

Shrimp Task Force Meeting Minutes
December 10, 2025
Terrebonne Parish Main Library
151 Library Drive
Houma, LA 70360

- I.** Pledge of Allegiance
- II.** Call to order

The meeting was called to order at 10:37am.

III. Roll call

Voting Members Present:

Rodney Olander
Andrew Blanchard
Acy Cooper
Lance Nacio

Voting Members Absent:

Randy Pearce
Alan Gibson
Jeff Drury
Phillip Tran
Kristen Baumer
Chalin Delaune

Non-Voting Members Present:

Bryan Wallace
Jack Isaacs
Konnor Lockfield
Gene Cavalier
Davis Madere

Non-Voting Members Absent:

- IV.** Acy Cooper motioned to approve the September 23, 2025 meeting minutes, 2nd by Andrew Blanchard. Motion carries.

- V.** Lance Nacio motioned to amend the agenda to add an item to discuss shrimp management and shrimp prices as Item G and move *Officer Election* to Item H, 2nd by Andrew Blanchard. Motion carries.

Lance Nacio approved the December 10, 2025 amended meeting agenda, 2nd by Andrew Blanchard. Motion carries.

VI. Federal Shrimp Permit Report

The board was presented with an updated copy of the Federal Shrimp Permit Report

VII. Financial Report

Remaining fund Balance - \$467,364

Remaining Budget Balance - \$90,201

Acy Cooper, Jr. motioned to approve the financial report as presented, 2nd by Lance Nacio. Motion Carries.

VIII. New Business

A. To Discuss LDWF Enforcement of TED Regulations

Davis Madere stated that he was unsure who added the item to the agenda but he believed it pertained to the 40-foot length vessels not requiring TEDs.

Acy Cooper, Jr. asked would TEDs be required on 40-foot vessels that fish in inside waters.

Davis Madere stated the state would not require TEDs but he would have to clarify that with the command staff and he would provide that information at the next task force meeting.

Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that the task force was informed that if the industry complied with TED regulations then the fishery would be removed from the red list but Louisiana Shrimp has not been removed from the red list. Acy Cooper, Jr. recommended ending the enforcement of TEDs by LDWF.

Davis Madere stated that enforcement would be neutral in the task force's recommendation. Davis Madere stated that if there is a joint force on the agreement with NOAA then LDWF is required to enforce the requirement.

Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that initially, LDWF was not required to enforce the regulation but the industry agreed for state enforcement in order to be removed from the red list. Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that he would recommend the enforcement by the federal agency like it was previously done.

Patrick Banks stated there was a previous law in which LDWF did not enforce TED laws on the inside waters. Patrick Banks stated that when the shrimp industry was going through seafood sustainability certification, LDWF notice that the Monterey Bay Aquarium was red-listing the shrimp fishery because of the lack of TEDs. Patrick Banks stated that the organization agree to take the industry off the red list if LDWF started enforcing TEDs in inside waters and the industry agreed and the legislation was changed. Patrick Banks stated that Monterey Bay Aquarium did not follow through with their word and ask it the task force was considering legislation were LDWF would not enforce TEDs in inside waters. Patrick Banks stated that if the task force recommends the regulation change then LDWF administration could take a stance on it as non-civil servants. Patrick Banks stated that previously TEDs were not required on 40-foot boats unless they had 1% of shrimp in there catch because that's when the federal law kicks in for a shrimp trawl. Patrick Banks stated that if enforcement encountered a vessel with greater than that 1% of shrimp and they didn't have a TED then they would be ticketed.

Davis Madere stated that LDWF has never had a case come up involving the 1% regulation.

Patrick Banks stated that LDWF was told by NOAA that if they encountered a shrimp vessel or a trawling vessel that was fishing for shrimp in federal water without a TED then they could not possess more than 1% of shrimp in their catch or it would be a violation of the federal TED law.

Andrew Blanchard stated that he spoke with LDWF administration and they stated that the department would start enforcing the TED laws on inside waters.

Davis Madere stated that around 2021 or 2022, the 40-foot inside rule came into effect and enforcement had a period in which they gave verbal warnings but did not write violations. Davis Madere stated that enforcement used that period to educate fishermen because they did not want to just jump in and start writing citations before they had a chance to educate the industry. Davis Madere stated that enforcement is now at the point where they will issue violations. Davis Madere stated that enforcement had a case in region 8 in which the fisherman was in inside waters with no TEDs. Davis Madere stated the enforcement tries to give as much leeway as possible if the TED measurements are somewhat off but they get questioned because the TEDs were not previously enforced. Davis Madere stated that LDWF is held to the joint enforcement agreement with NOAA but he will try to get more information about the enforcement of TEDs as well as the 1% regulation.

A member of the audience asked what LDWF enforcement's policy is if a fisherman has a 1-5 degree angle difference in the TED measurements. The audience member asked would enforcement seize the catch or just give a verbal warning.

Davis Madere stated that enforcement would issue a violation. Davis Madere stated that agents will use discretion as it relates to the degree angle and every situation is different. Davis Madere stated that as far as seizure of catch, he would get some additional information regarding that issue.

Acy Cooper, Jr. state that he received a \$5,000 fine for one of the bars that was cracked on his TED but they did not seize his catch.

Acy Cooper, Jr. made a motion for the task force to back legislation for LDWF not to enforce the TED rule in inside state waters, motion 2nd by Andrew Blanchard. Motion carries.

Rodney Olander stated that at the next task force meeting that a representative from NOAA be present to discuss the TED regulations. Rodney Olander asked for an update on the turtles because the task force has not received information regarding the number of required nesting sites.

Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that the lawyers are working to get some of the information and the issue is in district court but will be moving up the chain to federal court.

B. To Discuss an Ethics Opinion for Task Force Member Travel Reimbursement for Travel to Washington, DC

Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that at one of the meetings before the International Trade Commission, the task force voted to vote to send him to the International Trade Commission but the vote was not unanimous. Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that he attended to testify on anti-dumping and the task force was going to pay for the travel but then the travel reimbursement was not approved. Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that there was an issue of who should pay for the travel when he submitted his reimbursement. Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that he submitted an ethics appeal that was ruled in his favor.

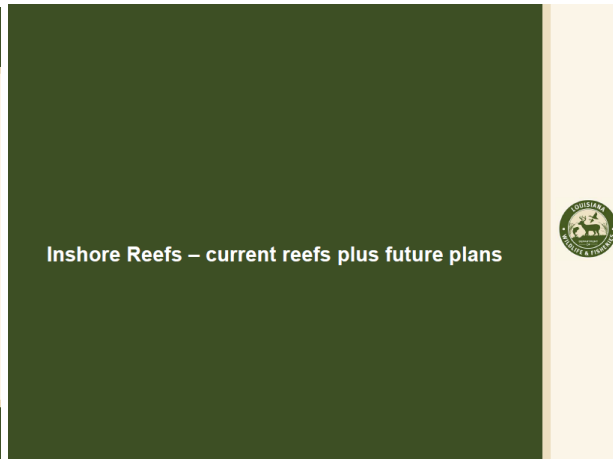
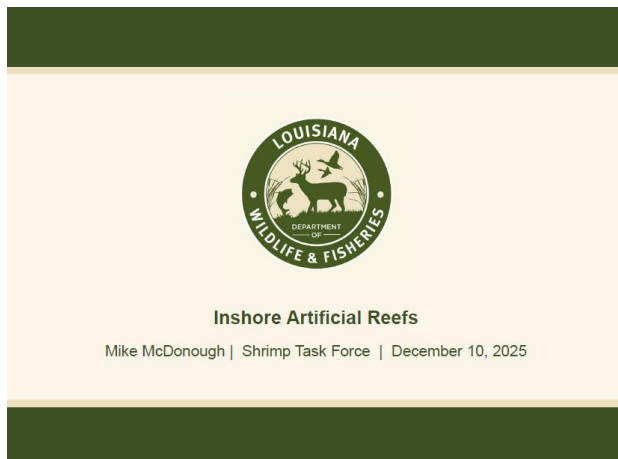
Rodney Olander asked Acy Cooper, Jr. if he was reimbursed for his travel.

Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that he did complete the paperwork and submitted it to LDWF.

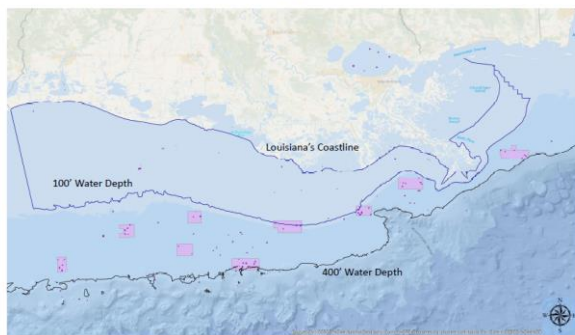
Patrick Banks stated that the department is currently processing the reimbursement to Acy Cooper, Jr. Patrick Banks stated that there were concerns regarding which organization he was representing and if it was the task force, the industry, or some larger group. Patrick Banks stated that the evidence from the ethics board cleared the issue and LDWF was moving forward with the reimbursement.

C. To Hear a Presentation on Current Inshore Reef Projects and Plans for the Current Fiscal Year

Mike McDonough with LDWF presented information on the current reef projected and future planned reefs.

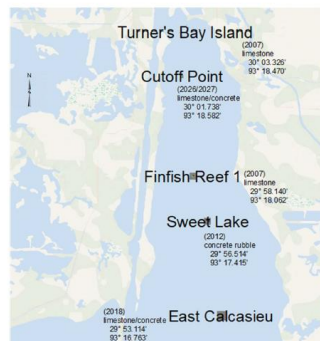


Louisiana Artificial Reef Program



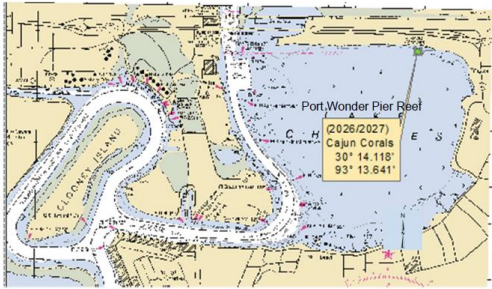
Inshore Artificial Reefs

Louisiana Artificial Reef Program



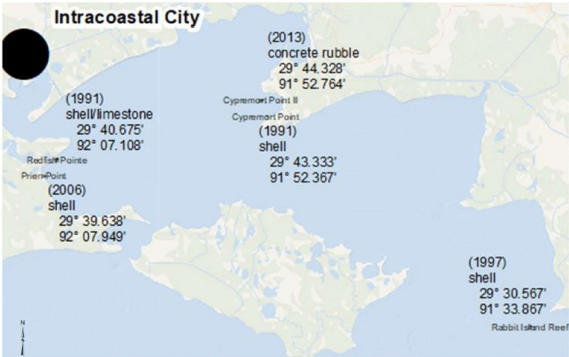
Inshore reefs – Calcasieu Lake

Louisiana Artificial Reef Program



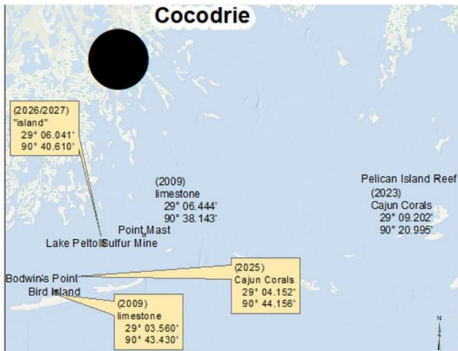
Inshore reefs – Lake Charles

Louisiana Artificial Reef Program



Inshore reefs – Vermilion Bay

Louisiana Artificial Reef Program



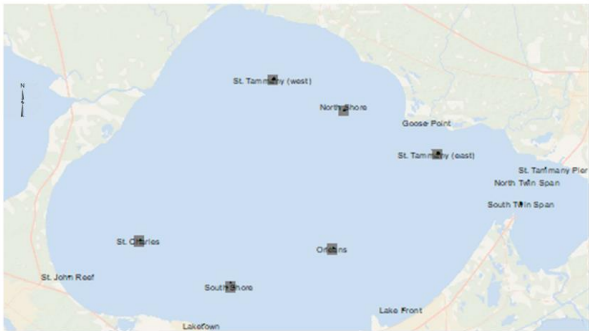
Inshore reefs – Timbalier Bay

Louisiana Artificial Reef Program



Inshore reefs – Barataria Bay

Louisiana Artificial Reef Program



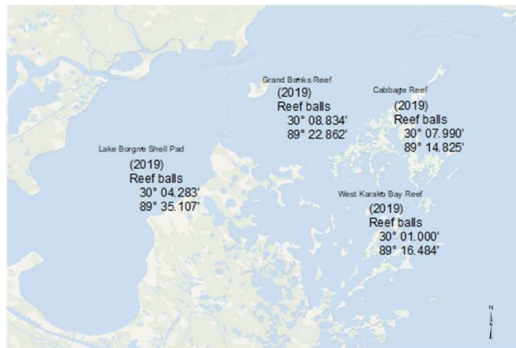
Inshore reefs – Lake Pontchartrain

Louisiana Artificial Reef Program

Reef Site Name	Latitude	Longitude	Material	Year
North Shore	30° 16.296'	90° 03.753'	Reef Balls	2004
South Shore	30° 05.034'	90° 12.582'	Reef Balls	2003
St. Charles	30° 08.077'	90° 19.048'	Reef Balls	2009
St. Tammany (east)	30° 13.456'	89° 56.838'	Reef Balls	2009
St. Tammany (west)	30° 18.348'	90° 09.000'	Reef Balls	2009
South Shore	30° 05.274'	90° 11.336'	Reef Balls	2003
South Shore	30° 05.028'	90° 12.096'	Reef Balls	2003
Lake Front	30° 03.521'	89° 59.608'	Limestone	2001
North Twin Span	30° 11.618'	89° 50.219'	Bridge Rubble	2012
South Twin Span	30° 10.169'	89° 50.744'	Bridge Rubble	2010
Orleans	30° 07.455'	90° 04.703'	Reef Balls	2009
St. Tammany Pier	30° 12.408'	89° 48.961'	Bridge Rubble	2013
Laketown	30° 02.633'	90° 14.362'	Limestone	2014
St. John Reef	30° 05.832'	90° 24.276'	Limestone	2018
West End Pier	30° 01.849'	90° 07.227'	Limestone/concrete	2019
Goose Point	30° 15.265'	89° 57.939'	concrete	2026

Inshore reefs – Lake Pontchartrain

Louisiana Artificial Reef Program



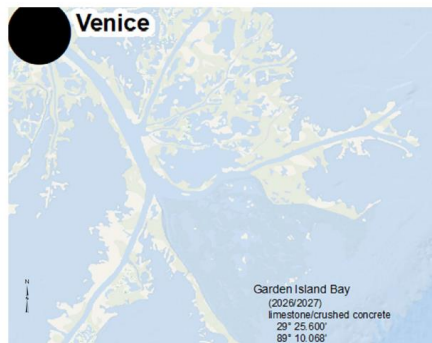
Inshore reefs – Lake Borgne

Louisiana Artificial Reef Program

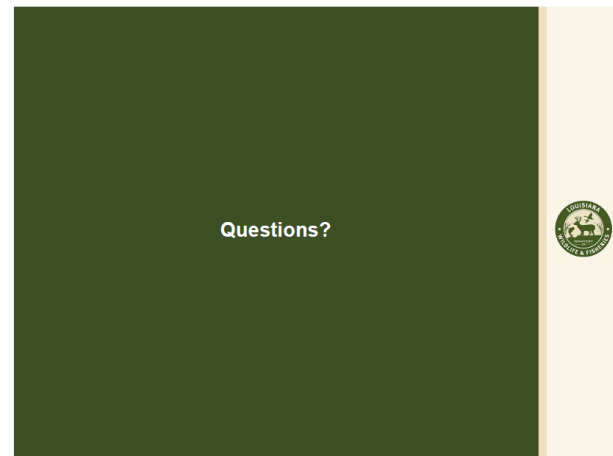


Inshore reefs – North of Venice

Louisiana Artificial Reef Program



Inshore reefs – South of Venice



Mike McDonough stated that there are currently 35 sites in which some of them have been enhanced and they extend from Calcasieu Lake to the Breton Sound/Main Pass area. Mike McDonough stated that there are four existing reef sites in Calcasieu which include Turner's Bay Island (constructed in 2007), Finfish Reef 1 (constructed in 2007), Sweet Lake (constructed in 2012), and East Calcasieu (constructed in 2018). Mike McDonough stated that LDWF is planning to complete one new reef within the next couple of years near Cutoff point which will be a low-profile reef constructed with limestone or crushed concrete. Mike McDonough stated that the department has the reef sites in decimal minutes format because of the defaults for most GPS units.

Acy Cooper, Jr. asked if the reefs are marked.

Mike McDonough stated that the reefs are not marked with buoys but the department works with the Coast Guard to verify if one is needed.

Acy Cooper, Jr. asked who approved the reefs.

Mike McDonough stated that the department gets permits from the Board of Engineers, consistency from the Department of Health and DNR approves the reefs. Mike McDonough stated that the department also works with the Coast Guard and National Ocean Service for reef approval.

Acy Cooper, Jr. asked if there was a comment period for fishermen on the approval.

Rodney Olander asked who selects the reef sites.

Mike McDonough stated that the department receives requests from the public for projects and determine the feasibility then receive approval of the permit from DNR.

Lance Nacio asked what a fisherman can do if he damages or destroys his vessel in the shallow water on a reef and who is held accountable.

Mike McDonough stated that the department would be liable because the department owns all of the artificial reefs.

Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that at one point there were no inshore reefs.

Mike McDonough stated that there have been inshore reefs since 1991. Mike McDonough stated that most of the reefs are constructed from crushed concrete.

Rodney Olander asked how high are the reef from the water bottom and what is the average size are the reefs.

Mike McDonough stated that the height depends on the area and some of the reef in Calcasieu are about an acre or more. Mike McDonough stated that the information published from the navigational charts provides the proper size of the reefs.

Rodney Olander asked how many artificial reef projects are planned in the next 12 months.

Mike McDonough stated that the department plans on constructing about 5 reefs within the next 12 months.

Rodney Olander asked when would be department provide the information for the planned reef sites.

Mike McDonough stated that the department is working to convert GPS information and would issue a press release to inform the public.

Rodney Olander stated that he would like to see more input from the commercial fishing side for the reef approvals.

Patrick Banks stated that the information for the reef sites is available on LDWF's website.

Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that the problem is putting reef in effort areas and not all fishermen are aware of the information.

Cheri Blanchard asked what the clearance above the reef is.

Mike McDonough stated that the clearance is 6 feet and has been a rule of thumb for a very long time. Mike McDonough stated that each project has to apply for a permit, propose a clearance, and get approval from the Coast Guard.

Cheri Blanchard stated that her concern is that the coordinates are not accurate for the sites.

Mike McDonough stated that the site coordinates are accurate and that the primary source of the information are the navigational charts.

Jack Isaacs asked if there have been instances in which vessels were damaged from the reefs.

Mike McDonough stated that he is not aware of any damaged vessels.

Cheri Blanchard stated that she is aware of two vessels that were damaged by reefs. Cheri Blanchard stated that the fisherman may not have anyone to contact regarding their damaged vessels.

Mike McDonough stated that the department has a museum in Lake Charles at the Port Wonder site and there is also a fishing pier associated with the museum in which the department is planning an artificial reef site. Mike McDonough stated that there are five existing reefs in Vermillion Bay. Mike McDonough stated that one of the initial inshore reefs was constructed in 1991 for the redfish farm and it was constructed from shell. Mike McDonough stated that there are four existing reefs in Timbalier Bay with two new ones planned for construction. Mike McDonough stated that the Lake Pelto Sulfur Mine has been decommissioned and the owner agreed to degrade the shoreline material to 6 feet of clearance to serve as a reef site and that will happen sometime in the next two years. Mike McDonough stated that there are four existing sites in Barataria Bay and the department has plans to build a new reef in Caminada within the next two years. Mike McDonough stated that there are a large number of sites in Lake Pontchartrain with 12 existing sites but there are no additional planned sites. Mike McDonough stated that the reef sites in Lake Pontchartrain were constructed from reef balls, bridge rubble, limestone, and crushed concrete. Mike McDonough stated that there are four reefs in Lake Borgne. Mike McDonough stated that north of Venice there is one of the reefs that was built in 2012 using concrete from the demolished school. Mike McDonough stated that there is a planned reef site south of Venice that will be built with low-profile material.

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

Sonya Self stated that the total program funding for the equipment grant program under the 2019 Flood Disaster Grant was about \$40.2 million because of an additional \$2 million that was added to the funding. Sonya Self stated that about 97.8% 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 review with 17 applicants that are under review and 25 applicants that are approved for payment. Sonya Self stated that \$39.3 million has been awarded.

Acy Cooper, Jr. asked if there was still funding for the applicants that were approved.

Sonya Self stated that there is \$865,000 left which is about 2.2% of the total funding. 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 the spend plan for the hurricane disaster funding was submitted to NOAA in June of last year and the spend plan was for direct payments to applicants. Sonya Self stated that the department would review license status to verify current licenses and trip tickets.

Rodney Olander asked if the department is currently working on the program. Sonya Self stated that the department is currently working on the application portal for application to apply for the program but with the program applicants will be pre-selected.

Rodney Olander asked if the fishermen would have to do anything and can the department pull the records. Rodney Olander asked how much funding was available for the program.

Sonya Self stated that \$27 million is available for the program.

Rodney Olander asked how much of the funding would go directly to fishermen.

Sonya Self stated that \$24.3 million would be used for direct payments to fishermen.

Rodney Olander asked if the department would be making payments based on certified and non-certified.

Sonya Self stated that there will be a base payment and two other different tiers. Sonya Self stated that under the loss tier, fisherman will receive a payment for losses and there will be a revenue tier for fishermen who earned revenue during the qualifying years.

Rodney Olander asked what is the time frame that fisherman can expect to see funding.

Sonya Self stated that the department is currently waiting on NOAA and has not received the funding approval from NOAA. Sonya Self stated that the department has received the funding appropriation but the spend plan has not been approved by NOAA.

Rodney Olander asked how many applicants would be eligible for the funding.

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.

Rodney Olander stated that there were only 1,400 applicants in the equipment program and asked how 9,000 applicants would be eligible for the hurricane program.

Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that 9,000 applicants would be eligible because they held the license.

Rodney Olander stated that's why he asked about the certified versus those who just have the license.

Sonya Self stated that is why the department added the loss and revenue payments.

Rodney Olander stated that the hurricanes were in 2002 and 2021 and it's already been 5 years.

Patrick Banks stated that it took about that long to approve the plan for the flood disaster funding and the COVID money delayed the flood disaster funding.

Acy Cooper, Jr. asked if there was something done to streamline the process.

Patrick Banks stated that there was supposed to be some federal legislation but the department has not received any information.

E. To Hear a Presentation on the LSU Ag Center and Sea Grant Seafood Processing Demonstration Lab

Thomas Hymel stated that the LSU Ag Center and Sea Grant have a seafood processing demonstration lab at the Iberia Research Station. Thomas Hymel stated that they are an economic development university and they have some innovative projects underway. Thomas Hymel stated that they also have a direct marketing program with Delcambre that is spread across the state. Thomas Hymel stated that they have helped Delcambre set up their seafood and farmer's market. Thomas Hymel stated that the seafood qualitative training lab is all about enhancing, increasing, and teaching how to get better quality fresh shrimp and better quality frozen shrimp. Thomas Hymel stated that they got into helping mom-and-pop business and big businesses do different things with seafood that what was done in the past. Thomas Hymel stated that they have helped fisherman get their product out into the marketplace and create value added products. Thomas Hymel stated that they needed a place to be able to do more training and several years ago they were able to convert an old beef laboratory at the Iberia station into a seafood processing demo lab. Thomas Hymel stated the lab has a classroom and they offer field days. Thomas Hymel stated that one of uncommon fish is the buffalo and the lab has a machine that removes the bones and turns the fish into buffalo mince that can be used for tacos, enchiladas or meatballs. Thomas Hymel stated that the lab experiments on a number of different species to come up with useful products. Thomas Hymel stated that they receive guidance for chefs to create new products. Thomas Hymel stated that for the last 6 years they have worked on a full shrimp grating machine that was essentially adapted from a crawfish grater. Thomas Hymel stated that the grating machine helps cut down labor costs and fishermen have the opportunity to sell into a market and make more money. Thomas Hymel stated that the grater machines are not cheap and run about \$40,000 but they can go on a boat or on land.

F. To Discuss Marketing for the Shrimp Industry Through the Louisiana Department of Agriculture

and Forestry

Gene Cavalier r stated that there was a Seafood Safety Task Force held on December 9, 2025. Gene Cavalier stated that presently 408 total samples have been completed with about 20 samples every 2 weeks. Gene Cavalier stated that there were 925 labeling on packages across the state at 86 locations. Gene Cavalier stated that as of December 20th, the seafood safety fee will be added to imported products. Gene Cavalier stated that the fee will be used for testing. Gene Cavalier stated that they are working with about 60 businesses but they are having issues. Gene Cavalier stated that in 2026 the fee will be \$500, in 2027 the fee will be \$750 and then will go up to \$1,000 in 2028. Gene Cavalier stated that the STF funds were used to test for specific antibodies. Gene Cavalier stated that a product from Thailand tested positive for fentanyl. Gene Cavalier stated that the STF was instrumental in building the baseline for those tests and DAF has a well-established system in place now. Gene Cavalier stated that there is a two-stage process for testing the antibodies requested by the STF. Gene Cavalier stated that samples could test positive initially but then there has to be a secondary test. Gene Cavalier stated that DAF provides the testing results to DHH because they actually did the enforcement action. Gene Cavalier stated that the FDA allows product with .5 through and some tests came back roughly under .3. Gene Cavalier stated there is a discrepancy that needs to be clarified because an accredited federal lab could be a .5. Gene Cavalier stated that DAF now has mandatory quarterly reporting for the company that has to be presented to the legislature. Gene Cavalier stated that they are trying to make things more user-friendly and provide education. Gene Cavalier stated that compliance is an issue and there are fines up to \$15,000.

Acy Cooper, Jr. asked where the breakdown between DAF and LDH was.

Gene Cavalier stated that once DAF provided LDH the test results it's their responsibility to do the enforcement action.

Andrew Blanchard stated that there were 4 samples from Singapore that came back positive and the protocol was for LDH to analyze the samples analyze but if it's interstate transactions then it goes to FDA. Andrew Blanchard stated that the feds are trying to come up with ways to document the origin of the products and try to eliminate comingling of products. Andrew Blanchard stated that if you have distributors that are purchasing products and contracting with processing plants in order to reprocess that product then that is an issue. Andrew Blanchard stated if there is more information from distributors then it could give them a clearer vision of what's coming in and what's leaving the state of Louisiana.

Gene Cavalier stated that the next Seafood Safety Task Force meeting is in February and they wanted to get on the docket for March.

Andrew Blanchard stated that last year the task force gave DAF \$50,000 for testing and would recommend another \$50,000 in order to keep the project going. Andrew Blanchard state that during the Seafood Safety Task Force meeting they voted to send a transcript of the meeting as public comment for the Restore America Act comment period which ends on December 15. Andrew Blanchard recommend sending a transcript of the STF meeting to show that there are two task forces working together on this issue.

Rodney Olander asked about other funding for testing.

Gene Cavalier stated that right now it is only the SeaD consulting sampling fee.

Patrick Banks stated that 90% of funds from the LDWF license fees for the imported seafood license goes towards testing which as generated about \$130,000.

Acy Cooper made a motion to fund the Department of Agriculture and Forestry \$50,000 for shrimp testing, 2nd by Andrew Blanchard. Motion Carries.

Acy Cooper stated DAF does a good job with marketing.

Gene Cavalier stated that DAF's PR director has been briefed on some of the dealing of the task force and could present a proposal to the task force. Gene Cavalier stated that there are several organizations that have coordinated together for help at the federal level.

Andrew Blanchard stated that the IPC ruling came out for the SSC lawsuit. Andrew Blanchard stated that he has not gotten 100% confirmation but believes they ruled in their favor. Andrew Blanchard recommended that the task force send a letter regarding seafood competitiveness.

Acy Cooper, Jr. asked when STF funding would become available

Patrick Banks stated that the task force has \$90,000 for this fiscal year. Patrick Banks stated that he is unsure what other funding is planned between now and the end of the year.

Rodney Olander stated that the task force does have the agreement with SeaD consulting.

Rodney Olander stated that the task force has to decide which one is more important.

Andrew Blanchard made a motion to send a letter to NOAA from the STF regarding the Restore American Act, 2nd by Acy Cooper, Jr. Motion carries.

G. To Discuss Shrimp Management and Shrimp Prices

Lance Nacio stated that he want's information about managing shrimp resources. Lance Nacio stated that 40/50s are selling for \$1 and anything smaller is selling for less. Lance Nacio stated that early openings are producing smaller shrimp. Lance Nacio stated that once fisherman on a freezer boat harvested \$550,000 worth of shrimp in 60 days and his larger shrimp were 26/30. Lance Nacio stated that at the last meeting Kristen Baumer stated that the price would take off for larger shrimp but shrimp is still selling at a \$1 per pound or less. Lance Nacio stated that the most fishermen were getting for 16/20s was \$2 per pound. Lance Nacio asked should the industry continue to harvest smaller shrimp or should they change. Lance Nacio stated that fisherman should know what prices they are going to receive several days before the season open. Lance Nacio stated that this was done for the May season and prices were \$0.90 for 80/100 but then the price dropped to \$0.60 a pound. Lance Nacio stated that this impacted fisherman who thought they were going to make a profit. Lance Nacio asked if they would

continue to manage and market smaller shrimp. Lance Nacio stated that it seems that the task force is not trying to do things that is going to bring more value to shrimp.

Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that the last three years the buyers have been changing the prices. Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that 9 years ago it was \$0.60. Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that docks have been setting prices based on their profit margin and if they offset prices than \$0.90 could go to \$0.30 overnight. Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that docks should justify the reasons why they would drop the prices. Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that instead of opening early they should hold back on the opening.

Lance Nacio stated that the fall season is the most important season because those shrimp don't want to leave the estuary. Lance Nacio stated that at the last meeting Peyton Cagle stated that the 36-count shrimp given 10-days could turn into a 22-count.

Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that the opening was previous the third Monday. Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that by holding back a little bit showed a difference this year.

Lance Nacio stated that they're getting \$0.50 a pound for shrimp that counts over 100. Lance Nacio stated that shrimp left alone in the spring and April could be \$2.00 or \$2.50 a pound. Lance Nacio stated that there was no winter season for white shrimp and fishermen were stuck at \$0.50 to \$0.60 a pound.

Konner Lockfield stated that that the 3-mile offshore did close and LDWF will collect that data to make a biological decision at that point. Konner Lockfield stated that for the inside closure the season closes on the third Monday with the exception of Lake Pontchartrain open water areas. Konner Lockfield stated that this year the shrimp were larger in the Barataria and Terrebonne Basins so those areas will not close on Monday. Konner Lockfield stated that in zone 3 west of the Atchafalaya closed on Monday.

Patrick Banks stated that the closures are based on size. Patrick Banks stated that the management for larger shrimp has not been a problem and when the sizes hit the criteria then the area could open. Patrick Banks stated that it's up to the Commission where they choose to open it or not. Patrick Banks stated that the laws tell the department to consider closing because of the size and that's what was done. Patrick Banks stated that in this case, he would need to review the data because he did not recall the small size on the beaches which is why they didn't close.

Rodney Olander stated that he agreed with the discussion on the prices because shrimpers should not have to find out the price on the day the start harvesting. Rodney Olander stated that for certain areas it needs to open based on the area and some years are just different.

Andrew Blanchard stated that some fishermen wait until later in the season to catch larger shrimp.

Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that there have been instances in which LDWF has gone in front of the commission for a special opening but it was not passed. Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that some fishermen want a set season. Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that the department should complete a survey regarding when to open the season.

Rodney Olander stated that if the data that it's good shrimp then there is no need for an argument. Rodney Olander stated that there would be no discusses of the processors had fair prices.

Lance Nacio stated that having a base price would probably help to resolve the issue.

Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that this year the amount of shrimp has decreased and the prices have dropped. Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that it is hard to find deck hands that would actually stay because of shrimp prices. Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that the industry needs to educate people and let them know what they're doing.

H. Officer Elections

Rodney Olander opened the floor for officer nominations. Acy Cooper, Jr. made a motion to nominate Andrew Blanchard as the new chairman, 2nd by Lance Nacio. Motion carries.

Rodney Olander made a motion to nominate Acy Cooper, Jr. as the vice chairman, 2nd by Lance Nacio. Motion carries.

IX. Public Comment

Cheri Blanced stated that the inshore reefs should be brought up to the legislature regarding the amount of reefs that are being added. Cheri Blanchard stated that a shrimper should be on CCA's board.

Acy Cooper, Jr. stated that he suggests giving LDWF a chance to continue presenting proposed reefs so that the task force can have some input.

Patrick Banks stated that CCA is the driving group behind the inshore reefs and they submit requests to the department. Patrick Banks stated that CCA asks the department to partner with financially and the decision is made by the administration. Patrick Banks stated the number of reef constructed depends on the funding amount and the location of the reef. Patrick Banks stated that Mike McDonough has previously attend the meetings to inform the task force of the planned reef before they are built. Patrick Banks stated that there is no law or policy that requires the task force approval for the reefs.

Cheri Blanchard stated that the legislation to create the Seafood Safety Task Force involved the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Health that enforces the labeling for restaurants but they are not doing anything with that. Cheri Blanchard stated that things started off good but it seems like its going way.

Gene Cavalier stated that he does have the results of the labeling violations for the past quarter but he is unsure how many were additional violations versus secondary. Gene Cavalier stated there were 114 violations for a total fine of \$33,570.

Cheri Blanchard stated that LDH did post a warning which reads a follows: *"The Louisiana Department of Health encourages residents of and visitors to the state to eat Louisiana seafood whenever it is available; imported seafood carries the risk of possible contamination by physical, chemical, and/or microbiological hazards"*. Cheri Blanchard stated that the warning is no longer on LDH's website.

Konner Lockfield stated that at the last task force meeting there was a motion for the department to write letters and post the results of the SeaD testing on the department's website. Konner Lockfield stated that after the discussion, the department decided to provide the data to the task force and the task force to choose how they want to utilize the data. Konner Lockfield stated that he would provide the completed data from SeaD testing to each task force member.

Patrick Banks stated the decision was made by the department to give the data to the task force for the members to choose how to contact the restaurants.

X. Set Next Meeting

The next Shrimp Task Force meeting was set for Wednesday, February 25, 2026 for 10:00am.

XI. Adjourn

Acy Cooper motioned to adjourn the meeting, 2nd by Lance Nacio. Motion carries. Meeting adjourned at 12:56 PM.