**Shrimp Task Force Meeting Minutes**

**Wednesday, August 3, 2022, 10:00am**

**Terrebonne Parish Main Library**

**151 Library Dr.**

**Houma, LA 70360**

**I.** Pledge of Allegiance

**II.** Roll Call

**Voting Members Present:**

Rodney Olander

Acy Cooper, Jr.

Kristen Baumer

Alan Gibson

Andrew Blanchard

**Voting Members Absent:**

Lance Nacio

Jeff Drury, III

Phillip Tran

Randy Pearce

Chalin Delaune

**Non-Voting Members Present:**

Peyton Cagle

Davis Madere

Jack Isaacs

Adam Eitmann

**Non-Voting Members Absent:**

Gene Cavalier

Justin Gremillion

**III.** Rodney Olander motioned to approve the May 4, 2022 meeting minutes, 2nd by Andrew Blanchard. Motion carries.

**IV.** Rodney Olander motioned to approve the August 3, 2022 meeting agenda, 2nd by Andrew Blanchard. Motion carries.

**V.** The task force received the Federal Shrimp Permit Report

**VI.** New Business

1. Peyton Cagle provided a presentation on the 2022 fall inshore shrimp season





Lambert Leblanc stated that the industry cannot survive on price, if there is an August 8th opening the price will drop

Barry Rogers stated that he agrees with the August 8th opening, but it’s impossible to make it with the prices maybe down the road prices need to be considered in the season projections

Kip Marquize stated that he opposes an August 8th opening

Rodney Olander motioned to accept LDWF’s Season Recommendation, 2nd by Alan Gibson. Motion withdrawn, motion does not pass.

Andrew Blanchard motioned to accept LDWF’s 2022 fall inshore shrimp season recommendation, 2nd by Alan Gibson. Motion carries with roll call vote- all voting members were in favor

1. The task force discussed the shrimp label of origin bill (HB335)

For Food Service Establishments that Use Menus If the menu item contains crawfish or shrimp that is imported, the menu must contain a notice which (1) states the country of origin of the crawfish or shrimp, or (2) denotes the word “imported.” The menu notice must be immediately adjacent to the menu listing of the seafood item (This means it can be placed before, after, above or below the menu item). Wording must be in the same font style as the item listed on the menu. Wording must be in the same font size as the item listed on the menu. Wording must be in the same font color as the item listed on the menu. The law allows for the notice to be paper-clipped to the menu with the same location, font and color restrictions required on the menu labeling. Other means of attaching the notice to the menus will be considered as long as the label meets all other requirements outlined in the law. For Food Service Establishments that Do Not Use Menus If a food service establishment does not use a menu as a standard business practice, the establishment must: Provide a sign posted as the main entrance to the establishment that states: “Certain crawfish and shrimp originate from a foreign country.” The sign must be at least 18 inches tall and 18 inches wide and be written in English. Lettering must not be less than 1 inch in size. The sign must be posted in a conspicuous location not less than 36 inches from the floor. Questions about the law and its enforcement can be directed to your local parish sanitarian office (for a statewide listing of all parish sanitarian offices, visit http://www.ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/page/394) or can be emailed to AskSanServices@la.govAcy Cooper asked about enforcement and restaurant compliance; what’s the procedure for non-compliance

[www.Eatsafe.la.gov-](http://www.Eatsafe.la.gov-) to find your sanitarian and for more information

Justin Gremillion stated that each area has a sanitarian that conducts health inspections, you can find you sanitarian (health inspector) at the above website. Depending on what the restaurant is preparing, raw product, hazardous product, they get inspected more often. So if it’s a full scale restaurant utilizing raw seafood, usually this is usually a category 3 or 4, which means they either get 3 or 4 inspections annually. When we go in we look for hundreds of things that all fall under title 51, sanitation code. If we go in and see that a restaurant is serving shrimp or crawfish that triggers the sanitarian to check for a violation. If a violation is found the violator would be given the option to correct the issue on site by correcting the menu immediately or if they do not have a menu they can post a sign at the door. If the issue is not able to be corrected on site, the violation stands as a non-critical violation. If left uncorrected the violation could stand until the next inspection. Do take complaints from the public if a violation is noted but will need specific details. Have been enforcing this and sanitarians are trained on it. There is no fine associated with this since it is a non-critical violation. Critical violations are things that can lead to an immediate illness

Davis Madere with LDWF enforcement stated that legal is looking into what needs to be done to change the legislation to have both agencies (LDH and LDWF) enforce this criminally similar to catfish and basa, also the crab industry is looking to be added in

Acy Cooper stated that something needs to be amended to add some teeth to the law on this, need guidance on what can be done from LDWF, imports are killing the industry

Alan Gibson stated there needs to be some work on regulating flyers and online advertising

Justin Gremillion stated that Representative Turner passed a law last year for LDH to test shrimp and crawfish coming into the state for contaminants, published July 20 and in the next few weeks LDH labs will be collecting foreign shrimp and crawfish for contaminants, if contaminated have the ability to seize and destroy

Acy Cooper stated that changes to this bill is something the STF needs help and support from the Governor’s office on, will work with LDH, LDWF and the Governor’s office to propose an amendment to the bill that will have more teeth with enforcing, also work to change non-critical to a critical violation, this would need to be changed by the State Health Officer

Rocky Decharo stated that there needs to be a cap on imports

Julie Falgout stated that the industry needs a comprehensive marketing campaign to notify the public

1. The task force discussed and considered funding the Sunset Review

Andrew Blanchard stated that ASPA has taken on the role of funding the sunset review, international trade review where we put a tariff on shrimp, in the past we had a mechanism in place where everyone could use their expensed to get some of this tariff. Later the tax was ruled as double taxation and was removed, the tariff is still collected but the funds goes to the Treasury Department and every year several shrimp organizations representing the industry goes to the legislature to try and get some of that money sent back to the industry. It costs $1M- $1.5M to fund the review. This tariff is needed because it helps keep a level playing field in the industry, the price of shrimp is low now if this tariff is removed it would be even lower.

Kristen Baumer stated that these are things that the Governor’s office can help with, when the industry goes to DC can assist by working with congressional leaders to lobby for some of this money to go back to the industry, the industry struggles with making any headway with getting any of that money dedicated back to the industry in which it was originally intended for. This is something we would love the support of the Governor, working with us to understand the critical nature of the industry when there is a pool of funds that, at some point, could help the industry and the State of LA

Acy Cooper stated that he would like to see the Governor’s office assist the industry in DC, write letters, help with meetings, Etc.

1. The task force considered funding the 2023 LA Fisheries Forward Summit

The 2023 LA Fisheries Forward Summit is set for Wednesday, March 1, 2023 from 8am-4pm at the Pontchartrain Center in Kenner

Rodney Olander motioned to approve $5,000 in funding to support the 2023 LA Fisheries Forward Summit, motion does not carry, no second.

Barry Rogers stated that funding should go towards assisting the industry, do not feel Sea Grant is helping task force money should go towards fishermen and the industry

Thomas Hymel stated that Louisiana is the only stated that has a seafood summit, there are demos, educational outreach, it’s a really nice event for the industry

Acy Cooper stated that Sea Grant is requesting money but does not keep the industry updated on things that are going on. When Sea Grant does things and doesn’t involve and notify the task force there is an issue; would like a Sea Grant representative from each area to make themselves known and start working with the community

Alan Gibson stated that the task force bring this request to the next meeting for consideration to give the agents time to reach out in their areas

1. The board discussed and considered funding the MSC and Gulf RFM Shrimp Fishery Sustainability Assessments as well as Audubon Gulf’s operational costs

Kristen Baumer led discussion stated that many of you know in addition to all the fisheries we have all of the food service companies, retailers continue to press for sustainability. About 10 years ago, LDWF and LSPM recognizing that sustainability was important put up a lot of money to work with Audubon Nature Institute and they created a program called Audubon Gulf. The task was to create a set of internationally recognize specifications to apply to our fishery that would demonstrate that the industry is doing a lot of sustainable practices. Over time the expenses of this program have become very expensive and we never achieved certification but are close to the point of achieving certification. LDWF, Audubon Nature Institute as well as the industry are recognizing the incredible amount of cost it takes to maintain an international standard for the Gulf fisheries, crab and shrimp primarily, and the juice is not worth the squeeze when there are other programs that the industry can piggy back on that are similar and can accomplish the same goal. What is happening now is the Alaska Seafood Marketing Board have put together, about 2 years ago, a standard for Alaska that is very similar to the Gulf standard but will be way less expensive. Proposed that the STF not worry about funding RFM at this time, let ASPA take the lead because this is a very cumbersome process because it takes a long time there are changes that may or may not need to be made, if allowed, ASPA will have to hire someone to take the lead on this. This is an inclusive collaborative process and ASPA should take the lead because they have the people to touch all the stakes. Suggested that LDWF continue to work with Audubon to make sure there is a seamless transition from Gulf RFM to Alaska RFM. We know we are going to continue with MSC but we also want to make sure that if we let this Audubon Gulf route go and partner with Alaska we want to make sure the rules and standards still apply to the Gulf shrimp fishery. Would let ASPA take the lead and work with the Alaska RFM and see where this takes us and if there is funding needed down the line this can be brought back to the STF

1. The Bureau of Ocean Energy Management provided a presentation on draft wind energy areas

• Louisiana Governor Edwards requested a Task Force on October 26, 2020.

• December 2020, Gulf of Mexico Region responded to the LA Task Force Request Letter with a region - based Task Force approach. The inaugural GOM Regional Task Force Meeting was held on June 15, 2021. • Conducting outreach and engagement to collect data and information.

• Advantages: Proximity to oil and gas supply chain – leverage existing capabilities

• Challenges: Hurricanes – major hurricanes could increase turbine and substructure costs

GOM Recommended WEAs:

1. Galveston (Option I)

2. Lake Charles (Option M)

The task force recommended giving the industry the area used back as fishing area, match acreage used and give back as additional fishing area

1. The task force discussed funding that was legislatively dedicated from the Shrimp Task Force Fund to the LA Shrimp Association

Acy Cooper stated that the Charter Boat Association gets money from license fees to help fund their association. Stated that LSA did not host their annual meetings the last 3-4 years due to Covid, had their last meeting and they are short on funds. Wanted to propose a bill where LSA could receive funding the same way, LSA does a lot for the industry and state, they fight laws, draw up legislation, work on TEDs, the association does a lot for the state and also promotes LA seafood. Was told that LSA could get a $50K grant to keep running day-to-day operations of the association that the Lt. Governor never used. Once the legislation was passed got a call that the money was coming out of the STF funding. Not sure where the mix up was but the intention was not to get the funding from the STF fund. No one has fought harder to to keep the STF funding intact, this was not the intention. This is a great example of what could happen to the funding, it can be swiped. As a board we need help. Asking the Ethics Board to provide an ethics opinion on this funding transfer.

Alan Gibson stated that his concern was not having representation from LDWF or the Governor’s office for the STF funding and how it is spent and there was no notification to the STF of this happening

1. Thomas Hymel provided a presentation on the new LSU Seafood Processing Demonstration Lab

Program Focus:

* Training and outreach
* Business economic development
* Product development
* Equipment training
* Develop new processing and packaging methods
* Research facility
* Assist established producers and new entrepreneurs
* Coastal and inland freshwater seafood
* Processors, distributors , fishermen

Open House- Nov 9; 10:00am – 4:00pm

1. The board discussed shrimp prices

Acy Cooper stated that there is concern for price, the industry is not going to make it with the price the way it is

Alan Gibson stated that there are so many different segments of the industry, the media is very misdirected and the processors are blamed for the price, the imports are the issue, the industry is a fragment of what it was and is currently dwindling away, there is too much product coming in way more than can be consumed, a limit needs to be placed on what is coming in, need help from LDWF and the Governor’s office to save the industry

Acy Cooper stated that from the State all the way up to the top no one seems to want to do the right thing, we have been fighting the same issue since 2011

Adam Eitmann stated that he will notify the Governor of this issue and he will do what he can, this is a federal issue

Thomas Olander suggested that the STF request a personal meeting on this with the Governor

**VII.** Public Comment

Julie Falgout announced that Sea Grant has a new Terrebonne and Lafource Marine agent- Haley Gambill, will send contact information over email

**IX.** Rodney Olander motioned to adjourn the meeting, 2nd by Alan Gibson. Motion carries.