

Planning for Management of State Oyster Leasing and Public Seed Grounds Affected by Coastal Projects and Natural Hydrological Changes

The La. Oyster Task Force (LOTF) sets forth this plan for dealing with changing hydrological conditions in areas of traditional oyster habitat and areas used for oyster cultivation in Louisiana coastal waters.

- A) Potential impacts on oyster habitat should be assessed and considered early in the project planning process.**
- B) Potential solutions to address impacts should begin with local solutions in order to minimize displacement of people.**
- C) The LOTF establishes the following work plan to address current needs in this regard:**
 - 1) Develop relocation program for oyster leases affected on east bank of Mississippi River
 - 2) Develop relocation program for oyster leases affected in Lake Borgne
 - 3) Develop relocation program for oyster leases that are projected to be impacted by Mid Barataria Sediment Diversion
- E) Elements to consider in developing an oyster impact mitigation project:**
 - 1) Delineate the impact zone by assessing water flows, salinity data and etc.
 - 2) Identify the oyster leases that are, or will be, negatively impacted
 - 3) Notify lease owners and hold public hearings
 - 4) Prohibit new oyster lease applications in the impact zones
 - 5) Identify potential areas to relocate oyster leases if necessary
 - 6) Develop a mitigation plan that best suits the local oystermen
- D) Oyster lease relocation programs should, when possible, follow the model established by the Davis Pond Oyster Relocation Program with following key elements:**
 - 1) Delineate the impact zone, and identify affected oyster leases
 - 2) Use side-scan sonar to analyze & map the water bottom of affected leases
 - 3) Offer owners substitute leases or a buyout
 - 4) Put together a budget for the program and identify funding
 - 5) Establish a Public Seed Ground in the formerly leased area