

Shrimp Task Force Meeting Minutes
April 30, 2025, 1:00pm
LDWF Headquarters
2000 Quail Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70898

I. Pledge of Allegiance

II. Call to order

III. Roll call

Voting Members Present:

Rodney Olander

Alan Gibson

Andrew Blanchard

Randy Pearce

Acy Cooper, Jr.

Kristen Baumer

Lance Nacio

Voting Members Absent:

Chalin Delaune

Non-Voting Members Present:

Andy Scalisi

Gene Cavalier

Davis Madere

Non-Voting Members Absent:

IV. Acy Cooper, Jr. motioned to approve the March 12, 2025, 2nd by Alan Gibson. Motion carries.

Alan Gibson motioned to add an item to the agenda under New Business, item D. To Consider Setting a Standard Start Time for Shrimping in Zone 2, 2nd by Acy Cooper. Motion carries.

V. Lance Nacio motioned to approve the April 30, 2025 meeting agenda as amended, 2nd by Kristen Baumer. Motion carries.

VI. Treasury Report

Remaining Fund Balance- \$597,174

Remaining Budget Balance- \$88,879

Acy Cooper motioned to approve the treasury report as presented, 2nd by Kristen Baumer. Motion carries.

VII. The shrimp task force heard the Federal Shrimp Permit Report

VIII. New Business:

- A. Joel Hirst, a representative from Senator Cassidy's office, was not able to provide an update on the congressional legislative effort and fair trade at this time

Alan Gibson motioned to enter an executive session at this time, 2nd by Andrew Blanchard.

It was determined that the task force did not have standing to hold an Executive Session under the circumstances- Alan Gibson motioned to return to the regular meeting, 2nd by Andrew Blanchard. Motion carries.

The task force did not go into the Executive Session and decided to postpone item A. at this time

- B. Neal McMillian provided an update on the Executive Order, "Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness

Executive Order 14276 - Background

Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness

Background

- ▶ American Seafood is great
- ▶ Our Seafood Industry faces challenges from:
 - ▶ Federal overregulation
 - ▶ Unfair Trade Practices, resulting in over 90% of our seafood being imported



"With this vast resource and centuries of hard work from American fishermen, our Nation has the greatest seafood in the world."

Executive Order 14276 - Purpose & Policy

Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness

Purpose

- ▶ Address unfair trade
- ▶ Level playing field
- ▶ Promote ethical sourcing
- ▶ Reduce regulatory burdens
- ▶ Ensure integrity of supply chain

"The erosion of American seafood competitiveness at the hands of unfair foreign trade practices must end."

Policy of United States

- ▶ Promote productive harvest
- ▶ Unburden commercial fishermen from costly regulation
- ▶ Combat illegal, unreported, unregulated (IUU) fishing
- ▶ Protect seafood market from unfair trade practices of foreign nations



Executive Order 14276 - Actions on Regulation

Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness

"A New Era of Seafood Policy"

Actions on Regulation

- ▶ Commerce (NOAA) & Health and Human Services shall suspend, revise, or rescind regulations that overly burden commercial fishing at the fishery specific level through consultation with industry.
- ▶ Commerce will solicit public engagement on improving management and science related to Magnuson-Stevens, Endangered Species, and Marine Mammal Protection Act.
- ▶ Within 6 months, Regional Fishery Management Councils shall identify actions to reduce burdens and increase production. Councils will develop a work plan to achieve this.
- ▶ Commerce will request public engagement on fisheries management and science priorities for seafood supply chain.
- ▶ NOAA Fisheries shall use less expensive & more reliable technology for fisheries assessments. Additionally, NOAA Fisheries shall expand exempted fishing permits.



Executive Order 14276 - Actions on Trade & Imports

Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness

"An American First Seafood Strategy"

Actions on Trade and Imports

- ▶ Commerce & Agriculture will develop an American First Seafood Strategy
 - ▶ marketing, production, sale, and export of products
 - ▶ strengthen processing capacity
 - ▶ increasing education on seafood health benefits.
- ▶ Commerce & U.S. Trade Representative will develop a comprehensive seafood trade strategy, including addressing non-tariff barriers.
- ▶ U.S. Trade Representative will examine trade practices of major seafood-producing nations and consider solutions through enforcement and negotiations.
- ▶ Commerce & Homeland Security will address recent changes to expand the Seafood Import Monitoring Program, allowing program to target high-risk shipments from priority nations.



Rodney Olander stated that TEDs should be included in this order and the planning moving forward

Andrew Blanchard asked about infrastructure repair and financing also be considered

C. The task force heard an update on Shrimp testing and labeling

Kevin Finley, Assistant Commissioner with the Department of Ag and Forestry, there is a bill that was originally set up with the Department of Health for shrimp and crawfish sampling that is moving over to the Department of Ag and Forestry. A lot of the infrastructure that is needed to carry out this bill has already been set up and developed by LDAF. For the false or misleading labeling requirement have already done close to 500 labeling inspections, we have issued stop orders and stopped products, product taken out of commerce and donated to a food bank, for the seafood sampling, limited by capacity of chem lab, it's about 20 samples every 2 weeks, have done about 119 samples, 106 shrimp samples and 13 crawfish from 13 different cities across the state, testing being done not is for the initial 3 antibiotics, the Shrimp Task Force has requested that an additional 3 tests for antibiotics be done, moved forward with MOU amendment to add these additional 3 antibiotic tests. Developing protocol and once complete will begin testing for these additional 3, the new testing is more of a two-step process, will ensure the entire amount of the additional funding from the STF will go towards the testing

of the additional requested antibiotics, working on a standardization that everyone will have to abide by, 17 op orders were completed at 15 different locations, only have so many inspectors so the more eyes the better

George Barisich expressed concern that the law does not have enough teeth, by the time the product is pulled from the shelves the damage is already done, these people will just keep putting their product out in violation if there are no

Alan Gibson stated that standardized packaging would fix the issue

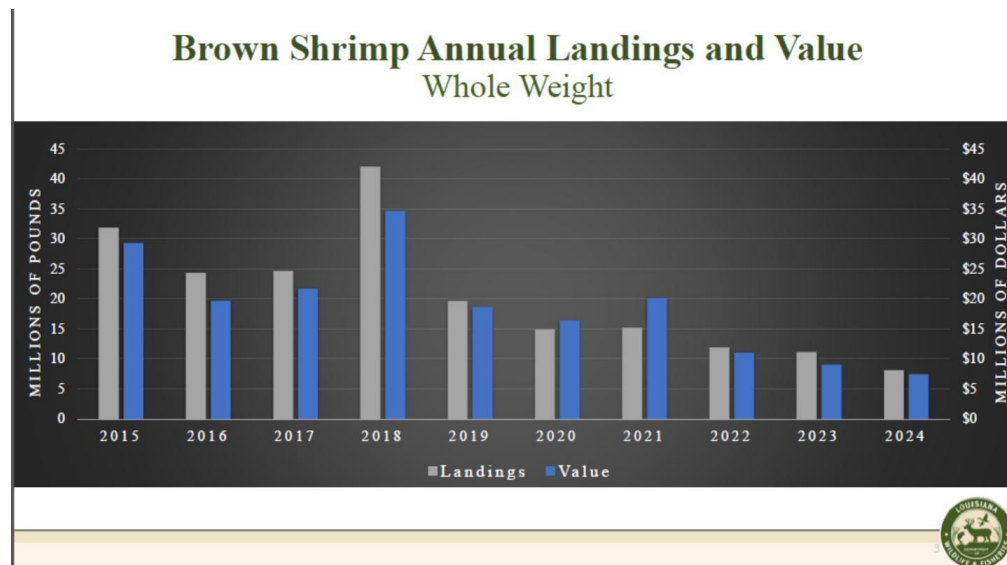
Rodney Olander stated that the public needs to be educated on these issues and what to look for on packaging

Jennifer Beall, Weights and Measures inspector, been with this program for 5 years, if a stop order is issued, will receive an email, program has a lot of emphasis on the integrity and importance of documenting, provide a lot of evidence and documentation, incorporated compliance of 4706 into inspections, when we get feet on the ground at the sites, have to educate business owner and managers, very time consuming, if someone has a complaint there is a QR code and a 1800# to call to make a report

- D. Rodney Olander led discussion on setting a standard opening time for the section of Zone 2 that extends from the Atchafalaya River west to the western shore of Vermillion Bay

Alan Gibson motioned to establish a standard opening time of 5:30am for shrimp season for the section of Zone 2 extending from the Atchafalaya River West to the western shore of Vermillion Bay. This standard would not apply to the opening day of shrimp season, during which we will continue to adhere to the existing regulations regarding opening times, 2nd by Andrew Blanchard. Motion carries.

- E. Andy Scalisi provided shrimp data trends and the 2025 inshore shrimp season recommendations



The left chart displays values in millions of pounds. The y-axis ranges from 0 to 12. The x-axis shows months 5, 6, 7, and 8. For each month, there are two bars: a grey bar for 2024 and a red bar for the 10-year average. The 10-year average is consistently higher than the 2024 value.

Month	2024 (Millions of Pounds)	10 Yr. Avg. (Millions of Pounds)
5	3.5	7.5
6	3.0	9.5
7	0.5	2.8
8	0.3	1.5

The right chart displays values in millions of dollars. The y-axis ranges from \$0 to \$12. The x-axis shows months 5, 6, 7, and 8. For each month, there are two bars: a blue bar for 2024 and a red bar for the 10-year average. The 10-year average is consistently higher than the 2024 value.

Month	2024 (Millions of Dollars)	10 Yr. Avg. (Millions of Dollars)
5	\$1.8	\$5.8
6	\$4.0	\$9.8
7	\$0.4	\$4.0
8	\$0.3	\$2.8

Time Series	License Sales	Fishers Reporting Landings	Annual Trips
5-Year Average	-21%	-35%	-25%
10-Year Average	-30%	-47%	-43%
Average Since 2000	-44%	-61%	-58%

LOUISIANA INSIDE WATERS
TO OPEN FOR SHRIMP HARVEST

Zone 1: May 19

Zone 2: May 8

Zone 3: May 22

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 Miles

Legend:
 --- 20-mile limit
 --- Boundary: Miss. Line
 --- Boundary: Mississippi Line

Map details:
 Zone 1: TO OPEN: MAY 19, 2023 AT 6:00 A.M.
 Zone 2: TO OPEN: MAY 19, 2023 AT 6:00 A.M.
 Zone 3: TO OPEN: MAY 22, 2023 AT 6:00 A.M.
 Zone 4: TO OPEN: MAY 22, 2023 AT 6:00 A.M.

Kristen Baumer recommended comparing the increase in size and the season date opening and the crossover and comparing that to see if that makes a difference

Rodney Olander recommended zone 2 opening on May 5th, in the next few weeks the numbers are going to slide, the recommendation is for the portion of zone 2 that extends from Atchafalaya River west to Vermillion Bay

Acy Cooper stated that if you open the requested portion of zone 2 on the 5th and open the rest of zone 2 on the 8th you will have so many boats; the 8th is the best bet, would like to stick with the biological recommendation of opening on May 8th

Rodney Olander stated that he is worried about losing the resource with the front and a high river may lose everything, stated that in his area still would like to recommend opening on the 5th

Andrew Blanchard recommended that the sooner you open the better off you are, you are looking at weather patterns, white shrimp are ready to be harvested now

Andrew Blanchard motioned to open Zone 1 on May 19, Zone 2 on May 5th and Zone 3 opening on May 22nd, 2nd by Acy Cooper. Motion did not carry with roll call vote, 5 no's to one yes (no's- Acy Cooper, Lance Nacio, Kristen Baumer, Alan Gibson, Randy Pearce, Yes- Andrew Blanchard)

Kristen Baumer recommended thinking brown shrimp right now and not white shrimp, the overall concern is how many 80/100s do we want to catch, like following the science and leaning toward the department's recommendation, peeling factory will not be ready by May 5th, would like to see the results of the decisions

Acy Cooper stated that he would love to wait and let the shrimp get bigger

Lance Nacio asked what were samples like inside the levee system? Andy Scalisi stated that he would be able to get back to Lance with this information but did not have it on hand

Rocky Decharo stated that if you get two big factories that are not ready, you will have a big issue, if the season opens on the May 5th we will have this issue the price will be dropped to nothing, recommended going with biological recommendation

Acy Cooper motioned to accept LDWF shrimp season recommendation as presented, 2nd by Kristen Baumer. Motion carries with 1 opposed Andrew Blanchard.

Rodney Olander had to exit the meeting at this time and left Andrew Blanchard to chair the rest of the meeting

F. Nathan Putman provided a presentation on a state shrimp voluntary effort-monitoring program

Goal

- To create a voluntary, non-regulatory effort monitoring program for Gulf state shrimp fleets as a mutually beneficial partnership between NOAA Fisheries and the industry.

Implementation

- Funding through DWH Restoration funds via National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF)
- Coordinated by LGL Ecological Research Associates, a long-term partner with the shrimping industry and collaborator with NOAA.
 - Equip ~200 state shrimp vessels with cellular Vessel Monitoring Systems (cVMS)
 - Collect effort data from cVMS for 2 years



Why?

Benefits to the shrimp industry

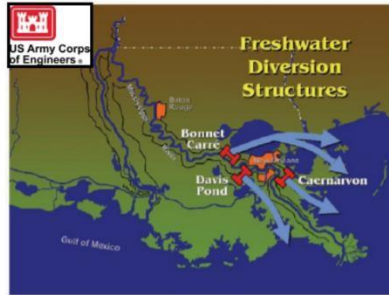
- Effort data collected could be used to advocate for minimizing impacts by other industries (e.g., offshore energy cable installation, aquaculture, artificial reefing) to shrimping grounds
- Data could be used to demonstrate environmental impacts to shrimping from storms and human-made disturbances
- Finer-resolution information on where effort occurs could lessen concerns about bycatch and protected species interactions



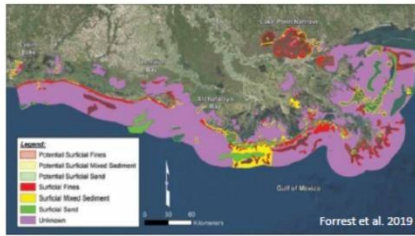
Artificial Reef Siting



Freshwater Diversions and Sediment Extraction



Once in operation, the three freshwater diversion structures will save nearly 90,000 acres of marsh.



Sediment resources of coastal Louisiana



Why?

Benefits to NOAA Fisheries

- Deployment of resources related to bycatch minimization (e.g., free TEDs) can be more efficiently prioritized for volunteer vessels that may benefit
 - Contribute to population growth and recovery of sea turtles
- Mapping use of marine waters by all user-groups can benefit marine spatial planning
 - Identify synergies and trade-offs in the growing the Blue Economy



NOAA Fisheries Service Gear Monitoring Team staff member, Peter Nguyen, displays a fixed angle TED design. This design is likely to be tested with a 45° angle in conjunction with other modifications, such as reduced bar spacing of 2.5". Photo credit: NOAA

Eric and Kevin Drury of the F/V Drury Boys from Venice, LA display a "Broom Handle" TED modification frequently used by fishermen along the northern Gulf of Mexico. The modification, which incorporates a wooden dowel ahead of a Rigid TED opening, is likely to be tested in conjunction with other modifications, such as reduced bar spacing of 2.5". Photo credit: NOAA



Modeled after the federal shrimp effort monitoring program

For more than a decade, cellular-based GPS devices have been valuable to federal shrimpers

- Minimized management actions taken on the shrimp fishery related to interactions with other species
- Improved marine spatial planning (guided decisions on where to place artificial reefs and siting for offshore energy and aquaculture structures).
- Maintained compliance with regulations such as the Endangered Species Act
- Been used as part of the Natural Resource Damage Assessment process to identify harm to commercial fishery species such as brown shrimp and provide restoration that benefitted shrimpers
- Ensured more accurate calculations of bycatch by NOAA scientists



	 ZenVMS Remote Data Sensing	 Boat Command Viatrax	 NEMO VMS Woods Hole Group
Retail Cost (Your Price)	\$549 (\$0)	\$299 (\$0)	\$574 (\$0)
Annual Cellular Fee*	\$240 (\$0)	\$199 (\$0)	\$180 (\$0)
Specifications			
Voltage	9-60 DC, 110 AC	9-32 DC, 110 AC	3.7 V, 5.2 A
Hardwired	No	Optional	No
Dimensions	7.5 x 5.5 x 1.5"	4.5 x 3.5 x 3.6"	8.75 x 5 x 4"
Waterproofing	IP67	IP67	IP67
Installation Location			
VMS Terminal	Interior	Exterior	Exterior
LTE/GPS Antenna	Interior/Exterior	Interior/Exterior	Exterior
Warranty	2 years	Lifetime (with subscription)	2 years
Features			
Optional Web- based Tracking Interface	Freely available	Freely available	Freely available

*Cost Per Tracking Unit



G. Andrew Blanchard led discussion on the special bait dealer's permit

Andrew Blanchard stated that he need a final motion from the task force to get clarity

Clay Boudreaux would like to streamline what he does when he leaves to go fish live bait, right now he calls BR to let them know he is going out, when he comes back he calls again to close the trip, at this time puts catch in brick and mortar tank at marina and at that time there is a transfer from live bait to wholesale retail license, can sell them at marina and can sell to another bait dealer but cannot put them on the boat the next day and cannot sell them off the boat, frames and nets are not on boat when selling shrimp, would like to be able to sell shrimp off the boat for bait

Alan Gibson motioned to move this item to the LDWF Commission to take it up for consideration and handle in a way that is within the law and fair to all parties involved, 2nd by Acy Cooper. Motion carries.

Rocky Decharo stated that he does not agree with lessening the regulations on the live bait dealers as they are continuing to work when the industry is not able to and they disturb and take the resource during a crucial time

IX. Public Comment: no comment

X. The next Shrimp Task Force meeting was set for Wednesday, August 6, 2025 for 10:00am at the Terrebonne Parish Council Chambers

XI. Kristen Baumer motioned to adjourn the meeting, 2nd by Acy Cooper. Motion carries.