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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 1, 2019

Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary names new superintendent

NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries is pleased to announce that Stan Rogers, a policy and planning supervisor with NOAA Fisheries, has been named superintendent at Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary. He succeeds Sarah Fangman, who left the sanctuary in 2017 to become superintendent at Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary. Mr. Rogers will begin August 5, 2019.

At NOAA Fisheries, Rogers supervised policy, planning and evaluation, data management, and communications activities for the NOAA Restoration Center in the Office of Habitat Conservation. Previously, he served as a senior consultation biologist for NOAA Fisheries Office of Protected Resources, leading national programmatic consultations with the U.S. Navy and other DoD training and testing activities worldwide, pursuant to the Endangered Species Act and Marine Mammal Protection Act.

"I have been fortunate to work in habitat conservation and resource protection roles at NOAA, and I'm deeply humbled by the opportunity to join the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries team," Rogers said. "Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary protects a vibrant and healthy habitat, and I look forward to building on the sanctuary's successes. I am eager to foster even greater connections between the sanctuary and our coastal and non-coastal communities, and enhance our understanding of the benefits provided by natural resources found at Gray's Reef."

Designated in 1981, Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary comprises a hard-bottom area off the Georgia coast. The reef's scattered rocky outcroppings and ledges provide homes for an abundance of marine life. Crabs, lobsters, soft corals, sponges, sea stars and other organisms form a dense carpet of living creatures, covering the nooks and crannies of Gray's Reef and giving it the name "live bottom."

The reef attracts more than 200 species of fish, including black sea bass, snappers, groupers and mackerels. Loggerhead sea turtles, a threatened species, also use Gray's Reef year-round for foraging and resting, and the reef is within the critical habitat and only known winter calving ground for the highly endangered North Atlantic Right Whale. The 22- square-mile sanctuary is the only protected natural reef and one of a few natural marine protected areas in the Atlantic Ocean between Cape Hatteras, North Carolina and Cape Canaveral, Florida.

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