

**Crab Task Force Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, January 20, 2026 10:00am  
Terrebonne Parish Main Library  
151 Library Drive  
Houma, LA 70360**

**I. Pledge of Allegiance**

**II. Call to order**

**III. Roll call**

**Voting Members Present:**

Edward Frekey  
Laquita Meek  
Joey Edgar  
George Jackson  
Rodney Parfait  
Sheb Callahan  
Chalin Delaune

**Voting Members Absent:**

Britney Breaux  
Trudy Luke  
Dannon Lacoste  
Al Cassagne  
Eric Blanchard

**Non-Voting Members Present:**

Konner Lockfield  
Jack Isaacs

**Non-Voting Members Absent:**

Melissa Daigle

**IV.** Chalin Delaune motioned to approve the October 28, 2025 meeting minutes, 2<sup>nd</sup> by George Jackson. Motion carries.

**V.** George Jackson motioned to approve the January 20, 2026 meeting agenda, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Chalin Delaune. Motion carries.

**VI. Financial Report**

Remaining Fund Balance- \$37,968  
Remaining Budget Balance- \$37,968

George Jackson motioned to approve the financial report as presented, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Chalin Delaune. Motion carries.

## **VII. New Business**

### **A. To Discuss Issues with Dealing with the Crab Professionalism Program and Fees Charged by Docks**

Laquita Meek stated that she spoke with a young lady who said that she could not get the dock to sign-off on her completion for the crab professionalism program without paying \$3,000.00. Laquita Meek stated that there has also been 3 or 4 other participants who have had issues with completing the program because they get halfway through the program and have to find a new sponsor. Laquita Meek stated that some docks are refusing to give the fishermen copies of trip tickets. Laquita Meek stated that some fishermen do not want to sponsor other fishermen and some fishermen have issues with finding sponsors.

Joey Edgar stated that the market is completely different and some people will help certain people and some won't. Joey Edgar stated that he was not aware that some people were charging for the program.

Jason Froeba stated that dealers are required by law to provide fishermen a copy of their trip ticket at the time of the transaction and they should not be charging for the trip tickets. Jason Froeba stated that the department cannot require a fisherman to sponsor another fishermen. Jason Froeba stated that people are willing to sponsor for free but some people want to charge a fee for the sponsorship. Jason Froeba stated that he is awaiting a response from LDWF general counsel regarding the issue and to request clarification. Jason Froeba stated that he is unsure how to prevent sponsors from charging fees without changing the rules of the program or without eliminating the program requirement.

Laquita Meek stated that the program requirement is not necessary and many crab fishermen are already aware of fishing regulations.

Jason Froeba stated that oyster fishermen have a similar training requirement that they must complete every 3 years even if they are familiar with the regulations.

Laquita Meek stated that there were several applicants who were half-way through the program that she helped find another sponsor.

Jason Froeba stated that he will look into making adjustments so that people can switch while they are enrolled in the program.

Laquita Meek motioned to end the crab professionalism program. Motion opposed.

Joey Edgar stated that the program should not be terminated because people should have a chance to get a license.

Laquita Meek stated that people could get the license without the requirement of the program.

Joey Edgar stated that it would not be feasible for just anyone to purchase the license. Joey Edgar stated that the right people should be getting the license.

Laquita Meek asked who the right people are because there are people now who are stealing and have never been arrested.

Edward Frekey stated that a change could be made to the program that states that sponsors are not allowed to charge applicants for the program.

Jason Frobea stated that the program could be amended to require no fees for the program but he stated that he would have to confirm that with LDWF general council.

Edward Frekey stated that the item should be tabled until additional guidance is received from LDWF general council.

**B. To Receive Feedback on Gear and License Information Requested by the Crab Task Force at Their Previous Meeting on October 28, 2025**

Konner Lockfield presented the information below to the task force regarding the out-of-state wholesale/retail dealer licenses, license fees, and mandatory VMS. Konner Lockfield stated that the number of out-of-state wholesale license sales has increased from 2021-2025. Konner Lockfield stated there were only 2 wholesale dealers with out-of-state licenses that purchased crabs. Konner Lockfield stated that if there are secondary crab sales from out-of-state the information would not be captured on LDWF trip tickets. Konner Lockfield stated that Louisiana resident licenses for crabbing are around \$192 and non-resident licenses are around \$1,200. Konner Lockfield stated that Alabama and Mississippi had similar fees with Texas having the highest non-resident fees. Konner Lockfield stated that there was a slight decrease in active licenses. Konner Lockfield stated that the average from 2000-2018 was 34.3% and the number of active licenses in 2025 was 31.6%. Konner Lockfield stated that requiring the gear license at the point of sale could be changed in Title 76. Konner Lockfield stated that the gear license could only be added to electronic trip tickets and paper trip tickets cannot be changed to add the gear license. Konner Lockfield stated that if the gear license is added to trip tickets it would not only affect the crab fishery but all other fisheries.

| License Sales                        |        |        |        |        |        |
|--------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Crab Trap licenses                   |        |        |        |        |        |
| Year                                 | 2025   | 2024   | 2023   | 2022   | 2021   |
| Resident                             | 2361   | 2427   | 2511   | 2561   | 2399   |
| Non-Resident                         | 34     | 36     | 39     | 41     | 41     |
| % Non-Res                            | 1.42%  | 1.46%  | 1.53%  | 1.58%  | 1.68%  |
|                                      |        |        |        |        |        |
| Wholesale/Retail License Sales       |        |        |        |        |        |
| Year                                 | 2025   | 2024   | 2023   | 2022   | 2021   |
| Wholesale/Retail Resident            | 1750   | 1809   | 2030   | 2189   | 1668   |
| Wholesale/Retail Non-Resident        | 1179   | 1111   | 1065   | 966    | 232    |
| Wholesale/Retail 4 year Resident     | 3      | 3      | 6      | 13     | 7      |
| Wholesale/Retail 4 year Non-Resident | 14     | 1      | 1      | 39     | 20     |
| Total Resident                       | 1753   | 1812   | 2036   | 2202   | 1675   |
| Total Non-Resident                   | 1193   | 1112   | 1066   | 1005   | 252    |
| % Non-Res                            | 40.50% | 38.03% | 34.36% | 31.34% | 13.08% |

## Dealers Purchasing Crabs

| Wholesale/Retail Purchased Crabs            |       |       |       |       |       |
|---------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Year                                        | 2025  | 2024  | 2023  | 2022  | 2021  |
| Wholesale/Retail Resident                   | 208   | 198   | 199   | 210   | 231   |
| Wholesale/Retail Non-Resident               | 2     | 3     | 0     | 3     | 2     |
| % Non-Res                                   | 0.95% | 1.49% | 0.00% | 1.41% | 0.86% |
| Wholesale/Retail Purchased Crabs from Traps |       |       |       |       |       |
| Year                                        | 2025  | 2024  | 2023  | 2022  | 2021  |
| Resident                                    | 204   | 191   | 194   | 203   | 223   |
| Non-Resident                                | 2     | 3     | 0     | 3     | 2     |
| % Non-Res                                   | 0.97% | 1.55% | 0.00% | 1.46% | 0.89% |

## License Fee Structures (2024)

### Louisiana

- Commercial Fisherman License
  - Resident - \$96
  - Non-Resident - \$620
- Vessel License
  - Resident - \$50
  - Non-Resident - \$400
- Gear License
  - Resident - \$50
  - Non-Resident - \$200

### Other Gulf States

- Alabama - Crab Catcher License
  - Resident - \$66
  - Non-Resident varies by state: Louisiana - \$724
- Mississippi - Crab License attached to vessel
  - Resident - \$75
  - Non-Resident varies by state: Louisiana - \$1,220
- Texas (Capped) - Commercial Crab License
  - Resident - \$630
  - Non-Resident - \$2,520
- Florida (Apprenticeship) - Endorsement, Products, & Vessel
  - Resident - \$125, \$50, \$100
  - Non-Resident - \$125, \$200, \$400

## Active Gear Licenses

| Year              | Resident Commercial Crab Trap License | Non-Resident Commercial Crab Trap License | Number of Fishers Reporting BC Landings | Active Licenses |
|-------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-----------------|
| 2000              | 3561                                  | 40                                        | 2218                                    | 38.1%           |
| 2001              | 3228                                  | 58                                        | 2210                                    | 40.2%           |
| 2002              | 3342                                  | 63                                        | 2031                                    | 37.4%           |
| 2003              | 3386                                  | 51                                        | 2016                                    | 37.0%           |
| 2004              | 3421                                  | 57                                        | 1823                                    | 34.4%           |
| 2005              | 2996                                  | 32                                        | 1494                                    | 33.0%           |
| 2006              | 3230                                  | 60                                        | 1349                                    | 29.1%           |
| 2007              | 3125                                  | 52                                        | 1406                                    | 30.7%           |
| 2008              | 3006                                  | 52                                        | 1421                                    | 31.7%           |
| 2009              | 3107                                  | 51                                        | 1496                                    | 32.1%           |
| 2010              | 3523                                  | 78                                        | 1710                                    | 32.2%           |
| 2011              | 3632                                  | 85                                        | 1837                                    | 33.1%           |
| 2012              | 3397                                  | 63                                        | 1678                                    | 32.7%           |
| 2013              | 3225                                  | 55                                        | 1573                                    | 32.4%           |
| 2014              | 3304                                  | 78                                        | 1707                                    | 33.5%           |
| 2015              | 2744                                  | 47                                        | 1589                                    | 36.3%           |
| 2016              | 2659                                  | 50                                        | 1515                                    | 35.9%           |
| 2017              | 2551                                  | 46                                        | 1457                                    | 35.9%           |
| 2018              | 2477                                  | 47                                        | 1426                                    | 36.1%           |
| Average 2000-2018 |                                       |                                           |                                         | 34.3%           |
| 2021              | 2399                                  | 41                                        | 1245                                    | 33.8%           |
| 2022              | 2561                                  | 41                                        | 1280                                    | 33.0%           |
| 2023              | 2511                                  | 39                                        | 1270                                    | 33.2%           |
| 2024              | 2427                                  | 36                                        | 1196                                    | 32.7%           |
| 2025              | 2361                                  | 34                                        | 1107                                    | 31.6%           |

## Requiring Proof of Crab Trap Gear License at Sale

- Could be changed in LAC 76:VII.201.D (Fisherman responsibility to provide gear license) and/or LAC 76:VII.201.E (Dealer's responsibility to collect information).
- Trip Tickets will be electronic in the near future and a field would need to be added.
- Currently, paper Trip Tickets cannot be changed and are no longer being produced.
- Unintended consequences to other fisheries (all fisheries would be required to show gear license).
- Crabs can be harvested legally using other gear. Illegally harvested crabs would still need to be reported to Enforcement. This potential change may bring illegal fishing activity to the dealer's attention.

## Mandatory VMS

- This is already in law, upon conviction:
  - Individual's gear license will be suspended
    - ✦ Duration depends on # of convictions.
  - VMS required on any vessel they are harvesting crabs on during their suspension.
- Potential changes to Legislation:
  - Possibly change to "upon violation," but no due process.
  - Possibly change gear license to commercial license, but still would need a conviction.

### C. To Hear an Update on the 1<sup>st</sup> Surveillance Audit for the Current Louisiana Blue Crab MSC Certification and Consideration of Options

Konner Lockfield presented the information below to the task force regarding the Surveillance Audit for the current Louisiana blue crab MSC Certification. Konner Lockfield stated that the certification was completed in March 2024 and is valid until March 2029. Konner Lockfield stated that the surveillance audit began in September 2025 and the report was finalized in December 2025. Konner Lockfield stated that there were three conditions to in the surveillance audit. Konner Lockfield stated that the first principle was a sustainable target for fish stocks with no new conditions. Konner Lockfield stated that the second principle to evaluate the fishery was environmental impact of fishing. Konner Lockfield stated that there were no significant changes to area, gear, regulations, or operations. Konner Lockfield stated that the Crab Task Force needs to provide evidence the fishery is highly likely not to hinder diamondback terrapin (DBT) recovery. Konner Lockfield stated that the third principle is the management of the fishery that requires use of the resources to be responsible and sustainable. Konner Lockfield stated that the fishery is subject to an occasional external review by a qualified entity. Konner Lockfield stated that there is a current client action plan to address the first two conditions for DBT events. Konner Lockfield stated that one milestone in the second surveillance audit would require evidence showing a discussion on an occasional external review was initiated. Konner Lockfield stated there were recommendations from the audit but they would not hold back the current certification. Konner Lockfield stated that option for the CTF would include addressing two conditions that are

currently relying on research from Nicholls State and an external review would address a third conditions.

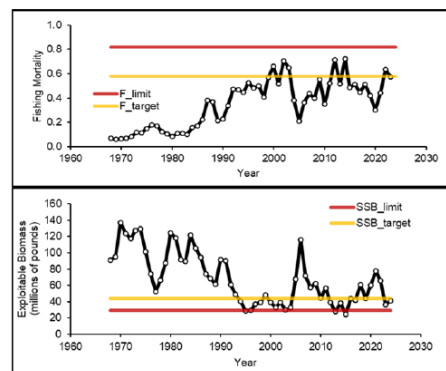
## Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) Certification

- Certification in March 2024
- In accordance with MSC's Principles and Criteria for Sustainable Fishing, the Louisiana blue crab fishery is a "Well Managed and Sustainable Fishery"
- MSC certified until March 2029
  - Surveillance audit conducted each year



## Principle 1: Sustainable target fish stocks

- A fishery must be conducted in a manner that does not lead to over-fishing or depletion of the exploited populations, and for those populations that are depleted, the fishery must be conducted in a manner that demonstrably leads to their recovery.
- Principal 1 Summary:
  - Louisiana blue crab stock is not overfished nor is overfishing occurring.
  - No new conditions are warranted.



## Principle 2: Environmental impact of fishing

- Fishing operations should allow for the maintenance of the structure, productivity, function, and diversity of the ecosystem (including habitat and associated dependent and ecologically related species) on which the fishery depends.
- Principle 2 Summary:
  - No significant changes to the fishery area, gear, regulations, or operation.
  - Existing Conditions:
    - ✦ Performance Indicator (PI) 2.3.1 – Provide evidence the fishery is highly likely not to hinder DBT recovery.
    - ✦ PI 2.3.2 - Provide evidence that a strategy is in place to ensure fishery is not hindering DBT recovery, the strategy will work, the strategy is being implemented successfully, and the strategy undergoes regular review.

### Condition PI 2.3.1

- Provide evidence the fishery is highly likely not to hinder DBT recovery.
- Year 1 Milestone is on target as research efforts have progressed to determine the impact of blue crab fishery on DBT.
  - Work initiated by Nicholls State to study the effectiveness of bycatch reduction devices (BRD) on blue crab traps, and associated mortality.
- Year 2 Milestone:
  - Work in progress to estimate effects.

### Condition PI 2.3.2

- Provide evidence that a strategy is in place to ensure fishery is not hindering DBT recovery, strategy will work, is being implemented successfully, and undergoes regular review.
- Year 1 Milestone is behind target as no evidence was provided that “Work commenced towards putting a strategy in place expected to ensure fishery does not hinder the recovery of DBTs” and “There is an objective basis for confidence that the measures/strategy will work, based on information directly about the fishery and/or species involved.”
  - Some progress by Nicholls State and the DCTR program data, but no change from certification.
- Year 2 Milestone
  - Provide evidence that work continues towards implementing a strategy with an object basis for confidence and success.

## Principle 3: Effective management

- The fishery is subject to an effective management system that respects local, national, and international laws and standards, and incorporates institutional and operational frameworks that require use of the resource to be responsible and sustainable.
- Principle 3 Summary:
  - Meets the majority of requirements of effective management.
  - One new condition raised:
    - ✦ PI 3.2.4 – The Louisiana blue crab fishery's management system is subject to an occasional external review by qualified entity.

## Condition PI 3.2.4

- The Louisiana blue crab fishery's management system is subject to an occasional external review by qualified entity.
- Qualified entity:
  - Another government department
  - Another agency within the country
  - Government audit
  - National or international peer organization
  - External expert reviewers.

## Client Action Plan - Condition PI 3.2.4

- Year 1 milestone = 2nd surveillance audit (2026)
  - Provide evidence showing discussion on how LDWF/LCTF will initiate an occasional external review of the Louisiana blue crab fishery management system.
- Year 2 milestone = 3rd audit (2027)
  - Provide evidence how the external review will be undertaken, by whom, and by what timeline.
- Year 3 milestone = 4th audit (2028)
  - Provide progress report that external review has commenced. Identify issues that may impact progress of the external review and what steps will be taken to ensure completion by 4th audit.
- Year 4 milestone = Audit at reassessment (2029)
  - Provide evidence that external review of the Louisiana blue crab fishery's management system has been completed.

## Recommendations from Audit

- **Further Review of Unauthorized Fishing of Blue Crab**
  - The audit team notices the LCTF concerns and recommends additional examination of unauthorized fishing.
- **Up-to-date bycatch data**
  - Although minimal bycatch in the fishery, updated data is recommended.
- **PI 2.3.3 to be rescored next audit**
  - Related to DBT populations and interactions with the fishery.

## Crab Task Force Potential Options

- **Condition PI 2.3.1 – The fishery's direct effect on DBT**
  - Condition is on target, but relying on Nicholls State University research on DBT mortality estimates associated with crab traps.
  - Fund or encourage research for population data.
- **Condition PI 2.3.2 – A strategy to ensure fishery does not hinder DBT.**
  - Condition is behind target and measures are needed.
  - Provide BRDs (Combined with Nicholls State University research).
  - Fund or encourage research for population data.
- **Condition PI 3.2.4 – Fishery management system occasional external review.**
  - Hire a qualified entity to review components of the fishery management system.
    - ✦ Shrimp and Oyster fisheries management external review was completed in 2023 by Teleost Environmental, LLC.
    - ✦ Proposed costs were between \$8,985 - \$12,305.
    - ✦ Final cost was \$11,020 for both fisheries combined.

Edward Frekey mentioned that little progress will be made with the bycatch reduction devices.

Konner Lockfield stated that LDWF would continue to find out if anyone is doing any studies with population or mortality of DBT.

Laquita Meek stated that DBT will continue to be an issue.

Edward Frekey asked how much Nicholls would charge for the study.

Konner Lockfield stated that LDWF could determine the cost of the study from Nicholls.

Christian Winslow stated that LDWF could verify the information with the professor at Nicholls and provide the information to the task force sometime in July.

Konner Lockfield stated that the current studies have been relatively small. Konner Lockfield stated that they are only running round 15 traps a day and they are not getting population or mortality data.

Jack Isaacs asked what the bycatch reduction device does.

Konner Lockfield stated that the device prevents the turtle from getting into the traps. Konner Lockfield stated that the fishery and management review could be costly but stated that he could provide the task force with the exact cost if they move forward with the review.

Edward Frekey asked about the current study with Nicholls.

Konner Lockfield stated that the information is not negative or positive but there's no way to know how many turtles it is because the information is only on a trap level. Konner Lockfield stated that LDWF has data as well but the department is unable to determine how many turtles there are.

Edward Frekey motioned for the task force to hear back from Nicholls and requested the price of the external review, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Joey Edgar. Motion passes.

**D. To Hear an Update on Federal Fisheries Disaster Funding for the Equipment Grant Program and the Hurricane Assistance Program – LDWF**

Sonya Self stated that about 98% of all the funding has been expended for a little over 1,400 applicants. Sonya Self stated that there are only a few applications remaining in reviewed with 12 applicants that are under review. Sonya Self stated that the department is planning on possibly closing out the program in a couple of months but the department is waiting on some of the applicants to purchase the equipment submitted on quotes. Sonya Self stated that for the 2020-2021 hurricane disaster funding, the plan was submitted to NOAA back in June of 2024. Sonya Self stated that the department is currently waiting on NOAA and has not received the funding approval from NOAA but funding appropriation was for \$27 million for direct payments to commercial fishermen. Sonya Self stated that around 9,000 applicants would be eligible. Sonya Self stated that the department would send out an eligibility letter to all those applicants who are eligible but they would have to accept their award in the application portal. Sonya Self stated that applicants would have a certain amount of time to accept their award and then the department would close the program. Sonya Self stated that the remaining funding would be awarded to those who accepted the award and they will get a second payment.

**E. Officer Elections**

Laquita Meek motioned to keep the officers the same as last year, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Joey Edgar. Motion carries.

**VIII. Public Comment**

**IX. Set Next Meeting**

Next CTF meeting was set for Tuesday, March 24, 2026 for 10:00am in Houma at the Terrebonne Parish Main Library.

**X. Adjourn**

George Jackson motioned to adjourn the meeting, 2<sup>nd</sup> by all. None opposed. Motion carries.