**Shrimp Task Force Meeting**

**Wednesday, December 11, 2019, 10:00 a.m.**

**Terrebonne Council Meeting Room**

**8026 Main Street, Houma, LA 70360**

**AGENDA**

1. **Pledge of Allegiance**

Meeting was called to order at 10:05 AM.

1. **Roll Call and Introduction of Guests**
2. **Approval of the October 2, 2019 Shrimp Task Force Meeting Minutes**

Motion by Alan Gibson. 2nd by Acy Cooper. Motion Carries.

1. **Approval of the December 11, 2019 Meeting Agenda**

It was requested to add several items to the agenda. They were as follows:

* To Discuss Purchasing Enforcement Drones
* Discussion of the 100 Count Shrimp Law
* To Discuss Removing STF Members Based on Attendance

Motion by Andrew Blanchard to approve the meeting minutes. 2nd by Alan Gibson. Motion Carries.

1. **Treasury Report**
	1. **Budget Report‐ LDWF**

Remaining Fund Balance $655, 198

Remaining Budget Balance $48,318

Motion by Andrew Blanchard to approve the treasury report, 2nd by Craig Authement. Motion Carries.

1. **Federal Shrimp Permit Report**

No discussion

1. **New Business**
	1. **To Receive a Presentation on an Artificial Reef Proposal—East Cameron 278- LDWF**

Mike McDonough with LDWF gave a presentation on the proposed artificial reef in the East Cameron 278 block. The presentation was submitted to the STF to receive public comment before a final ruling from the Artificial Reef Council meeting in late February or early March.

**Offshore Planning Areas**

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**East Cameron 278 Vicinity Map, with Trawl Effort**

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* 1. **To Hear an Update on the Federal Fisheries Disaster Declaration and Damage Assessment- LDWF**

Harry Blanchet with LDWF gave a brief update on the status of the Federal Fisheries Disaster. A fisheries disaster was declared in late September. Assessments were compiled to record the amount of damage sustained so LDWF could determine the impacts of the flood. LDWF submitted its findings to NOAA in late November with estimates of the damage. LDWF is awaiting information for funding allocations so at this time LDWF does not have a definite amount that will be allocated for relief. NOAA only looks at revenue losses for fisheries disasters not resource losses. Rodney Olander stated he believes the losses inshore were greater than the losses offshore. It was explained that estimates were based on the amount of seafood landed in Louisiana regardless of if it was caught in offshore waters. Harry Blanchet explained that LDWF aimed to encapsulate the largest group of fishermen possible in LDWF’s report to NOAA. Acy Cooper stated he would like the STF to play a role in determining how funds received are allocated.

* 1. **To Discuss the Current Restaurant Labeling Regulations-STF**

Al Mancuso and Carol Neusetzer from the LA Department of Public Health came to speak about LDH’s efforts in enforcing the seafood labeling bill. In June legislation went into effect requiring restaurants to comply with the new labeling regulations. A press release was published in July in regards to the new requirements and emails were sent establishing a system for reporting labeling violations. Also LDH completed procedures for processing labeling violations. On September 2 enforcement commenced for compliance with the labeling regulations. Approximately 23,000 inspections were completed from September to December. Of those inspections, 81,000 violations were discovered with 501 labeling violations noted. Twenty percent (20%) of violations noted occurred in region 1 (New Orleans) while region 2 (Baton Rouge) had the second highest violations. Once a violation is issued, there will be a follow-up for correcting the violation. If the violation is not resolved by the next inspection, the entity is issued a fine. A business can remain open even if they are issued violations. LDH may recommend to close a business if the fines reach over $10,000 for a year. Kristen Baumer asked for clarification on the rules regarding the origin of seafood and how violations were processed for seafood landed in Louisiana but shipped to another state for processing. LDH stated that products are labeled based on where they are processed.

* 1. **To Discuss How LDWF Can Aid the STF with Washington, D.C. Efforts- STF**

The STF requested additional support from LDWF with their efforts when they travel to Washington, D.C. in the way of support letters or expert personnel. Cole Garrett with LDWF legal explained that as a public entity state employees are limited on lobbying efforts because of ethics laws. Peyton Cagle with LDWF suggested that the STF take steps to fill the Governor’s appointee STF position that is currently vacant which could allow for a direct line of contact to the Governor’s office. Kristen Baumer and Dr. Jack Isaacs spoke about how LDWF’s shrimp import data had been useful in the past.

* 1. **To Discuss STF Travel to Washington, D.C. and the 2020 Louisiana Alive Event- STF**

Alan Gibson motioned to approve travel for up to 8 STF member for up to 6 night to attend the LA Alive event in Washington D.C. 2nd by Acy Cooper. Motion carries.

* 1. **To Discuss Purchasing Enforcement Drones-STF**

The STF discussed whether they should preemptively allocate funding for the purchase of enforcement drones. Cole Garrett with LDWF gave an update that the department is currently waiting to be added to the appropriation agenda so that additional STF funding for the purchase of the drones can be approved. Alan Gibson made a motion to add the drone purchase discussion to the next STF agenda. 2nd by Lance Nacio. Motion carries.

* 1. **Discussion of the 100 Count Shrimp Law-STF**

Lance Nacio stated that he would like LDWF to look at modifying the 100 count law similar to how the Carolinas manage their resources. Rodney Olander is in favor of keeping the law as it stands elaborating that in certain areas of the state during certain weather patterns 100 count shrimp is all that’s available. Acy Cooper agreed with Rodney stating that keeping the current 100 count law allows fishermen to work and make a living.

* 1. **To Discuss Removing STF Members Based on Attendance-STF**

Acy Cooper introduced the idea of removing STF members who have poor attendance at the STF meetings. The decision was made to contact members with poor attendance records via certified mail urging them to attend or resign.

1. **Public Comment**

Peyton Cagle with LDWF announced the closing of the inshore shrimp season will occur on the 16th with Lake Pontchartrain having a few pockets remaining open.

LA Sea Grant let the task force know that registration for the Louisiana Fisheries Forward (LFF) Summit is now open.

Angela Portier requested that a short prayer be included on the agenda for all STF meetings. A motion was made by Acy Cooper to include a prayer on the STF agenda pending legal approval. 2nd by Andrew Blanchard. Motion carries.

Thomas Olander spoke about the Calumet Cut and the blockage it’s creating in the Atchafalaya. He requested that LDWF add discussing the Calumet Cut and how it affects juvenile shrimp to the next agenda. A motion was made by Acy Cooper to discuss the Calumet Cut and its impact on juvenile shrimp production to the next agenda. 2nd Lance Nacio. Motion carries.

Lance Nacio announced that Slow Fish 2020 will be taking place March 19-22 in Durham, New Hampshire.

Samantha Carrol announced that she is the new Executive Director of the Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board. The LSPMB is planning a three-month radio, tv, and social media marketing campaign promoting Louisiana shrimp. If after the initial three-month period, there seems to be high interest then they will proceed with three more months.

1. **Set Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for February 5th at 10am in Houma.

1. **Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn by Andrew Blanchard. 2nd by Lance Nacio. Motion Carries.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:28 PM.