and Boat Launch, Rockport Beach Park, Fulton Harbor and Cove Harbor Marina. Other launch sites at: Goose Island State Park, St Charles Bay boat ramp and SeaGun Marina is due to open soon and many private sites are available as well.

### **Professional Fishing Guides**

In Aransas County, prior to Hurricane Harvey, the average professional fishing guide chartered over 100 days in one year. There are more than 100 professional fishing guides operating out of the Rockport-Fulton area. Therefore, roughly there are 10,000 guided fishing trips per year in Aransas County. Professional fishing guides had to seek other professions due to the first six-months post Hurricane Harvey but seem to be coming back online for the spring and summer season according to the Rockport-Fulton Chamber of Commerce. “I am open for business. I am booking some trips later in the year but could use some now. The fishing has been great, unfortunately customers are not here.” says Captain Robert Hamilton. Another guide, Captain Ray Burdette states “I am doing a few charters but many of my regular customers were from Houston and they had storm damage as well. I am ready for some new clients.”

For more information on Fishing Guides and other tourism information visit [Rockport-Fulton.org](http://Rockport-Fulton.org) or Call 1-800-242-0071 or 361-729-6445. For Goose Island, 729-2858 or Aransas County Navigation District, 361-729-6661.