**LA Shrimp Task Force Meeting Minutes**

**George Barisich, Chairman**

**Wednesday, June 2, 2021, 10:00am**

**Via Webinar**

**I.** Pledge of Allegiance

**II.** Roll Call

**Voting Members Present:**

George Barisich

Acy Cooper

Lance Nacio

Kristen Baumer

Alan Gibson

Andrew Blanchard

**Voting Members Absent:**

Rodney Olander

Craig Authement

**Non-Voting Members Present:**

Peyton Cagle

Bryan Marie

Jack Isaacs

**Non-Voting Members Absent:**

Meg Bankston

Gene Cavalier

Justin Gremillion

**III.** Andrew Blanchard motioned to approve the May 20, 2021 meeting minutes, 2nd by Acy Cooper. Motion carries.

**IV.** Andrew Blanchard motioned to approve the June 2, 2021 meeting agenda, 2nd by Kristen Baumer. Motion carries.

**V.** New Business

1. The task force discussed and considered a special bait dealers permit NOI

Peyton Cagle stated that the amendment to the current rule will allow fishermen utilizing a special bait dealer’s permit to use the same fishing gear that is currently allowed during the inside waters open shrimp seasons. The gear change will allow for larger nets, compared to those currently allowed by rule, to be fished during closed seasons to be able to adequately provide live bait intended solely for the benefit of the recreational fishing public that desires to use live bait. Trawl and skimmer vessels operating under a special bait dealer’s permit must adhere to a tow time not exceeding 15 minutes. The permitted gear was also changed to one trawl measuring 50 feet long or less along the cork line and 60 feet or less along the lead line. Also mesh sizes were added in, which is what is currently legal inside. The change for the skimmers, it used to a net of 16 feet measured horizontally or 12 feet measured vertically or 20 feet measured diagonally and that will be changed to what the current skimmer measurements are, which is a net opening circumference of no more than 72 feet and a maximum lead line length of 33 feet, with a 20 foot horizontal frame. Also mesh sizes are included in this.

Acy Cooper stated that he is against this because there are currently issues with these boats taking bigger shrimp and selling them on the side of the road. Giving them bigger nets and letting them have free range when the season is closed is an issue. Stated that if bigger nets are wanted the bait boats can come on the beach with the shrimpers during open season

Peyton Cagle stated that one of the reasons the tow time was put in was to 1. Make it enforceable and would help deter someone from trying to drag purposely to sell catch as dead consumable shrimp rather than live bait, there is currently around 22 special bait dealer’s permit license holders; there is currently no volume restriction per day but there is a restriction on % dead vs % alive in catch

LDWF must be notified anytime someone is operating under the special bait dealer’s permit

Kristen Baumer stated that enforcement will be more difficult if everyone is pulling the same gear

Acy Cooper motioned to oppose the Special Bait Dealers Permit NOI, 2nd by Lance Nacio. Motion carries.

Acy Cooper motioned to amend the previously adopted motion to oppose the Special Bait Dealers Permit NOI as currently written by adding in the recommendation to keep the current regulations in place during closed shrimping season and allow for bigger gear when the season is open, 2nd by Lance Nacio. Amendment to the motion carries with unanimous vote.

1. George Barisich led discussion on Senate Resolution 105, which provides relative to taking shrimp in Lake Pontchartrain

The task force plans to set up a joint meeting with the Crab Task Force to further discuss the resolution and make recommendations to reduce damages to crab traps and the number of derelict crab traps in Lake Pontchartrain

**VI.** Public comment

Reminder for the task force and anyone interested to submit comment to Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion Draft EIS before the deadline on June 3, 2021

Licensing bill update- heard in the Senate Natural Resources Committee

**VII.** Next meeting set for Wednesday, August 4, 2021 for 10:00am at LDWF headquarters in Baton Rouge

**VIII.** Andrew Blanchard motioned to adjourn the meeting, 2nd by Acy Cooper. Motion carries.