



LWF Commission Rejects Reef Fish Rules

The Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission considered actions at their November 2009 meeting to:

- 1) Receive and consider resolution and notice of intent to amend rules for harvest of reef fish: grouper recreational seasons and bag limits, grouper commercial seasons and size limits, red snapper/reef fish IFQ modifications.
- 2) Receive and consider declaration of emergency-rules for harvest of reef fish: grouper recreational seasons and bag limits, grouper commercial seasons and size limit.
- 3) Receive and consider declaration of emergency-closure of the recreational fishery for greater amberjack in Louisiana waters.

The commission rejected all three proposals. This means that existing rules for harvest of reef fish will remain in effect in Louisiana waters. However, federal rules for recreational and commercial harvest will be in effect in waters of the EEZ, generally more than three miles offshore of Louisiana.

Regulations for the greater amberjack fishery in the Gulf of Mexico include a quota for the recreational fishery. Based on an analysis to project 2009 greater amberjack recreational landings, NMFS closed the recreational greater amberjack fishery in federal waters off Louisiana at 12:01 a.m. on Oct. 24, 2009. The regional administrator requested that the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries enact similar action for Louisiana waters to enhance effectiveness and enforceability of regulations and to ensure that the recreational greater amberjack quota is not exceeded during the 2009 fishing year.

The Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission considered the request of NOAA Fisheries to close the recreational fishery for greater amberjack at their November 2009 meeting, and voted not to enact a closure for state waters. The closure in effect in the EEZ remains in effect. The commission also voted not to modify state rule on harvest of grouper and tilefish to provide compatible size, creel, and season limits, and provisions dealing with Individual Fishing Quotas for those species. This also means that violators intercepted by enforcement will be charged federally.

Southwest Oyster Season Opened

The Lower Calcasieu Lake and West Cove Conditional Management Areas opened to harvest one-half hour before sunrise on Oct. 15, 2009. Harvesting will close one-half hour after sunset on April 30, 2010. The sack limit for Calcasieu Lake is set at 15; one and one half bushel sacks per day as provided for in R.S. 56:435.1.1. However, these conservation actions will not supersede public health closures.

The reason for health closures is the occurrence of high fecal coliform counts during high flow episodes of the Calcasieu River. Fecal coliform is a bacterium found in the intestines of warm blooded animals (birds and mammals, including humans). Fecal coliform is monitored as an indicator species. It is assumed that if it is present, other human pathogens and bacterium such as hepatitis, vibrio, cholera, etc. may also be present. Fecal coliform bacteria can live for up to 48 hours outside of the gut of warm blooded animals. When river flows are heavy, water carrying fecal coliform and potentially other pathogens reaches the harvest area alive. A study completed in the early 1990s by the Louisiana Department of Public Health correlated fecal coliform counts on Calcasieu Lake and West Cove oyster harvest areas with the Calcasieu River stage at Kinder. When the river stage at Kinder reaches 13.5 feet, fecal coliform numbers on the Lower Calcasieu management area pose a health threat. A health threat is posed for the West Cove Management Area when the Kinder station reaches seven feet. Harvesters monitoring the status of openings can call 1-800-256-2775.

The mechanism by which fecal coliform enters our waterways is through runoff during heavy rainfall. This is called non-point source pollution, which is very diffuse and hard to identify. The concern over fecal coliform in our waterways can be divided into two sources; those coming from human activities and naturally occurring sources (birds and animals). During winter months, water draining through marshes surrounding Calcasieu Lake picks up fecal coliform from large waterfowl and bird populations overwintering and from furbearers and other animals. Normally, these wastes are assimilated in the marsh ecosystem and reduced to usable nutrients and organic matter. But, in heavy rain events and in cooler seasons, it is flushed out before being metabolized or reduced.

Runoff from rural and urban areas picks up fecal coliform from faulty or overloaded sewer treatment systems. Both residential and municipal sewer treatment plants are designed to reduce sewage and bacteria through biological and mechanical treatment over time. But, heavy rainfall runoff overloads the systems and water flushes untreated waste out and eventually into the river. Improperly maintained home sewer treatment units also contribute to untreated waste entering the river.

Oysters are filter feeders and readily pick up bacteria and pathogens when actively feeding. The major concern with oysters is caused by the raw consumption of oysters and thereby increasing the risk of also consuming live bacteria and pathogens. According to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, approximately 20 million Americans eat raw oysters, however the risk is not the same for everyone. People with certain health conditions such as diabetes, immune disorders, stomach problems, liver disorders or disease, and those on long-term steroid use have an increased risk of becoming ill from eating raw oysters. People within these categories or those wanting to reduce their risk and still enjoy oysters are encouraged to consume only fully cooked oysters.

- Kevin A. Savoie

Louisiana Officials Express Concerns Over Federal Summer Oyster Ban

A unilateral proposal by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to depart from an agreed plan to manage oyster safety could be harmful to Louisiana's oyster industry, which employs more than 3,500 Louisianians, according to officials at the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (DHH) and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF).

The proposal would place regulations for post-harvest processing and preservation on Louisiana harvesters which have not been imposed on other producers. Under normal conditions, oysters must either be eaten live or cooked in order to be safe. However, post-harvest processes involve treatments to the oysters that kill and then preserve them in a state similar to raw. It is widely held that these processes change the taste, texture and color of the oysters.

Additionally, according to Michael Voisin, the co-chairman of the Gulf Oyster Industry Council and owner of a post-harvest processing plant, post-harvest processing usually doubles or triples the cost of an oyster.

"We are not aware of the reason for departing from an agreement that has provided extensive education to consumers, and has also resulted in significant advancements in our regulatory approach to the oyster industry," DHH secretary Levine said. "Our public health sanitarians are extremely thorough in their efforts to sample and monitor oyster production in our state to ensure the safety of our oysters."

For more than 10 years, the FDA worked closely with both states and the Interstate Shellfish Sanitation Conference, the organization that represents almost all oyster producers. The organizations co-developed extensive plans to both manage the safety of oysters during harvesting and transportation and to educate people who are at a higher risk of contracting a food-borne illness, such as those with conditions or diseases that have resulted in a compromised immune system.

The industry recently began refrigerating oysters for half shell consumption within five hours of harvest during the summer months (June through September) and that time was expected to decrease to two hours within the next year. All menus in establishments that serve raw oysters and all products that contain raw oysters in Louisiana are required to specifically state that raw oysters can be dangerous to your health.

"What is particularly interesting is while the FDA seems focused on domestic oyster production, there is wide evidence that imported seafood is a far greater health threat, and there seems to be little movement by the FDA to get their arms around that problem," added Levine. "Our legislature this year passed a law requiring labeling of imported seafood for the very reason that the FDA has not yet captured this threat."

Lagniappe Fisheries Newsletter

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According to Al Sunseri, chairman of the Louisiana Oyster Task Force and owner of P&J Oyster Company of New Orleans, voting delegates of the ISSC voted unanimously last week to keep intact the current *Vibrio vulnificus* management plan involving strict refrigeration requirements of harvested oysters.

Also, ISSC delegates voted unanimously to recommend that FDA conduct a full-fledged cost-benefit study, including a consumer acceptance study, before any proposed *Vibrio* management guideline change, as the agency would be required to do before any regulation change requiring post-harvest processing.

Vibrio vulnificus is a bacteria that can be found in oyster-growing waters, particularly during warmer months. As a result of the possible presence of this bacteria, there may be a risk associated with consuming raw shellfish, as is the case with other raw protein products. People with chronic illness of the liver, stomach, or blood, or who have other immune disorders, should eat these products fully cooked.

Louisiana ranks first in the nation in terms of pounds harvested and monetary value as part of the domestic oyster harvest. The total economic impact of the state's oyster industry is \$318 million a year, and 3,565 Louisianians are employed by the industry.

"I am shocked that a federal agency that has turned a blind eye on inspections of foreign seafood imports would impose radical restrictions on an industry that has provided a safe, quality product for generations," LDWF secretary Barham said.

Barham added that "The effect of the proposed ban would greatly impact the Gulf Coast oyster industry and threaten thousands of jobs here in Louisiana and all along the coast. The capacity to post-harvest process the volume of oysters our fishermen bring to the dock is not in place and would be virtually impossible to put in place within the FDA's timetable."

The Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals' Molluscan Shellfish Program works year-round with the state Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and the Louisiana Oyster Task Force to help ensure the safety of the state's oyster-growing areas. Through a wide spectrum of oyster water inspection, sampling and testing programs using FDA guidelines, the state and its partners ensure safe, high-quality product is available for consumers nationwide.

The Task Force also helps educate consumers about the proper handling and safe consumption of oysters, including warnings for immune-compromised people not to consume raw oysters and raw oyster products.

To help ensure safety of oyster-growing waters, the Molluscan Shellfish Program:

- Collects 800 oyster-growing water samples per month from throughout the Louisiana Gulf Coast and into the Gulf, to look for bacteria that might be hazardous to oyster-growing areas.
- Collects oyster meat samples prior to the opening or reopening of areas that may have been closed for adverse weather events or manmade disasters.
- Conducts hundreds of camp surveys, shoreline surveys and marina surveys each year to identify potential pollution point sources and assess oyster-growing areas for potential hazards from sewage

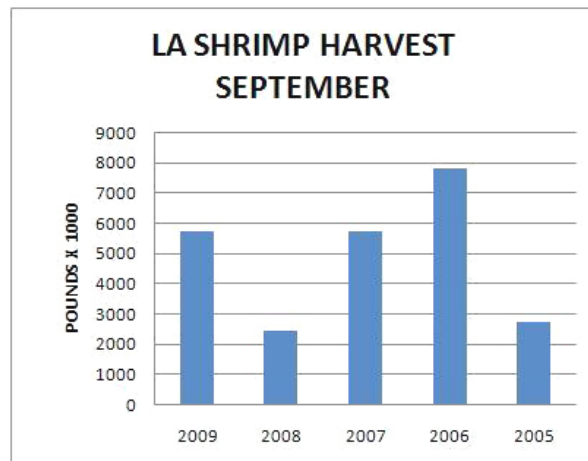
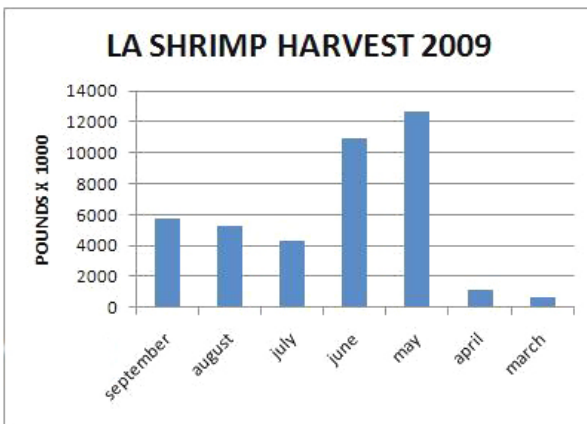
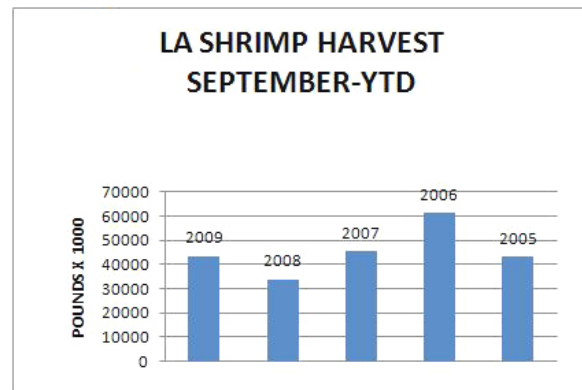
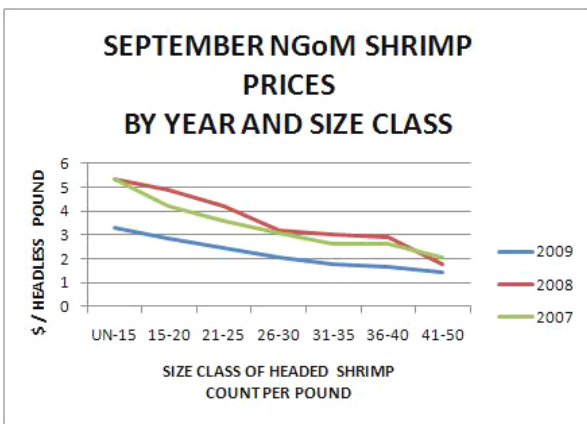
discharges, wild animal and bird populations, marina waters or any other pollutants that may affect the state's oyster-growing areas.

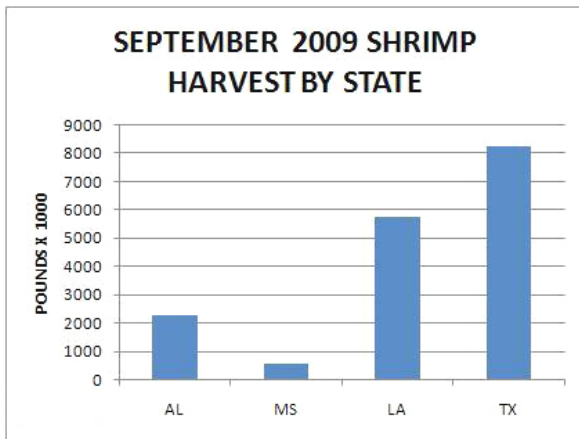
To learn more about DHH, visit <http://www.dhh.louisiana.gov>.

Louisiana Shrimp Watch

Louisiana specific data portrayed in the graphics are selected from preliminary data posted by NOAA on their Website. All data portrayed are subject to final revision and approval by NOAA. Shrimp landings are ex-vessel prices, inclusive of all species harvested. Missing, inadequate or withheld reports are portrayed as 'zero' in these graphics. Price graphics reflect central Gulf states only (Texas and Florida are reported independently). For more information, please refer to: http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/st1/market_news/index.html

- Rusty Gaudé





Shrimp Task Force Activities on Web

Late in October 2009, Gov. Bobby Jindal tasked the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) to house the newly created Louisiana Shrimp Task Force via Executive Order BJ09-13.

Information about the Governor's Shrimp Task Force and the Shrimp Harvesters and Shrimp Processors Advisory Panels, as well as meeting minutes, documents and presentations and live stream or recordings meetings are available at:

<http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/shrimptaskforce/>

The membership of the task force includes:

- Robert Barham, Chair, Secretary, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.
- Jody Montelaro, Senior Policy Advisor, Governor's Office.
- Carrie Castille, Deputy Assistant Commissioner, Department of Agriculture and Forestry.
- Kris VanOrsdel, Policy Director of Infrastructure, Louisiana Recovery Authority.
- Kelsey Short, Louisiana Department of Economic Development.
- Cathy Breaux, Deputy Director for Customized Workforce Services, Louisiana Workforce Commission
- David Guilbeau, Program Administrator for the Commercial Seafood Program, Department of Health and Hospitals.
- Stacy Deblieux, Assistant Attorney General, Attorney General's Office.

Gulf of Mexico Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program

On Aug. 31, 2009, a rule published in the *Federal Register* established a grouper and tilefish IFQ program for commercial fishermen in the Gulf of Mexico. This rule also made changes to the red snapper IFQ program to align that program with the grouper and tilefish IFQ program.

A letter was sent on Oct. 5, 2009, to each commercial reef fish permit holder on record as of Oct. 1, 2009. This letter informed individuals of his/her estimated grouper and tilefish IFQ shares and 2010 allocation. IFQ shares are the percent of the quotas assigned to each fisherman. Allocation is the pounds of fish each fisherman has the opportunity to harvest each year. Shares were distributed proportionately among eligible participants based on landings during 1999-2004, with an allowance for dropping one year. Five species-specific share types were established: red grouper, gag, other shallow water grouper (other SWG), deep water grouper (DWG), and tilefish shares. Estimated allocation was based on the 2010 quota for each share type.

Individuals with no landings of grouper or tilefish during the qualifying period, or those acquiring a permit after Sept. 30, 2009, did not receive initial shares or allocation. These individuals may still participate in the IFQ program by purchasing shares or allocation from current shareholders after Jan. 1, 2010. The only items subject to appeal under the grouper tilefish IFQ program are: 1) Initial eligibility for shares based on ownership of a commercial reef fish vessel permit, 2) The accuracy of the amount of landings. Logbook landings used to determine shares are in gutted weight, not whole weight, 3) Correct assignment of landings to the permit owner, 4) Correct assignment of gag versus black grouper landings. NOAA Fisheries Service reef fish permit records are the sole basis for determining permit ownership. Appeals regarding landings data from 1999- 2004 will be based on NOAA Fisheries Service logbook records. If NOAA Fisheries Service logbook records are not available, the regional administrator may use state landings records or data that were submitted in compliance with applicable federal and state regulations on or before Dec. 31, 2006. Appeals may be submitted to: NOAA Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, Attn: Regional Administrator, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, Florida 33701. When submitting an appeal, indicate the reason for appealing and provide supporting documentation for your appeal (e.g., copies of landings records and/or permit ownership). Appeals must be submitted to the NOAA Fisheries Service regional administrator postmarked no later than April 1, 2010.

For both the red snapper and grouper/tilefish IFQ programs, landing locations must be pre-approved by NOAA Fisheries Service Office for Law Enforcement beginning Jan. 1, 2010. New landing locations will be approved only at the end of each calendar-year quarter. To have a landing location approved by the end of the calendar-year quarter, it must be submitted at least 45 days before the end of the calendar-year quarter. Landing locations must be submitted for review by Nov. 15, 2009, to be used Jan. 1, 2010. Pre-approved landing locations must be publicly accessible by land and water and have a street address. If a particular landing location has no street address on record, global positioning system (GPS) coordinates for an identifiable geographic location must be provided. Other criteria may also be used when approving locations.

NOAA Fisheries Service will conduct workshops for shareholders and dealers throughout the Gulf region during November and December of this year. These workshops will address how to manage IFQ accounts, how to complete landing transactions and other online activities, and the regulations governing the IFQ program.

November 16 – Wingate Inn, 12009 Indian River Road Biloxi, MS 39540

November 17 – Riverview Plaza Hotel, 64 S. Water Street Mobile, AL 36602

November 18 – Courtyard Marriott, 905 E. 23rd Place Panama City, FL 32405

November 19 – Franklin Co. Courthouse, 33 Market Street Apalachicola, FL 32302

December 2 – City of Madeira Beach, 300 Municipal Drive Madeira Beach, FL 33708

December 8 – Larose Civic Center, 307 East 5th Street Larose, LA 70373

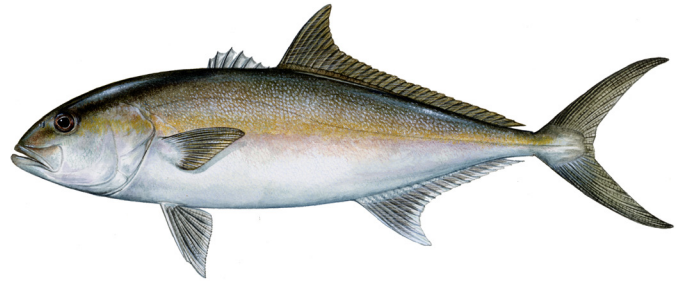
December 9 – Holiday Inn, 5002 Seawall Boulevard Galveston, TX 77551

December 10 – Courtyard Marriott, 3955 N. Expressway 77/83 Brownsville, TX 78520

All workshops will begin at 6:00 p.m. and end no later than 9:00 p.m.

Amberjack Commercial Harvest Closed

The commercial harvest of greater amberjack in the Gulf of Mexico is closed from Nov. 7, 2009, through Dec. 31, 2009. NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service has determined the 2009 commercial quota of 503,000 pounds of greater amberjack will be reached by this date. During the closure period, no person aboard a vessel for which a commercial Gulf of Mexico reef fish permit has been issued may fish for or retain greater amberjack in federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico. In addition, this closure applies in state waters for persons aboard a vessel for which a federal reef fish permit has been issued.



Art by Diane Rome Peebles. Courtesy Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission and the artist

Closure of the commercial greater amberjack harvest in the Gulf of Mexico complies with regulations implemented under the Fishery Management Plan for Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and is necessary to protect the Gulf reef fish resource. NOAA Fisheries Service has determined this action is necessary to prevent overfishing and to keep the commercial sector from exceeding the quota during the 2009 fishing year.

The operator of a vessel with a valid commercial reef fish permit having greater amberjack aboard must have landed and bartered, traded, or sold such greater amberjack prior to 12:01 a.m., local time, Nov. 7, 2009. The prohibition on sale or purchase does not apply to sale or purchase of greater amberjack that were harvested, landed ashore, and sold prior to 12:01 a.m., local time, Nov. 7, 2009, and were held in cold storage by a dealer or processor. The commercial harvest will remain closed until 12:01 a.m., Jan. 1, 2010.

Gulf Amberjack Recreational Closure: Frequently Asked Questions (NOAA)

When will the Gulf of Mexico greater amberjack fishery be closed?

The fishery will be closed from Oct. 24, 2009, through Dec. 31, 2009.

Why is the Gulf of Mexico greater amberjack recreational fishery being closed?

Recreational landings through Aug. 31, 2009, indicate the 1.368 million pound recreational quota for greater amberjack has been met. NOAA Fisheries Service is required to close the fishery when the quota is met or projected to be met.

Why did the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council and NOAA Fisheries Service implement a quota for the Gulf of Mexico recreational greater amberjack fishery?

Changes to federal regulations in 2006 required regional fishery management councils to develop annual catch limits (ACLs) for each of their managed fisheries, and establish a mechanism for specifying a harvest level that prevents overfishing, including measures to ensure accountability. An ACL is the level of annual catch of a population that if met or exceeded triggers accountability measures, such as a seasonal closure or quota closure. In 2008, the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council amended their Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan and established a quota as their ACL for the recreational greater amberjack fishery because the population was undergoing overfishing and only five years remained to rebuild the population to sustainable levels. The council also reduced the commercial quota at that time and set the quota equal to the commercial ACL.

When was a recreational quota established for greater amberjack?

NOAA Fisheries Service implemented new regulations, including a recreational quota, for the greater amberjack fishery on Aug. 4, 2008. The recreational greater amberjack quota was not met in 2008, therefore the fishery remained open all year.

What happens if the recreational quota is exceeded?

If 2009 recreational landings exceed the quota despite the closure of the recreational greater amberjack fishery, then the length of the recreational fishing season in 2010 must be reduced by the amount necessary to recover the overage that occurred during the 2009 fishing year.

How is the fishery for Gulf of Mexico greater amberjack currently managed?

Recreational greater amberjack fishery: 1.368 million pound whole weight quota (when quota is met or projected to be met the fishery closes), 30-inch fork length minimum size limit. Daily bag limit of one fish per person with a zero bag limit for the captain and crew of for-hire vessels.

Commercial greater amberjack fishery : 0.503 million pound whole weight quota (when quota is met or projected to be met the fishery closes), 36-inch fork length minimum size limit, March 1-May 31 closed season.

What is the current status of the Gulf of Mexico greater amberjack population?

Gulf of Mexico greater amberjack are currently undergoing overfishing (the rate of removals is too high) and is currently overfished (population abundance is too low). The greater amberjack is currently in year-7 of a ten year rebuilding plan. The goal of this plan is to end overfishing and rebuild the population size to sustainable levels by 2012.

When will the status of Gulf of Mexico greater amberjack next be assessed?

The next population assessment for Gulf of Mexico greater amberjack will occur in 2010. The dates, times, and location for this assessment have not yet been scheduled.

Collegiate Bass Fishing Catching On

In college athletics, football and basketball reign supreme in televised competition. However, there's a new sport in town that has begun to crown champions on a field of play far removed from the grid iron or field house - collegiate bass fishing. The sport's governing body, the Association of College Anglers (ACA), has announced its 2010 tournament season has now grown to five televised events.

"Four years ago when we started supporting the championship, there were about 40 schools with organized clubs and no sanctioning body," said BoatU.S. Angler director Mike Pellerin. "Once this sport starting gaining critical television coverage, its popularity has soared. Today, there are over 200 clubs, with the ACA leading the effort to grow bass fishing at the collegiate level. We have also now witnessed the first college in the nation - Bethel University in McKenzie, Tenn. - to officially classify their fishing team an 'athletic sport,' putting it on par with other team sports for recruitment and athletic scholarships. We hope that trend continues."

The ACA reports that nearly 40 more schools are currently in the process of organizing a sanctioned team. The ACA was formed through an affiliation with the BoatU.S. Collegiate Bass Fishing Championship and other sponsors. The organization has been made possible by a joint effort among The Bass Federation Inc. (TBF), Careco Multimedia, and a host of supporting companies. The ACA is a "federation" under the TBF umbrella, having its own board of directors, by-laws and benefits.

The 2010 ACA schedule now includes five televised events which will air on the Versus network next year:

- Stephen F. Austin State University Bucketmouth Bass Tournament: Dec. 18-19 on Sam Rayburn Lake, TX. This event draws many anglers from colder climates.
- Arkansas Tech University Invitational: March 25 and 26 at Lake Dardanelle, AR. This is a popular Spring Break tournament.
- Southern Collegiate Bass Fishing Series Championship: April 2 and 3 on Wheeler Lake, AL. Hosted by the Auburn University Bass Sports Club, this is the largest regional bass fishing series in the nation.
- Fifth Annual BoatU.S. Collegiate Bass Fishing Championship: May 24-28 on Lake Lewisville, TX. The largest and most prestigious college bass fishing event of all.
- Collegiate Bass Fishing Open: June 21-25 on Kentucky Lake, TN. Hosted by Paris/Henry County, TN. This is a new event that uses an innovative "team" format, where everyone gets in on the action.

The ACA sanctions additional non-televised collegiate bass fishing tournaments as well. For more information on all of the tournaments, information on how to start a club, or join the ACA, go to www.CollegiateBassChampionship.com .

Gulf Council Recruiting Members for King Mackerel LAPP Advisory Panel

Tampa, Fla. - The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council is forming a new ad hoc advisory panel to consider the trading of catch shares and other issues related to limited access privilege programs (LAPP's) for Gulf king mackerel.

The Magnuson-Stevens Reauthorization Act of 2006 encourages regional fishery management councils to develop limited access privilege programs for fisheries when appropriate. Such programs allow fishermen more flexibility in terms of how and when they can fish during the year, increasing both efficiency and safety at sea. In addition, limited access privilege programs help improve resource conservation because combined catches of all quota holders are generally at or below the total allowable catch.

Expected time commitment for members of the new ad hoc advisory panel is two to three, two-day meetings per year. Members are not compensated; however travel expenses are reimbursed. Anyone interested in serving on the advisory panel should submit a letter and resume to: Phyllis Miranda, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 2203 N. Lois Avenue, Suite 1100, Tampa, FL 33607. Materials may also be faxed to: 813-348-1711; or e-mailed to Phyllis.miranda@gulfcouncil.org. Resumes and letters must be received no later than close of business January 26, 2010.

Marketing program could boost sales for Louisiana Fishermen

Louisiana's agriculture and seafood industries soon will have a new Web portal with which to promote their wares. It's called MarketMaker, and it should be up and operational on the Internet sometime in early 2010. During a presentation to the Baton Rouge Press Club, LSU AgCenter vice chancellor Paul Coreil says the site would function like an online farmers' market. "The service will help producers find a market anywhere in the country for their products," Coreil said. "This raises our agriculture marketing efforts to the next level. This will be a huge boost for our rural economy."

MarketMaker was originally developed by the University of Illinois and is already in use by 12 states. Arkansas and Florida join Louisiana as upstarts looking to go online within the next year. About \$125,000 in federal recovery funds will be used to purchase the software, develop it and keep the site going for three years. After that, the Louisiana Farm Bureau and state departments of agriculture and fisheries have committed to sustaining the program. The service will be free to both buyers and sellers.

The concept is simple enough: Farmers and fishermen will be able to enter their contact information and their products, including sizes and varieties. Consumers, restaurants, chefs, wholesalers and others then will be able to search Louisiana MarketMaker for what they want and the free-enterprise system takes over from there. The Web portal will not be used to negotiate things like price and shipping. Agriculture Commission Mike Strain says there will be an aggressive outreach campaign to contact wholesalers, restaurants and the like. "We want to simplify the direct marketing concept for our producers," Strain says. "This is a great tool. It could mean tens of millions of dollars for our small producers."

Still, Internet access could become a major hurdle for the program. For instance, Strain says only 57 percent of Louisiana farmers have a way to the Web. While no firm numbers were available

for commercial fishermen, Coreil says the same type of challenges can be found there as well. To combat the problem in coming months, he says that producers will have the ability to enter their information at any number of state agriculture and fisheries offices. "We're going to give them a wide variety of opportunities to get online," Coreil says. "We'll make it as easy as we can."

In particular, the Web portal could be a boost to the fledgling shrimp industry, said Wildlife and Fisheries secretary Robert Barham. In addition to battling cheap imports, high fuel prices and other market factors, Barham said the industry is also losing bodies. In 2000, there were 6,900 commercial shrimpers in Louisiana, but today that number is down to 2,900. While the program might appear to be geared toward fishermen, Barham added that processors, many of which are sitting on record inventories, would be able to use the portal, too. "This could help us create a real identity for Louisiana shrimp," Barham said.

Value-added products, like ice cream from the state's dairy farmers, will be able to be listed on the site as well, officials said. The probable list could be huge: alligator hides, sweet potatoes, nutria meat, Ponchatoula strawberries, catfish filets, Ruston peaches, Natchitoches meat pies and more. But more than just listing products, the Web site will also be able to analyze all of the markets, become the source for other databases and determine market demographics. During the next couple of months, officials from the LSU AgCenter will begin conducting training sessions across the state so producers can start populating the site. For more information, the national site can be found at national.marketmaker.uiuc.edu/.

Underwater Obstructions

In accordance with the provisions of R.S. 56:700.1 et. seq., notice is given that 15 claims in the amount of \$54,824.78 were received for payment during the period September 1, 2009 - September 30, 2009.

There were 15 claims paid and 0 claims denied.

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates of reported underwater obstructions are:

29 05.952	89 26.952	PLAQUEMINES
29 06.645	90 15.341	LAFOURCHE
29 09.451	90 13.888	LAFOURCHE
29 10.388	90 23.993	LAFOURCHE
29 18.159	89 57.205	JEFFERSON
29 18.366	89 45.552	PLAQUEMINES
29 21.440	90 32.160	TERREBONNE
29 23.908	90 01.437	JEFFERSON
29 40.910	89 43.857	PLAQUEMINES
29 44.694	89 37.242	ST. BERNARD
29 47.419	89 20.075	ST. BERNARD
29 49.594	89 43.373	ST. BERNARD
29 49.674	89 40.422	ST. BERNARD
29 50.228	89 37.187	ST. BERNARD
30 09.789	89 45.516	ORLEANS

A list of claimants and amounts paid can be obtained from Gwendolyn Thomas, Administrator, Fishermen's Gear Compensation Fund, P.O. Box 44277, Baton Rouge, LA 70804 or you can call (225)342-0122.

THE GUMBO POT

Gulf Fish Iberville

Courtesy Louisiana Seafood Promotion Board and Bourbon House

Ingredients:

6-7oz. filet of Louisiana Gulf fish
1 Tbsp. Creole seasoning
2 Tbsp. unsalted butter
1 tsp. minced garlic
4 shrimp, medium sized
1/2 cup artichoke hearts, cleaned and roasted
1/2 cup mixed mushrooms quartered and roasted
1oz. white wine
4 oysters, medium sized
1/4 cup olive oil
Kosher salt & fresh ground pepper to taste

Chef: Bourbon House

Season the fish on both sides with Creole seasoning. Pan-roast the fish skin-side down for 3 minutes. Heat 1 Tbsp. butter in a cast skillet and toast the garlic. Add the shrimp, artichokes and mushrooms. After the shrimp begin to turn pink, deglaze with the wine. Add the oysters and 1 Tbsp. butter. Stir to emulsify off the heat. Turn the fish carefully and cook for one minute or more. Spoon the seafood ragout onto the middle of the plate. Drape the fish across the ragout. Garnish with green onion and fresh thyme.



For more information, contact your local extension agent:



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