

Lagniappe



Research and Extension Programs

Agriculture
Economic/Community Development
Environment/Natural Resources
Families/Nutrition/Health
4-H Youth Programs

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ENDANGERED STATUS CONSIDERED FOR EELS

Responding to petitions from two individuals and a request by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service will review the status of the American eel, *Anguilla rostrata*. Once the review is complete, the agencies will decide whether the species should be listed as an endangered or threatened species.



The only freshwater eel in the western hemisphere, American eels begin their lives in the mid-Atlantic Sargasso Sea. About a year later, they migrate to freshwater rivers, lakes and coastal areas where they live for 7 to 30 years. At maturity, eels return to the Sargasso Sea to spawn and die. Because the eel spends a portion of its life in the marine environment and a portion of its life in freshwater, it falls under the responsibilities of both agencies, so they will work together on the issue. The eel is found in all Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico states.

Anyone wishing to submit information regarding the American eel they may do so by writing to: Martin Miller, Chief, Endangered Species, Northeast Regional Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 300 Westgate Center Drive, Hadley, MA 01035 or by e-mail to: AmericanEel@fws.gov. Comments must be received by September 4, 2005.

For more information about the American eel and this finding, visit the Fish and Wildlife Service's web site at <http://northeast.fws.gov/ameel>.

NEW FISHERIES LAWS

The following bills were passed by the Regular Session of the 2005 Louisiana Legislature and will go into effect on August 15 (unless otherwise noted). In these bill summaries, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is referred to as LDWF, the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission as LWFC, the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources as LDNR, the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality as LDEQ, the Department of Agriculture and Forestry as LDAF, and the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals as LDHH.



House Bill 124 (Act 195) – Wooten, Dartez, Dupre, & B. Gautreaux.

Requires that from July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006 that any recreational fishermen who purchases a trawl gear license must pay a \$10 fee. Any commercial fisherman who purchases a trawl, skimmer, or butterfly gear license for 2006 shall pay a \$15 fee. The funds from the fees shall be deposited in the Shrimp Trade Petition Account. Each person shall be required to pay the fee only once, no matter how many gear licenses he purchases. The provisions of this act shall cease to be effective on November 14, 2005 if the U.S. International Trade Commission rules that shrimp harvesters are not eligible for Byrd money. Effective July 1, 2005.

House Bill 127 (Act 42) – Frith, Baldone & Romero

Defines theft of crawfish to include fraudulent practices as well as taking without consent. Provides penalties based on the value of crawfish involved.

- * \$500 or more – Up to 10 years imprisonment and a \$3,000 fine
- * \$300 to 499 – Up to 2 years imprisonment and a \$2,000 fine
- * \$299 or less – Up to 6 months imprisonment and a \$500 fine. Repeat offenders may be imprisoned up to 2 years and fined up to \$2,000.

House Bill 154 (Act 354) – Pitre, Baldone & Dupre

Prohibits towns of less than 25,000 people from passing laws that prevent fishermen or their employees from peddling seafood on the streets and in public places.

House Bill 204 (Act 203) – Cazayoux

Exempts the dredging of the bottom of False River to remove sediments and to help navigation and recreation from the payment of royalties.

House Bill 238 (Act 206) – St. Germain

Allows 50% instead \$50 from the sale of lifetime hunting and fishing licenses to be deposited in the Conservation Fund, with the rest going into the Lifetime License Endowment Trust Fund. Specifies how the money of the trust fund and undistributed returns shall be invested in stocks, bonds, debentures, notes, and other investments. No more than 35% can be in stocks.

House Bill 245 (Act 172) – T. Powell

Deletes the "crab trap on a trotline" recreational and commercial gear licenses. Increases the recreational crab trap gear fee from \$10 to \$15, with \$5 being dedicated to the Derelict Crab Trap Removal Program Account. Increases the commercial crab trap gear fee from \$25 to \$35, with \$5 being dedicated to the Derelict Crab Trap Removal Program Account, and \$5 being dedicated to the Crab Promotion and Marketing Account within the Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Fund.

House Bill 331 (Act 219) – Hill, Frith and Walsworth

Increases from 2 to 4 the number of representatives on the Louisiana Fur and Alligator Advisory Council who are active alligator farmers.

House Bill 339 (Act 57)–Pitre

Authorizes the Grand Isle Port Commission to use a tract in Caminada Pass until

August 15, 2015 for the purpose of off-bottom oyster culture, in cooperation with the Louisiana Sea Grant Program.

House Bill 397 (Act 226) – Baldone

Repeals the requirement for the immediate destruction of any net or beam trawl that is seized because it is considered abandoned.

House Bill 475 (Act 183) – St. Germain

Updates the shrimp trawling/menhaden line in Breton and Chandeleur Sounds.

House Bill 477 (Act 184) – Dove

Prohibits any local game and fish commission appointed by a parish government from regulating the movement, mooring or position of any commercial industrial vessel on navigable waters with its jurisdiction.

House Bill 494 (Act 371) – St. Germain

Changes the area where recreational wire nets and recreational hoop nets can be used. East of Baton Rouge, these nets may only be used north of Interstate Highway 12 instead of north of Interstate Highway 10. West of Baton Rouge these nets may be legally used north of Interstate Highway 10 instead of north of the geographical area between Baton Rouge and Ragley.

House Bill 515 (Act 89) – Pierre

Increases the amount assessed for mineral leases and deposited in the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Conservation Fund from \$10 per acre to \$15 per acre.

House Bill 587 (Act 93) – Odinet

Authorizes LDWF to permit the use of devices to protect oysters on leased areas from predators. Directs LDWF to develop rules for such a permit. The rules shall require an application fee of \$100 and fee of \$50 per acre, up to \$1,000. The material used for the device cannot be made of monofilament or multifilament, cannot resemble a gill net, strike net or trammel net, cannot have openings larger than 1½-inches stretched, and are required to be approved by the LWFC and both Legislative Natural Resources Committees. The device cannot raise the profile of the water bottom by more than 6 inches and more than one-tenth of the depth of the water. The devices cannot interfere with the movement of marine life. An area permitted for a device to protect oysters cannot be larger than 10 acres and must meet LDHH standards. Only one device may be used per lease. All permits, including a coastal use permit must be obtained before applying for an LDWF permit. LDWF may permit the use of devices on no more than 100 acres east of the Mississippi River, 100 acres between the Mississippi River and Bayou Lafourche, 100 acres from Bayou Lafourche to the Atchafalaya River, and 100 acres west of the Atchafalaya River. Devices may only be permitted for use during the months of March, April, October, and November. The permit shall require the leaseholder to have liability insurance. The law allowing the use of devices to protect oysters shall end on January 1, 2011.

The act also makes changes in the provisions of the current law on claims of damages to oyster beds and grounds by oil and gas activity. Effective upon signature of the governor.

House Bill 596 (Act 93) – Fannin

Creates the Jackson Parish Dugdemona Watershed Authority.

House Bill 617 (Act 95) – Kennard & Thompson

Prohibits the use and possession of recreational hoop nets, recreational wire nets, yo-yos, trotlines, or slat traps in Poverty Point Reservoir.

House Bill 752 (Act 102) – Dartez, St. Germain & Dupre

Increases the maximum fine for first offense of class four violations from \$750 to \$900, and decreases the maximum fine for second offense from \$3,000 to \$999. Trawling in closed season is a class four violation. Any person convicted of trawling during closed season twice in a 5-year period is ineligible to hold a commercial or recreational trawl, butterfly or skimmer license for 3 years. Any person convicted 3 or more times shall be illegible for such licenses for 10 years. Anyone ineligible to hold such licenses cannot be on board a boat or vessel that is shrimping, that possesses shrimp gear, or that possesses shrimp unless the vessel has on board an operating vessel monitoring system that LDWF can monitor.

Criminal penalties were also added for trawling in closed season. For first offense, the violator's trawl, skimmer or butterfly net license may be revoked for 1 year and the violator sentenced to 40 hours of community service. For second offense, the licenses must be revoked for 3 years and the offender may be sentenced to serve community service instead of jail time. For the third or later offenses, the licenses must be revoked for 10 years and the violator may be sentenced to serve community service instead of jail time, except for 30 days. If litter abatement community service is available, the community service in the sentence must be served by picking up litter.

House Concurrent Resolution 51 – Damico

Urges and requests LDEQ, with public, industry, and agency involvement, to develop a mercury action plan.

House Concurrent Resolution 104 – Odinet & others

Expresses support for the Louisiana shrimp industry and the "Bonne Crevette" marketing campaign for wild-caught Louisiana shrimp.

House Concurrent Resolution 85 – Jack Smith & St. Germain

Establishes the Wild-Caught Crawfish Task Force to advise LDWF on crawfish management, marketing, and development of the wild-caught crawfish industry.

Senate Bill 224 (Act 133) – Hollis

Provides for allowing local outlets to sell and issue commercial fishing licenses and boat registrations similar to the way that recreational licenses are sold by local outlets. Effective upon signature by the governor.

Senate Bill 235 (Act 116) – Ullo, Toomy & Wooton

Authorizes the Jefferson Parish Council and Jefferson Parish towns to regulate the operation of air boats.

Senate Bill 278 (Act 307) – Nevers, Richie & Strain

Provides for authority, composition, duties, responsibilities, powers, and functions of the Washington Parish Reservoir District.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 12 – Mount & others

Requests U.S. Congress to provide funding to dredge Calcasieu Ship Channel to its authorized depth of 40 feet.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 66 – Nevers & others

Requests U.S. Congress to permit continued public access to the West Pearl River Navigational Canal and to extend the closure date of June, 2005 until a long-term solution can be found.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 76 – Dardenne

Urges and requests that the House and Senate Committees on Agriculture, Forestry, Aquaculture, and Rural Development meet jointly to study the possibility of creating a Louisiana agricultural and seafood products purchase program and a purchasing board to oversee the program. The purchased agricultural and seafood products would be distributed by food banks.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 111 – McPherson

Urges and requests the Louisiana state land office to issue public notices of preliminary water bottom ownership determinations.

Senate Concurrent Resolution 117 – Boasso & others

Requests U.S. Congress and the Louisiana Congressional Delegation to protect the right of state and local governments to comment on applications for new liquefied natural gas (LNG) facilities and the right of the governor to veto the approval of such facilities. Also requests Congress to direct the U.S. Maritime Administration to require that the environmental impacts of offshore LNG terminals to be investigated and considered before the terminals are licensed.

SEAFOOD HACCP AND SANITATION TRAINING COURSES OFFERED

The LSU AgCenter/Louisiana Sea Grant Seafood Technology Program is offering instruction of seafood Sanitation Control Procedures (SCP) and Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) training courses in Baton Rouge on the LSU campus in late August. The one-day SCP course is offered on Tuesday, August 23, 2005, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. The three-day HACCP course takes place from Wednesday to Friday, August 24-26, 2005, starting at 8:00 a.m. each day.

Both courses are sponsored by the Association of Food & Drug Officials, and students will receive certificates of completion from AFDO. The HACCP certificate

is recognized as proof of training required by the FDA seafood HACCP regulation. The SCP training is not required, but covers key sanitation controls and monitoring that are covered by good management practices (GMP) and HACCP regulations.

The SCP course registration fee is \$90. The three-day HACCP course registration is \$160, which includes refreshments, but not meals nor lodging. For more information, contact Jeff Schwab (225-578-2631, jschwab@agcenter.lsu.edu) or Jon Bell (225-578-5190, jonbell@agcenter.lsu.edu)

HOTLINE FOR HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Management Division's toll-free telephone line containing basic information about permitting, regulations, and catch reporting for all Atlantic and Gulf HMS fisheries is now operational. Highly migratory species include tunas, sharks, billfish, and swordfish.

The information line can be reached by dialing 1-800-894-5528. It offers recorded information on the requirements for HMS permits, and provides a connection to the telephone numbers where HMS permits, including the permit required to land recreationally-caught sharks, tunas, billfish, and swordfish, may be purchased. It also provides information for reporting bluefin tuna landings and a link to report catches of billfish and swordfish.

It contains recorded information about current regulations for swordfish, sharks, and billfish, with a connection to the 1-888-USA-TUNA (888-872-8862) line for information about HMS tunas. There is also a call-back-feature, where constituents may request pamphlets, brochures, or placards for posting on their vessels. The callback feature also provides constituents with an opportunity to leave questions and comments for a later response by HMS staff members.

A variety of telephone numbers and web address are referenced throughout the site, as well as direct connections to several National Marine Fisheries offices.

M.P.A. INFORMATION REVIEW

On July 18, the National Marine Protected Areas Center held a public meeting in New Orleans called an "MPA Dialogue". This meeting was held as part of a national effort to determine what cultural and natural marine resources, inshore as well as offshore, should be protected by marine protected areas (MPAs). In September 2000, right after the concept of MPAs came on the scene we published a newsletter article on the subject. Because the issue is back on the front burner, we have chosen to reprint this article in its entirety below.

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS: CONTROVERSY OR CURE-ALL

On May 26, President Clinton signed Executive Order #13158 which directs each federal agency that has the authority to manage marine protected areas (MPAs) to "enhance and expand protection of existing MPAs and to establish and recommend new MPAs." The order called for all types of U.S. marine ecosystems to be included in these MPAs.

The executive order was prompted by a letter to Clinton from the Marine Conservation Biology Institute (MCBI). As MCBI requested, Clinton directed the creation of a "Marine Protected Areas Center" to develop a framework for a national MPA system and provide federal, state and local governments with a clearinghouse for information, technologies, and strategies to support the system. MCBI is calling for 20% of each marine ecosystem type to be set aside as MPAs by the year 2015.

Marine protected areas have been called a variety of names, including marine fishery reserves, marine reserves, no-take reserves, zones or areas, conservation districts, non-consumption zones, sanctuaries, and others. The serious consideration of using areas closed to all fishing as a management tool first arose in the U.S. in 1990 from a report delivered to the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council by its Snapper-Grouper Plan Development Team. The team was created to review the status of trends in the snapper-grouper fishery and make management recommendations to the council. They concluded that area closures were needed to protect both ecosystems and the reef fish fishery.

When first proposed, few people thought that any agency would seriously consider closing areas to all fishing, but the idea kept coming up as a solution to problems that other management didn't handle. Now a growing number of scientists (and environmentalists) are reaching agreement that marine protected areas deserve serious consideration.

Unfortunately, MPAs have produced a very negative reaction from much of the national recreational fisheries leadership. At the recent *RecFish 2000* symposium in San Diego, Mike Hayden, President of the American Sportfishing Institute went on record strongly opposing MPAs, calling them the most serious threat to recreational fishing being done under the disguise of marine conservation. The Recreational Fishing Alliance has also expressed disapproval of MPA use. An editorial expressing strong concern over MPAs was published by *Salt Water Sportsman* magazine in August. The International Game Fish Association in the July/August, 2000 edition of its *International Angler* magazine published an open letter (which 35 other organizations had signed) to President Clinton asking him to reconsider his executive order. The letter calls MPAs "ill-advised" and states that the right to fish is being taken from American families. Finally, National Marine Fisheries Service has been sued over the creation of closed areas in the Gulf of Mexico to protect concentrations of spawning gag grouper. How did such a controversial fisheries management tool come into consideration?

Fisheries management techniques such as size limits, bag limits, quotas, and seasons have been the methods traditionally used by managers to manage fisheries. Often, these don't work to prevent overfishing. Trip and bag limits can be gotten around by taking more trips. Size limits can fail due to bycatch mortality (deaths) from other fisheries and from high mortality levels of undersized released fish. Some measures fail because of poor compliance or poor enforcement.

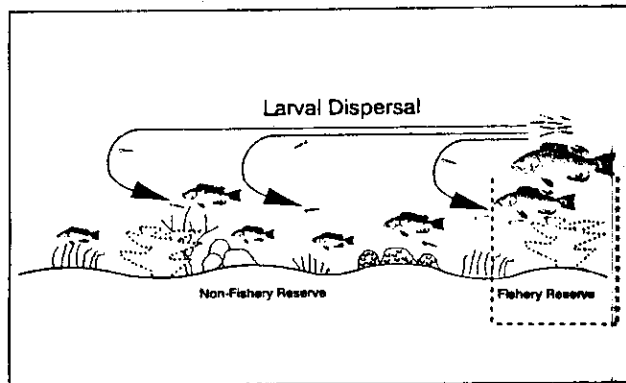
Also, traditional fisheries management does not protect biodiversity, the web of life in which all the different species present in an ecosystem affect and depend upon each other. Fisheries managers focus their attention only on those individual species that fishermen target and usually only after those species are in biological trouble. These single species fisheries management programs can fail because they ignore interactions between all the species present, variations in the environment, and the genetic impacts of fishing.

The fact that animals inherit from their parents such genetic traits such as size, growth rate and even behavior is the basis for animal breeding programs that have produced faster horses, bigger, easier- to-handle cattle, woollier sheep, and chickens that lay more eggs. Unfortunately, we work backwards in fisheries. We catch the bigger, faster-growing, easier-to-catch fish and leave the smaller, slower-growing, harder to catch fish to spawn and produce more fish like them.

Scientists are becoming increasingly concerned that heavy fishing pressure over many fish generations managed under traditional regulations, will produce inferior populations of fish. One estimate is that fishing pressure on wild fish may put one-fourth to one-third as much selective breeding pressure on fish as do breeding programs for domestic animals in agriculture. This pressure may have as much as 5,000 to 12,000 times as much genetic effect as the natural forces of nature have.

An increasing number of scientists are beginning to accept the view that setting aside good-sized blocks of waters from all fishing pressure may be the most effective way to prevent overfishing and to protect the genetics of fish populations. They view marine protected areas as providing many benefits.

- 1) Eggs and larvae (baby fish) from fish spawning in an MPA could restock areas outside of the MPA. It is estimated that putting 20% of red snapper habitat in MPAs would increase egg output 12 times over what it would be without MPAs. Scientists point out that one 24-inch red snapper will produce as many eggs as 212 seventeen-inch fish.



- 2) MPAs can protect the stock of fish from genetic changes towards smaller, slower growing fish caused by fishing pressure. With no fishing fish that have the genetic tendency to grow larger will be protected and allowed to mature and spawn.
- 3) MPAs can help protect against collapse of a fish stock if several years of poor spawning survival occur due to poor environmental conditions.
- 4) MPAs can provide protection against stock collapse if more traditional management does not work to prevent overfishing in a fishery.
- 5) MPAs can provide better data on the natural life cycles and death rates of fish, which will allow for better management in waters that are open to fishing.
- 6) In an MPA, fishermen using one type of gear would not be favored over fishermen using a different gear type. Since no fishing would be allowed, all fishermen would be treated equally.
- 7) With MPAs in place, more fishing with less restrictions could safely be allowed in waters open to fishing.

- 8) MPAs help prevent serial overfishing and bycatch overfishing. Serial overfishing occurs when one species of fish is overfished and fishermen move to the next species, and when it is overfished, on to the next, the whole time catching some of the protected species as bycatch, some of which dies upon release.
- 9) MPAs may provide some trophy fish production when large individuals wander from the MPA into fished areas.
- 10) MPAs provide unfished areas for scientific research and education, and also for ecotourism/diving, the fastest growing type of international tourism.
- 11) Enforcement is easier, since anyone fishing is in violation.

Not all points on MPAs are positive and some trade-offs exist.

- 1) Harvest from areas permanently closed to fishing is lost, at least temporarily, until fish stocks increase in areas open to fishing.
- 2) Benefits produced by MPAs will not be seen for a number of years after their creation. Time is required for overfished stocks or damaged habitat to recover.
- 3) Fishermen near MPAs will have to travel greater distances to fish, and someone's favorite fishing area will be put off-limits, no matter where MPA's are placed.
- 4) Fishing pressure and crowding will likely increase in areas open to fishing.
- 5) MPAs are not likely to provide many benefits for highly migratory species like tuna, mackerel and dolphin.

While President Clinton's executive order did not specify how much of U.S. marine waters should be put into MPAs, scientists have discussed a range of 10% to 50%. Most environmental groups are calling for 20% of all waters and many scientists agree with that number.

The entire issue of MPAs will be challenging for both recreational and commercial fisheries leadership. The basis now for recreational leadership's objections to MPAs is that recreational fishing is allowed in national parks and refuges and therefore should be allowed in MPAs. Parks on land are protected from habitat-altering activities such as logging and mining, while minor activities such as fishing are allowed.

What is difficult for recreational fisheries leaders to accept is that in marine ecosystems, environmentalists and many scientists see fishing as the equivalent to mining and logging on land as an ecosystem-altering activity. The very thing that MPAs are designed to do is to prevent fishing. In November 1999, a total of 19 respected fisheries scientists endorsed the idea of marine protected areas in *Fisheries*, the publication of the American Fisheries Society, the largest professional organization of fisheries scientists in the world. They go beyond fisheries management alone as a reason for MPA's, stating that "The economic and social benefits of non-extractive uses of a reserve in many cases can exceed its extractive value." The non-extractive uses they list are "... education,

THE GUMBO POT

Fish with Crawfish Sauce

A great New Orleans Creole restaurant tradition is a white-fleshed fish fillet topped with a sauce containing, individually or in combination, crabmeat, crawfish tails, shrimp, and/or oysters. This dish follows that tradition well, although the fish is baked rather than sautéed as in the traditional preparation approach. The end result is the same and I guarantee that you will like this one. Any white-fleshed fish is suitable. Catfish steaks work as well as trout fillets.

2	lb fish fillets or steaks	¼	cup parsley, chopped
½	cup white wine	⅓	cup celery, chopped
	salt and pepper	1	lb crawfish meat
1	medium onion, thinly sliced	½	cup heavy cream
6	tbsp butter	½	tsp hot sauce
3	tbsp flour		salt to taste
1	cup green onion, chopped	¼	cup grated Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Arrange fish in a greased baking dish. Add wine. Salt and pepper fillets and arrange onion slices on top of fish. Dot with 6 tbsp of butter. While the fish is baking make a roux from 4 tablespoons butter and the flour. Stir constantly until it is a light brown (not dark brown). Add the green onions, parsley and celery and sauté until tender. Add the crawfish and cook gently for 5 minutes. When the fish is done, drain the juices from the baking dish into the crawfish sauce. Stir gently and cook over a low heat until the sauce begins to thicken. Gradually add the cream, hot sauce and salt, blending well. Pour the sauce over the fish and dot with remaining butter. Sprinkle with cheese and bake 15 minutes at 375°. Serves 4.

Sincerely,



Jerald Horst
Professor, Fisheries