

## LETTER FROM THE AUTHORS

Five papers in this journal represent a compilation of taxonomic concepts and stratigraphic ranges for key Gulf of Mexico species as developed and utilized by BP and its heritage companies. These concepts and ranges have been forged over decades by internal analyses and research, duplicated in hundreds of wells by BP staff and consultants. Long held internal, the decision was made to share concepts and this framework in an effort to advance the application of nannofossil biostratigraphy and contribute to understanding of the Gulf of Mexico.

The BP Neogene Gulf of Mexico biostratigraphic framework has been fully calibrated to the astronomical chronometer represented by ODP Leg 154 cores through what is now a 15-year research effort. This integrated nannofossil and foraminifer event framework will be published in a separate paper, currently in preparation for submission in early 2018.

Many of these taxonomic concepts lived only in the minds of the senior authors - many of which were passed on by retired BP nannofossil specialist Jim Newell - and in the spiral bound training notebooks of the junior authors. With that, we thank BP for permission to publish this series of manuscripts. Our gratitude is extended to Jamie Shamrock for her time and effort in the coordination and editing of this series.

Finally, we would like to dedicate this volume to Professor Sherwood W. Wise, who retired from Florida State University in 2016, and Professor David Watkins from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

*Jim Bergen*

*Emily Browning*

*Stacie Blair*

*Eric de Kaenel*

*Todd Boesiger*