**Shrimp Task Force Meeting**

**Wednesday, August 2, 2023, 10:0am**

**LDWF Headquarters**

**2000 Quail Drive**

**Baton Rouge, LA 70898**

**I.** Call to Order

**II.** Roll call

**Voting Members Present:**

Rodney Olander

Acy Cooper, Jr.

Lance Nacio

Jeff Drury, III

Kristen Baumer

Alan Gibson

Andrew Blanchard

**Voting Members Absent:**

Phillip Tran

Randy Pearce

Chalin Delaune

**Non-Voting Members Present:**

Neal McMillian

Peyton Cagle

Edward Skena

Jack Isaacs

Gene Cavalier

**Non-Voting Members Absent:**

**III.** Rodney Olander motion to enter executive session, 2nd by Alan Gibson. Motion carries.

Rodney Olander motioned to exit executive session and resume the meeting, 2nd by Andrew Blanchard. Motion carries.

**I.** Call to order after executive session

**II.** Rodney Olander motioned to approve the July 5, 2023 meeting minutes, 2nd by Alan Gibson. Motion carried.

**III.** Rodney Olander motioned to approve the August 2, 2023 meeting agenda, 2nd by Alan Gibson. Motion carries.

**IV.** New Business

1. Cole Garret provided an update on the Shrimp Task Force executive session, discussed recent ruling on the TEDs case where the State of Louisiana sued the Department of Commerce regarding the new TEDs regulation. Discussed what the court’s ruling on this case was and some possible paths forward; no action was taken at this time
2. The task force moved up item D and took it at this time, the Task force considered the biological recommendation to set the opening date for the 2023 Fall Inshore Shrimp Season

Recommendations ¬ Zone 1 - From the Mississippi/Louisiana state line westward to the eastern shore of South Pass of the Mississippi River to open at 6:00 a.m. August 7, 2023 except for the Biloxi Marsh which will open at 6:00 a.m. August 16, 2023.

Zone 2 (Barataria and Terrebonne) - From the eastern shore of South Pass of the Mississippi River westward to the Atchafalaya River Ship Channel at Eugene Island as delineated by the River Channel Buoy Line to open at 6:00 p.m. August 7, 2023.

Zone 2 (Vermilion-Teche) and Zone 3 - From the Atchafalaya River Ship Channel at Eugene Island as delineated by the River Channel Buoy Line westward to the Louisiana/Texas state line to open at 6:00 a.m. August 7, 2023.

Andrew Blanchard suggested opening as soon as we can, follow the department’s recommendation

Rodney Olander recommended going with the recommendation of LDWF

George Barisich stated that St. Bernard Parish, Zone 1- if open on August 7 open zone 1 at 6am

Rocky Decharo stated that he suggests opening on August 7th

Rodney Olander motioned to approve LDWF’s season recommendation, 2nd by Alan Gibson. Motion carries.

1. Sandy Garcia with WWLTV provided a presentation on a possible shrimp marketing campaign

Elements that will create awareness:

Current Situation:

You are looking to have people ask for Louisiana Shrimp when they go out to eat throughout the state • It’s important that our communities know that ordering and eating Louisiana shrimp helps our economy and way of life throughout the Gulf South Region • There is a need to promote the cultural and heritage value of the industry as an important part of what makes Louisiana unique Let the power of Tegna Tell Your Story!

A multimedia campaign to run across: • WWL-TV Ch. 4 • NewsWatch 15 – The rebroadcast • WUPL Ch. 54 • WWLTV.com – Pre-roll • Targeted Streaming Television (OTT) • Saints Specials

Production of your :30 “Taste the Love, Taste the Passion, Taste Louisiana”

Campaign Summary:

137 x :30 commercials on broadcast TV: WWL-TV, WUPL and NewsWatch15 during Monday -Sunday News programming and Saints Specials 4,943,900 IMP A35+ in New Orleans DMA

• 120,000 Streaming TV Impressions to air in Baton Rouge, Lafayette, Lake Charles

• 60,000 pre-roll impressions on wwltv.com to run prior to someone watching a video on our site

• Production of all broadcast and digital assets includes 8 hours of video shooting to insure we are telling your story and 5 hours of editing\* Total :30 Investment: $36,840

Acy Cooper stated that the commercial would need to be more in depth on concerns with imports and key issues, restaurant labeling, Gulf aware. Etc.

Kristen Baumer stated that the fishermen need your help to preserve the industry, more of a call to action

Lance Nacio stated that something good to reference may be -2016 Dr. Oz about food truths in shrimp; can pull from this

Rodney Olander stated that St. Mary Parish is running a program called Simply Delicious Food Trail- you guys special prizes if you visit 5 restaurants in St. Mary Parish

Sandy Garcia stated that basline would be $5K a month for broadcast television

Kristen Baumer stated that SPMB may be able to help with some funding for this campaign

Acy Cooper asked Sandy Garcia to put together figures for the next meeting and bring back to the task force for consideration

1. Peyton Cagle provided an update on the Special Bait Dealer’s Permit before the December sunset

Background: Spring of 2021, bait fishermen were asking for changes that would assist with increased catch and reduced effort. • The Commission requested LDWF to draft a NOI that would assist the bait fishermen in accomplishing their goals. • A NOI was approved by the Commission in June 2021 and the Final Rule published in November 2021. • We are here today to provide an update so the LSTF can consider the data before the sunset, December 31, 2023.

Current Regulations- Requires a tow time restriction when operating under a special bait dealer permit. • Allows bait fishermen to use gear that is allowed during the inshore shrimp season • One trawl not to exceed 50 feet along the cork line and 66 feet in length on the lead line. • Double skimmers may have an opening circumference of no more than 72 feet for each net and a maximum lead line length of 33 feet. • Current regulations sunset on December 31, 2023.

Previous Regulations- No tow time restriction. • Limits dead catch to no more than two gallons while operating under the permit. • Permitted gear is one trawl not to exceed 25 feet along the cork line or 33 feet along the lead line. Two skimmer nets with a frame size not more than 16 feet measured horizontally or 12 feet measured vertically or 20 feet measured diagonally.

Rocky Decharo stated that fishermen have been bringing this up, a lot of this catch is not being reported, concern about what is being killed, we close brown shrimp season to let white shrimp grow and these guys are continuing to fish, when it closes for the brown shrimp season it should close for everybody, who is checking these guys out

Acy Cooper stated that there is an issue when they are pulling the same skimmers shrimp fishermen are pulling and in the same areas but the season is closed this is an issue

Peyton Cagle stated that the sunset if it goes away would take away the tow time, the rule for bait permit requires that fishermen call enforcement and report the area they are fishing in when they go out and again when they come in

Acy Cooper stated that during closed season they should use smaller rigs to minimize damage and when season is open use the larger rigs

Andrew Blanchard suggested leaving it like it is and do not allow the sunset to expire

LDWF is not taking a stance it was an issue within one sector of the industry, can look at data and it doesn’t show that the number of vessels operating

Alan Gibson motioned to let the sunset lapse on the Special Bait Dealer’s Permit at this time and go back to the previous regulations, 2nd by Rodney Olander. Motion carries.

1. The task force discussed LDWF’s enforcement of TEDs in skimmers

Acy Cooper stated that the task force was lied to that they would be pulled off of the Monteray Bay red list if they enforced Teds and that did not happen. Partially removed from redlist but skimmers are not removed, how does LDWF feel about not enforcing TEDs? know there is funding that goes to enforcement to enforce this

Patrick Banks stated that as a department we are not allowed to fight for or against legislation, TEDs enforcement funds are not strictly for state waters, some segments of the inshore fishery that would fall under this, there is one lump sum to enforce the federal fisheries laws so it’s hard to determine how much funding would be lost; may affect the shrimp certification, not mandated to enforce in state waters

F. Sam Carrol played the Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board commercial, suggested redoing the commercial to coincide with message of new WWL commercial

Barry Rogers stated that first off you need a law to prosecute someone for selling shrimp with the wrong label of origin you have to enforce and prosecute it

Thomas Olander suggested looking into hiring a top name chef bring them on a boat and video catch, process and have chef prepare on boat with catch

Kristen Baumer stated that the messaging is missing the need to tell consumer why they need to ask, potential health issues

Lance Nacio stated that filming with Emeril; 95% of the shrimp is imported and farm raised, all about promoting LA seafood and will be shown on ROKU TV

Rodney Olander suggested maybe include a dock and processors in the commercial as well

G. The task force considered funding to hire a lobbyist firm, Adams and Reese, LLP

Rodney Olander motioned to move forward with a contract to hire Adams and Reese as the new firm representing the Shrimp Task Force, would like to mirror all of the same terms and same payment/payment schedule as the original contract with American Strategic Partners, 2nd by Andrew Blanchard. Motion carries.

Jason Froeba stated that there may be some ability to backdate contracts to some extent, possibility of a July 1 start date, need OSP’s approval

Acy Cooper suggested a start date of August 1, 2023

H. The task force heard an update on the STF meeting with the Governor’s office

Acy Cooper stated that they did have a meeting with the Governor’s office but it was a 3rd party meeting and not a full task force meeting, the meeting included Alan Gibson,Acy Cooper, Parish President of St. Bernard, Dean Blanchard, still haven’t heard back yet, one issue when we met with the Governor; TF was told that the Governor was never made aware that the task force had been trying to have a meeting with him

Alan Gibson concern that they could not get a meeting for so long, overall a good meeting

Acy Cooper stated that this is the Governor’s task force and we are the eyes and ears on the ground and if the Governor is not going to listen then what is the point

Thomas Olander asked why has there not been a state of emergency declared for the shrimp industry? How can this be done, similar to what was done in Texas.

Patrick Banks stated that he will need to get more information on this and look into it and can get back to the task force

I. The task force discussed the funding for LDH shrimp testing program

Jennifer Armentor of LDH stated that she has been working diligently; have started working on Senator Mills’ House Concurrent Resolution No.134 that creates the Imported Seafood Safety Task Force, drafted letter and the tentative date of the first meeting is August 23rd; on the retail side regarding the restaurant menu posting of shrimp label of origin this violation has been changed in the sanitary code from a non-critical to a critical violation and a memo has been sent out and retail inspectors have received new guidance on this

Lance Nacio stated that one of that gaps we have in this law is for instance the Westwego Market issues with selling under local seafood and its imports; it’s a gray area in the law that needs to be addressed

Jennifer Armentor stated that LDH is aware of the funding the Shrimp Task Force has dedicated to LDH to shrimp testing but do not have the $50K in hand yet, Rep Kerner passed a law that collects a $100 seafood fee so have been testing from this funding, distributers who carry imported seafood have to pay this fee. 58 establishments that do this using this funding for the last year now, testing for 3 antibiotics can check if current lab can do the testing and what the pricing would be

Alan Gibson stated that would like increased testing closer to what is being done at the European Union testing around 32 instead of 3

The task force agreed to provide a list to LDH of what increased testing is needed so the lab can confirm whether or not this can be done and the associated costs

The task force asked that a report of all findings from the shrimp sampling be emailed to the task force as well as an in-person update at the task force meetings

Lance Nacio Alabama has a program where they invite the consumer to go to a restaurant and when they are eating shrimp take a picture of the menu and bring samples of shrimp home and freeze it and mail it in and they are doing DNA testing to check country of origin, consulting firm out of Alabama

Brian Warren is Justin Gremillion’s replacement and in the future he may be assigned to the STF at some point to fill the LDH seat

**V.** Public Comment

Brian Lezina from CPRA stated that money for stewardship measures to address issues right now that the shrimp industry is facing, will work with Director Carrol, hope with this amount of funding to reach a little bit of larger audience than just the State of Louisiana, this is for the fishermen and the fishery, 5-7 years off to see any actual operations from this, do have money on hand for outreach and marketing; the Governor’s office and CPRA move forward with some of the funding to address issues that the industry is facing, hoping to get a commitment from the task force to provide input on where some of these funds should be spent, looking how CPRA can move things quickly with contracts that are already on hand, the intent of the money was to address impacts of diversion in Barataria bay this should be for the shrimp industry

Jason Froeba stated that the 2019 disaste funding is on a day to day notice at this point, it’s going through the system/ process and are hoping the money should be in hand any day now, once received will start public meetings and will present the program and all of the information to the task forces

Barry Rogers closed season violations, would like some feedback from enforcement, is the drone being used, small fine not enough teeth in the law

**VI.** Next meeting set for Wednesday, October 11, 2023 for 10am in Houma

**VII.** Rodney Olander motioned to adjourn, 2nd by Alan Gibson. Motion carries.