

**Louisiana Shrimp Task Force Meeting
Wednesday, July 31, 2019, 10:00am
Terrebonne Council Meeting Room
8026 Main Street, Houma, LA 70360**

- I. Pledge of Allegiance
- II. Roll call and introduction of guests

Voting Members Present:

Acy Cooper
Lance Nacho
Rodney Olander in for George Barisich
Kristen Baumer
Alan Gibson
Andrew Blanchard
Craig Authement

Voting Members Absent:

George Barisich
Ronald Dufrene, Sr.
Steven Sode

Non-Voting Members Present:

Peyton Cagle
Edward Skena

Non-Voting Members Absent:

Jack Isaacs
Stephen Sessums
Justin Gremillion

DRAFT

III. Acy Cooper motioned to approve the May 1, 2019 meeting minutes, 2nd by Lance Nacio. Motion carries.

Andrew Blanchard motioned to approve the June 21, 2019 special meeting minutes, 2nd by Lance Nacio. Motion carries.

IV. Acy Cooper motioned to add an item under New Business, 'J. To Discuss the 4-Year TEDs Study , 2nd by Lance Nacio. Motion carries.

Andrew Blanchard motioned to approve the agenda as amended, 2nd by Alan Gibson. Motion carries.

V. New Business

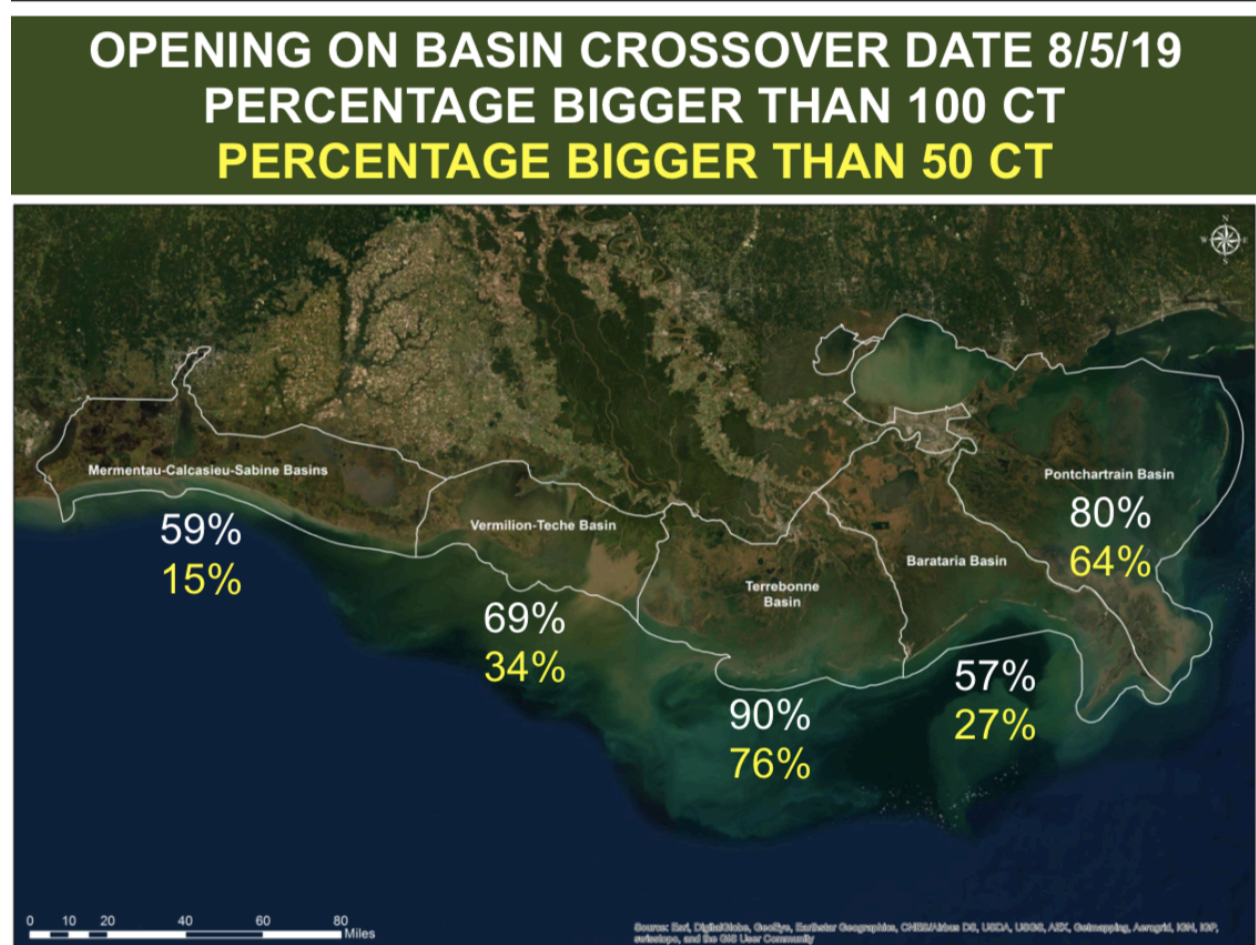
A. Peyton Cagle provided a presentation on the Fall Inshore Shrimp Season

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- All state inside waters from the Mississippi/ Louisiana state line westward to the Louisiana/ Texas state line to open at 6:00 a.m. August 5, 2019.

Alan Gibson acknowledged Parish President Gordon Dove in attendance

Andrew Blanchard motioned to support the WLF recommendation to open all state inside waters from the Mississippi/ Louisiana state line westward to the Louisiana/ Texas state line to open at 6:00am on August 5, 2019 , 2nd by Craig Authement. Motion carries with two abstentions- Acy Cooper and Lance Nacio



***The Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission met on Thursday, August 1, 2019 and the shrimp season was set as follows:**

Season openings are as follows:

- The portion of state inside waters from the Mississippi/Louisiana state line westward to the Atchafalaya River Ship Channel at Eugene Island as delineated by the red Channel Buoy Line to open at 6 p.m. August 5, 2019, and;
- The portion of state inside waters from the Atchafalaya River Ship Channel at Eugene Island as delineated by the red Channel Buoy Line westward to the western shore of Freshwater Bayou to open at 6 a.m. August 5, 2019, and;
- The portion of state inside waters from the western shore of Freshwater Bayou westward to the Louisiana/Texas state line to open at 6 p.m. August 5, 2019.

The task force unanimously decided take up item F. As item B, 'To Discuss Fall Season Ride-Alongs'

B. Peyton Cagle led discussion on fall season ride-alongs

Vermillion: sampled 3 sites in the area and the results were: LDWF catch per effort data was 27 and commercial gear showed catch per effort of 177. LDWF gear average size- 72ct and commercial gear average size was 77ct, both gears indicated over 80% were over 100ct.

Terrebonne: sampled 6 sites and this is the white shrimp data- LDWF catch per effort data was 35 and commercial gear showed catch per effort of 783. LDWF gear average size 47ct and commercial gear average size was 45ct. LDWF gear indicated that 95% were 100ct or bigger and commercial gear indicated that 97% were 100ct or bigger

Barataria: Samples 3 sites- LDWF data for site 1 was 27, for site 2 was 7, and for site 3 was 7 and commercial gear showed catch per effort of for site 1 was 118, for site 2 was 132, and site 3 was 434. LDWF average size for site 1 was 42ct, at site 2 was 29ct, and at site 3 was 45ct and commercial gear at site 1 was 44ct, at site 2 was 33ct, and at site 34ct.

Pontchartrain: Sampled 4 sites- LDWF catch per effort data was 44 and commercial gear showed catch per effort of 828. LDWF gear average size- 59ct and commercial gear average size was 32ct

Acy Cooper stated that he appreciates all of the department's efforts given the short time frame and stated that he would like to see the ride-alongs continue through the spring and fall seasons

Acy Cooper motioned to add fall season ride-along program in addition to the spring program for the next two years, 2nd by Lance Nacio. Motion carries.

C. Doug Daigle led discussion on the Shrimp Task Force resolution on Gulf Hypoxia, comments on LA Nutrient Management Strategy

Alan Gibson motioned to update the STF hypoxia resolution and forward as comment on behalf of the Shrimp Task Force regarding the LA Nutrient Strategy, 2nd by Acy Cooper. Motion carries.

D. The task force discussed and considered funding to purchase a drone to be used for shrimp enforcement

Acy Cooper stated that the drones, if purchased, would only be used for shrimp enforcement and search-and-rescue

LDWF enforcement stated that the costs for one drone with training included (up to 10 agents) is around \$35,639. Training takes about 3 days

The task force asked if there has been an increase in citations/ convictions since the Oyster Task Force has purchased drones and enforcement stated that since it has only been a few weeks it is still too early to say

Barry Rogers stated that until something is done to increase penalties on violations that offenders will continue

The task force plans to host a Legislative Committee meeting prior to the next STF meeting to discuss increasing shrimp penalties; requested that LDWF Legal be present at this meeting to provide pertinent feedback

Alan Gibson motioned to ask LDWF to request an increase in the Shrimp Task Force budget authority of the Shrimp Marketing and Promotion Account (51400W2200) from \$95,000 to \$190,000 for the purchase of two drones and the associated training for increased shrimp enforcement (approx. \$65,000), and to provide funding to support the efforts of the shrimp by-catch study (\$30,000), 2nd by Andrew Blanchard. Motion carries.

The task force requested feedback from LDWF Enforcement on who would be responsible for the maintenance and updates of drones

E. Thomas Hymel provided the task force with an update on the 2020 Louisiana Fisheries Forward Summit

The LFF Summit will be held on Wednesday, March 6, 2020 at the Pontchartrain Center in Kenner, LA

Acy Cooper motioned to provide \$5,000 in funding to sponsor the 2020 LA Fisheries Forward Summit, 2nd by Lance Nacio. Motion carries.

F. The task force discussed purchasing Shrimp Task Force shirts

Suggested a white or a light blue shirt and requested pricing and shirt options by the next meeting

G. Acy Cooper provided an update on the summer Shrimp Task Force trip to Washington, D.C.

Acy Cooper stated that the trip was successful and introduced Ryan Bradley, the Executive Director of the Mississippi Commercial Fisheries United, who provided an update on some of the bills being introduced by the Mississippi Congressional Delegation

1. Asking Congress to provide emergency direct financial assistance for the short term for the folks that are directly impacted by the opening of the Bonne Carre Spillway, the MS Congressional Delegation has indicated that there is approx. \$150M available in fisheries disaster appropriations that was in a supplemental appropriations bill that has passed in June 2019. All of those funds can not be tapped into, essentially the funds were allocated for hurricanes, but there is expected to be some funding there that can be tapped into now for these purposes. Stated that is not believed that the funds that may be available from this source will be enough to make everybody whole, but hopefully some funding will be provided to the folks that need it
2. Once the disaster is quantified and the Secretary of Commerce approves of both the MS and LA disaster it is expected that Congress will come back and do an additional round of supplemental disaster funds.
3. Lastly requesting fishery disaster reform from Congress- the big complaint heard from MS is that the last two disasters from 2011 it took 7-8 years to receive funding. Requesting that Congress streamline the funding process so that money goes directly to those who need it most

On July 23, Senator Cindy Hyde Smith introduced SB2209, which is a bill to amend the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act to establish a safety net program for commercial fishermen and aquaculture producers. Senator John Kennedy was a co-sponsor of the bill. Essentially it would make commercial fishermen eligible to similar programs that farmers have access to and would complementary to the current fisheries disaster process and would not require a federal fishery disaster declaration. If your income falls below 85% of your average income from prior years it would automatically trigger assisted payments directly to you. The bill will likely have proposed amendments.

Another bill was introduced, SB2346 by Senator Roger Wicker, which is titled Fishery Failures: Urgently Needed Disaster Declarations Act, this bill would streamline the fisheries disaster declaration process and hold the Federal Government accountable to deadlines to get funding out the door faster, it would make it possible for funding to go directly to members of the fishing community and would also prioritize hiring fishermen to restore the fishery.

Alan Gibson stated that on Tuesday the task force members met with Senator John Kennedy, Senator Shelby, Senator Doug Jones, Senator Cindy Hyde Smith, and Congressman Palazzo,

NOAA. On Wednesday, the board met with Senator Wicker, Senator Cassidy, Congressman Clay Higgins, Congressmen Garret Graves, and Congressman Steve Scalise

H. The task force discussed Act 372 (HB335)

Acy Cooper stated that this paved the way for other industries to come afterward and be added to the bill, also provides a good framework for other states to do something similar

The task force plans to meet with the Lt. governor to discuss the LA Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board's involvement and would also like to look into getting a slot on WWL to discuss the health benefits of eating local vs imported shrimp

- I.** Alan Gibson motioned to postpone considering Shrimp Task Force seat vacancy nominations to the next meeting, 2nd by Lance Nacio. Motion carries.

J. The task force discussed the 4-Year TEDs Study

Julie Fallout stated that she was recently made aware of the study, it's another division of NOAA, there was 1 public meeting in Florida and Mississippi found out in time and requested a meeting. Suggested that the task force submit their comments on the website

Alan Gibson motioned to allow Acy Cooper to write a letter and attend the public hearing regarding the NOAA 4-Year TEDs Study representing the Shrimp Task Force, 2nd by Lance Nacho. Motion carries.

VI. Public Comment-

Rocky Ditcharo, Ditcharo Seafood Buras, LA- expressed concern with business promotion during the signing of House Bill 335, requested that this be avoided and addressed in the future by developing protocol

- VII.** The next Shrimp Task Force meeting is set for Wednesday, October 2, 2019 for 10:00am in Houma, also to host a Legislative Committee meeting prior for 9:30am.

- VIII.** Andrew Blanchard motioned to adjourn, 2nd by Kristen Baumer. Motion carries.