

Louisiana Oyster Task Force Meeting
Tuesday, July 30, 2019, 1:00pm
East Bank Regional Library
4747 W. Napoleon Ave.
Metairie, LA 70001

- I. Pledge of Allegiance
- II. Roll call and introduction of guests

Voting Members Present:

Dan Coulon
Byron Encalade
Jakov Jurisic
Mitch Jurisich
Brandt Lafrance
Al Sunseri
Sam Slavich
Willie Daisy

Voting Members Absent:

Shane Bagala
Tracy Collins
Leo Dyson
Brad Robin
John Tesvich
Peter Vujnovich

Non-Voting Members Present:

Carolina Bourque
Justin Gremillion
Edward Skena
Frank Cole in for Karl Morgan
John Troutman in for Brian Lezina

Non-Voting Members Absent:

III. Al Sunseri motioned to approve the June 25, 2019 meeting minutes, 2nd by Byron Encalade. Motion carries.

Al Sunseri motioned to accept the July 30, 2019 meeting agenda, 2nd by Byron Encalade. Motion carries.

IV. Treasury Report

Remaining FY2019 Fund Balance- \$409,466
Budget Balance for FY2019- \$56,192
Tag sales for the month of June- 78,504

V. Committee Reports

- A. Public-Private Oyster Seed Grounds Committee- no report
- B. Enforcement

June 15th - July 21st

Region 4 (Iberia) None

Region 5 (Calcasieu and Cameron) None

Region 6: (Terrebonne, Lafourche, Grand Isle) Terrebonne

2 take oyster closed season Bay Junop

2 take oyster with illegal dredge

1 fail to have commercial license in possession

4 take oysters unapproved area (polluted)-DRONE CASES 16 (counts) – fail to maintain records (Oyster Related)

5 – fail to report commercial fish data (Oyster Related)

53 sacks seized

Lafourche

4 – take oysters from an unapproved area (polluted)-DRONE CASES 1 fail to display number on vessel

40 sacks oysters seized

Region 8: (Jefferson, Plaquemines, St. Bernard, Orleans, St. Tammany) St. Bernard

None

Orleans

8 (counts) – fail to maintain records (Oyster Related)

3 (counts) – fail to report commercial fish data (Oyster Related)

Plaquemines

363 (counts) – fail to maintain records (Oyster Related)

15 – harvest oysters from an improperly marked lease (WARNINGS)

C. Legislative Committee- No report

D. Research Committee- No report

E. Coastal Restoration Committee- No report

F. Marketing Committee- No report

G. Health Committee-

Lots of openings and closings from this time of year. Areas 1,2, and 3 are closed due to low salinity. The Bonnet Carre Spillway is completely closed as of Saturday. Most areas reopen due to Barry, except for Areas 28, 29, there is a 21 day waiting period

H. Aquaculture- No report

I. Joint Task Force Working Group- No report

VI. New Business

A. Carolina Bourque led discussion on the 2019-2020 public oyster seed grounds season

2019 Public Ground Oyster Stock Assessment

Availability in barrels (1 barrel = 2 sacks)

GREEN = % Increase, **RED** = % Decrease compared to 2018.

Area	Seed	Seed %	Sack	Sack %	Total	Total %
Lake Borgne/MS Sound	10,765	-78%	450	-99%	11,214	-86%
East of MS River, South of MRGO	0	-100%	0	n/a	0	-100%
Hackberry Bay	3,108	+53%	337	-77%	3,445	-1%
Lake Chien/Felicity	36	-92%	36	n/a	72	-84%
Sister Lake/Bay Junop	55,229	+14%	7,671	-65%	62,900	-11%
Calcasieu - East Side	15,209	+72%	11,588	+26%	26,797	+49%
Calcasieu - West Cove	62,005	+187%	83,367	+16%	145,372	+55%
Statewide Totals	146,351	+12%	103,449	-24%	249,800	-6%

PRELIMINARY DATA - SUBJECT TO CHANGE

2019/2020 Public Ground Oyster Season Recommendation

Area/Public Ground	Season Recommendation	Limit
East of MS River, North of MRGO	No Season	
East of MS River, South of MRGO	No Season	
Hackberry/Barataria Basin	No Season	
Lake Tambour, Lake Chien, Lake Felicity, Deep Lake	No Season	
Bay Junop and Lake Mechant	No Season	
Sister Lake - Bedding	Open November 18, 2019 (One day only)	No more than 15% of non-living material allowed in bedding loads.
Sister Lake - Sacking	Open November 19, 2019	25 sacks/vessel/day (take and possession)
Vermilion/Atchafalaya Basin	No Season	
Calcasieu Lake (East and West)	Open November 1, 2019	10 sacks/vessel/day (take and possession)



B. Carolina Bourque provided a report on the Oyster Mortality Surveys related to the 2019 flood event

Results from Weekly samples (as of Late June 2019)

Basin	site/reef name	seed/sack mortality			
Pontchartrain	Petit Island	n/a	100%	--	June 19
	Grassy Island	n/a	100%	--	June 19
	Grand Banks	0%	75%	--	June 26
	3 Mile Pass	n/a	100%	--	June 26
	Round Island	n/a	100%	--	June 19
Atchafalaya	Nickel Reef	76%			
	HighSpot	n/a	100%	--	July 2
	Big Charles	66%			
	Lighthouse Pt	62%			
Sabine	Sabine Lake 1	0%			
	Sabine Lake 4	2%			
	Sabine Lake 5	74%			

C. Doug Daigle led discussion on Gulf hypoxia, comments on Louisiana’s Nutrient Management Strategy

Al Sunseri motioned to rewrite the task force’s letter supporting the continued work to reduce Gulf hypoxia and submit it as comment to CPRA regarding Louisiana’s Nutrient Management Strategy, 2nd by Sam Slavich. Motion carries.

D. Jakov Jurisic provided an update on the 2019 Oyster Task Force summer trip to Washington, D.C.

On the first day the board met with Congressman Scalise, Senator Kennedy, and Congressman Abraham; discussed the flood events and the impacts on the oyster industry. On the 2nd day met with Senator Cassidy, Plaquemines Parish President, Kirk Lepine was in attendance

E. Considered funding for task force member travel, conference fees, and membership dues for the 2019 Interstate Shellfish Conference

Al Sunseri motioned to provide funding for task force member travel, conference fees, and membership dues for the 2019 Interstate Shellfish Conference, 2nd by Jakov Jurisic. Motion carries.

Jakov Jurisic requested to add an item to the ISSC agenda this year to propose changing the date/ time of year that the conference is held. Justin Gremillion stated that a request is being put in for discussion at this meeting to perhaps change the date of the next ISSC

F. Sam Slavich led discussion on a state based assistance program for Louisiana oystermen due to the current flooding crisis and loss of resources

Dan Coulon entered at 3:05pm

Recommendations:

1. Can State waive the cost of the Public Oyster Seed Ground Vessel Permit for a year and reassess next year and the year after to see how the resource is recovering?
2. Tax credits for improvements- for people who decide they want to put rocks out on some of their leases or any improvements made, I.e. boat improvements (legislative action)
3. Waiving lease rentals for the year and reevaluate the following year

Sam Slavich motioned to send the recommendations and discussion to the Public-Private Oyster Seed Grounds Committee for further vetting, 2nd by Willie Daisy. Motion carries.

Willie Daisy asked that the impacts of Hurricane Barry in Lafourche and Terrebonne Parishes be added to the discussion

G. Willie Daisy led discussion on the effects of Hurricane Barry in Terrebonne Parish
Asked that these areas be considered for compensation for losses during the storm

Carolina stated that those areas are being sampled and data is being collected and will continue to be collected to monitor losses

Patrick Banks commended the Oyster and Shrimp Task Forces, President Lepine and President McInnis and their staff and Representative Garaofalo for the tremendous efforts made in Washington, D.C.

H. The task force considered recommendations for the Aquaculture Committee chair

Byron Encalade recommended Brandi Shelley as the Aquaculture chair

Jakov Jurisic motioned to nominate Brandi Shelley as the OTF Aquaculture chair, 2nd by Byron Encalade. Motion carries.

VII. Public Comment

The Oyster Lease Moratorium Lifting Notice of Intent will be heard by the LDWF Commission at their meeting set for Thursday, August 1, 2019 for 9:30

VIII. Next meeting set for Tuesday, September 10, 2019 for 1pm in Houma at the Terrebonne Council building, a OTF Marketing Committee meeting was set for 9:30am with a Public-Private Oyster Seed Grounds Committee meeting following at 10:00am

IX. Jakov Jurisic motioned to adjourn, 2nd by Willie Daisy. Motion carries.