

**Oyster Task Force Meeting**  
**Tuesday, September 10, 2019, 1:00pm**

**I. Pledge of Allegiance**

**II. Voting Members Present:**

Shane Bagala  
Dan Coulon  
Byron Encalade  
Jakov Jurisic  
Brad Robin  
Brandt Lafrance  
Sam Slavich  
Mitch Jurisich  
Willie Daisy  
John Tesvich  
Sam Slavich  
Peter Vujnovich

**Voting Members Absent:**

Leo Dyson  
Al Sunseri  
Tracy Collins

**Non-voting Members Present:**

Carolina Bourque  
Justin Gremilion  
Edward Skena  
Frank Cole in for Karl Morgan  
Brian Lezina

**Non-voting Members Absent:**

**III.** Jakov Jurisic motioned to approve the July 30, 2019 meeting minutes, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Shane Bagala. Motion carries.

John Tesvich motioned to approve the September 10, 2019 meeting agenda, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Jakov Jurisic. Motion carries.

**IV. Treasury Report:**

Remaining Fund Balance- \$451, 683  
Budget Balance- \$125,098  
August Tag Sales- 216,700

## V. Committee Reports:

### A. Public-Private Oyster Seed Grounds Committee

The committee met prior to the full task force meeting to discuss and make the following recommendations:

1. Discussed a state based assistance program for LA oystermen due to the flooding crisis and loss of oyster leases- Recommendation: Suspension of the Public Seed Ground Permit fee, instead instating a \$15 retention fee per scraper OR implementing a rebate program by LDWF after payment, money to be reimbursed in whole through rebate program
2. Suspension of the lease rental fee due to loss of resource- Recommendation: reimbursement through rebate program
3. Tax credits for infrastructure, reef rehabilitation, and training for pursuing other lines of work- Recommendation: the task force plans to get more feedback on this item and how it can be accomplished (plan to reach out to legislators and Department of Revenue)

Discussed setting a meeting and possible trip to Washington, D.C. to work with local parish presidents and legislators to set a game plan for funding for harvesters and reef holders impacted by recent flood

Jakov Jurisic motioned to accept the recommendations of the committee as presented, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Sam Slavich. Motion carries.

Duncan Kemp from LDWF stated that the Public Seed Ground Vessel Permit was established legislatively and it is currently written that the fee "shall be \$250."

Steve Pollock requested that task force remember the aquaculture industry and their losses when considering disaster assistance funding

Jakov Jurisich motioned to send letters to Plaquemines Parish President Lepine, St. Bernard Parish President McInnis, Representative Leopold, and Representative Garofalo to request a meeting with the Oyster Task Force, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Brad Robin. Motion carries.

Dan Coulon stated that he would follow up with Jefferson Parish representatives to seek their participation in the meeting

The last item discussed was the marking of oyster leases- Recommendation: would like to look into alternative methods of marking oyster leases by using navigational equipment and GPS rather than physical markers

Duncan Kemp stated that this change would statutory, there are several statutes in Title 56 that require the marking and posting of oyster leases

The committee recommended keeping this item in committee for further discussion and to vet other options.

**B. Enforcement Report:** Edward Skena provided the board with the enforcement report July 22<sup>nd</sup> – Sept. 3<sup>rd</sup>

**Region 4 (Iberia)**

None

**Region 5 (Calcasieu and Cameron)**

None

**Region 6: (Terrebonne, Lafourche, Grand Isle)**

**Terrebonne**

4- take oysters from unapproved area (Polluted)  
1-Log Book Violation  
1-fail to have commercial license in possession  
1-fail to oyster harvester license in possession  
3-No written permission  
3-theft of oysters  
2 – harvest oysters from an improperly marked lease (warning)  
2 – violate sanitary code (vessel regulations)  
Approximately 40 sacks of oysters seized and returned to the water

**Lafourche**

3-Log Book violations  
3-violate sanitation code (no tarp or cover)  
1-take commercial fish without commercial vessel license  
1-take commercial fish without commercial license  
1-no commercial gear license (Dredge)  
1-Harvest Oysters without an oyster harvester license  
5- take oysters from unapproved area (Polluted)  
3- take oysters from unapproved area (Polluted) Drone Used  
3-harvest oysters illegal hours Drone Used  
2-Improper numbers  
92 sacks of oysters seized and returned to the water

**Region 8: (Jefferson, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, Orleans, St. Tammany)**

**St. Bernard**

1 – violate sanitary code (tagging)  
4 – violate sanitary code (refrigeration)  
1-No Harvester License  
3-Violate Sanitary Code (Log Book)  
721-mini sacks of oysters

## Plaquemines

7 – violate sanitary code (vessel regulations)

1-Fail to Have Written Permission

2-Take Commercial Fish W/O Vessel License

1-Fail to have Commercial License In Possession

1-Fail to Have Scraper License in Possession

45 Sacks Seized

The task force requested that enforcement provide a summary of citations issued with the help of drones

**C. Legislative Committee-** No report

**D. Research Committee-** No report

**E. Coastal Restoration Committee-** No report

**F. Marketing Committee-** No report

**G. Health Committee-** all areas (1,2,&3) have completely opened, continuing to monitor weekly and have returned and are well within all averages

The task force expressed concern for enforcement of other user groups utilization of waste receptacles on the water

**H. Aquaculture Committee-**

Brandi Shelley provided the aquaculture committee report:

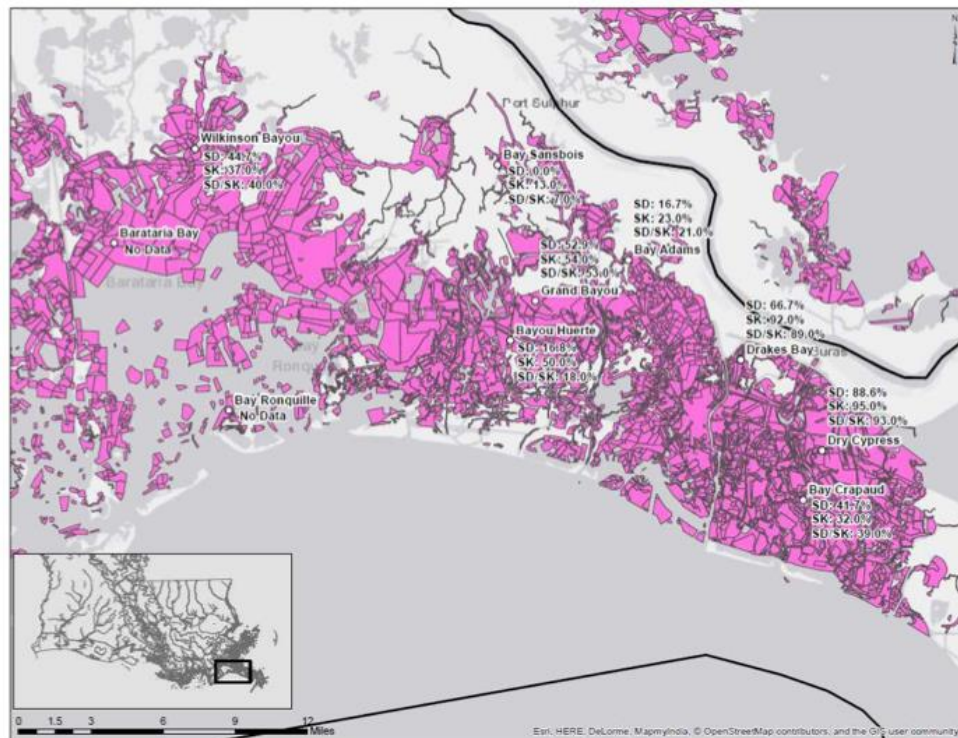
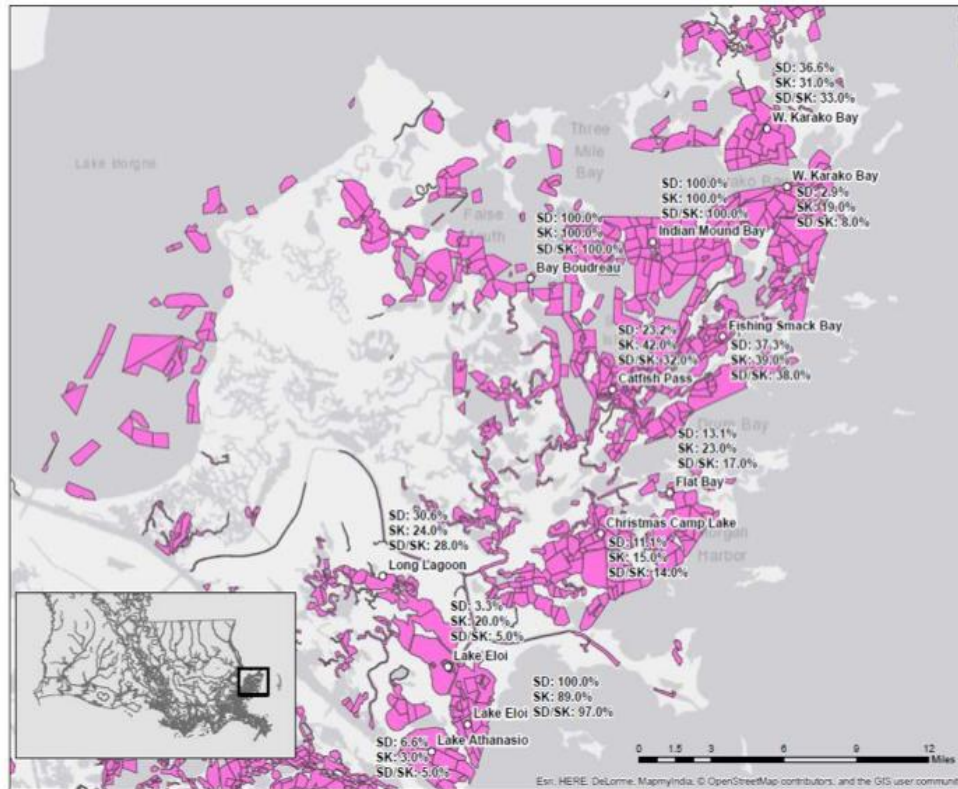
The committee met on September 4, 2019 and discussed the AOC permitting process, the challenges and steps that are needed to move AOC cages to other locations in the instance of low salinity, storms, etc., possible solutions discussed were setting up a backup location for each farm or setting up an AOC sanctuary for all harvesters to use. The locations the committee were looking into were to the west of Leeville. Since the moratorium is not yet lifted, the process would require private leasing areas. The committee discussed getting a working group together to discuss possible options and getting through the process in this regard. The working group would include Cole Garrett, Andrew Wilson, and other AOC industry members and state departments. Establishing backup areas or a sanctuary would still be about a two-year process as it takes the approval of around 9 agencies to get permitted

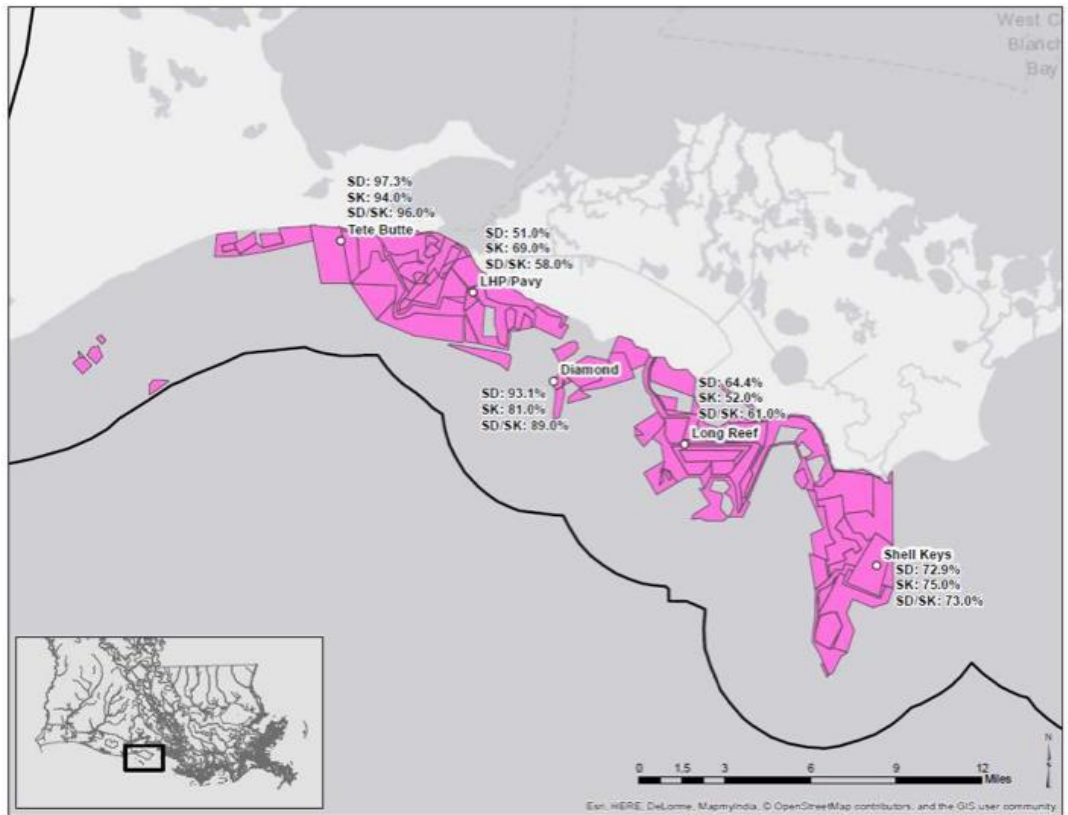
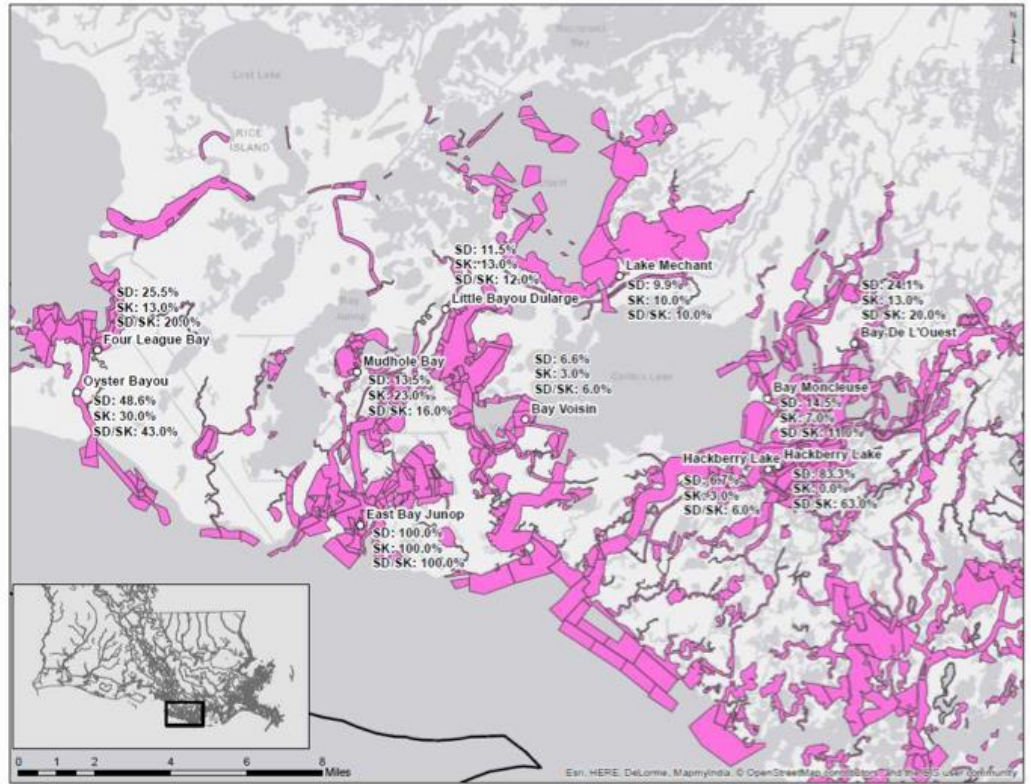
**I. Joint Task Force Working Group-** No report

**VI. New Business**

A. Carolina Bourque provided a presentation and update on the oyster mortality surveys related to the 2019 flood event

Key-(SD: seed) (SK: sack) (SD/SK: seed and sack mortalities)





Jakov Jurisic motioned to request that LDWF conduct additional sampling in areas east of the Mississippi River that were impacted by hypoxia, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Shane Bagala. Motion carries.

John Tesvich stated the presented data shows such a wide range of damages from 0-96% in some areas on the public resource and private leases. The data doesn't provide a clear picture of where the damages were. Requested that LDWF map damages according to data to show what areas were affected more around 96% and which areas were more around 0%

The task force sent this item to the Public-Private Oyster Seed Ground Committee to further delineate areas in which additional sampling should be conducted

John Tesvich stated that areas that have already shown 100% mortality should not be sampled again, the focus should be on areas within a hypoxia event that may have seen a change

The task force made a request in the past that LDWF increase sampling stations in the Grand Pass and Cabbage Reef areas and this is currently still in the works

**B. Brad Barth with CPRA began an update on the Sediment Diversion Program**

Jakov Jurisic motioned to remove item B. 'To Hear a Presentation on the Sediment Diversion Program' from the agenda at this time, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Sam Slavich. Motion carries.

**C. The board discussed the 2019 Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference proposals**

The board inquired about a previous request to change the date/ time of year of the conference. Justin Gremillion stated that Kirk Wiles is planning to bring the item up for discussion in committee meetings during the conference; it was determined that this item did not need to be a proposal

**D. John Zach Lea provided a presentation on a suggested public relations campaign for the oyster industry**

**A Plan to Increase Louisiana Oyster Production East of the Mississippi River (DRAFT)**

**Combining Storm Surge Protection with Oyster Industry Development**

Work with communities and the State to build multiple storm surge protection barriers that also define oyster production zones. The barriers will allow better water-flow- and salinity-control to rehabilitate traditional oyster bottoms, develop new oyster production areas, reduce man-made-flooding-risk to oyster industry investors, and provide "immediate" increases in storm protection to SE Louisiana. Most of SE Louisiana becomes a managed, oyster production zone with benefits for shrimp, crab, and finfish.

Components of the Plan:

1. Build storm surge protection reservoirs/levees to capture silt and control freshwater from:
  - a. the Fort Saint Philip crevasse

- b. the Mardi Gras Pass crevasse
  - c. the proposed Mid-Breton Sound Sediment Diversion
  - d. the Caernarvon Diversion
  - e. the Bonnet Carré Spillway
2. Complete the NOAA Land Bridge across upper Breton Sound. See location below.



3. Build one or more storm surge protection levees across the Biloxi Marsh
4. Build one or more storm surge protection levees running southwesterly from the MRGO
5. Build a lock at Hopedale to control freshwater and boats entering SW of the MRGO
6. Build "off-shore" storm surge barrier islands
7. Divert floods of "new"-global-warming-Mississippi-River-waters north of Baton Rouge.

The Oyster Task Force can use the Plan to build support for its industry among oyster growers and merchants, shrimp and crab industries, local communities, levee boards, environmental groups, economic development groups, elected- and governmental-officials at Parish, State, and National levels. Individuals and organizations interested in storm protection and in supporting the oyster industry will better understand how they can create programs to help.

Submitted by John Dale "Zach" Lea, Ph.D., [jdzlea@hotmail.com](mailto:jdzlea@hotmail.com)

**E.** The task force discussed the 2020 LA Alive event; would like to look into purchasing extra tickets for the event and perhaps including the Shrimp Task Force

**F.** The board discussed hosting a seafood reception in Washington, D.C.; OTF to hold a joint task force working group meeting to discuss joint task force seafood reception; task force to provide feedback on venues

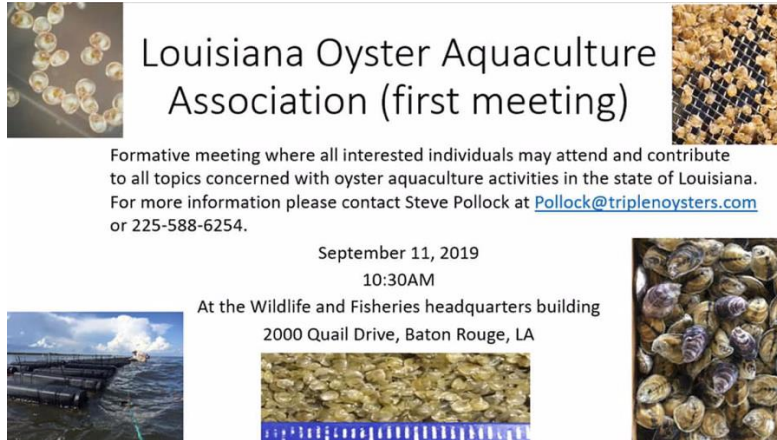
Jakov Jurisic motioned to provide funding to sponsor a seafood reception in Washington, D.C. in coordination with the other task forces, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Brad Robin. Motion carries.



## VII. Public Comment-

Dan Coulon requested that CPRA provide a breakdown of money that was spent on the two diversions, Brian Lezina from CPRA asked that Dan/ the task force submit questions via email

Steve Pollock announced the following meeting:








**Louisiana Oyster Aquaculture Association (first meeting)**

Formative meeting where all interested individuals may attend and contribute to all topics concerned with oyster aquaculture activities in the state of Louisiana. For more information please contact Steve Pollock at [Pollock@triplenoysters.com](mailto:Pollock@triplenoysters.com) or 225-588-6254.

September 11, 2019  
10:30AM

At the Wildlife and Fisheries headquarters building  
2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA



VIII. The task force set a Coastal Restoration Committee meeting for 10:00am on Tuesday, October 22, 2019 with a Public Private Oyster Seed Grounds Committee meeting to follow

**The full Oyster Task Force meeting will proceed after the committee meetings on Tuesday, October 22, 2019 for 1:00pm at the St. Bernard Port Harbor and Terminal Building located at 100 Port Blvd In Chalmette, LA 70043**

Motion to adjourn by Jakov Jurisic, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Peter Vujnovich. Motion carries.