



Catch Shares and Sectors: Management vs. Separation

This article is the final part of our series.

Over the last two months, we've discussed the some of the basics of catch shares. However, there is a big piece of the puzzle causing a lot of controversy: Sectors. Besides raising a lot of arguments and tempers, this word also causes a lot of confusion. Part of the confusion is based on figuring out the context: sector separation or sector management. The use of the word sector in fisheries management varies greatly depending on which part of the country you are in.

First, sector management is used in the Northeast multispecies fishery (NMF) by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). The sector managers help oversee a sector. Sector management is designed to allow more flexibility and responsibility over the fisheries by the fishermen themselves. In this usage, a sector is a group of fishermen holding limited access vessel permits. "The New England Fishery Management Council's sector policy defines a 'sector' as a group of persons holding limited access vessel permits under the fishery management plan through which the sector is being formed, who have voluntarily entered into a contract and agree to certain fishing restrictions for a specified period of time, and which has been granted a total allowable catch (TAC) in order to achieve objectives consistent with the applicable FMP goals and objectives."

Forming or joining a sector is voluntary, and each sector approves new membership. Instead of individual fishermen receiving an allowed amount of catch for a species of fish, or individual fishing quota (IFQ), the sector is given TAC for the entire sector. The sector then chooses how to divide this up amongst individuals. This allows greater flexibility within and among the sectors. Sectors can have TAC for several fisheries or gear types. Therefore, individuals can move around quotas within their sector. Additionally, sectors can trade TAC to other sectors.

Once the annual catch is reached by a sector, all vessels in that sector are prohibited from fishing that specific stock until the next season or until the sector could trade some TAC. So if species A is more plentiful towards Maine, and species B is more plentiful towards New York, sectors can trade allocated TAC to a sector in the region with more fish. This allows vessels to focus on fish in their area instead of using costly fuel to fish further away.

Additionally, sector members receive some regulatory exemptions. For example, vessels part of a sector are not subject to trip limits of allocated stocks or some groundfish restrictions. Each sector

must have an operations plan and reporting requirements. In addition to trading TAC within the sector and among sectors, the responsibility comes into play with reporting. If one vessel fishes over their limit, it reduces the entire sector's TAC. So other members can be hurt by one vessels overfishing. This is why sectors control their own membership. Vessels known to overfish may not be allowed into any sector.

In addition to the NOAA auditing process on catch, there is now an informal check system in place within the sector to monitor each other. As with any new management system, the NMF has worked out some problems in the year it's been operational. Some individuals are a fan of the new system and some are not. Only time will tell if the sector management approach to catch shares continues and grows in popularity around the country.

Here in the Gulf of Mexico, sector refers to sector separation. Sector separation has some similarities to sector management in the idea of groups instead of individuals, but the formation of sectors is very different. Sector separation involves the recreational sector and charter for hire sector.

When it comes to catch shares or allowable catch or trip limits, or any of the various methods to manage fisheries, there are two main groups or sectors: recreational and commercial. While commercial fisheries have strict reporting guidelines, it is hard to get an accurate assessment of the recreational catch in the Gulf of Mexico. Currently, charter or for-hire vessels and anglers fall into the recreational sector. However, there has been a lot of attention on the concept of splitting the recreational sector into private anglers and charter.

Harvest quotas for managed fish species would now be split among the three sectors instead of the existing two. With that comes the highly controversial question of how to change the split between these two sectors. Some feel this places the private boat owner angler against those who rely on charter boats for their offshore fishing trips. Charter boats argue they should not be grouped with recreational anglers as their livelihoods depend on fishing like the commercial sector. Save our sector, a for-hire advocacy group, says, "the for-hire fleet would have its own set of accountability measures that could prevent the overharvest of fish."

With sector separation would come strict reporting guidelines for charters like the commercial fleet currently has. However, non-charter recreational groups argue this sector separation will take away fish from them, and if seasons are different then only individuals who can afford to hire a charter will be allowed to fish during those seasons. Like the future of sector management in the north, only time will tell the future of sector separation in the south.

-Julie Anderson

Sources:

<http://www.nero.noaa.gov/sfd/sectordocs/Sector%20Management%20Fact%20Sheet%20Aug%2009.pdf>

http://www.noaa.gov/factsheets/new%20version/catch_shares.pdf

<http://saveoursector.com/WhatWeDo/SectorSeparation.aspx>

Second Stop on Louisiana Saltwater Series Tournament Trail

On Saturday, April 30, 2011, the second annual Louisiana Saltwater Series made its second stop on the tournament trail at Calcasieu Point Landing in Lake Charles with 26 boats entered and more than \$4,000 awarded in cash prizes.

The series was developed by LDWF in conjunction with the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Foundation to promote conservation of Louisiana's saltwater sport fish resources and targets one of Louisiana's most valuable sport fish, redfish. Taking home first place overall were Blake Champion and Mike Lambert with a two fish total weight of 11.7 pounds.

Relative Sea Level Rise

Whether you believe that man has had any effect on earth's climate or in global warming, the science is out there to show that the sea level along the Gulf coast is rising. The world's oceans have been on the rise since the peak of the last ice age over 18,000 years ago. Sea level is rising along most of the U.S. coast and around the world. In the last century, sea level rose five to six inches more than the global average along the Mid-Atlantic and Gulf coasts because coastal lands there are subsiding. The combination of sea level rise and land subsidence is referred to as relative sea level rise. In most journal articles and government reports on sea level rise, Louisiana is listed as the area to be most impacted by relative sea level rise. While Cameron Parish's coastal area is experiencing the least impact of any coastal parish from relative sea level rise, the impact still is quite significant.

The two National Weather Service tide stations to Cameron's east and west, which have more than 100 years of data, show an average relative sea level rise of 5.66 mm per year for Sabine Pass, Tx., and 9.65 mm per year for Eugene Island, La. This converts to one third of an inch per year or three inches per decade. Three inches over a decade does not seem like much until you consider that much of Cameron Parish has an elevation of three feet or less.

What does this mean for Cameron Parish and its residents?

1. Let's assume that a high tide of three feet puts water in the streets in downtown Cameron. A three-foot tide is not the norm, but does happen several times per year. Using the three-inch per decade average in relative sea level rise, in 30 years (nine inch increase in relative sea level) a two-foot, three- inch tide will put water in the streets. The impact: A two-foot, three-inch tide is quite common.
2. Assume the life of a tidal marsh management project with water control structures is 30 years. The management goal of the project is constructed to maintain water levels at a set water level. Over the 30 year life of the project, tide water levels will be 9 inches higher than planned for, making management goals of the project nearly impossible.

Lagniappe Fisheries Newsletter

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Relative sea level rise will affect every aspect of coastal activities. This is not meant to alarm anyone, only to raise awareness and to plan for sustainable future activities. Anyone who has lived on the coast for 30 years or so realizes in normal years there is more water to land ratio than ever before.

-Kevin A. Savoie

Sources:

<http://www.epa.gov/climatechange/effects/coastal/index.html>

<http://tidesandcurrents.noaa.gov/sltrends/sltrends.shtml>

http://sos.noaa.gov/datasets/Ocean/sea_level.html

Cabela's "Wanna Go Fishing for Millions" Partners with LDWF

Fish worth up to \$2.2 million could soon be swimming in Louisiana waters

Get out your shiny lures and round up your fishing gear. Cabela's announced Wanna Go Fishing for Millions?, a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to win millions of dollars in cash and prizes by enjoying one of America's favorite pastimes – fishing.

Cabela's is tagging hundreds of fish in selected waters in states that have Cabela's retail stores – including Louisiana – and every one of them is a winner. Among the winning fish, there are grand prize winners that may qualify for additional bonuses based on the winning angler using or wearing sponsors' products when they catch a tagged fish.

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is Cabela's state partner and will tag fish in selected waters. The official start of the contest is May 14, and the contest runs through July 14.

Winning is as easy as baiting a hook. Go to LDWF's website for contest information at www.wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/recreational-fishing. Anglers need to pre-register and hit their local waters between May 14 and July 14 for their chance at winning a fish worth \$2.2 million. Anglers also need a valid fishing license in order to participate in the contest. To purchase a Louisiana fishing license, visit www.wlf.louisiana.gov/licenses/fishing.

Be Mindful of Wildlife Displaced by Flooding

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) reminds the public to be mindful of wildlife species forced into populated areas by flood waters from the Mississippi River and spillways.

Rising waters force wildlife from flooded habitat into adjacent residential and commercial areas where they may come into contact with residents. LDWF urges citizens to minimize contact with animals while they seek temporary refuge from their flooded home range.

Wild animals not posing a threat to humans should be left alone and should not be fed. Feeding wild animals will encourage those animals to remain in the vicinity of a new food source when they should be allowed to find natural habitat and food sources on their own.

Basic Tips:

- Avoid areas where displaced wildlife has taken refuge.
- Avoid interaction with and do not feed displaced wildlife.
- Avoid roadways near flooded areas to reduce likelihood of disturbance and collisions with wildlife.

Species of Concern:

Black Bears: The Louisiana black bear remains on the federal Threatened and Endangered Species List. The black bear is a species of concern during a flood incident when high water moves bears out of their habitat within the Mississippi Alluvial Valley. For assistance with black bears that may be forced into populated areas by flood waters, call 800/442-2511 toll free.

Alligators, Snakes: Flood waters will carry reptiles into populated areas where they may not normally be noted in significant numbers. Following the impact of flood waters, exercise extreme caution when salvaging possessions from flooded areas. Wildlife, especially reptiles, may remain in flooded areas and pose a safety threat.

Poisonous snake species in Louisiana include the canebrake rattlesnake, the copperhead, the cottonmouth, the eastern diamondback rattlesnake, the harlequin coral snake, the pygmy rattlesnake and the Texas coral snake. For more information on snake species found in Louisiana, including frequently asked questions, visit LDWF's website at this link: www.wlf.louisiana.gov/resource/snakes-louisiana.

Deer, Feral Hogs: Deer and feral hog populations within the Mississippi Alluvial Valley represent the two large quadruped species that may appear in populated areas in significant numbers as flood waters move wild animals out of natural habitat. As is the case with all wild animals, how these species will react to humans in close contact situations is unpredictable. LDWF recommends allowing these species, when sighted individually or in groups, to move unimpeded through flooded areas as they seek higher ground.

For assistance with these, or any other wildlife species, that endanger human health or safety, call the following LDWF field offices at:

- Baton Rouge 225/765-2800
- Hammond 985/543-4777
- Monroe 318/343-4044
- New Iberia 337/373-0032
- Opelousas 337/948-0255
- Pineville 318/487-5885

First Annual Boating Education Lagniappe Day Certifies 264 Boaters

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) certified 264 boaters statewide after their first ever “Boating Education Lagniappe Day” on May 14.

Boating Education Lagniappe Day ran from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at eight locations across the state and consisted of the NASBLA boating education course, food and drinks, giveaways and door prizes all free of charge to the public.

“We are extremely pleased with the turnout as more than 250 boaters will now be safer when boating on Louisiana waterways,” said LDWF Lt. Col. Jeff Mayne, the state’s boating law administrator.

“We wanted to make this day full of fun and still be educational at the same time and I feel we accomplished both goals.”

The National Associations of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) safe boating certification is mandatory for anybody born after Jan. 1, 1984, who wants to operate a motorboat in excess of 10 horsepower.

Sponsors for the Boating Education Lagniappe Day are the Louisiana Wildlife Agents Association, Academy Sports and Outdoors, Walmart, Cabela’s, Holiday Inn, Calcasieu Parish District Attorney’s Office, Calcasieu Parish Sheriff’s Office, CCA of Louisiana, All Star Pontiac in Sulphur, Coca-Cola of Lake Charles, Songy’s Sporting Goods of Houma and Gene Kile Inc.

For more information on boating regulations and safety, please www.wlf.louisiana.gov/boating. For more information on boating education courses, please visit www.wlf.louisiana.gov/boating/courses.

Studies have shown that states with a mandatory boating education program have fewer boating incidents that result in fatalities than states that have no boating education program. States with a boating education program for more than 20 years had 3.67 fatalities per 100,000 registered boats, and states with no boating education program had 6.61 fatalities per 100,000 boats.

LDWF initiated the state’s boating education program in 2003 and has certified over 40,000 boaters during that time.

LOUISIANA RULE CHANGES

Remainder of State Waters Open to Shrimp Harvesting

The remainder of state waters opened for harvest at 6 a.m. Monday, May 23.

This opening specifically includes inshore waters north of the northern shore of the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet (MRGO) to the Louisiana/Mississippi state line. State waters south of the MRGO opened to shrimping on May 16. Effective with this opening, all state inside and outside waters will be open to shrimp harvesting.

The Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission set this shrimp season dates along with those for Shrimp Management Zones 2 and 3 at its May 5 meeting. The commission also provided authority to LDWF Secretary Robert Barham to delay or modify shrimp season opening dates if biological and/or technical data indicate the need.

LDWF has received reports of small size shrimp in commercial harvests from certain waters and is closely monitoring the shrimp resource statewide through extensive trawl sampling surveys and boarding and dockside interviews. LDWF biologists are also monitoring the movement of flood waters into coastal waters and their impacts on estuarine and marine species. LDWF is prepared to take appropriate action to modify shrimp seasons if the resource is at risk.

2011 Free Fishing Weekend in Louisiana Set for June 11-12

The Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission officially proclaimed June 11-12 as “Free Fishing Weekend” at the May 5 commission meeting. The promotional fishing dates are provided for novices and non-anglers as an opportunity to experience recreational fishing in fresh or salt water without the purchase of a recreational fishing license.

The program is part of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) efforts to attract more participants into the ranks of licensed fishermen. Fishing license fees support LDWF’s conservation efforts including habitat management.

“LDWF is encouraging licensed recreational fishermen to introduce someone to fishing on the weekend of June 11-12,” said John Sturgis, LDWF education manager. “It’s an activity anyone of any age can enjoy, even without a boat. Louisiana offers some of the best bank and pier fishing opportunities in the south.”

“Free Fishing Weekend” is a part of Fishing Week in Louisiana that runs from June 6-12. The event was created to help reverse the trend of declining participation in outdoor activities across America.

In conjunction with Free Fishing Weekend, LDWF and the Office of State Parks will host Family Fishing Day on Saturday, June 11 at the following sites: Bogue Chitto State Park, Franklinton; Chicot State Park, Ville Platte; Lake D’Arbonne State Park, Farmerville; and within New Orleans City Park. Family Fishing Day at these park sites will be offered from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Participants are encouraged to bring their own fishing gear for pier or bank fishing. LDWF will provide basic fishing gear for anyone needing gear for the day.

Entrance fees at the three state parks hosting Family Fishing Day will be waived on June 11. For information and directions to all Louisiana State Parks and New Orleans City Park, visit www.lastateparks.com.

Commercial Fisheries Failure in Louisiana Requested

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Secretary Robert Barham sent a letter to the U.S. Department of Commerce Secretary Gary Locke asking for swift application of a commercial fisheries failure declaration in anticipation of the opening of the Bonnet Carré Spillway in response to rising waters in the Mississippi River. The letter, sent May 6, 2011, also requested support from the Department of Commerce’s Economic Development Administration (EDA) for commercial and recreational fishing and associated businesses. The proactive declaration and support would provide financial assistance to individual business owners in areas that may be impacted, and assistance for the restoration of recreational and commercial fisheries.

Secretary Barham also sent a letter to U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) Administrator Karen Mills requesting the activation of all appropriate federal disaster declaration clauses that would enable the SBA to assist the small businesses in the state that may be impacted by the opening of the Bonnet Carré Spillway and Morganza Spillway. In particular, Barham also asked that Mills consider temporarily suspending loan repayments for coastal businesses that may be impacted by flood waters that currently have SBA disaster and economic injury loans as a result of the 2010 Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, and hurricanes Katrina, Rita, Ike and Gustav.

State Sets Season for Recreational Catch of Red Snapper

The 2011 recreational fishing season for red snapper will open on June 1 and close on July 19. LDWF Secretary Robert Barham set this season to reflect the season set in federal waters by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The recreational fishing season for red snapper will close in federal and state waters at 12:01 a.m., July 19, 2011, and is set to remain closed until 12:01 a.m. June 1, 2012. The daily limit for red snapper is two fish per licensed angler with a minimum size of 16 inches.

Greater Amberjack 2011 Commercial and Recreation Seasons Set

The 2011 seasons for the commercial and recreational harvest of greater amberjack. LDWF Secretary Robert Barham set the seasons to coincide with federal seasons issued by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

Commercial Greater Amberjack Season

The commercial fishery for greater amberjack in Louisiana waters will close at 12:01 a.m. on June 18, 2011, and will remain closed until 12:01 a.m. Jan. 1, 2012.

Recreational Greater Amberjack Season

The 2011 recreational season for greater amberjack will close for a two month period beginning June 1 and reopening Aug. 1.

2011 ALLIGATOR LOTTERY HUNTS

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF), in an effort to increase alligator harvest opportunities, will conduct alligator lottery hunts on four Coastal & Nongame Resources (CNR) Division Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs), 13 Wildlife Division WMAs and 22 public lakes during the 2011 alligator harvest season.

The CNR Division WMAs include: Atchafalaya Delta WMA, St. Mary Parish; Pass A Loutre WMA, Plaquemines Parish; Pointe Aux Chenes WMA, Terrebonne and Lafourche parishes; and Salvador/Timken WMAs, St. Charles Parish.

The Wildlife Division WMAs include: Big Lake WMA, Tensas Parish; Boeuf WMA, Caldwell Parish; Buckhorn WMA, Tensas Parish; Elm Hall WMA, Assumption Parish; Grassy Lake WMA, Avoyelles Parish; Joyce WMA, Tangipahoa Parish; Manchac WMA, St. John the Baptist Parish; Maurepas Swamp WMA, St. John the Baptist, St. James and Ascension parishes; Sherburne WMA (state

portion only), Pointe Coupee and St. Martin parishes; Spring Bayou WMA, Avoyelles Parish; Pearl River WMA, St. Tammany Parish; Red River WMA, Concordia Parish; and Three Rivers WMA, Concordia Parish.

The public lakes include: Lake Bistineau, Webster, Bossier and Bienville parishes; Lake Wallace, Caddo Parish; Black/Cypress Lake, Bossier Parish; Cross Lake, Caddo Parish; Kepler Lake, Bienville Parish; Bayou Desiard North, Ouachita Parish; Caney Lake, Jackson Parish; Bayou Bartholomew, Ouachita and Morehouse parishes; Kincaid Lake, Rapides Parish; Indian Creek, Rapides Parish; Lake Iatt, Grant Parish; Cotile Lake, Rapides Parish; Nantachie Lake, Grant Parish; Saline Lake, Winn Parish; Toledo Bend, Desoto and Sabine parishes; Lake Bruin, Tensas Parish; Lake Concordia, Concordia Parish; Lake St. John, Tensas Parish; Lake St. Joseph, Tensas Parish; Anacoco Lake, Vernon Parish; Caddo Lake, Caddo Parish; and Black Lake, Natchitoches Parish.

Interested participants may print out an application from LDWF's website at www.wlf.louisiana.gov/hunting/lottery-hunts or request an application by phone for CNR Division WMAs at 337-373-0032 or Wildlife Division WMAs and public lakes at 225/765-2346.

To assist applicants in selecting specific WMAs/public lakes, LDWF has posted the percentage of lottery alligator harvest applicants selected in 2010 by WMA or public lake on its website at www.wlf.louisiana.gov/lottery-alligator-harvest-program.

Applications and non-refundable application fees (\$5) must be submitted to the address indicated on corresponding applications and be postmarked by July 8, 2011. Only one of the three available lottery alligator harvest applications may be submitted per applicant. Additional applications will result in voiding all applications of the applicant.

The lottery alligator harvests will be conducted between Aug. 31 and Oct. 6, 2011. Exact harvest dates will vary by WMA/public lake and will be specified at the time selected hunters are notified.

Applicants must be a legal Louisiana resident and 16 years of age or older. All successful applicants will be required to purchase an alligator hunting license (\$25). Successful applicants for WMAs will be required to submit payments (\$40) for each alligator tag allocated.

All applicants meeting the application requirements will be entered into a randomized computer drawing, which will take place in August 2011. Selected hunters will be notified by mail.

For more information concerning CNR Division WMAs, contact Lance Campbell at 337/373-0032 or ljcampbell@wlf.la.gov. For more information concerning Wildlife Division WMAs or public lakes, contact Randy Myers at 225/765-2346 or rmyers@wlf.la.gov.

State Closes Two Oyster Harvest Areas, Allows Some Oyster Relocation

Precautionary closures protect human health; relocation of oysters helps prevent further damage to commercial industry

Louisiana officials announced precautionary closures of two oyster harvesting areas that are receiving large amounts of freshwater intrusion from the opening of the Bonnet Carre' Spillway and from the Mississippi River.

Officials also announced that oysters in some areas east of the Mississippi River may be relocated from beds that will be inundated with fresh water to other seed grounds or oyster leases out of the way of the flood waters coming through the spillway into Lake Pontchartrain and into the Gulf of Mexico. A special permit is required for relocation of oysters from an area closed for traditional harvest to an area specifically for bedding purposes. The permit is not required if the harvest area is open for harvest.

Closures: The Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals is closing oyster harvest areas 1 and 7. The closures will take effect at sunset, Saturday, May 14, 2011. Area 1 is in Lake Borgne in Orleans and St. Bernard parishes, and Area 7 in Plaquemines Parish. Both oyster harvesting areas are on the east side of the Mississippi river.

Resource Relocation: A special bedding-only season has also been announced by state officials today. At an emergency Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission meeting, the commission voted to open a special “bedding-only” oyster season for public seed grounds in the Lake Borgne and Mississippi Sound area in St. Bernard Parish. The special season, which will open at one-half hour before sunrise on Saturday, May 14, 2011, and shall close at one-half hour after sunset on May 31, will allow the oyster industry an opportunity to relocate oysters ahead of possible freshwater impacts from the opening of the Bonnet Carre’ Spillway.

This special oyster season allows the harvest of seed oysters for bedding purposes only in the public oyster seed grounds within:

- Harvest area 1
- Harvest area 2
- That portion of Harvest area 3 located north of a line of latitude 30 degrees 00 minutes 00.0 seconds N and east of a line of longitude 89 degrees 22 minutes 50.0 seconds W.

The special “bedding-only” season described above shall be opened with the following provisions:

1. All oysters on board a vessel actively harvesting oysters in the public seed grounds described above shall be presumed to have been taken from the public seed grounds described above.
2. No oyster harvester who is actively harvesting oysters in the public seed ground described above shall have on board his vessel any sacks or containers which may be used to hold oysters for transport to market.
3. No harvester shall sell, or transport with his vessel, oysters intended for market sales on the same day that he harvested seed oysters from the public seed grounds described above.

Harvestable quantities of oyster resources exist on these public oyster seed grounds. The opening of the Bonnet Carre’ Spillway places those resources in imminent peril. As significant oyster mortalities could be experienced due to the anticipated depression, the special season is a necessary step to protect and preserve Louisiana’s oyster resources.

The commission gave the Secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Robert Barham authorization to take emergency action as necessary to open or close public oyster areas based on the best available biological data.

Beginning Sunday, May 15, 2011, harvesters that seek to participate in the oyster relocation or “bedding-only” season in Harvest Area 1 must have a special permit that requires notification of where transplanted oysters will be relocated. A permit is not required on Saturday, May 14, 2011, because Harvest Area 1 will still be open. Oysters harvested and relocated to a new lease may not be harvested for consumption or for the public marketplace for at least 14 days - ample time for the oysters to filter any contaminants. Permits can be obtained at the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals Office of Public Health Commercial Seafood Program, located at 628 North 4th St., room 156, in downtown Baton Rouge. The special permit requires a \$5,000 bond.

GULF OF MEXICO RULE CHANGES

Federal Waters off Texas Closed to Shrimping

NOAA Fisheries Service announces federal waters from 9 to 200 nautical miles off Texas closed to shrimp trawling at 30 minutes after official sunset, local time, on May 15, 2011, corresponding to the time Texas closes its waters to shrimp trawling.

The shrimp fishery is closed annually off Texas to allow brown shrimp to reach a larger and more valuable size prior to harvest, and to prevent waste of brown shrimp that might otherwise be discarded due to their small size.

The Texas closure ranges from 45 to 90 days. The closing and opening dates of the Texas closure are based on the results of biological sampling by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD). This sampling is used to project the closure, which coincides with brown shrimp in Texas bays and estuaries reaching a mean size of 90 mm, and beginning strong emigrations out of the bays and estuaries during maximum duration ebb tides. The termination date of the Texas closure is based on continued sampling by TPWD to develop projections of when brown shrimp will reach a mean size of 112 mm, and when maximum duration ebb tides will occur.

NOAA Fisheries Service will re-open federal waters off Texas when the state of Texas opens its territorial waters. Historically, the opening has been on or about July 15. If there is a need to adjust the July 15 date for the termination of the closure, notification of the revised termination date will be published in the Federal Register and in additional news bulletins.

Final Rule Re-Defines Actual Ex-Vessel Value, Extends the Annual Maintenance Window for the Individual Fishing Quota Online System and Removes Obsolete Grouper Regulations

NOAA Fisheries Service announces a final rule that re-defines “actual ex-vessel value,” extends the time needed for maintenance of the Gulf of Mexico (Gulf) Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) online system, and removes obsolete regulations regarding the sale of grouper. The final rule published in the Federal Register on April 29, 2011.

Revised Definition of Ex-Vessel Value: Through this rulemaking, NOAA Fisheries Service revises the definition of “actual ex-vessel value” to represent the price paid per pound of fish before any deductions are made for transferred (leased) allocation and goods and services (e.g., bait, ice, fuel, repairs, machinery replacement, etc.). This revision will allow NOAA Fisheries Service to more

accurately analyze the total value of the Gulf red snapper and grouper/tilefish component of the reef fish fishery, and will more appropriately align the definition with the original intent of the IFQ program.

Extend IFQ Online System Maintenance Window: This rulemaking will extend the maintenance window an additional eight hours from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Jan. 1 to allow for more time to conduct end-of-year maintenance. The revision is not expected to have any effects on fishermen or dealers. To date, no landing transactions have been completed between 6 a.m. and 2 p.m. on Jan. 1. Additionally, IFQ participants may still submit an advanced notice of landing via phone or through their vessel monitoring system during the maintenance window.

Remove Obsolete Grouper Regulations: Prior to the implementation of the grouper IFQ, commercial fishing for gag, red grouper, and black grouper was prohibited from Feb. 15 through March 14. Regulations also prohibited the sale of these three species during the Feb. 15 through March 14 closure. With implementation of the IFQ, there was no longer a need for these regulations, and the fishing prohibition was removed. However, NOAA Fisheries Service inadvertently did not remove the regulations prohibiting sale. The final rule removes this obsolete regulation.

Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Bottom Longline Vessels Seasonal Closure

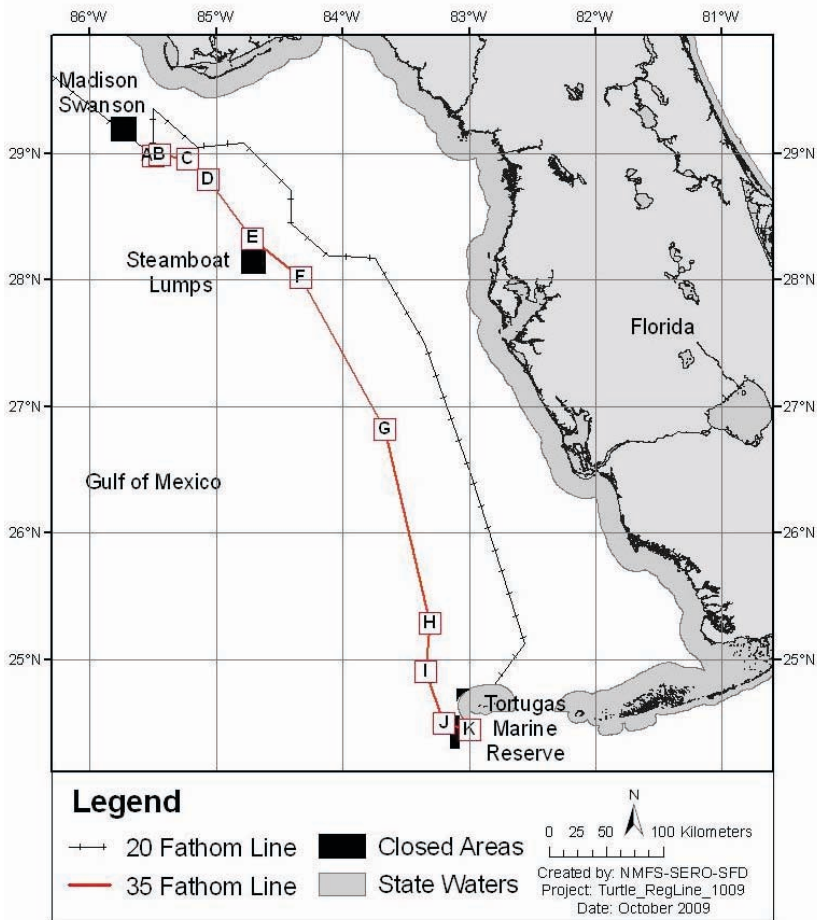
NOAA Fisheries Service reminds fishermen of the seasonal bottom longline closure in the Gulf of Mexico from June 1, 2011, through Aug. 31, 2011. This regulation prohibits the use of bottom longline gear in the reef fish fishery east of Cape San Blas, Florida, shoreward of a line approximating the 35-fathom depth contour (see map and table).

NOAA Fisheries Service published a final rule to implement Amendment 31 to the Fishery Management Plan for Reef Fish Resources in the Gulf of Mexico in the *Federal Register* on April 26, 2010, (75 FR 21512). These provisions were effective May 26, 2010.

Additional requirements for bottom longline vessels include possession of the bottom longline endorsement and restriction of the number of hooks that may be possessed onboard each reef fish bottom longline vessel to 1,000 hooks total, only 750 of which may be fished or rigged for fishing at any given time.

This bulletin provides only a summary of the information pertinent to the rule. Any discrepancies between this bulletin and the rule as published in the Federal Register will be resolved in favor of the Federal Register.

	Longitude West	Latitude North
Waypoint	Degree Decimal Minute	Degree Decimal Minute
A	85°30.00'	28°58.70'
B	85°26.70'	28°59.25'
C	85°13.80'	28°57.00'
D	85°03.90'	28°47.40'
E	84°43.00'	28°19.50'
F	84°20.00'	28°00.80'
G	83°40.00'	26°48.80'
H	83°19.00'	25°17.00'
I	83°21.00'	24°54.00'
J	83°12.30'	24°29.50'
K	83°00.00'	24°26.50'



Gulf Fishery News

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Inside this issue:

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- From the Deck of the Shipp*
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- Gag Interim Rule*
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- *Proposed Amendments*
- *REMINDER – Gulf Council Seeking Applicants for Ad Hoc Head Boat Individual Fishing Quota Advisory Panel*
- *Major Chris Blankenship Promoted to Director of Marine Resources*
- *Marine Recreational Information Program Update*
- *Gulf Council Gets Seat on Gulf of Mexico Alliance*
- *Panel and Committee Appointments*

OTHER REGULATION CHANGES

Federal Waters off South Carolina to Re-open to Shrimping

NOAA Fisheries Service announces that federal waters within 25 nautical miles of the federal-state water boundary off South Carolina will re-open to fishing for brown, pink, and white shrimp at 12:01 a.m. June 7, 2011. South Carolina state waters remain closed and will re-open with the opening of its brown shrimp season. This action was taken at the request of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council and the State of South Carolina. The state made their request to close federal waters after determining there has been greater than an 80 percent mortality of overwintering white shrimp due to severe cold weather in the region. The state also requested that the closure would not extend beyond June 7, 2011.

Fish Gear Coordinates Dec. 2010 - April 2011

Dec. 2010:

In accordance with the provisions of R.S. 56:700.1 et. seq., notice is given that five claims in the amount of \$15,334.83 were received for payment during the period Dec. 1, 2010 – Dec. 31, 2010. There were five paid and zero denied.

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates of reported underwater obstructions are:

29 14.029	91 18.636	TERREBONNE
29 15.241	90 54.232	TERREBONNE
29 31.950	92 18.600	VERMILION
29 36.517	89 43.529	PLAQUEMINES

Jan. – April 2011:

In accordance with the provisions of R.S. 56:700.1 et. seq., notice is given that 15 claims in the amount of \$57,776.54 were received for payment during the period Jan. 1, 2011 - April 30, 2011. There were 13 paid and two denied.

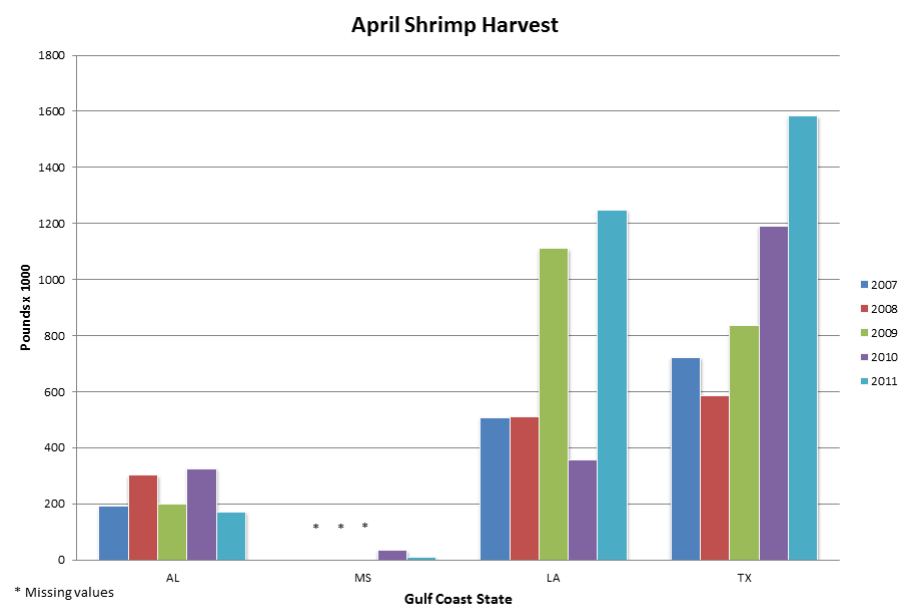
Latitude/Longitude Coordinates of reported underwater obstructions are:

29 11.231	90 18.343	LAFOURCHE
29 35.065	91 43.909	IBERIA
29 43.232	89 32.805	ST. BERNARD
29 44.153	89 33.133	ST. BERNARD
29 44.696	89 27.274	ST. BERNARD
29 49.357	89 36.388	ST. BERNARD
30 02.170	89 20.980	ST. BERNARD
30 03.808	89 10.667	ST. BERNARD
30 11.753	89 46.907	ST. TAMMANY
93 19.393	29 50.447	CAMERON

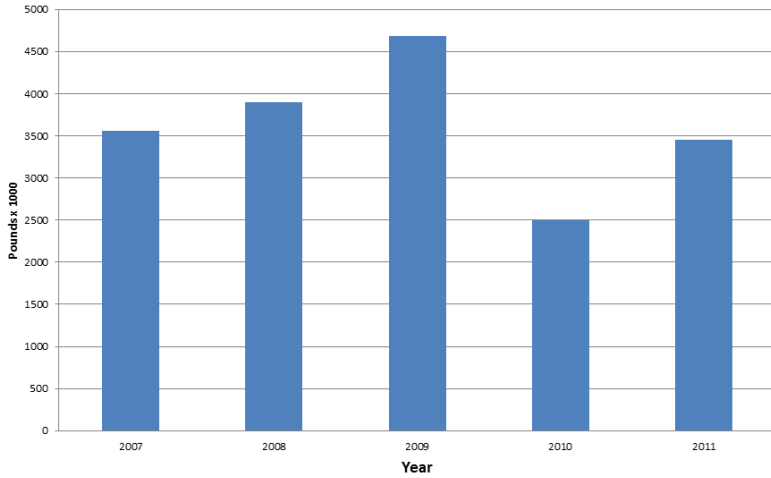
A list of claimants and amounts paid can be obtained from Gwendolyn Thomas, administrator, Fishermen's Gear Compensation Fund, P.O. Box 44277, Baton Rouge, LA 70804 or you can call 225/342-0122.

Louisiana Shrimp Watch

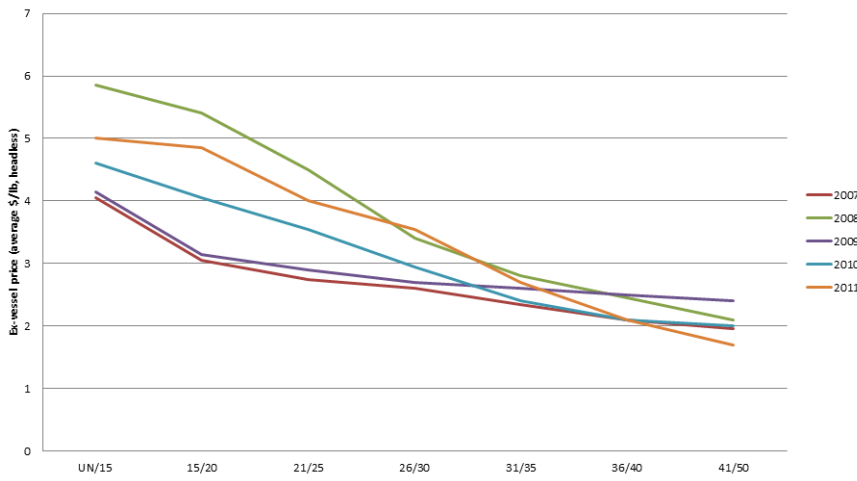
Louisiana specific data portrayed in the graphics are selected from preliminary data posted by NOAA on their website. All data portrayed are subject to final revision and approval by NOAA. Shrimp landings are ex-vessel prices, inclusive of all species harvested. Missing, inadequate or withheld reports 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: www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/st1/market_news/index.html.



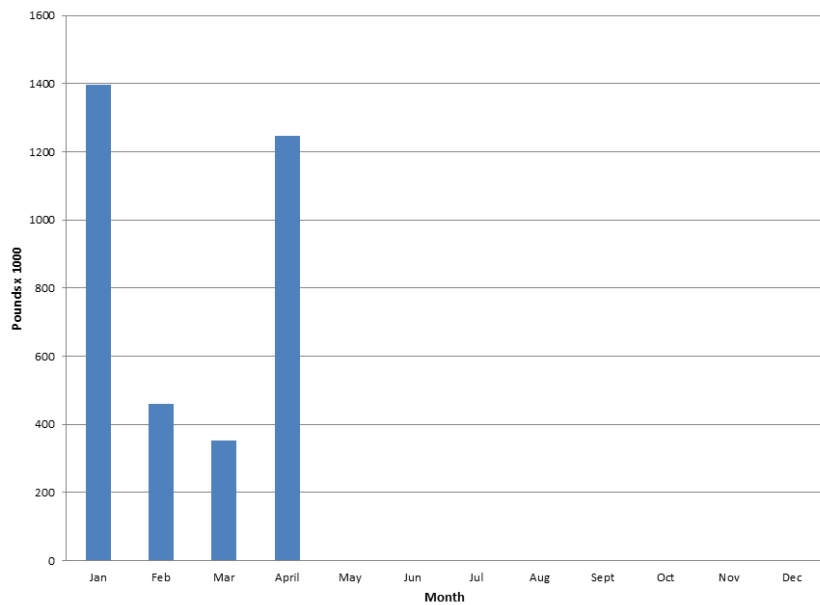
LA Year To Date 2011 Shrimp Harvest



April Northern GoM Shrimp Prices



LA 2011 Shrimp Harvest



The Gumbo Pot

If you have a favorite seafood recipe that you would like to share, please send it to Julie Anderson janderson@agcenter.lsu.edu for inclusion in future issues.



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We would like to hear from you! Please contact us regarding fishery questions, comments, or concerns you would like to see covered in the Lagniappe. Anyone interested in submitting information, such as articles, editorials, or photographs pertaining to fishing or fisheries management is encouraged to do so.

Please contact Lagniappe editor Julie Anderson at janderson@agcenter.lsu.edu

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