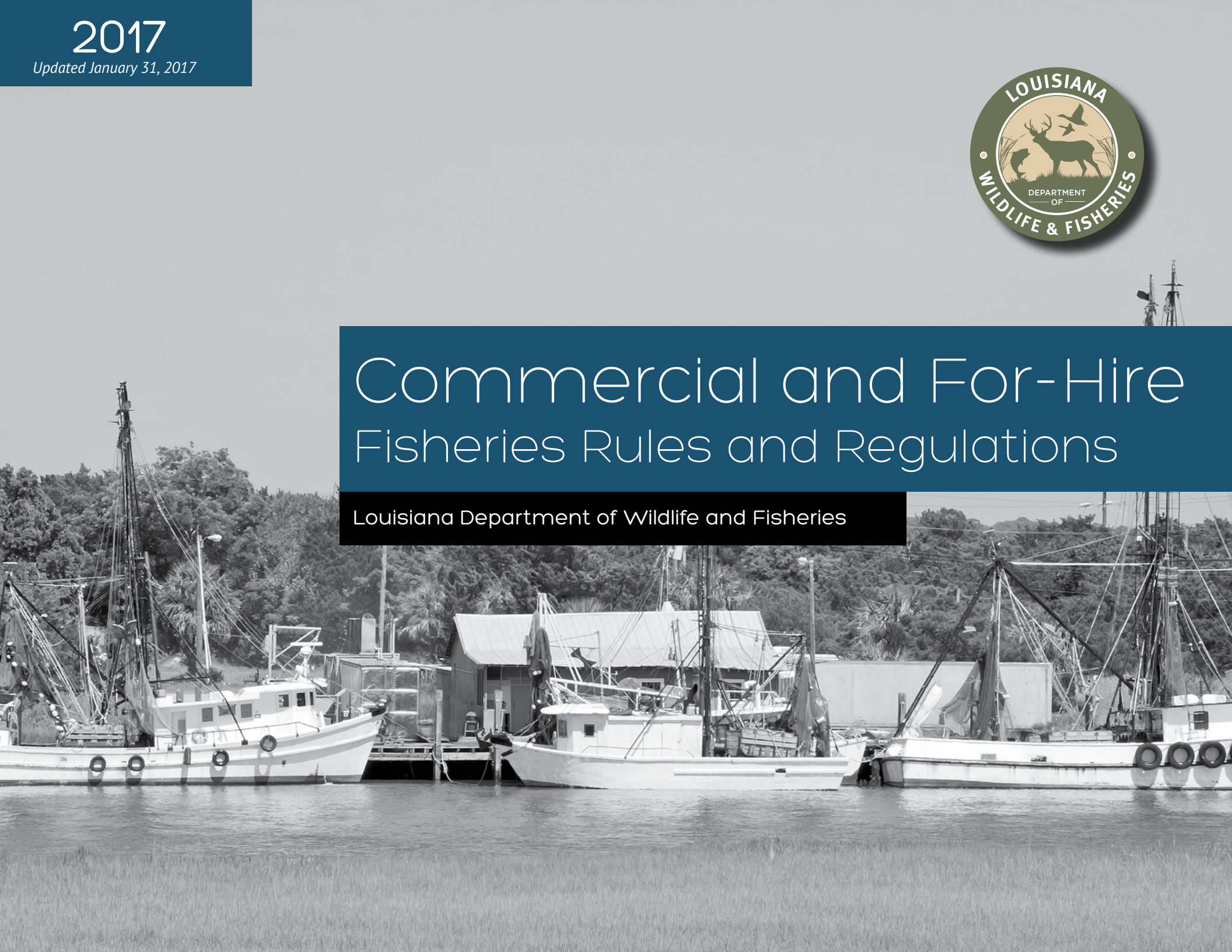
2017

Updated January 31, 2017

Commercial and For-Hire
Fisheries Rules and Regulations

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries



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General Info

THIS PUBLICATION IS NOT AN OFFICIAL COPY OF THE LAWS AND SHOULD NOT BE RELIED UPON AS SUCH. THIS PUBLICATION SUMMARIZES EXISTING LAWS IN EFFECT. AS LAWS MAY CHANGE FOLLOWING THE PRINTING OF THIS PUBLICATION, THE ACCURACY OF THE INFORMATION HEREIN IS NOT GUARANTEED. IT IS THE OBLIGATION AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE READER TO BE AWARE OF CURRENT LAWS AT ALL TIMES, INCLUDING LOUISIANA REVISED STATUTES (TITLES 51 AND 56), OFFICIAL REGULATIONS OF THE LOUISIANA WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION (COMMISSION), LOCAL AND PARISH ORDINANCES, FEDERAL LAWS, AND NATIONAL SHELLFISH SANITATION PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS. VISIT WLF.LOUISIANA.GOV/FISHING/COMMERCIAL-FISHING FOR DETAILS.

Saltwater/Freshwater Line

Louisiana's salt and freshwater areas are divided by a line that runs from the Intracoastal Waterway from the Texas-Louisiana boundary to its junction with Louisiana Highway 27 at Gibbstown, south to Louisiana Highway 82, east to its junction with the Intracoastal Waterway from Forked Island to Bayou Barataria to the Harvey Canal, the Harvey Canal to the Mississippi River, the Mississippi River to the Industrial Canal, the Industrial Canal to the Intracoastal Waterway, the Intracoastal Waterway to the Rigolets in Orleans Parish to the Louisville and Nashville Railroad Bridge, and the Louisville and Nashville Railroad right-of way from the Orleans Parish line to the Mississippi state line. Areas north of this line are freshwater. Areas south of this line are saltwater, including Lakes Maurepas, Pontchartrain, and St. Catherine, Chef Menteur Pass (except a 7/10-mile section from Bayou Sauvage south to the Intracoastal Waterway), the Rigolets, Unknown Pass, Pass Manchac, the Intracoastal Waterway, and the portion of the Calcasieu Ship Channel from the Intracoastal Waterway south to the Gulf of Mexico.

State vs. Federal Waters

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF), the Commission, and the Louisiana Legislature manage fisheries in state waters; the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Gulf Council) and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) manage fisheries in federal waters. Generally, Louisiana state waters extend 3 nautical miles from the nearest land; federal waters extend from 3 nautical miles to 200 nautical miles. However, for reef fish fishery management, Louisiana waters extend to 9 nautical miles. Fishermen should stay informed of the state/federal jurisdictional boundary as future congressional actions may affect the current boundary demarcation as it applies to reef fish species. If a future congressional action modifies the state/federal jurisdictional boundary, it will not impact the type of fishing gear reef fish fishermen may use.

Contact Info

LDWF Headquarters

2000 Quail Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70808
225.765.2800
wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/commercial-fishing

LDWF Regional Offices

Freshwater Fisheries		Saltwater Fisheries	
Alexandria	318.487.5885	Bourg	985.594.4139
Baton Rouge	225.765.2336	Grand Isle	504.284.2030
Lacombe	985.882.5228	Lacombe	985.882.0027
Lake Charles	337.491.2577	Lake Charles	337.491.2579
Many	337.286.5940	New Iberia	337.373.0032
Minden	318.371.3050	New Orleans	504.284.2030
Monroe	318.343.4044		
New Iberia	337.373.0032		
Opelousas	337.948.0255		

Other Important Contacts

Gulf Council
888.833.1844
gulfcouncil.org

NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office
877.376.4877
sero.nmfs.noaa.gov

NOAA Fisheries Highly Migratory Species Division
888.872.8862
nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms OR hmspermits.noaa.gov

Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals (LDHH)
225.342.9500
dhh.louisiana.gov

Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF)
866.927.2476
ldaf.state.la.us

LDWF Law Enforcement

LDWF's Law Enforcement Division is responsible for ensuring compliance with rules and regulations through regular patrols and investigations. LDWF partners with NOAA Fisheries and U.S. Coast Guard enforcement agents and officers to increase their enforcement capabilities and carry out their important mission in Louisiana's waters and beyond. Penalties for violations vary with the severity of the violation and include fines, jail time, loss of fishing license, and forfeiture of property.

REPORT FISHING VIOLATIONS
800.442.2511
24 hours a day,
7 days a week.

HEADQUARTERS: Baton Rouge—225.765.2987
REGION 1: Minden—318.371.3049 *Caddo, Bossier, Webster, Claiborne, Bienville, Red River and Desoto parishes*
REGION 2: Monroe—318.343.2417 *Lincoln, Union, Morehouse, West Carroll, East Carroll, Jackson, Ouachita, Richland, Madison, Caldwell, Franklin and Tensas parishes*
REGION 3: Pineville—318.487.5634 *Sabine, Natchitoches, Winn, LaSalle, Catahoula, Concordia, Avoyelles, Rapides, Grant and Vernon parishes*
REGION 4: Opelousas—337.948.0257 *St. Landry, Pointe Coupee, West Baton Rouge, Iberville, St. Martin, Iberia and Lafayette parishes*
REGION 5: Lake Charles—337.491.2580 *Beauregard, Allen, Evangeline, Calcasieu, Jefferson Davis, Acadia, Cameron and Vermilion parishes*
REGION 6: Thibodaux—985.447.0821 *St. Mary, Lower St. Martin, Assumption, St. James, St. John, Lafourche and Terrebonne parishes*
REGION 7: Baton Rouge—225.765.2999 *West Feliciana, East Feliciana, St. Helena, Tangipahoa, Washington, Livingston, Ascension and East Baton Rouge parishes*
REGION 8: New Orleans—504.284.2023 *St. Charles, Jefferson, Orleans, St. Bernard, St. Tammany and Plaquemines parishes*

Licenses and Permits

Contact: 225.765.2887 or 225.765.2898

Summary of License and Permit Fees

Commercial Harvester Licenses/Permits	Resident Fee	Nonresident Fee	Commercial Harvester Licenses/Permits	Resident Fee	Nonresident Fee
Commercial Fisherman's License	$55	$460	Dip Net	$25	$100
Apprentice	$27.50	$230	Eel Pot (any legal number)	$25	$100
Senior Commercial Fisherman's License (residents age 70 and older)	$20	N/A	Flounder Gig (per gig)	$25	$100
Reptile and Amphibian Collector License (age 16 and older)	$25	$200	Freshwater Fish Seine (any legal number)	$25	$100
Reptile and Amphibian Collector License (under age 16)	$10	N/A	Freshwater Gill Net (any legal number)	$25	$100
Vessel License (required south of saltwater line)	$15	$60	Freshwater Shrimp Net License	$25	N/A
Mullet Permit (captain only)	$100	$400	Freshwater Trammel Net (any legal number)	$25	$100
Mussel Harvester Permit (captain only)	$100	$1,000	Garfish Gig (per gig)	$25	$100
Calcasieu Lake Oyster Harvester Permit	No fee	No fee	Hoop Net (any legal number)	$25	$100
Out-of-State Oyster Landing Permit	$100	$100	Minnow Trap (any legal number)	$25	$100
Oyster Harvester License (captain only)	$100	$400	Mullet Strike Net (per net)	$250	$1,000
Public Oyster Seed Ground Vessel Permit—one scraper	$250	$1,000	Oyster Scraper (per scraper)	$25	$200
Public Oyster Seed Ground Vessel Permit—two scrapers	$500	$2,000	Oyster Tong (per tong)	$30	$240
Alternative Oyster Culture Permit	$100	N/A	Pompano Strike Net (per net)	$250	$1,000
Pompano Permit (captain only)	No fee	No fee	Purse/Menhaden Seine (per seine)	$505	$2,020
Shark Permit	No fee	No fee	Rod and Reel (saltwater; any legal number)	$250	$1,000
Special Bait Dealer Permit	$110	N/A	Set Line (trot, bush, etc.; any legal number)	$25	$100
Spotted Seatrout Permit	$100	$400	Shad Gill Net	$25	$100
Traversing Permit	No fee	No fee	Shad Seine (freshwater)	$25	$100
Shrimp Gear Fee (one-time annually)	$10	$40	Shrimp Trawl (per trawl)	$25	$100

Commercial Harvester Licenses/Permits	Resident Fee	Nonresident Fee	Commercial Harvester Licenses/Permits	Resident Fee	Nonresident Fee
Bow and Arrow	$25	$100	Single-throated Hoop Net (reptiles and amphibians)	$25	$80
Butterfly Net (per net)	$25	$100	Skimmer Net (per net)	$25	$100
Cans, Buckets, Pipes, Drums (any legal number)	$25	$100	Spear Gun (per spear gun)	$25	$100
Cast Net	$25	$100	Slat Trap (any legal number)	$25	$100
Crab Drop Net	$25	$100	Turtle Trap (reptiles and amphibians)	$25	$80
Crab Trap (any legal number)	$50	$200	Wire Net (any legal number)	$25	$100
Crawfish Trap (any legal number)	$25	$100			

For-Hire Operator/Charter Vessel Licenses/ Permits	Resident Fee	Nonresident Fee	Dealer, Retailer, Processor, and Transporter Licenses/Permits	Resident Fee	Nonresident Fee
Recreational Offshore Landing Permit	No fee	No fee	Mothership License (up to 6 skiffs)	$1,000	$1,000
Charter Boat Fishing Guide License (up to 6 passengers)	$250	$1,500	Mothership License (more than 6 skiffs)	$2,000	$2,000
Charter Boat Fishing Guide License (more than 6 passengers)	$500	$2,500	Charter Skiff License (per skiff, 2 persons per skiff limit)	$50	$50

Dealer, Retailer, Processor, and Transporter Licenses/Permits	Resident Fee	Nonresident Fee	Dealer, Retailer, Processor, and Transporter Licenses/Permits	Resident Fee	Nonresident Fee
Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer - Business or Vehicle	$250 (or $1,000 for four years)	$1,105 (or $4,420 for four years)	Oyster Cargo Vessel Permit	$250	$1,105
Retail Seafood Dealer - Business or Vehicle	$105 (or $420 for four years)	$405 (or $1,620 for four years)	Reptile and Amphibian Wholesale/Retail Dealer	$105	$405
Seafood Transport - Wholesale/Retail or Retail	$30 (or $120 for four years)	$30 (or $120 for four years)	Nonresident Reptile and Amphibian Wholesale/Retail Dealer (3-day)	N/A	$75
Seafood Transport - Commercial Fisherman	$30	$30	Reptile and Amphibian Transport	$30	$120
Fresh Products (Commercial Fisherman's License required)	$20	$120	Alligator Parts Dealer (expires June 30)	$50	$50
Fresh Products - Spouse	$5	N/A	Alligator Parts Retailer (expires June 30)	$5	$5
Mussel Buyer's Permit	$150	$600	Triploid Grass Carp Sales Permit	$250	$250
Retail Out-of-State Crab Shipping	$100	$100	Triploid Grass Carp Possession and Transport Permit	$50	$50
Wholesale Out-of-State Crab Shipping	$100	$100	Domesticated Aquatic Organism License	$15	$400

Applying for a License or Permit

To apply for LDWF-issued licenses, contact **225.765.2898** or visit LDWF's headquarters at **2000 Quail Drive in Baton Rouge**, Monday through Friday, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. You must provide proof of residency for your domiciliary state. If you're applying for a license in a business name, you must provide documentation of valid federal tax ID number assigned to your business name and authorized signature OR an occupational license.

Expired Licenses and Permits

All commercial licenses expire December 31 each year, unless otherwise noted. Renew your license online at **la.wildlifelicense.com**.

Resident License Requirements

To qualify for a resident license, you must be a Bona Fide Resident. You're a Bona Fide Resident if you've resided in the state continuously during the 12 months immediately prior to the date you apply for any license and if you've established Louisiana as your legal domicile. You must demonstrate compliance with all of the following, as applicable:

- If you're registered to vote, you're registered to vote in Louisiana
- If you're licensed to drive a motor vehicle, you have a valid Louisiana drivers license
- If you own a motor vehicle located within Louisiana, you have a valid Louisiana registration for that vehicle
- If you earn an income, you have filed a Louisiana state income tax return and have complied with state income tax law and regulations.

With respect to a corporation or other legal entity, a resident is incorporated or otherwise organized under and subject to the laws of Louisiana, is domiciled in Louisiana, and has a permanent physical location of business in Louisiana where records are held.

Any person, corporation, or other legal entity that possesses a resident license from any other state or country shall not qualify for a resident license in Louisiana.

Commercial Harvesters

To take or possess shrimp, crab, oysters, or finfish in Louisiana waters or gather reptiles and/or amphibians for commercial purposes, you must have one or more of the following licenses issued by LDWF. You also must have additional licenses and permits to harvest some species, use certain gears, and/or operate in federal waters (see each species section for details).

If you:	**You must have a/an:**	**Fees and notes:**
Operate a commercial fishing vessel	Commercial Fisherman's License OR Senior Commercial Fisherman's License (if a resident age 70 or older)	$55 resident, $460 nonresident; senior: $20 resident (includes all gear licenses except annual shrimp gear fee). License is personal and not transferable. It allows you to transport and sell your catch to any licensed wholesale/retail seafood dealer in Louisiana. If you transport your catch out of state, sell to a retail seafood dealer, restaurant, or retail grocer, or purchase fish for resale, you must become a licensed Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer. You must have a Fresh Products License to transport and sell your catch to a consumer within in the state. See below.
Gather reptiles and amphibians for sale	Reptile and Amphibian Collector License	$25 resident/$10 resident under age 16, $200 nonresident
Use or possess commercial fishing gear	Commercial Gear License	You must have a license for each piece of gear you're using, unless otherwise noted. See specific species section for details. Gear licenses are temporarily transferable between licensed commercial fishermen of the same residency status. Nonresidents may not purchase licenses for gear that is prohibited in their home state.
Have a vessel fishing commercially in the saltwater areas of Louisiana	Vessel License	$15 resident, $60 nonresident; this license is specific to the individual's vessel and must be in the vessel owner's name.

If you:	You must have a/an:	Fees and notes:
Sell your catch to anyone who doesn't have a Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer License (besides consumers) or transport your catch out of state	Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer License	$250 resident, $1,105 nonresident
Sell your catch directly to consumers within Louisiana	Fresh Products License	$20 resident, $120 nonresident. Your spouse may purchase a Fresh Products-Spouse License for $5 to sell directly to consumers.

Dealers, Retailers, and Processors

To purchase, resell, or process seafood products, bait, reptiles or amphibians in Louisiana, you must have one of the following licenses issued by LDWF, unless otherwise noted. You also must have additional licenses and/or permits to buy, sell, or process some species (see each species section for details).

If you:	You must have a/an:	Fees and notes:
Buy, acquire, or handle seafood products or bait from licensed commercial fishermen or wholesale/retail seafood dealers from in or out of the state for sale or resale	Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer Business License OR Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer Vehicle License if selling from a vehicle	$250 resident, $1,105 nonresident. You may buy from licensed commercial fishermen and licensed wholesale/retail dealers in Louisiana and from out of state. When buying seafood products for which a permit is required (mullet, reef fish, spotted seatrout, shark, tuna, etc.), you may only buy from commercial fishermen who have the required permit. There are no restrictions on whom you may sell to. You are also licensed to transport fish.
Buy, acquire, or handle seafood products from a licensed Louisiana wholesale/retail seafood dealer for sale to consumers for personal or household use	Retail Seafood Dealer Business License OR Retail Seafood Dealer Vehicle License if selling from a vehicle	$105 resident, $405 nonresident. You may only buy from licensed wholesale/retail dealers in Louisiana and only sell directly to consumers for personal or household use. You may ship seafood products within and out of Louisiana to consumers for personal or household use. To buy from out of state, you must have a Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer License (see above). Restaurants and grocers are exempt from these license requirements if they only sell seafood products fully prepared for immediate consumption.
Buy, acquire, or handle for resale or sell any native reptiles or amphibians, including those reared in captivity	Reptile and Amphibian Wholesale/Retail Dealer License	$105 resident, $405 nonresident. Nonresidents may instead purchase a Three-Day Reptile and Amphibian Wholesale/Retail Dealer's License ($75; valid for three consecutive days). Licensed wholesale/retail seafood dealers are exempt from this license.

Transporters

To operate any commercial transport vehicle and load, unload, or transport fish or reptiles and amphibians, you must have one of the following LDWF-issued licenses. Common carriers are exempt from these license requirements. In addition, transport license requirements do not apply to processed fish or fish products (drying to a point of dehydration, canning, salting, breading, and cooking for immediate consumption).

If you:	You must have a/an:	Fees and notes:
Are a licensed wholesale/retail seafood dealer delivering seafood	Wholesale/Retail Seafood Transport License	$30 per vehicle (residents and nonresidents); can only be purchased by a licensed Louisiana commercial fisherman or wholesale/retail seafood dealer; issued in the purchaser's name. If you're transporting fish under a transport license, you may not buy or sell and fish (unless working under a transport license purchased in connection with a wholesale/retail seafood dealer license and buying fish for and transporting such fish to the dealer to whom the license was issued). A dealer may purchase any number of transport licenses; transport licenses are freely transferable between vehicles, but the licensee remains responsible for all activities conducted under that license.
Are a licensed retail seafood dealer picking up seafood from a wholesale/retail dealer and transporting it to your business	Retail Seafood Transport License	
Are transporting a commercial fisherman's catch to a wholesale/retail dealer for sale	Commercial Fisherman Seafood Transport License	
Ship seafood out of state	Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer License OR Seafood Transport License purchased with the dealer license	• Dealer License: $250 resident; $1,105 nonresident • Seafood Transport License: $30 for residents and nonresidents
Operate commercial transport vehicles and load, unload, or transport reptiles or amphibians	Reptile and Amphibian Collector License, Reptile and Amphibian Wholesale/Retail Dealer License, OR Reptile and Amphibian Transport License	• Collector License: $25 resident/$10 resident under age 16, $200 nonresident • Dealer License: $105 resident, $405 nonresident. Nonresidents may instead purchase a Three-Day Reptile and Amphibian Wholesale/Retail Dealer's License ($75; valid for three consecutive days). • Transport License: $30/vehicle resident, $120/vehicle nonresident; transferable between vehicles. Only licensed reptile and amphibian collectors or wholesale/retail dealers may purchase. Transport licenseholders may not buy/sell reptiles or amphibians unless buying on behalf of the dealer to whom the transport license was issued and transporting the purchase back to them.

Shipping Requirements

Seafood transporters must mark all vehicles used to transport seafood with the name and address of your company, plainly mark all shipments containing seafood products or bait, and attach records, tags, or certificates showing names of the buyer and seller and an itemized statement of the number of pounds of seafood or bait and the names of each kind or species of seafood or bait in the shipment. Bills of lading issued by a common carrier for shipments of seafood products or bait must state the number of packages that contain seafood products or bait and the date and names of the buyer and seller and include an itemized statement of the number of pounds of seafood or bait and the names of each kind or species of seafood or bait in the shipment. Shipments are subject to inspection while in transit and upon leaving the state.

Reptile and amphibian transporters must plainly mark all shipments containing reptiles or amphibians and attach tags or certificates showing names of the buyer and seller and an itemized statement of each kind of reptile or amphibian in the shipment. Bills of lading issued by a common carrier for shipments of reptiles or amphibians must state the number of packages that contain reptiles, or amphibians. Out-of-state shipments of reptiles or amphibians ordinarily used for human consumption must be registered at some port of exit and inspected.

Trip Tickets

Contact: 225.765.2399

Trip Ticket Requirements

When a licensed commercial fisherman sells or transfers his catch to a wholesale/retail seafood dealer, he must present his license to the dealer for license verification and provide the dealer with information necessary to complete a commercial trip ticket. The dealer must record the sale or transfer on a three-part LDWF-issued trip ticket form and include the following information:

- The fisherman's name and license number
- The dealer's name and license number
- Transaction date
- Gear and vessel used
- Primary location of where the fish were caught
- Duration of the fishing trip
- Species identification
- Quantity and units of each species
- Size and condition of each species
- Unit price of each species

The commercial fisherman and dealer must sign each trip ticket attesting that the information is correct. The dealer retains one part of the trip ticket, provides the fisherman with one part, and submits one part to LDWF.

When a commercial fisherman sells his catch under a Fresh Products License, he must record all information required on the commercial trip ticket form, recording his fresh products license number in place of the wholesaler/retailer seafood dealer's license number. The commercial fisherman must sign each trip ticket attesting that the information he provided is correct.

On or before the 10th of each month, dealers and fresh products licenseholders must submit to LDWF all trip tickets from the previous month. Dealers must also include a signed submission sheet certifying that the submitted trip tickets represent all of the dealer's transactions with commercial fishermen for that month. For more details, go to **wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/trip-ticket** or call **225.765.2399**.

Dealers, fresh products licenseholders, retailers, restaurants, and grocers must keep records of the following and make them available for inspection by LDWF:

- Quantity and species of seafood products, bait, reptiles, or amphibians you purchase, date of purchase, and full name and license and/or permit number of the commercial fisherman/collector, wholesale/retail dealer, or out-of-state seller from whom you purchase the seafood products, bait, reptiles, or amphibians
- Quantity and species of seafood products, bait, reptiles, or amphibians you sell, date of sale, and name and license number of the buyer
- If selling to consumers, quantity and species of seafood products, bait, reptiles, or amphibians sold, the date you sell it to consumers, and a statement that you sold it to consumers

If a fisherman must have a special permit to harvest a species, records must indicate the commercial fisherman's permit number. If creel limits apply to a species, records must indicate the number by head count of such species.

Dealers with federal permits must report landings electronically through approved reporting methods every week. Go to **www.sefsc.noaa.gov/fisheries/dealers.htm** for more information.

Electronic Trip Tickets

Free computerized trip ticket data entry software is also available for wholesale/retail seafood dealers. This electronic trip ticket program completely replaces the paper ticket system, electronically collects and sends all information required by the state, tracks all monies owed and paid to fishermen, tracks deductions, generates reports, prints checks, and exports data. Dealers must still mail LDWF a copy of their monthly submission sheet generated by the electronic program and a completed electronic signature log by the 10th of each month for the preceding month. If you're interested in using the electronic trip ticket program to enter and submit trip ticket information, please contact Claude Petersen at **claude@bluefindata.com** or **225.744.0807**.

Nearly

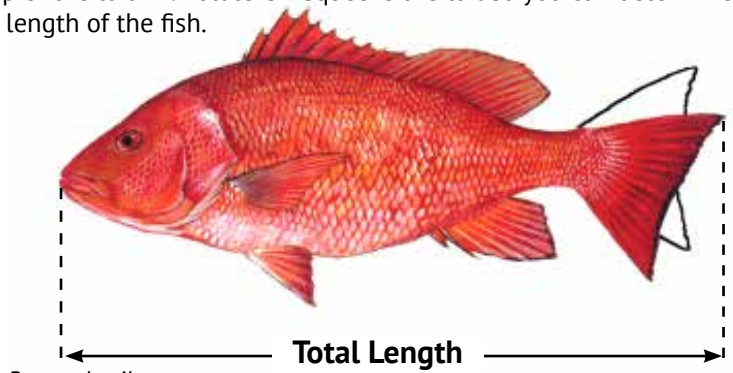
50%

of annual Gulf of Mexico shrimp landings is landed in Louisiana.

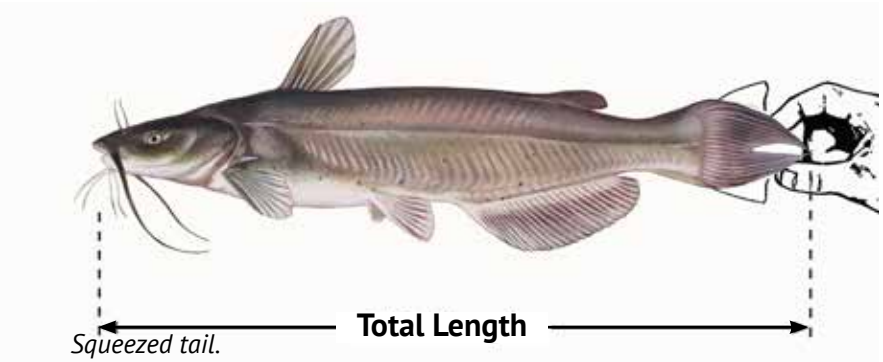
Measuring Fish

First, place the fish on its side on a flat board with its jaw closed.

For **total length**, measure in a straight line from the tip of the snout to the extreme tip of the tail fin. Rotate OR squeeze the tail so you can determine the maximum length of the fish.

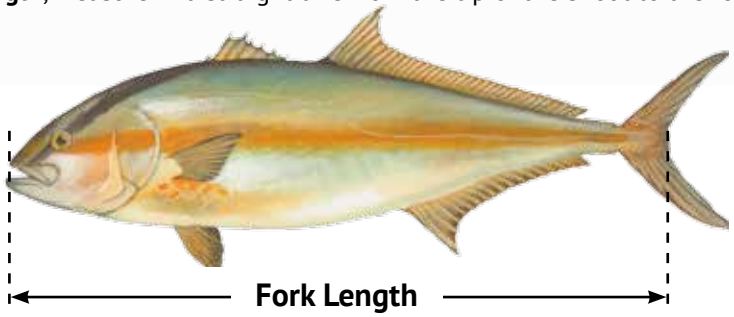


Rotated tail.



Squeezed tail.

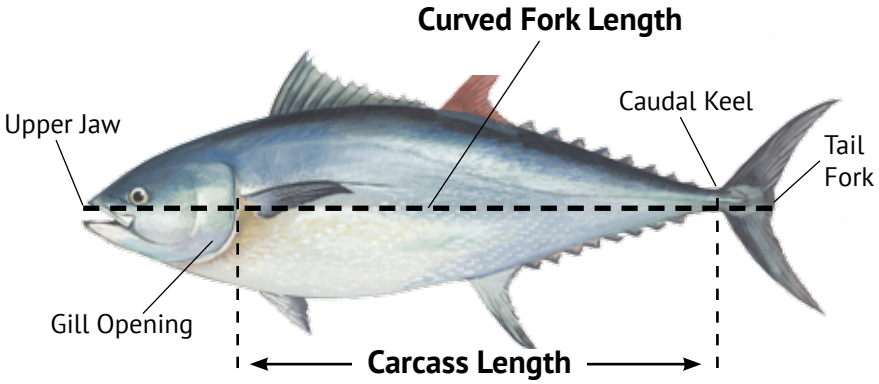
For **fork length**, measure in a straight line from the tip of the snout to the fork of the tail.

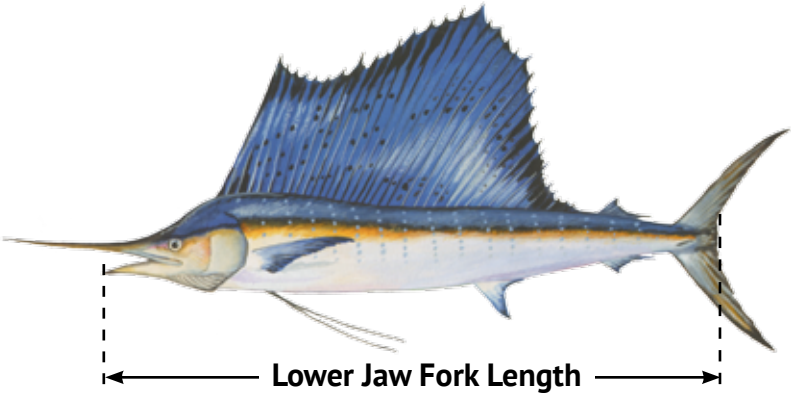


For **curved fork length**, measure tracing the contour of the body from the tip of the upper jaw to the fork of the tail.

For **carcass length**, measure the curve from rear edge of gill opening to the front edge of the caudal keel (the ridge found just before the tail fin).

For **lower jaw fork length**, measure from the tip of the lower jaw to the midline of caudal fin. This measurement is used for billfish such as swordfish.





Fish illustrations by Duane Raver.

Shrimp

Contact: Jeff Marx, 337.373.0032, jmarx@wlf.la.gov

Additional Licenses and Permits

In addition to the applicable licenses and permits listed on pages 7-9, you must have the following permits to participate in the following activities.

If you:	You must have a/an:	Fees and notes:
Harvest shrimp in federal waters	Federal shrimp permit issued by NOAA Fisheries	There is a moratorium on these permits; you may only apply for one if an original permit is transferred to you. View the current list of transferable permits at **go.usa.gov/3FcW5**. Contact NOAA Fisheries at **877.376.4877** for more information.
Commercially harvest shrimp for live bait	Special Bait Dealer Permit	$110; see page 13 for additional details.
Use or possess shrimp trawls, butterfly nets, skimmer nets, or cast nets	Commercial Gear License for each piece of gear	$25 resident, $100 nonresident. You must have a license for each piece of gear. You must also pay an annual gear fee ($10 resident, $40 nonresident).

Harvest Areas

Louisiana's state waters are divided into inside and outside waters. The "inside/outside line" separates these waters. It generally follows the coastline from the Louisiana/Texas state line to the Louisiana/Mississippi state line. Waters landward of the inside/outside line are inside or inshore waters; waters seaward of the inside/outside line out to three nautical miles are outside waters or the territorial seas. Inside waters are further divided by major estuarine basin. The Commission may amend the shrimp line due to environmental changes. See the latest coordinates at **wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/insideoutside-shrimp-line**.

The Louisiana Legislature, the Commission, and LDWF are responsible for managing the shrimp fishery in inshore waters and the territorial seas. The Gulf Council and NOAA Fisheries are responsible for federal waters.

Seasons

You may only harvest shrimp during open shrimp seasons (unless you're permitted to harvest live bait under a Special Bait Dealer Permit). The Commission sets shrimp seasons for Louisiana's state waters by area, according to scientific information about environmental and water conditions and the growth rates, distribution, and abundance of shrimp. They also consider input from the industry and other stakeholders. In general, shrimp seasons by area are:

- Inside: open when enough market-sized shrimp are available in these waters for harvest. The spring/brown shrimp season generally runs May to July. The fall/white shrimp season is generally open mid-August to mid-December; some waters stay open into January.
- Outside: year-round, except from mid or late December to April or May in certain areas to protect small white shrimp and allow them to grow to market size. The Commission can close these waters at other times of the year if necessary.
- Federal waters off Louisiana: year-round

Go to **wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/shrimp-seasons** for the most up to date information on Louisiana's shrimp seasons.

5,600
Approximate number of licensed shrimpers in Louisiana.

Size/Possession Limits

There is no size limit for any shrimp harvested during the spring open season nor for brown or seabob shrimp harvested during any open season.

White shrimp is legal size when a pound of white shrimp equals 100 whole shrimp or less. You may not harvest sub-legal white shrimp, except from October 15 through the 3rd Monday in December. Also, when more than half of your catch is seabob or brown shrimp, no more than 10% (by weight) of your catch may be sub-legal size white shrimp.

Legal Gear

You may only use trawls, butterfly nets, skimmer nets, and cast nets to harvest shrimp during open seasons in Louisiana's waters.

Turtle Excluder Devices

State and federal law require all shrimpers fishing with powered or mechanically-retrieved otter trawls (except test nets with headrope lengths of 12 feet or less) to equip them with turtle excluder devices (TEDs), which allow incidentally captured turtles to escape the nets.

In lieu of TEDs, shrimpers fishing with test trawls and skimmer and butterfly nets must limit their tow times to 75 minutes from November 1 through March 31 and 55 minutes from April 1 through October 31 to reduce potential impacts on sea turtles.

Go to **go.usa.gov/xKJ74** for the latest TED regulations and guidelines for complying with them. Email **Michael.Barnette@noaa.gov** or call **727.551.5794** with any TED-related questions.

Bycatch Reduction Requirements

When fishing in federal waters, shrimp trawlers must install bycatch reduction devices (BRDs) in each trawl to reduce catch of non-targeted species. Go to **go.usa.gov/xKJ7k** for more information. Email **Steve.Branstetter@noaa.gov** or call **727.824.5305** with any BRD-related questions.

Restricted and Closed Areas

Some areas, including wildlife refuges, wildlife management areas (WMAs), and habitat conservation areas, may be closed to certain gear types, methods, and/or times of day and may have different possession limits. Some are closed to shrimping altogether. These restrictions and closures help protect developing shrimp populations and reduce conflicts among users. See **wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/commercial-shrimp** for details.

Shrimper/Crab Trap Interactions

If you catch an unserviceable crab trap, you must keep it on your vessel and properly dispose of it onshore. If you catch a serviceable crab trap without a float, return it to the water with a common float (a white, plastic, one-gallon or larger bleach bottle).

Shrimp Excise Tax

Louisiana collects an excise tax on all saltwater shrimp harvested from state waters as well as all shrimp imported into the state. Taxes apply as follows:

- 15 cents per barrel of 210 pounds of head-on, unpeeled shrimp
- 15 cents per barrel of 125 pounds of headless, unpeeled shrimp
- 15 cents per barrel of 75 pounds of headless, peeled shrimp

The first wholesale/retail seafood dealer who receives the shrimp must pay this tax. For imported shrimp brought to cold storage, the dealer storing, brokering, or distributing the shrimp must pay the tax.

Taxes are deposited in Louisiana's Conservation Fund and support LDWF's Law Enforcement Division and its operations.

Live Bait Shrimp

To commercially harvest shrimp for live bait, you must have a Special Bait Dealer Permit, which allows you to harvest shrimp for bait at any time. The requirements for this permit include:

- A permit application and fee
- $1,000 cash bond, which must be forfeited if anyone associated with the permit violates any of the permit requirements or any commercial fishing laws and regulations
- Background check for previous wildlife or fisheries violations
- Inspection of live bait holding facilities (onshore and on vessel)
- Proper signage on the vessel identifying that the vessel is working under the bait permit
- Public notice that live bait is available
- Use of an approved, fully operational vessel monitoring system onboard the vessel if harvesting bait shrimp at night
- Recordkeeping and reporting

You may only use the following gear under this permit:

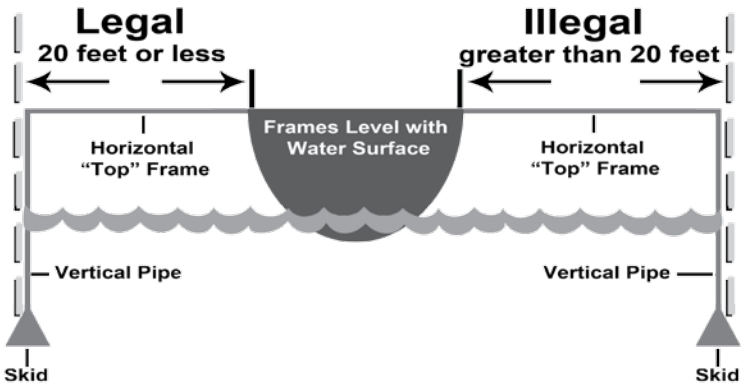
- One trawl no more than 25 feet along the cork line and 33 feet along the lead line
- Two skimmer nets with individual nets no more than 16 feet measured horizontally, 12 feet measured vertically, or 20 feet measure diagonally

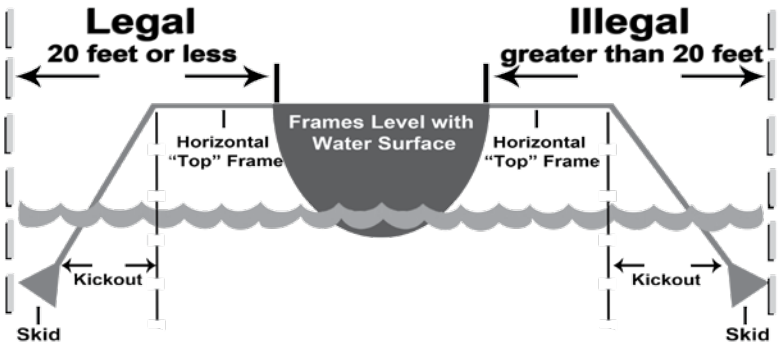
For more information, visit **wlf.louisiana.gov/permit/special-bait-dealer-permit**.

Gear Requirements

Trawls	
Mesh	Must be at least 5/8-inch bar or 1-1/4 inches stretched mesh. Must be at least 3/4-inch bar or 1-1/2 inches stretched mesh during the fall inshore shrimp season from the western shore of Vermilion Bay and Southwest Pass at Marsh Island to the Atchafalaya River.
Size and number	• *Inside waters:* regulations permit one trawl measuring 50 feet long or less along the cork line and 66 feet long or less along the lead line; two trawls not exceeding 25 feet each along the cork line and 33 feet along the lead line, with trawl doors no more than 8 feet long and 43 inches high; OR two trawls not exceeding 25 feet each along the cork line and 33 feet along the lead line, with no more than two outer trawl doors no larger than 8 feet long and 43 inches high and no more than two inner sled doors. Each vessel may also pull a test trawl.* • *Outside waters:* A vessel's nets may not exceed a total of 130 feet of cork line and 165 feet of lead line, in addition to one test trawl.* • *Breton and Chandeleur Sounds:* Regulations permit two trawls, each measuring no more than 65 feet long along the cork line and no more than 82 feet long along the lead line, plus one test trawl.* • *Federal waters:* up to four trawls of any size plus one test trawl. *A test trawl is no more than 16 feet long along the cork line or 20 feet long along the lead line or head rope.
Butterfly and skimmer nets	
Mesh	Must be at least 5/8-inch bar or 1-1/4 inches stretched mesh. Must be at least 3/4 inch bar or 1-1/2 inches stretched mesh during the fall inshore shrimp season from the western shore of Vermilion Bay and Southwest Pass at Marsh Island to the Atchafalaya River.
Size and number	• A single stationary butterfly net may measure no more than 22 feet vertically or horizontally. • Individual nets of double butterfly nets may measure no more than 12 feet vertically or horizontally, unless used on a vessel, in which case they may measure no more than 12 feet vertically by 16 feet horizontally. • Double skimmer nets may have an opening circumference of no more than 72 feet for each net and a maximum lead line length of 33 feet.
Other	• Butterfly nets may be mounted no more than 24 inches from the side of the vessel. • Skimmer nets may be mounted to the horizontal net frame at any distance from the gunwale of the vessel as long as the mounting distance and horizontal length of the net frame does not exceed 20 feet from the gunwale. • You may not tie individual nets together. • No sweeper devices, leads, extensions, wings, or other attachments. • You must mark butterfly nets with a tag listing your name, address, and net license number when using them in East and West Passes of the Calcasieu River, Grand Bayou, and in Oyster Bayou (all within Cameron Parish only); if found unmarked, these nets will be seized by LDWF agents or other authorized employees. This tag must be attached to the net, frame, or any other part directly attached to the net or frame and must be visible above the water at all times. Letters must be at least 3 inches high and of appropriate width to make it visible and readable.

Examples of legal and illegal skimmer net frames.





Crab

Contact: Jeff Marx, 337.373.0032, jmarx@wlf.la.gov

Legal Gear

You may only use the following gear to harvest crabs in Louisiana waters:

- Crab traps
- Crab drop nets
- Trawl, skimmer, and butterfly nets*
- Trotlines, handlines, and bushlines
- Dip and cast nets

*You may only use trawls and butterfly and skimmer nets to harvest crabs during open shrimp seasons and must abide by commercial shrimping regulations.

You may not use dredges to intentionally harvest crabs.

Commercial Gear Licenses

In addition to the applicable licenses and permits listed on pages 7-9, you must have the following Commercial Gear Licenses to use or possess commercial fishing gear:

- Any legal number of crab traps*: $50 resident, $200 nonresident
- Each butterfly, skimmer, or trawl net: $25 resident, $100 nonresident, plus an annual gear fee ($10 resident, $40 nonresident)
- Each cast, dip, or drop net: $25 resident, $100 nonresident
- Any legal number of bush, hand, or trotlines: $25 resident, $100 nonresident

*Any commercial fisherman applying for a Commercial Crab Trap Gear License must have either (1) possessed a valid Commercial Crab Trap Gear License in any two of the following years: 2011, 2012, 2013, and 2014; or (2) possessed a valid Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer License and can demonstrate crab landings through trip ticket submissions during any two years between 2011 and 2014. Otherwise, they must first enroll in and complete a crab industry professionalism program. See **wlf.louisiana.gov/crabtraining** for details.

Seasons

In 2017, 2018, and 2019, the commercial harvest of blue crabs and the use of all crab traps are prohibited for a 30-day period beginning on the 3rd Monday in February. All crab traps remaining in Louisiana's territorial waters during this closure will be presumed to be actively fishing and thus considered illegal.

The Commission may also prohibit the use of crab traps in certain areas for short periods of time to remove lost or abandoned traps through the Derelict Crab Trap Removal Program.

Size Limits

Any commercial fisherman identified as having sold undersized crabs to a wholesale/retail dealer will be subject to penalties for taking and possessing undersized crabs.

Hard shell crabs: You may only harvest crabs 5 inches carapace width or wider. Since at least half of the crab population has sexually matured at this size, this minimum size limit helps ensure crabs are able to reproduce and replace those that are harvested. You must immediately return crabs smaller than 5 inches wide back to the water without injury.

Immature female crabs: You may not harvest immature female blue crabs during 2017, 2018 and 2019, except when an immature female is in the pre-molt stage and is being held for processing as soft shell crab or sold to a processor for making soft shell crab.

Pre-molt crabs*: You may harvest pre-molt crabs smaller than 5 inches carapace width under the following conditions:

- You're holding them for processing as soft shell crabs, OR
- You're selling them to a processor for making soft shell crabs, have properly identified them as pre-molt crabs, and are holding them in a separate container marked "peelers" or "busters".

*Pre-molt crabs are crabs showing signs of molting; the first sign is a white line on the back paddle fin.

Stone crabs: You may only harvest stone crab claws. The claws must measure at least 2-3/4 inches from the tip of the claw to the base of the joint. You may only transfer legal size stone crab claws from a vessel to the shore. You may keep whole stone crabs on a vessel until you have removed their claws; then you must immediately return the crabs to the waters where you harvested them.

Possession Limits

Egg-bearing crabs: You may not harvest any females bearing eggs on their abdomen. You must immediately return egg-bearing crabs to the water without injury to protect this next generation of crabs. No more than 2% of the total number of crabs in your possession may be incidentally harvested, egg-bearing crabs.

Immature female crabs: No more than 2% of a random sample of 50 crabs from each crate (or group of crabs equivalent to one crate) in your possession may be incidentally harvested immature female crabs.

Whole stone crabs: You may only harvest stone crab claws; you may possess one incidentally harvested whole stone crab per crate of blue crabs (or group of blue crabs equivalent to one crate).

Tagging Requirements

You must tag, mark, or otherwise identify any crabs you sell with your name, license number, and the date you harvested the crabs.

Bycatch Limits

You may retain for personal consumption up to 25 finfish in aggregate caught as bycatch in crab traps per vessel per day. However, you may not keep any freshwater gamefish, red drum, or spotted seatrout. Any fish you keep are still subject to recreational size and possession limits.

If you have a gear license which allows you to take finfish for commercial purposes, you may keep any finfish you catch under this license, up to the commercial possession limit for that fish. You do not have to separate this catch from the bycatch described above.

Crab Trap Requirements

Night restrictions	You may not bait, tend, check, or remove crab traps, their contents, lines, buoys, or markers in public waters from 1/2-hour after legal sunset until 1/2-hour before legal sunrise.
Trap placement	You must place your traps so vessels can safely navigate waters. Do not set them in navigable channels or entrances to streams.
Unserviceable traps	• You must properly dispose of unserviceable crab traps back at the dock to reduce the risk and potential impact of derelict traps. • If you retrieve a trap with a Commission-approved common float, you must return that float to any shrimper for reuse.
Damage to or destruction of traps	Unless you are the crab trap licenseholder (or his agent), you may not intentionally damage or destroy a crab trap, attached floats or lines, or its contents.
Trap identification	You must mark your traps with a plastic bait box cover or a 2-inch stainless steel, self-locking tag attached to the center of the trap ceiling to identify the owner of the trap. Either one must be legibly engraved or embossed with your Commercial Fisherman's License number.
Floats and float lines	• You must mark all crab traps with a solid float, 6 inches in diameter or larger, attached with a non-floating line, 1/4 inches in diameter or larger. You do not have to mark traps with a float and line in areas designated as freshwater north of the northern bank of the Intracoastal/ Waterway and west of LA Highway 70 and those areas located on the eastern side of the Mississippi River and inland from the saltwater line, unless you're placing the trap in a lake. • You may attach crab traps to a trotline attached to a non-floating line and a visible float measuring at least 6 inches in diameter or 1/2 gallon in volume. You must register each trap on a trotline with LDWF and tag it with your Commercial Fisherman's License number.
Escape rings	• Each crab trap must have at least two escape rings, 2-5/16 inches in inside diameter or larger, to allow undersized crabs the opportunity to escape the trap. They must be placed on the vertical outside walls flush with the trap floor or baffle. There must be one ring located in each chamber of the trap. Escape rings are not required in Lake Pontchartrain until November 15, 2017 or on any crab trap constructed of square wire mesh 2-5/16 inches or larger. Beginning November 15, 2017, each trap must have three escape rings, each measuring 2-3/8 inches or larger, with at least two located in the upper chamber. • No material should obstruct the escape rings and hamper or prevent crabs from exiting, except from April 1 through June 30 and September 1 through October 31.
Metal tackle and traps	You may not use metal tackle or metal crab traps in any of the public waters north of the Intracoastal Waterway in the Calcasieu River, in any body of water of the Calcasieu River System north of the Intracoastal Canal, or in Vermilion Bay from Cypremort Point one mile offshore to Blue Point.
Closed area	You may not use crab traps in the Tchefuncte River.

WMAs and Refuges

Commercial fishing is **permitted** in:

- Atchafalaya Delta, except in the Limited Access Areas from September to January each year
- Pass-a-Loutre, except in the Limited Access Areas from September to January each year
- Pointe-aux-Chenes (in the Cut Off Canal and Wonder Lake); nighttime fishing is prohibited.

Commercial fishing is **prohibited** in:

- Elmer's Island
- Isle Derniers Barrier Island
- Rockefeller, State, and Marsh Island
- Salvador.

Derelict Crab Traps

Derelict traps are traps that have been discarded, lost, or abandoned. Derelict traps can "ghost fish" and continue to capture blue crabs and other species. They can also create a navigational hazard for boats and become entangled in other fishing gear such as shrimp nets.

Funded in part by the sale of Louisiana crab fishing licenses, a volunteer-based Derelict Crab Trap Removal Program was initiated in 2004 to remove derelict crab traps and reduce their potential impacts. Every year, the Commission prohibits the use of crab traps in certain areas for short periods of time to remove lost or abandoned traps through this program. Any crab trap found in these areas of the state when the Commission has prohibited their use shall be considered abandoned and may be removed by persons authorized by the Commission. Since the program began, volunteers have helped remove more than 27,000 traps. The program also collects data on the number and types of animals found in recovered traps. Go to **wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/derelict-crab-trap-removal** for information on current crab trap removal closures.

Louisiana is the **#1** supplier of domestic blue crab in the nation.

Louisiana has the **1st** and only blue crab fishery certified sustainable by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC).

$58 million The dockside value of Louisiana's 2015 blue crab harvest.

43 million pounds of blue crab are landed in Louisiana in an average year.

Additional Dealer Requirements

If you:	You must have a/an:	Fees and notes:
Are a licensed wholesale/retail seafood dealer exporting (or attempting to export) any crabs or crabmeat outside of Louisiana	Wholesale Out-of-State Crab Shipping License	$100 for residents and nonresidents
Are a licensed retail seafood dealer exporting (or attempting to export) any crabs or crabmeat outside of Louisiana	Retail Out-of-State Crab Shipping License	$100 for residents and nonresidents
Own or operate a soft shell crab shedding facility	Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer License	$250 resident, $1,105 nonresident. On or before the 10th of every month, you must report to LDWF how much soft shell crab you produce. Go to **wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/trip-ticket** or call **225.765.2399** for more details.

Oyster

Contact: Steve Beck (Oyster Program Manager), 225.765.2956, sbeck@wlf.la.gov; Marc Maniscalco (Oyster Lease Section), 504.284.5277, mmaniscalco@wlf.la.gov

Additional Licenses and Permits

In addition to the applicable licenses and permits listed on pages 7-9, you must have the following permits to participate in the following activities.

If you:	You must have a/an:	Fees and notes:
Are the captain of commercial vessel harvesting or possessing oysters	Oyster Harvester License	$100 resident, $400 nonresident; see below for Oyster Harvester License Training Requirements.
Are in charge of an oyster cargo vessel	Oyster Cargo Vessel Permit	$250 resident, $1,105 nonresident; permitholders must have a vessel monitoring system (VMS) acceptable to LDWF's Law Enforcement Division.
Harvest oysters from Calcasieu Lake	Calcasieu Lake Oyster Harvester Permit	No fee
Take and carry oysters from public oyster seed grounds and/or reservations (not including those in Calcasieu or Sabine Lakes)	Public Oyster Seed Ground Vessel Permit	$250 resident, $1,000 nonresident for a single scraper vessel; $500 resident, $2,000 nonresident for a double scraper vessel; issued in the name of the vessel owner; identifies the permitted vessel; cannot be sold, exchanged, or transferred; permitted vessels must have an LDWF-issued VMS properly installed and operating. LDWF is currently prohibited by law from accepting applications for new permits but will be accepting them once a professionalism program is developed (expected to be completed by 2018).
Harvest oysters from a private lease in Louisiana and land them outside of Louisiana	Out-of-State Oyster Landing Permit	$100 resident and nonresident; permit is valid for one calendar year; apply in person at LDWF; permitholders must have a VMS acceptable to LDWF's Law Enforcement Division.
Grow oysters in cages, on- or off-bottom, on permitted state-owned water bottoms for commercial harvest	• Alternative Oyster Culture Permit • Oyster Harvester License • Commercial Fisherman's License	Permit application fee is $100; permits are granted for a 10-year period. You must also obtain a suitable lease from LDWF; to do so, you must be 18 years of age and a Louisiana resident (or a corporation organized in Louisiana). Leases rent for $2 per acre.
Use or possess oyster scrapers (dredges) or tongs	Commercial Gear License for each piece of gear	• Each scraper: $25 resident, $200 nonresident • Each tong: $30 resident, $240 nonresident

Oyster Harvester License Training Requirements

Beginning in license year 2017, **ALL** oyster harvesters must complete an online oyster harvester education course **BEFORE** applying for their 2017 license.

Go to **wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/commercial-oyster** and click "Mandatory Oyster Harvester Training". Enter your first name, last name, email (optional), last 4 digits of your social security number, and Commercial Fisherman's License number. Watch the video and answer a minimum of 80% of the questions correctly to pass (takes about 1 hour). A certificate of completion will be sent to your email and logged with LDWF. It takes 24 to 48 hours for the system to update, so be sure to finish the video at least 3 days before you try to apply for a license. If you don't have a computer with internet connection at home, try your local public library.

Harvesters are required to take this training every three years.

If you:	You must have a/an:	Fees and notes:
Are a restaurant or grocer selling raw oysters	Retail Seafood Dealer License	$105 resident, $405 nonresident
Buy oysters in Louisiana from commercial fishermen for sale or resale	LDHH Shellstock Dealer or Shucker-Packer Permit (plus a Wholesale/Retail Seafood Dealer License)	LDHH permit fees range from $100 to $500, depending on gross annual sales. Contact an LDHH office or inspector to obtain a permit: • Baton Rouge Area: Gordon LeBlanc: 225.342.7539 • New Orleans Area: Gary Lopinto: 504.427.5153 • Lafayette Area: Donna Porrier: 337.207.4043 Oyster dealers must have and implement a written Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) plan.
Shuck oysters to sell to another dealer for resale	LDHH Shucker-Packer Permit	
Buy oysters from harvesters and reship them	LDHH Shellstock Shipper or Reshipper Permit	
Buy oysters only from wholesale/retail dealers	LDHH Distribution and Reshipping Permit	
Are a seafood retailer shucking oysters for sale to the public	LDHH Retail Permit	

Closed Areas

LDHH may close oyster areas for public health reasons. Call **800.256.2775** for more information. If LDWF finds a vessel harvesting oysters within an unapproved or closed area, LDWF will deem all oysters on board the vessel to have been taken from that area, seize the oysters, and return them to the water. LDWF may also revoke the oyster harvester's license(s).

Seasons and Times

Public areas: Generally open from the first Wednesday after Labor Day in September for seed oysters and the second Monday in October for market oysters through April 30 of the following year. The Commission may open and close the season when biological data indicate a need. Go to **wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/commercial-oyster** for the latest information.

State-issued leases and privately-owned water bottoms: A lessee or his agent may fish oysters on the lease at any time unless it is closed by LDHH.

All areas: No harvest from 1/2-hour after sunset to 1/2-hour before sunrise.

Gear Restrictions

Public areas: You may harvest oysters with scrapers and tongs. Scrapers may be no wider than 54 inches measured along the tooth bar and weigh no more than 175 pounds. Scraper teeth may be no longer than 5 inches and must be spaced at least 2-1/4 inches, measured from the center of a tooth to center of the adjacent tooth. A tooth may be no larger than 11/16 inches in diameter. The scraper bag must be single mesh with a minimum mesh size of 3 inches stretched. Vessels may not use more than two scrapers at one time. Vessels may not use any scraper attachment intended to increase downward pressure.

State-issued leases and privately-owned water bottoms: A lessee or his agent may use any gear as long as it does not impair or destroy the water bottom.

Calcasieu and Sabine Lakes: You may harvest oysters with tongs, a hand scraper, or a single scraper with mechanical assist and a flat bar no longer than 36 inches. Commercial vessels must be self-propelled (traveling under their own power).

Size and Possession Limits

Public areas: Oysters harvested for market must measure 3 inches or larger from hinge to mouth. Immediately return any undersized oysters and any shell and/or cultch back to the reefs from which they were taken. Sacks of market oysters from public oyster areas may contain no more than 15% undersized oysters and shell and/or cultch. Size limit does not apply if a fisherman is lawfully removing seed oysters from public grounds.

State-issued leases and privately-owned water bottoms: No size limit.

Calcasieu Lake: You may harvest no more than the sack limit set by the Commission.

Unlawful Removal of Oysters or Signs

You may not take, carry away, or attempt to take or carry away any oysters, shell, or cultch from a leased area without the lessee's permission. You may not remove or alter any stake, monument, bounds, buoy, sign, or other designation of bedding or propagating grounds placed by LDWF or in accordance with regulations.

Cleanliness of Shellfish Vessels

You must wash decks, holds, or binds used for storing shellfish daily. Unless exempted in writing by LDHH, you must have a suspended awning (tarp) on your vessel to protect shellfish from direct exposure to sun, birds, and other conditions. It must be between 1 and 7 feet high and extend to the outer edges of the vessel.

Sewage Disposal on Shellfish Vessels

Vessels without an LDHH-approved sewerage system must have waste receptacles with tight fitting lids, labeled "FOR HUMAN WASTE ONLY" with letters at least 1-½ inches tall, and with a capacity of at least 2 gallons per person on the vessel. You must dispose of the contents of such receptacles through a municipal sewer system, incineration, or burial in the ground.

Oyster Harvest Tags

If you take oysters from Louisiana state waters for sale, you must identify sacks and other packing containers used to hold in-shell oysters with official oyster harvest tags purchased from LDWF. The color of the tag depends on the intended use of the oysters (white for raw consumption in and outside of Louisiana, pink for raw consumption only in Louisiana, or green for shucking or post-harvest processing). Tags are identified with and traceable to your license.

You must complete all information on the tag, including:

- Dealer's name, address, certification number assigned by LDHH and the original oyster shipper's number, if different
- Harvester's identification number assigned by LDWF
- Date and area of harvest
- Type and quantity of oysters.

If you sack or package oysters on your vessel, you must tag them prior to removing them from the vessel. If you sack or package oysters at the dock, you must tag them immediately upon arriving at the dock prior to shipping them. If you harvest from more than one area on a given day, you must sack or package and tag the oysters from one area before moving on to the next.

Dealers must keep oyster harvest tags affixed to each container of in-shell oysters until the container is shipped or emptied for washing, grading, or packing. Dealers must retain all tags for at least 90 days.

It is illegal to possess untagged sacks or containers of oysters (other than on board the vessel or at the dock prior to shipment)—untagged or improperly tagged sacks or containers will be considered to have been taken from polluted waters, deemed a health hazard, and seized and destroyed. You may not sell for resale untagged sacks or containers of oysters.

General Refrigeration Requirements

You must place all harvested in-shell oysters under mechanical refrigeration at an air temperature of 45°F or less (measured 12 inches from the blower). Oysters must be refrigerated within two hours of being offloaded from the harvest vessel onto the dock. Total harvest to refrigeration time must not exceed the time/temperature requirements specified on page 21. If you offload oysters from the harvest vessel to an oyster cargo vessel, oysters must be refrigerated within the times specified on page 21.

In-shell oysters must be maintained at or below 45°F throughout all levels of commerce. You must meet additional refrigeration requirements (see page 21), depending on the oysters' intended use (raw consumption, processing, etc.).

Any oysters that do not meet refrigeration requirements may not be used for raw consumption; only certified dealers may use them for shucking or post-harvest processing.

Time/Temperature Log Sheet

Both the harvester and the first certified dealer must complete time/temperature log sheets to document compliance with refrigeration requirements. Harvesters and dealers must maintain the log sheets for one year (two years for frozen oysters) and make them available for inspection by LDHH, LDWF, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Harvesters must keep log sheets for the current and previous 15 days aboard their vessel. (Exception: Time/temperature log sheets are not required for harvest in the West Cove Conditional Management Area or the Lower Calcasieu Lake Conditional Management Area, both located in Cameron Parish.)

Harvester instructions: Before harvesting oysters, legibly document the following:

- Your boat name/number
- Your name and harvester license number
- Harvest area/lease number
- Time harvesting begins
- Whether oysters will be bedded, shucked, relayed, or other (explain)
- Your signature and date.

After harvesting oysters and prior to leaving the harvest area, record the time harvesting ended and the total number of sacks harvested. If you declare sacks of oysters for shucking and half-shell, distinguish those oysters from each other by placing the appropriate tag on the sack prior to leaving the harvesting area.

Certified dealer instructions: Legibly document the following:

- Temperature of the cooler where oysters are being stored when they begin to be offloaded from the harvesting vessel
- Time and temperature of the cooler when the last sack or container of oysters is removed from the harvest vessel and placed in the cooler. Make this entry immediately upon removal of the sack/container from the vessel.
- Your signature and date.

Louisiana is
1st
in Eastern oyster production, not only in the Gulf of Mexico but also in the entire United States.

Additional Refrigeration Requirements

WHITE TAG OYSTERS Intended for raw consumption in and outside of Louisiana			
Harvested:	**Must be refrigerated at 45°F or less within:**	**Product temperature must be:**	**Other requirements:**
In December, January, February	20 hours from the time harvest began	50°F or below within 10 hours of receipt by the dealer and prior to shipment	
In March, April, November	8 hours from the time harvest began	50°F or below within 10 hours of receipt by the dealer and prior to shipment	You may not also possess oysters intended for shucking, post-harvest processing, relay, or bedding until you offload all white tag oysters (unless you follow white tag requirements for all oysters on board). If oysters are removed from a vessel before they reach 55°F or below, the dealer must verify that the last lots of oysters harvested and placed in mechanical refrigeration meet a temperature of 55°F or below in six hours. They must document this on the same log sheet they received from the harvester.
From May through October	1 hour from the time harvest began	55°F or below within 6 hours of refrigeration	

PINK TAG OYSTERS Intended for raw consumption in Louisiana only; may not leave the state of Louisiana.		
Harvested:	**Must be refrigerated at 45°F or less within:**	**Other requirements:**
Year-round	5 hours from the time harvest began	You must call **800.442.2511** before leaving to harvest pink tag oysters (dial "0" for dispatch). Containers of shucked or frozen pink tag oysters must identify that the product cannot be sold for use outside of Louisiana.

GREEN TAG Intended for shucking by a certified dealer or post-harvest processing only; must be consumed fully cooked.			
Harvested:	**Must be refrigerated at 45°F or less within:**	**Product temperature must be:**	**Other requirements:**
In December, January, February	24 hours from the time harvest began	You may not ship green tag oysters until internal temperature is 50°F or below, unless trip is under 4 hours or you ship them with a time/temperature monitoring device.	All in-shell oysters that have been refrigerated must not be without mechanical refrigeration for more than two hours at points of processing or transfer such as at loading docks. You may not also possess white tag oysters unless you follow white tag requirements for all oysters on board (exception: December, January, and February).
From March through May, October through November	18 hours from the time harvest began		
From June through September	12 hours from the time harvest began		

Harvesting Oysters for Raw Consumption

If you harvest oysters for raw consumption, you must have a HACCP plan.

Your time/temperature log sheet must document the time harvest began for each lot of oysters and the time you refrigerated each lot. Log sheets for pink tag oysters must be separated from log sheets for oysters intended for shipment outside of Louisiana. Harvesters must note on log sheets for pink tag oysters that the oysters are "For Intrastate Shipments Only". If your harvest vessel is equipped with refrigeration capabilities, you must provide documentation to the original dealer that you have met the time and temperature requirements.

You must attach an LDHH- and LDWF-approved tag on all containers holding in-shell oysters, with the corresponding lot identification number or character printed legibly on the tag, prior to refrigerating them. You must record the number of sacks contained within each lot immediately after refrigerating the oysters.

Harvesting Oysters for Shucking or Post-Harvest Processing

Your time/temperature log sheet must document the date and time harvest began for each lot of oysters. If your harvest vessel is equipped with refrigeration capabilities, you must provide documentation to the original dealer that you have met the time and temperature requirements.

If you harvest oysters for delivery to a steam factory for canning and thermal processing, you must land them at the factory within 72 hours from the time harvesting begins. You must document the time harvesting begins and the time of arrival at the factory on your invoice.

Landing Oysters

If you're harvesting oysters from Louisiana's public reefs for sale or consumption, you must land them in Louisiana and tag them appropriately.

If you land oysters harvested from a private lease in Louisiana's waters outside the state (with applicable permit from LDWF), you must tag all sacks or containers prior to leaving the state. You must install a VMS on the vessel used to transport oysters to another state and allow LDWF to access the system.

If you harvest oysters outside of Louisiana waters but land them in Louisiana, you must tag sacks or containers according to the laws of the state where you harvested the oysters.

Oyster Severance Tax

Louisiana collects a severance tax on all oysters harvested from state waters.

Taxes apply as follows:

- 2-1/2 cents per barrel of oysters fished from leased water bottoms
- 3 cents per barrel of oysters fished from the natural reefs.

The oyster fisherman or lessee is responsible for paying these taxes, unless they are sold to a resident wholesale/retail dealer. In that case, the dealer is responsible. If a nonresident wholesale/retail dealer buys oysters from a Louisiana fisherman to ship out-of-state and no severance taxes have been paid on the oysters, the nonresident dealer is responsible for the tax.

Standard Measurements and Labeling

A **barrel** is equal to 6,451.26 cubic inches and is the equivalent of two sacks/baskets or three bushels of unshucked oysters.

A **sack** (or **basket**) is exactly 3,225.63 cubic inches and is the equivalent of 1/2 barrel or 1-1/2 bushels of unshucked oysters.

A **mini-sack** is 1,075.21 cubic inches and is the equivalent of 1/3 of a sack or 1/2 bushel of unshucked oysters.

LDAF certifies metal baskets to ensure accurate measurement. Contact LDAF's Weights and Measures Division at **225.925.3780**. LDAF and LDWF agents have the authority to inspect baskets to ensure volumetric measurements are accurate.

$$V = \frac{\pi H \ (R2^{2+}R1*R2+R1^{2})}{3}$$

Formula for measuring the volume of a basket.

All licensed oyster captains, harvesters, or certified wholesale/retail dealers of in-shell and shucked oyster products shall verify that the oysters being sold adhere to these measurement standards. The quantity of oysters for sale must be accurately labeled by volume, weight, or count (e.g. 1 sack, 35 pounds, or 120 count) in the 'Quantity' field on the harvest tag. Sacks and barrels must contain correct measurements when they are delivered to the buyer.

You may sell in-shell oysters by volume, weight (including the weight of the shell), or count. All oysters must be market size and wholesome.

You may only sell half-shell oysters by weight (excluding shell weight) or count.

You may only sell shucked oysters by fluid volume or net drained weight at wholesale or retail. They must be clearly labeled by volume or weight. A maximum of 15% free liquid by weight is permitted for oysters sold by volume.

You may only sell shucked oysters by count at final retail sale; if they are prepackaged, you must also label them by net drained weight.

Packaging, Labeling, and Distributing Shucked Oysters

You must follow the National Institute of Standards and Technology's guidelines when packaging, labeling, or distributing shucked oysters.

You may only shuck and prepackage oysters in LDHH-certified facilities. You may only ship them in LDHH-approved containers.

When packing shucked oysters, you must mark the containers with

- Your packer certificate number preceeded by the letters LA
- The packing date in code or by actual date.

Shipping documents for shucked oysters must show:

- The name and address of the buyer
- Shipper's name, address, and certificate number
- State of origin.

You must also keep accurate records of the source of the oysters so they can be traced back to the harvest tag and label containers of shucked oysters with this information.

You may not use containers with the certificate number of another packer. If you repack oysters, you must keep records which show the packing date, certificate number, and name and address of the original shucker and packer.

You may not sell or distribute shucked oyster containers to anyone that has not been certified by LDHH. The packer, distributor, or purchaser shall not resell shucked oyster containers. Nonresidents who purchase new and unused shucked oyster containers must have a valid certificate from an appropriate state agency that regulates the seafood industry.

Shucked oysters must maintain a temperature of 45°F or below throughout transit.

Packaging, Labeling, and Shipping In-Shell Oysters

You must pack in-shell oysters (except those for bulk shipments) in clean barrels or sacks.

When in-shell oysters are temporarily offloaded for any reason, you must store them on pallets or on a well-graded paved surface and limit direct exposure to the sun to no more than 30 minutes.

If you ship in-shell oysters in bulk, you may not ship them by truck or car, except when shipping from only one seller to only one buyer. An oyster harvest tag must accompany each shipment.

You may ship in-shell oysters in bulk by boat when harvesters obtain the oysters directly from growing areas and sell them without shucking them. When you ship in-shell oysters by boat, you must label the shipment according to requirements for shucked oysters. If these oysters are intended for processing in shucking houses, the boat operator must keep records in a book provided for such purposes only, showing the sources and quantity of oysters, date and local waters where the oysters were taken, and license or certificate number of persons buying and selling the oysters. The operator must keep these records for 12 months.

All land-based deliveries of in-shell oysters must be made aboard mechanically refrigerated trucks with an internal air temperature of 45°F or less. (Exceptions: deliveries to certified shellfish dealers located less than 30 minutes from the dock and deliveries to steam factories for thermal processing and canning from November through May within 72 hours from the time harvesting began.)

Railroad cars and trucks in which oysters are shipped in sacks must be kept clean; both are subject to inspection. Vessels used to transport in-shell oysters must be constructed to prevent contamination, deterioration, and decomposition of oysters during transport. They must be pre-chilled to 45°F or below prior to loading; the dealer must document compliance with this temperature requirement.

For shipments by air, in-shell oysters must have an internal meat temperature of 45°F or less at all times. You must pre-chill them to an internal temperature of 40°F or less prior to packing them into insulated containers with frozen gel packs.

If you receive in-shell oysters either sacked or in boxes from a certified dealer and do not process or repack them, you must label the package with your name and certification number if you reship them to another certified dealer, wholesaler, or retailer.

You may label in-shell oysters in sacks in bulk when the sale is between certified dealers.

Post-Harvest Processing

If you process oysters to reduce the level of a particular pathogen, you must:

- Have a HACCP plan approved by LDHH that ensures the processing method reduces pathogen(s) in the product to established safe levels for the at-risk population. This plan must include process controls and periodic sampling to ensure and verify that these criteria are met.
- Package and label all oysters in accordance with all National Shellfish Sanitation Program requirements .
- Keep records in accordance with the National Shellfish Sanitation Program.

If you meet the above requirements, you may label your processed product as:

- "Processed for added safety", if the process reduces the levels of all pathogens of public health concern to safe levels for the at-risk population
- "Processed to reduce [name of target pathogen(s)] to non-detectable levels", if the process reduces one or more, but not all, pathogens of public health concern to safe levels for the at-risk population, and if that level is non-detectable
- "Processed to reduce [name of target pathogen(s)] to non-detectable levels for added safety", if the process reduces one or more, but not all, pathogens of public health concern to safe levels for the at-risk population, and if that level is non-detectable
- A term that describes the type of process applied (e.g. "pasteurized," "individually quick frozen," "pressure treated") may be substituted for the word "processed" in the above options.

If your end product is dead, refrigerate it according to requirements for shucked oysters; if your end product is live, refrigerate it according to requirements for in-shell oysters.

You must tag all in-shell oysters that have gone through post-harvest processing with a blue tag, which must include the certification number of the post-harvest processing facility. A blue tag indicates that the oysters have been post-harvest processed by a certified dealer and may now be sold for raw (half-shell) consumption in both interstate and intrastate commerce.

Selling Raw Oysters

You may sell oysters harvested from Louisiana waters for raw consumption within the state throughout the year as long as they meet refrigeration requirements specified on page 21.

All establishments that sell or serve raw oysters must display one of the following messages at the point of sale; the message must also appear on the main display panel and on top of containers of prepackaged raw oysters.

- "There may be a risk associated with consuming raw shellfish as is the case with other raw protein products. If you suffer from chronic illness of the liver, stomach, or blood or have other immune disorders, you should eat these products fully cooked."
- "Consuming raw or undercooked meats, poultry, seafood, shellfish, or eggs may increase your risk of foodborne illness, especially if you have certain medical conditions."

Other Requirements

You must keep oysters in the container in which they were received until they are used, unless displaying them for retail sale. You may not mix oysters from different lots.

Recalls

Certified dealers must have written procedures for recalling adulterated or misbranded oyster products. These procedures must be based on and complementary to FDA policy.

Certified dealers must follow these procedures including timely notification to LDHH and the product buyer of a situation requiring recall and effective removal or correction of the affected product.

$85.3 million
The dockside value of Louisiana's 2015 oyster harvest.

14.5 million
pounds of oysters were harvested by Louisiana's commercial fishermen in 2015.

Legal Finfish Gear

Gear License Fees, Requirements, and Restrictions

To use or possess commercial fishing gear, you must have a Commercial Gear License for your gear. You must also have additional special permits to harvest some species and/or use certain gear, and there are specific requirements and restrictions for the use of some commercial fishing gear.

STATE WATERS (FRESH AND SALTWATER)	
Bow and arrow	License fee: $25 resident, $100 nonresident
Cans, buckets, pipes, drums	License fee: $25 resident, $100 nonresident (any legal number)
Cast net	License fee: $25 resident, $100 nonresident
Dip net	License fee: $25 resident, $100 nonresident
Eel pot	• License fee: $25 resident, $100 nonresident (any legal number) • You may only use eel pots to harvest eel. If you catch any other fish with this gear, you must immediately return it unharmed to the water. • Must be no longer than 48 inches and mesh must be at least 1/2 inch. • Throats or flues must be smaller than 3 inches in diameter at the narrowest point and no larger than 5 inches in diameter at the widest point. • You may not connect lead or wings or use them in conjunction with an eel pot.
Flounder or garfish gig	License fee: $25 resident, $100 nonresident (per gig)
Gill net	• License fee: $25 resident, $100 nonresident (any legal number) • Prohibited in saltwater (unless you have a special permit to use strike nets to harvest mullet or pompano). • For use in freshwater, net must not exceed 1,200 feet in length and mesh must be at least 3 inches square or 6 inches stretched after treating with tar or copper. You must attach waterproof tags with your name and license number to the cork line at the end of each net, no more than 3 feet from the webbing edge.
Hoop net	• License fee: $25 resident, $100 nonresident (any legal number of nets) • Mesh must be at least 1 inch square or 2 inches stretched after treating with tar or copper • Saltwater: you may leave hoop nets unattended if they're attached to a wharf at an inhabitable camp and tagged with an LDWF-issued tag. You may leave hoop nets without leads unattended only if you're harvesting catfish. You may not have red drum or spotted seatrout on board any vessel that's carrying a hoop net. • Freshwater: You may only use wings and leads in overflow regions (where the water is out of the bed of the natural stream or lake). You must set them at least 500 feet from the bed. Wings or leads must be at least 100 feet apart. Leads must not exceed 25 feet in length. You may not use a hoop net with leads to harvest mullet.
Minnow trap	• License fee: $25 resident, $100 nonresident (any legal number) • Throats or flues must not exceed 1 inch in width. • You may only use minnow traps to harvest minnows for bait.

Mullet strike net	• License fee: $250 resident, $1,000 nonresident (per net) • You must have a Mullet Permit to use a strike net to harvest mullet (see page 31). You may only use strike nets to harvest striped mullet; you may not harvest any other fish while harvesting mullet with a strike net (or cast net). You may not have red drum or spotted seatrout on board any vessel that's carrying a strike net. • Mesh must be at least 1-3/4 inches square or 3-1/2 inches stretched, and net must not exceed 1,200 feet in length. • You may only use one strike net from a vessel at any time. You must attach an LDWF-issued tag to the net. • You may not anchor or secure a strike net to the water bottom or shore. You must actively work the net and may not leave it unattended.
Pompano strike net	• License fee: $250 resident, $1,000 nonresident (per net) • You must have a Pompano Permit (captain only; no fee) to use a strike net to harvest pompano (see page 31). • You may only use pompano strike nets from August 1 to October 31 of each year in waters more than 7 feet deep and beyond 2,500 feet from land within Breton and Chandeleur Sounds. You may not use them between sunset and sunrise nor on weekends or Labor Day. • You may not harvest any other fish while harvesting pompano with a strike net, and you may not have any other gear on board. You may not have red drum or spotted seatrout on board any vessel that's carrying a strike net. • Mesh must be at least 2-1/2 inches square or 5 inches stretched, and net may be no longer than 2,400 feet. • You must attach an LDWF-issued tag to the net, and your vessel must display your permit number in 8-inch high letters. • You may not anchor or secure a strike net to the bottom. You must actively work the net and may not leave it unattended. • You must notify LDWF before you leave port to fish under the conditions of your Pompano Permit and immediately when you return.
Purse seine	• License fee: $505 resident, $2,020 nonresident (per seine) • You may only use purse seines in state waters to harvest menhaden and/or herring-like species.
Rod and reel	• License fee: $250 resident, $1,000 nonresident (any legal number) • You must have a permit to use a rod and reel for commercial purposes. To qualify, you must have had a valid Saltwater Gill Net License during any two years from 1993 to 1995 and provide state and federal income tax returns (including Schedule C of the federal 1040 form) demonstrating more than 50% of your earned income came from the capture and sale of seafood in at least two years from 1993 to 1995.
Seine	• License fee: $25 resident, $100 nonresident (any legal number) • Prohibited in saltwater. • For use in freshwater, net may be no longer than 1,200 feet; mesh must be at least 2 inches square or 4 inches stretched after treating with tar or copper.
Set lines (trot, bush, yo-yos, triggers, etc.)	• License fee: $25 resident, $100 nonresident (any legal number) • Trotline hooks must be at least 24 inches apart.
Shad gill net	• License fee: $25 resident, $100 nonresident • You must hold a special Shad Gill Net License to use this gear (one shad gill net per licensee per vessel). This license allows you to harvest shad and skipjack herring in Lac Des Allemands, Lakes Palourde and Verret, any Iberville Parish waterway, and those portions of Iberia, St. Martin, and St. Mary Parishes located between the guide levees of the Atchafalaya Basin. You may not harvest shad or skipjack in streams, bayous, canals, and other water bodies connected with these lakes. You may only use gill nets to take shad or skipjack; however, you may keep up to 25 other commercial fish. Heads and caudal fins of all fish on board the vessel must be intact. You may not harvest shad or skipjack on Saturday or Sunday. The season is closed from July through October. • Net may be no longer than 1,200 feet; mesh must be at least 1 inch bar or 2 inches stretched but no more than 2 inch bar or 4 inches stretched. • A 1-gallon jug painted international orange and marked, in black letters, with the words "Shad Gill Net" must be attached to each end of the net. • You must attach waterproof tags with your full name and license number to your net. • You must place nets at least 50 feet from the tree line. • Never leave your net unattended. • Only strike fishing is allowed. Once you deploy the net, it must remain stationary until you remove the fish or retrieve the net from the water.

Shad seine	• License fee: $25 resident, $100 nonresident; one shad seine per licensee per vessel • May be used for shad, skipjack herring, and any other legal-sized freshwater commercial fish. Heads and caudal fins of all fish on board the vessel must be intact. • Net must not exceed 1,200 feet in length and mesh must be at least 1 inch bar and 2 inches stretched but no more than 2 inch bar and 4 inches stretched. No monofilament mesh. • Never leave your net unattended. • A 1-gallon jug painted international orange and marked, in black letters, with the words "Shad Seine" must be attached to each end of the net. • You must attach waterproof tags with your full name and license number to your net. • May only be used in freshwater areas of the state, except where seines are prohibited; also prohibited in the Pearl River and Pearl River navigational canal.
Slat trap	• License fee: $25 resident, $100 nonresident (any legal number) • May only be used to capture catfish. • At least one pair of slats must be at least 1 inch apart from each other on at least three sides of the trap. • Trap must be less than 6 feet in length, 2 feet in diameter or width. • Trap must have one or more cone-shaped throats, flues, or entrances.
Spear gun	License fee: $25 resident, $100 nonresident (per spear gun)
Trammel net	• License fee: $25 resident, $100 nonresident (any legal number) • Prohibited in saltwater. • For use in freshwater, net must not exceed 1,200 feet and mesh must be at least 3 inches square or 6 inches stretched after treating with tar or copper. You must attach waterproof tags with your name and license number to the cork line at the end of each net, no more than 3 feet from the webbing edge.
Trawl	• License fee: $25 resident, $100 nonresident (per trawl) • You may only use trawls in waters where and when shrimp season is open.
Trotline	• License fee: $25 resident, $100 nonresident • Line must not be longer than 440 yards. • Hooks must be at least 24 inches apart.
Wire net	• License fee: $25 resident, $100 nonresident (any legal number) • Net mesh must be at least 1 inch square or 2 inches stretched; wire mesh must be 5 inches or larger to support the webbing.
FEDERAL WATERS (SALTWATER)	
Bandit gear	You may not use bandit gear in state saltwater areas.
Longlines	You may not use longlines in state saltwater areas.
Saltwater gill net, seines, strike nets, and trammel nets	• You must have an LDWF-issued Traversing Permit (no fee) to transport gill nets, seines, strike nets, and trammel nets across state waters to use in federal waters. You may not use these gears in state saltwater areas (unless you have a special permit to use strike nets). • You may not possess red drum or spotted seatrout on vessels carrying these gears. • You must notify LDWF at **800.442.2511** or **225.765.2441** four hours before you leave port to traverse or fish under the conditions of the Traversing Permit and immediately when you return from the permitted trip.

Saltwater Finfish

Contact: Jason Adriance, 504.284.2032, jadriance@wlf.la.gov

Additional Dealer Licenses and Permits

In addition to the applicable licenses and permits listed on pages 8-9, you must have the following permits to participate in the following activities.

If you are a:	You must have a/an:	Notes:
Dealer receiving reef fish, mackerel, or cobia harvested from federal waters	NOAA Fisheries Gulf and South Atlantic Dealer Permit	You must also have a Gulf IFQ Dealer Endorsement if you're receiving red snapper, groupers, or tilefish (unless the commercial fisherman has one). For details, contact NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office at **877.376.4877**.
Dealer receiving, buying, trading, or bartering Atlantic swordfish	NOAA Fisheries Atlantic Swordfish Dealer Permit	
Dealer receiving Atlantic shark species	NOAA Fisheries Atlantic Shark Dealer Permit	
Commercial fisherman with an Gulf IFQ allocation selling red snapper, groupers, or tilefish to a dealer without a Gulf IFQ Dealer Endorsement	NOAA Fisheries Gulf IFQ Dealer Endorsement	

Prohibited Gear

You may not use any of the following types of gear in state saltwater areas:

- Spears (except for flounder and garfish)
- Stupefying substances or devices
- Guns
- Poisons
- Explosives
- Tree-topping devices
- Electric shocking instruments or devices
- Seines (unless you are harvesting menhaden and/or herring-like species)
- Snagging devices (not including bows and arrows; exceptions: garfish taken by spears)
- Longlines (not the same as trotlines—longlines are longer than 440 yards; allowed in federal waters)
- Gill nets (unless you have a special permit to use strike nets to harvest mullet or pompano)
- Bandit gear (allowed in federal waters)
- Elevated trotlines (except in exempt areas)
- Trammel nets.

You may not use any aircraft including fixed-wing aircraft, dirigibles, balloons, helicopters, or any other form of aerial surveillance to assist in harvesting finfish, except menhaden and herring-like fish.

Area Restrictions

Free fish passage: Do not set gear within 500 feet of the mouth of any inlet or pass or within 500 feet of any water control structures. This ensures fish can pass freely through these areas.

WMAs and refuges: Commercial fishing is **permitted** in:

- Atchafalaya Delta, except in the Limited Access Areas from September to January each year
- Pass-a-Loutre, except in the Limited Access Areas from September to January each year. Commercial mullet fishing is only permitted in: South Pass, Pass-a-Loutre, North Pass, Southeast Pass, Northeast Pass, Dennis Pass, Johnson Pass, Loomis Pass, Cadro Pass, Wright Pass, Viveats Pass, Cognevich Pass, Blind Bay, Redfish Bay, Garden Island Bay, Northshore Bay, East Bay (west of Barrier Islands), and oil and gas canals as described on LDWF's Pass-a-Loutre WMA map
- Pointe-aux-Chenes (in the Cut Off Canal and Wonder Lake); nighttime fishing is prohibited.

Commercial fishing is **prohibited** in:

- Elmer's Island

- Isle Derniers Barrier Island
- Rockefeller, State, and Marsh Island
- Salvador.

Prohibited Saltwater Species

You may not harvest the following **federally-listed threatened, endangered, or prohibited species**:

All whales	Dolphin (mammal)
West Indian manatees	Sea turtles

You may not harvest the following **gamefish**:

Red drum	Black marlin	Blue marlin
Hatchet marlin	Striped marlin	White marlin
Sailfish		

You may only purchase or sell the gamefish listed above if you import them. You must notify LDWF at **800.442.2511** or **225.765.2441** before you import any of these fish. When you import any of these fish, you must attach an official metal self-locking tag to one gill cover of each fish. These tags must be issued by the official conservation agency of the state from which the fish was taken and must show the originating water body and identity of the issuing agency. However, imported wild-caught red drum must only be accompanied by a bill of lading. Farm-raised red drum is exempt from these requirements if certified by LDWF as having been raised and harvested in accordance with a certified aquaculture program or a valid mariculture program.

You may not harvest **goliath grouper (jewfish)** or **Nassau grouper**.

You may not harvest, possess, purchase, sell, barter, exchange or attempt any of these activities for the following **shark species**:

Atlantic angel	Basking	Bigeye sand tiger
Bigeye sixgill	Bigeye thresher	Bignose
Caribbean reef	Caribbean sharpnose	Dusky
Galapagos	Largetooth sawfish	Longfin mako
Narrowtooth	Night	Sand tiger
Sevengill	Sixgill	Smalltail
Smalltooth	Whale	White

78%
of Louisiana's 2015 finfish harvest (by value)* came from saltwater.
*Not including menhaden.

11.7 million
pounds of saltwater finfish* were landed by commercial fishermen in Louisiana in 2015.
*Not including menhaden.

Species Regulations

You must return undersized fish back to the water unharmed; 5% (by number) of each species of commercial fish you harvest may be smaller than the legal limit. You may harvest commercial species with no specified size limit in any size and quantity. No one may sell, purchase, barter, trade, or exchange undersized fish (or attempt to do any of these activities).

Make sure that all saltwater finfish, except garfish, tuna, swordfish, and sharks, have their head and caudal fins intact until you put them on shore or sell them. Garfish must retain a strip of skin sufficient to clearly identify the fish until you put them on shore or sell them. All sharks aboard your vessel must have their fins naturally attached by at least some portion of uncut skin.

For the most current information, go to **wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/commercial-finfish**.

COMMON COASTAL SPECIES				
Species	**Size Limit**	**Harvest Limit**	**Season/Times**	**Other**
Cobia	33 in. min. fork length	Two fish per person per trip		You may only retain and sell two cobia per trip.
Black drum	16 in. min. total length	• 16-27 in. total length: annual quota of 3.25 million pounds • Longer than 27 in. total length: annual quota of 300,000 pounds	Fishing year begins Sept. 1; open year-round, or until quota is harvested	
Southern flounder	None	10 fish daily for each licensed fisherman for each consecutive day on the water; however, commercial shrimping vessels may retain and sell all southern flounder harvested as bycatch on a shrimping trip	Year-round	
King mackerel	24 in. min. fork length	3,000 pounds per trip	Season begins Jul. 1, closes when quota is reached	You must have a federal permit when fishing in federal waters.
Spanish mackerel	12 in. min. fork length	None	Fishing year begins Apr. 1, closes when quota is reached	You must have a federal permit when fishing in federal waters.
Menhaden	None	• Bait: annual quota of 3,000 metric tons (6,613,800 pounds) • Purse seine: none	• Purse seine: 3rd Mon. in Apr.—Nov. 1 • Bait: Nov. 2—Dec. 1; if quota has not been harvested by Dec. 1, fishery may resume on Apr. 1 of the following year until the quota is harvested.	• You may only sell menhaden harvested during bait season as bait. • You may not possess more than 5%, by weight, of any species other than menhaden and herring-like species. • You may only use purse seines to harvest menhaden or herring-like species. You may not use this gear for any other purpose in state waters. • You may only fish for menhaden in waters seaward of the inside-outside line, including federal waters and Chandeleur and Breton Sounds.

Species	Size Limit	Harvest Limit	Season/Times	Other
Striped mullet	None	• You may not harvest any other fish while harvesting mullet with a strike or cast net. • Strike net: None • Live bait: None, but all mullet you harvest commercially with a cast net must remain alive until you sell it	• Strike net: 3rd Mon. in Oct.—3rd Mon. in following Jan.; harvest only allowed Mon.—Fri., from sunrise to sunset • Live bait: year-round, with cast net only; harvest only allowed Mon.—Fri., from sunrise to sunset	• Unless harvesting mullet for live bait, you must have a Mullet Permit ($100 resident, $400 nonresident) to harvest and sell mullet (plus other commercial fishing and gear licenses). To qualify, you must have had a Saltwater Gill Net License during any two years from 1993 to 1995 and provide state and federal income tax returns (including Schedule C of the federal 1040 form) demonstrating more than 50% of your earned income came from the capture and sale of seafood in at least two years from 1993 to 1995. • You may only harvest mullet commercially with a mullet strike net (see page 26). However, you may harvest mullet for live bait with a commercial cast net (no more than 12 feet in radius, operated manually, during any season, with appropriate gear licenses).
Florida pompano	None	None	• Strike net: Aug. 1—Oct. 31 of each year, sunrise to sunset, no weekends or Labor Day • Other legal gears: year-round	You must have a Pompano Permit (no fee) to harvest and sell pompano caught with a strike net (see page 26); application period is from Jan. 1 to Apr. 30 each year.
Spotted seatrout (speckled trout)	14 in. min. total length	Annual quota of 1 million pounds	• 2nd day of Jan. until the last day of Dec., or until the quota is reached (whichever comes first). • No harvest on weekends (from official sunset on Fri. to official sunrise on Mon.). • When you're not on a commercial trip, you may harvest up to the recreational limit of spotted seatrout between 10 pm and 5 am when the season is open and anytime when it's closed. You must also have a basic recreational and a saltwater fishing license. You may not sell/barter/trade/exchange these fish.	• You must have a Spotted Seatrout Permit ($100 resident, $400 nonresident) to harvest and sell spotted seatrout (plus other commercial fishing and gear licenses). To qualify, you must have had a Saltwater Gill Net License during any two years from 1993 to 1995 and provide state and federal income tax returns (including Schedule C of the federal 1040 form) demonstrating more than 50% of your earned income came from the capture and sale of seafood in at least two years from 1993 to 1995. Saltwater guides may not obtain a Spotted Seatrout Permit. • You may only use commercial rod-and-reel gear to harvest spotted seatrout. No vessel carrying or fishing a gill, hoop, trammel, or seine net may have spotted seatrout aboard. • All on board a vessel commercially fishing spotted seatrout must be a licensed commercial fishermen. • No commercial harvest of spotted seatrout in Louisiana waters west of the Mermentau River.
Sheepshead	10 in. min. fork length	None	Year-round	
Tripletail	18 in. min. total length	100 pounds per trip; no more than one vessel trip per day	Year-round	

REEF FISH: You must have a NOAA Fisheries-issued Commercial Reef Fish Vessel Permit to harvest or sell triggerfish, amberjack, wrasse, snapper, grouper, and tilefish, regardless of whether you're fishing in state or federal waters. Federally-permitted reef fish vessels must carry VMS onboard. Additional federal regulations apply to the harvest of reef fish species. For reef fish fishery management, Louisiana waters extend to 9 nautical miles. Fishermen should stay informed of the state/federal jurisdictional boundary as future congressional actions may affect current boundary demarcation as it applies to reef fish species. If a future congressional action modifies the state/federal jurisdictional boundary, it will not impact the type of fishing gear reef fish fishermen may use.

Species	Size Limit	Harvest Limit	Season/Times	Other
Greater amberjack	36 in. min. fork length	1,500 pounds gutted weight per trip. Annual quotas may fluctuate from year to year; see the most recent quota online at **gulfcouncil.org**.	Closed Mar. 1—May 31	
Lesser amberjack	14 in. min. fork length and 22 in. max. fork length	None	Year-round	
Grouper	• Black: 24 in. min. total length • Gag: 22 in. min. total length • Red: 18 in. min. total length • Scamp: 16 in. min. total length • Yellowfin: 20 in. min. total length • None for misty, snowy, yellowedge, and warsaw groupers and speckled hind	You must have an IFQ allocation to harvest groupers. Annual quotas may fluctuate from year to year; see the most recent quotas online at **go.usa.gov/xKJHq.**	Year-round	You must call NOAA Fisheries Office of Law Enforcement at least 3 hours, but no more than 24 hours, before landing groupers. You must report the location of landing, name of the IFQ dealer receiving your catch, and estimated gutted weight of your catch per IFQ category. You may not transfer any of these species between vessels at sea or dockside. Call **877.376.4877** or go to **sero.nmfs.noaa.gov** for details.
Hogfish	12 in. min. total length	None	Year-round	
Banded rudderfish	14 in. min. fork length and 22 in. max. fork length	None	Year-round	
Black seabass	None	None	Year-round	
Snapper	• Lane: 8 in. min. total length • Mutton: 16 in. min. total length • Vermilion (beeliner): 10 in. min. total length • Yellowtail, cubera, and gray (mangrove): 12 in. min. total length • Red: 13 in. min. total length • Mahogany, dog, schoolmaster, queen, blackfin, and silk: none	You must have an IFQ allocation to harvest red snapper. Annual quotas may fluctuate from year to year; see the most recent quotas online at **go.usa.gov/xKJHq.**	Year-round	You must call NOAA Fisheries Office of Law Enforcement at least 3 hours, but no more than 24 hours, before landing red snapper. You must report the location of landing, name of the IFQ dealer receiving your catch, and estimated gutted weight of your catch per IFQ category. You may not transfer red snapper between vessels at sea or dockside. Call **877.376.4877** or go to **sero.nmfs.noaa.gov** for details.
Tilefish (blueline, golden, and goldface)	None	You must have an IFQ allocation to harvest tilefish. Annual quotas may fluctuate from year to year; see the most recent quotas online at **go.usa.gov/xKJHq.**	Year-round	You must call NOAA Fisheries Office of Law Enforcement at least 3 hours, but no more than 24 hours, before landing tilefish. You must report the location of landing, name of the IFQ dealer receiving your catch, and estimated gutted weight of your catch per IFQ category. You may not transfer tilefish between vessels at sea or dockside. Call **877.376.4877** or go to **sero.nmfs.noaa.gov** for details.

Species	Size Limit	Harvest Limit	Season/Times	Other
Gray triggerfish	14 in. min. fork length	12 fish per trip. Annual quotas may fluctuate from year to year; see the most recent quota online at **gulfcouncil.org**.	Closed Jun. 1—Jul. 31	
HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES				
Species	**Size Limit**	**Harvest Limit**	**Season/Times**	**Other**
Shark	None	Under the LDWF-issued shark permit, 45 large coastal sharks per trip per vessel per day; large coastal sharks include: blacktip, bull, great hammerhead, lemon, nurse, sandbar, scalloped hammerhead, silky, smooth hammerhead, spinner, and tiger sharks. Harvest limits vary in federal waters.	State waters: closed Apr. 1—Jun. 30	• You must have an LDWF-issued Shark Permit (no fee) to harvest shark. If you're fishing in federal waters, you must also have a Federal Shark Permit. Go to **go.usa.gov/xKJsD** for federal information. • You may not possess sandbar sharks unless you have a valid Federal Shark Research Permit. • Shark finning is illegal. All sharks aboard your vessel must have their fins naturally attached by at least some portion of uncut skin. • You may not transfer sharks between vessels. • You may only skin or scale sharks after you have put them on shore or when you sell them.
Swordfish	29 in. min. carcass length or 33 lb. min. dressed weight	Federal restrictions apply.	Year-round	• You must have a Federal Commercial Swordfish Permit to harvest, possess, or sell swordfish, regardless of whether you're fishing in state or federal waters. Go to **go.usa.gov/xKJsn** for federal information. • You may not transfer swordfish between vessels in state or federal waters. • You may only skin or scale swordfish after you have put them on shore or when you sell them.
Tuna	• Bigeye and yellowfin: 27 in. min. curved fork length* • Bluefin: 73 in. min. curved fork length* • Albacore and skipjack: none *You may remove the head of these tuna species, as long as the carcass length without the head exceeds the minimum size requirement.	Federal restrictions apply. No directed fishing for bluefin tuna.	Federal seasons apply.	• You must have a Federal Commercial Tuna Permit to harvest, possess, or sell Atlantic albacore, bigeye, bluefin, skipjack, and yellowfin tuna, regardless of whether you're fishing in state or federal waters. You must follow both state and federal laws, rules, and regulations, regardless of where you're fishing. Seasonal changes in federal regulations may supersede LDWF's regulations Go to **go.usa.gov/xKJsv** or call **888.872.8862** for current federal information. • You may only skin or scale tuna after you have put them on shore or when you sell them.

Louisiana ranks

2nd

in the harvest of finfish in the United States*.
*By volume, including menhaden.

$25.6 million

The dockside value of Louisiana's 2015 finfish harvest*.
*Not including menhaden.

Freshwater Finfish

Contact: Ricky Moses, 225-765-2331, rmoses@wlf.la.gov

Gear Requirements and Restrictions by Water Body

TROTLINES AND YO-YOS	
Black-Clear Lake, Caddo Lake, Chicot Lake, Prairie Lake, Lake Lafourche, & Lake St. Joseph	• You must tag trotlines with your name, address, phone number, and the date you placed the line. You must mark each end of the line with a visible floating object. You must attach an 8-foot cotton leader on each end to ensure that if the trotline is left unattended, the leader will deteriorate and the line will sink. You may set no more than three trotlines with no more than 50 hooks per line and must attend them daily. • You may not use more than 50 yo-yos or trigger devices. You must clearly tag each device with your name, address, and phone number. You may not attach them to a metallic object or anchor them with any artificial object. You may only anchor them to an existing pier, boathouse, seawall, or dock—you may not use any object such as rebar, cane, PVC tubing, or construction material to anchor a yo-yo or trigger device to a water bottom, stump, tree, or shoreline. You must rebait each yo-yo or trigger device at least once every 24 hours. You must immediately remove all fish or any other animals caught or hooked on the device.
Poverty Point Lake	You may not use trotlines or yo-yos.
NETS	
Anacoco Lake, Lake Vernon, and the portion of Anacoco Bayou between the lakes	No fish seines, gill nets, hoop nets, or trammel nets.
Lake Bartholomew	No fish seines, gill nets, or trammel nets.
Lake Bistineau	No fish seines, gill nets, hoop nets, or trammel nets.
Bogue Chitto River	• No seines, nets, or webbing in the Bogue Chitto River from where it enters the state in northern Washington Parish to where it enters the Pearl River in St. Tammany Parish. • No hand grabbing to take fish from logs, buckets, barrels, drums, or natural or artificial nesting areas.
Bundick Lake	No fish seines, gill nets, hoop nets, or trammel nets.
Caddo Lake	No fish seines, gill nets, or trammel nets.
Caney Creek Reservoir	No fish seines, gill nets, hoop nets, or trammel nets.
Lake Charles	No butterfly nets or shrimp trawls longer than 16 feet, fish seines, gill nets, strike nets, or trammel nets.
Lake Claiborne	No fish seines, gill nets, or trammel nets.
Lake Concordia	No fish seines, gill nets, or trammel nets.
Cross Lake	No fish seines, gill nets, hoop nets, or trammel nets.
Cypress Lake and Black Bayou Reservoir	• No fish seines, gill nets, or trammel nets. • No hoop nets, slat traps, or wire nets from March 1 to October 31.

Chicot Lake	No fish seines, gill nets, hoop nets, or trammel nets.
D'Arbonne Lake	No fish seines, gill nets, or trammel nets.
False River Lake, Lake Bruin, Lake Providence, & Poverty Point Lake	You may only use gill and trammel nets from October 1 through sunset on the last day of February of the following year. Net mesh must be at least 3-1/2 inches square (7 inches stretched). You may leave gear overnight but may only remove fish during daylight hours.
Fool River	No fish seines.
John K. Kelly-Grand Bayou Reservoir	No fish seines, gill nets, hoop nets, trammel nets, or wire nets.
Lacassine Bayou	No gill nets, hoop nets, or trammel nets from March 1 to November 30 (in the portion that flows through Lacassine National Refuge).
Moss Lake	No butterfly nets or shrimp trawls longer than 16 feet, fish seines, gill nets, strike nets, or trammel nets.
Nantachie Lake	No nets allowed.
Prien Lake	No butterfly nets or shrimp trawls longer than 16 feet, fish seines, gill nets, strike nets, or trammel nets.
Tchefuncte River	No seines, nets, or webbing in this river or its tributaries, from its origin in Washington Parish to where it empties into Lake Pontchartrain in St. Tammany Parish.
Toledo Bend Reservoir	No hoop nets from March 1 to May 15 (only in that portion of the reservoir from a point north of Logansport where the lake enters Texas and south to a point on the lake where the Texas Duck Refuge Canal intersects the Old Channel of the Sabine River).
TRAPS	
Lake Bruin	No slat traps from October 1 through sunset on the last day of February of the following year. You may leave gear overnight but may only remove fish during daylight hours.
Poverty Point Lake	No slat traps.
Tchefuncte River	No traps in this river or its tributaries, from its origin in Washington Parish to where it empties into Lake Pontchartrain in St. Tammany Parish.

Prohibited Gear

You may not use any of the following types of gear in state freshwater areas:

Spears (except garfish)	Poisons
Stupefying substances or devices	Explosives
Guns	Tree-topping devices
Lead nets (exception: leads on hoop nets set at least 500 feet from a stream bed in overflow regions)	Electric shocking instruments or devices
Snagging devices (not including bows and arrows; exceptions: catfish, garfish taken by spears)	Elevated trotlines (except in exempt areas)

You may not use any aircraft including fixed-wing aircraft, dirigibles, balloons, helicopters, or any other form of aerial surveillance to assist in harvesting finfish, except herring-like fish.

Bait

You may use the following gear to harvest minnows, shrimp, and other baits permitted by law:

- Seines no longer than 30 feet and with mesh no larger than 1/4 inch
- Cast nets with a radius of less than 8-1/2 feet
- Dip nets no larger than 3 feet in diameter
- Minnow traps

Area Restrictions

Free fish passage: Do not set gear, such as trawls, nets, or seines, within 500 feet of the mouth of any inlet or pass or within 500 feet of any water control structures, dams, or weirs. This ensures fish can pass freely through these areas.

Louisiana/Mississippi Border: When fishing in border waters, you must attach waterproof tags with your full name and license number to trotlines, snag lines, hoop nets, gill nets, and trammel nets, in lieu of tags required by Mississippi regulations. You must place the tag within 5 feet of one end on trot and snag lines, on the first hoop on hoop nets, and on the float line within 5 feet of one end on gill and trammel nets. Louisiana fishermen using slat traps or baskets in border waters must obtain tags from the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks.

Impoundments: You may not use nets to harvest fish in freshwater impoundments during water drawdown periods, unless LDWF specifies otherwise. Closures begin on the date the drawdown control structure opens and continues until the lake is full again.

WMAs and refuges: Commercial fishing is **permitted** in:

- Fort Polk (specific regulations pertaining to fishing are posted at specific lakes)
- Grassy Lake*, except in Smith Bay, Red River Bay, and Grassy Lake on Saturday and Sunday and during waterfowl season
- Pomme de Terre*, except on the weekends and during duck season
- Richard K. Yancey, except during regular waterfowl seasons in Grand Bay, Silver Lake, and Lower Sunk Lake
- Spring Bayou* (Monday through Friday and after 2 pm during waterfowl season). However, you may use slat traps and hoop nets any day, you may never use gill or trammel nets, and you may not harvest grass carp.

*You must have a permit to fish Grassy Lake, Pomme de Terre, and Spring Bayou WMAs. Permits are available from **Spring Bayou Headquarters** or the **Opelousas Field Office** at **337.948.0255**.

Commercial fishing is **prohibited** in Ouachita WMA.

Prohibited Freshwater Species

You may not commercially harvest the following freshwater species:

Largemouth bass	Hybrid striped bass
Shadow bass	Spotted bass
Striped bass	White bass
Yellow bass	Black crappie
Bream (any species)	Paddlefish (spoonbill catfish)
White crappie	All species of piranha
Atlantic, pallid, and shovelnose sturgeons (whole or any body parts, including roe)	Rio Grand cichlid
All species of tilapia	Rudd
Freshwater electric eel	*Channidae* (snakeheads)
All members of the family *Synbranchida* (Asian swamp eels)	*Trichomycteridae* (pencil catfishes)
Clariidae (walking catfishes)	

12.6 million pounds of freshwater finfish were landed by commercial fishermen in Louisiana in 2015.

71% of active freshwater commercial fishermen in Louisiana harvest catfish.

Species Regulations

You must return undersized fish back to the water unharmed; 5% (by number) of each species of commercial fish you harvest may be smaller than the legal limit, except channel catfish of which 10% (by number) may be smaller. No one (commercial fishermen, dealers, retailers, and restaurants) may sell, purchase, barter, trade, or exchange undersized fish (or attempt to do any of these activities).

You may harvest commercial species with no specified size limit in any size and quantity.

For the most current information, go to **wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/commercial-finfish**.

Species	Size Limit	Harvest Limit	Season/Times	Other
Blue catfish	12 inches minimum total length	5% may be smaller than the legal limit	Year-round	
Buffalo (smallmouth, bigmouth, and black)	16 inches minimum total length	5% may be smaller than the legal limit	Year-round	
Channel catfish	11 inches minimum total length	10% may be smaller than the legal limit	Year-round	
Flathead catfish	14 inches minimum total length	5% may be smaller than the legal limit	Year-round	
Freshwater drum	12 inches minimum total length	5% may be smaller than the legal limit	Year-round	
Bowfin	22 inches minimum total length	5% may be smaller than the legal limit	Closed December through February, except in Assumption, Avoyelles, Iberville, Pointe Coupee, Terrebonne, Tangipahoa, and West Baton Rouge parishes, and in the areas know as Bayou Courtableau, Bayou Teche, Lake Dauterive, Lake Fausse Point, Vermilion River, Carencro Bayou, Queue de Tortue Bayou, Bayou Nez Pique, Mermentau River, Bayou Lacassine, Sabine River, and the Atchafalaya Basin Floodway that is bounded by the east and west levees of the Atchafalaya Basin and is south of U.S. Highway 190.	
Shad and skipjack herring	None	No limit for properly licensed shad gill net and seine fishermen	Closed July through October. During open season, you may take shad and skipjack during the day or night, but you may not harvest shad or skipjack on Saturday or Sunday.	You must be properly licensed to harvest shad and skipjack herring with shad gill nets or seines (see pages 26-27).
Asian/grass, silver, bighead, and black carp	None	None	None	Fish harvested may only be possessed and sold dead.

Crawfish

Contact: Ricky Moses, 225-765-2331, rmoses@wlf.la.gov

Gear License Fees, Requirements, and Restrictions

You may use approved crawfish traps to harvest wild crawfish in Louisiana's waters. Trap mesh must be a hexagon of 3/4-inch by 11/16-inch or larger, measured from wire to wire, not including any coating on the wire. The openings of trap flues and throats must not exceed 2 inches. These requirements allow small crawfish to escape the trap—small crawfish have little market value and are important to the population for breeding.

To use or possess crawfish traps, you must have a Commercial Gear License for any legal number of traps. A Commercial Gear License for crawfish traps costs $25 for residents and $100 for nonresidents.

Seasons and Size/Possession Limits

There are no limits on season, size, or possession for commercial crawfish harvests. Harvest controls are not necessary as crawfish populations are productive, resilient, and influenced by environmental conditions, rather than fishing.

WMAs and Refuges

Commercial fishing is permitted in:

- Fort Polk (see fishing regulations posted at specific lakes)
- Grassy Lake*, except in Smith Bay, Red River Bay, and Grassy Lake on Saturday and Sunday and during waterfowl season
- Pomme de Terre*, except on weekends and during duck season
- Richard K. Yancey, except during regular waterfowl season in Grand Bay, Silver Lake, and Lower Sunk Lake
- Spring Bayou* (Monday through Friday and after 2 pm during waterfowl season).

*You must have a permit to fish Grassy Lake, Pomme de Terre, and Spring Bayou WMAs. Permits are available from Spring Bayou Headquarters or the Opelousas Field Office at **337.948.0255**.

Commercial fishing is prohibited in Ouachita WMA.

Labeling

No product labeled "crawfish" may be sold in Louisiana unless it consists of, or is derived from, the red swamp crawfish (*Procambarus clarkii*), the white river crawfish (*Procambarus zonangulus*), or Louisiana pond-raised crawfish.

No owner or manager of a restaurant that sells imported crawfish shall misrepresent to the public, either verbally, on a menu, or on signs displayed on the premises, that the crawfish is domestic.

Did you know?

With more than 1,000 crawfish fishermen and 1,300 crawfish farmers, Louisiana leads the nation in crawfish production, supplying 100 to 120 million pounds per year. Louisiana's crawfish industry contributes more than $300 million to the state's economy annually.

LDWF is responsible for monitoring and managing wild crawfish; the information in this brochure applies to the harvest and sale of wild crawfish. About 10% of Louisiana's total crawfish production comes from the wild. Most wild Louisiana crawfish comes from the rivers, bayous, swamps, and lakes of the Atchafalaya and Vermilion-Teche basins.

The Louisiana Department of Agriculture, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and other agencies are responsible for farm-raised crawfish. However, farmers who plan to resell their crawfish must have the appropriate licenses from LDWF and other agencies.

Reptiles and Amphibians

Contact: Jeff Boundy, 225.765.2815, jboundy@wlf.la.gov

Regulations for commercially collecting reptiles and amphibians apply to native lizards, snakes, turtles, frogs, salamanders, and related species. They do not apply to alligators.

Additional Licenses and Permits

If you:	You must have a/an:	Fees and notes:
Gather reptiles and amphibians for sale	Reptile and Amphibian Collector License	$25 resident/$10 resident under age 16, $200 nonresident
Operate a single-throated hoop net or turtle trap	Commercial Gear License	$25 resident, $80 nonresident
Buy, acquire, or handle for resale or sell any native reptiles or amphibians, including those reared in captivity, in Louisiana	Reptile and Amphibian Wholesale/Retail Dealer License	$105 resident, $405 nonresident. Nonresidents may instead purchase a Three-Day Reptile and Amphibian Wholesale/Retail Dealer's License ($75; valid for three consecutive days). Licensed wholesale/retail seafood dealers are exempt from this license.
Operate commercial transport vehicles and load, unload, or transport reptiles or amphibians	Reptile and Amphibian Collector License, Reptile and Amphibian Wholesale/ Retail Dealer License, OR Reptile and Amphibian Transport License	Transport License: $30/vehicle resident, $120/vehicle nonresident; transferable between vehicles. Only licensed reptile and amphibian collectors or wholesale/retail dealers may purchase. Individuals holding transport licenses may not buy/sell reptiles or amphibians unless buying on behalf of the dealer to whom the transport license was issued and transporting purchases back to them.

Prohibited Species

You may not harvest alligator snapping, box, or razor-backed musk turtles for commercial purposes. You may not harvest any of the following for any purpose in Louisiana:

Salamanders (Tiger, Southern red backed, Webster's, Mud, and Red)	Louisiana pine snake
	Gopher tortoise
Sea turtles (Green, Hawksbill, Kemp's ridley, Leatherback, and Loggerhead)	Ringed sawback turtle
	Dusky gopher frog
Black pine snake	Eastern diamondback rattlesnake

Legal Collection Methods

You may not remove nests or animals tending their nests. You may not use gasoline to flush animals from hiding places. You may not destroy natural habitat while searching for animals.

You must mark traps or other capture devices with your name, address, and license number if you leave them unattended. You must check them daily.

You must place turtle traps in a way that leaves enough area above the waterline for turtles to breathe. You must mark them with the words "turtle trap". They must have one or more horizontal throat. You may not possess finfish while turtle trapping. You may not use any trap or net to harvest diamondback terrapins; you may only take diamondback terrapins by hand.

You may take frogs using any visible light and mechanical devices known as frog catchers or with devices that puncture the skin such as gigs and spears. You may not carry a firearm while hunting/taking frogs at night.

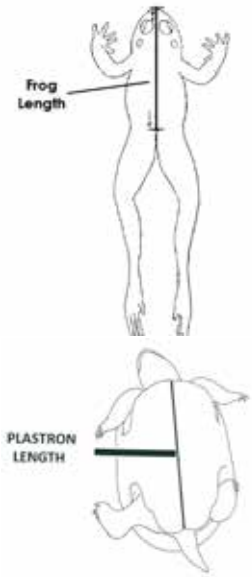
Closed Seasons and Areas

You may not harvest bullfrogs or pig frogs/grunters during April and May. You may not take diamondback terrapins from April 15 to June 15.

You may not collect reptiles and amphibians for commercial purposes from any WMA or state wildlife refuge.

Size/Possession Limits

Bullfrogs: must be at least 5 inches long*
Pig frogs/grunters: must be at least 3 inches long, measured from the tip of the muzzle to the posterior end of the body between the hind legs. A permitted owner (or authorized representative) of a privately-owned waterbody may take undersized frogs from their privately-owned waterbody and sell them for stocking other waterbodies.
Diamondback terrapins: must be at least 6 inches long on the plastron (bottom shell plate)
Green anoles: must be at least 1-3/4 inches snout-vent length or 5 inches overall length
Turtle eggs: no harvest of turtle eggs, except for red-eared slider eggs



Industry Resources

Contact: Richard Williams, 225.765.0121, rrwilliams@wlf.la.gov

Get Involved!

To manage Louisiana's fisheries, LDWF and the Commission rely on scientific data and landings records as well as public input. Our decisions directly impact you, so it's important that we have your input as we define management goals and strategies. We encourage you to participate in the management process to ensure that we consider your interests and that you understand the regulatory process and resulting management actions.

Sign up to receive text and/or email notifications about season openings and closings, regulatory changes, and task force and Commission meetings at **wlf.louisiana.gov/signup**.

LDWF has organized industry task forces for Louisiana's shrimp, blue crab, and oyster industries. These task forces are made up of representatives from the respective industries as well as relevant state agencies. The task forces are responsible for studying and monitoring their industries and making recommendations to LDWF, the Commission, and other state agencies on managing and developing their industries. The task forces meet regularly, and meetings are open to the public. Read more online at:

- Shrimp Task Force: wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/shrimp-task-force
- Blue Crab Task Force: wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/louisiana-blue-crab-task-force
- Oyster Task Force: wlf.louisiana.gov/fishing/oyster-task-force

LDWF is also in the process of organizing a Finfish Task Force. Email **awest@wlf.la.gov** for more information.

The Commission's monthly meetings and our open regulatory process provide additional opportunities for public input.

Louisiana Fisheries Forward

Louisiana Fisheries Forward (LFF) is a voluntary education and training program for members of Louisiana's seafood community. Created by LDWF and Louisiana Sea Grant, LFF delivers training videos and fact sheets on a number of topics such as how to be a commercial fisherman and seafood business finance and management, as well as hands-on workshops, trainings, and demonstrations to showcase new technology and best practices. LFF's goal is to help improve the economic success of Louisiana's commercial fishing industry. Learn more at **lafisheriesforward.org.**

Louisiana Wild Seafood Certification Program

Through the Louisiana Wild Seafood Certification Program (LWSCP), LDWF aims to build a brand that guarantees the origin of Louisiana wild-caught seafood. Through strict chain of custody requirements, the program guarantees that all seafood products bearing the Certified Louisiana Seafood label were caught in Louisiana or Gulf waters by a licensed Louisiana fisherman, landed at a Louisiana dock, and processed and packaged by a Louisiana-based company. The program provides education for participants on best seafood handling and sanitation practices to ensure the utmost safety and quality. When a buyer sees this label, they can be confident they're buying authentic Louisiana wild-caught seafood, a premium product known for freshness, consistent quality, and sustainability, and that they're supporting our local fishing communities.

By branding and showcasing Louisiana seafood, LWSCP helps suppliers increase the value of their seafood and remain competitive in the marketplace. LWSCP participants benefit from free marketing support, such as:

- Market portal linking Certified Louisiana Seafood suppliers with buyers
- Promotions through the program website, social media, and events including seafood festivals and industry conventions
- Point-of-sale materials such as decals, brochures, and apparel
- Access to program partners including the Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board, Audubon GULF, NOAA Fisheries, Louisiana Sea Grant, and other partners who purchase and promote Certified Louisiana Seafood.

Licensed Louisiana commercial fishermen are automatically eligible for the program; licensed Louisiana Fresh Products dealers and Wholesale/Retail Seafood dealers must obtain a permit to participate. They must also comply with all state and federal permitting and reporting requirements. Find out more or sign up to participate at **LouisianaCertifiedSeafood.com**.

For-Hire Operators/Charter Vessels

Contact: Jason Adriance, 504.284.2032, jadriance@wlf.la.gov

Licenses and Permits

To operate a vessel for hire and derive income from taking recreational fishermen to saltwater areas within the state to take fish, you must have one or more of the following licenses issued by LDWF. To apply for LDWF-issued licenses, contact **225.765.2898** or visit LDWF's headquarters at **2000 Quail Drive in Baton Rouge**. New applicants must apply in person at LDWF's headquarters. Renew your license online at **la.wildlifelicense.com**. You must have additional permits issued by NOAA Fisheries to operate a vessel for hire in federal waters and take passengers to recreationally fish for and retain federally managed species. Fishermen should stay informed of the state/federal jurisdictional boundary as future congressional actions may affect current boundary demarcation as it applies to reef fish species.

If you:	You must have a/an:	Fees and notes:
Operate a charter fishing vessel in saltwater areas of the state	Charter Boat Fishing Guide License	Up to six passengers: $250 resident, $1,500 nonresident; more than six passengers: $500 resident, $2,500 nonresident. To qualify for this license, the captain of a charter vessel must present the following: • A valid U.S. Coast Guard Captain's License • A valid driver's license • A Louisiana Recreational Fishing License. • Proof of liability insurance (see page 43) A licensed Charter Boat Fishing Guide shall not have a Spotted Seatrout Permit.
Are a charter fishing operation which does not have a charter boat fishing guide present and consists of a large vessel carrying small skiffs that will be used by no more than two people for fishing purposes	• Mothership License (for the main motorized vessel) • Charter Skiff License (for each skiff)	• Mothership with up to six skiffs: $1,000 resident and nonresident; mothership with more than six skiffs: $2,000 resident and nonresident; mothership captain must have a valid U.S. Coast Guard Captain's License on his person. A Charter Skiff License • Charter Skiff License (2 persons per skiff limit): $50 resident and nonresident; identifies the mothership to which it is attached; a licensed skiff may only be used for fishing purposes while the mothership to which it's attached is located in Louisiana waters
Are a charter boat captain whose passengers are fishing for tunas, billfish, swordfish, amberjacks, groupers, snappers, hinds, cobia, wahoo, or dolphin	Recreational Offshore Landing Permit	No fee; go to **wlf.louisiana.gov/rolp** for more details and to obtain a permit.
Own or operate a charter vessel or headboat and take people out fishing in federal waters to catch and keep mackerels, cobia, little tunny, cero, dolphin, or bluefish	Gulf of Mexico Charter Vessel/Headboat Coastal Migratory Pelagics Permit	No permits are currently being issued (as of 6/16/2003); you may not sell fish under this permit. Go to **sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/permits** for more information.

If you:	You must have a/an:	Fees and notes:
Own or operate a charter vessel or headboat and take people out fishing in federal waters snappers, groupers, amberjack, tilefish, hogfish, or gray triggerfish	NOAA Fisheries Charter Vessel/Headboat Reef Fish Permit	No permits are currently being issued (as of 6/16/2003). You may not sell fish under this permit. If your vessel also has a federal Commercial Reef Fish Permit, it must have a VMS onboard. Go to **sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/permits** for more information.
Own or operate a charter vessel or headboat fishing for or retaining tunas, sharks, swordfish, and billfish in both state and federal waters	NOAA Fisheries Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Charter/ Headboat Permit	$20; go to **hmspermits.noaa.gov** to buy or renew a permit. A licensed U.S. Coast Guard captain must be onboard the vessel fishing for Atlantic HMS. The vessel must comply with U.S. Coast Guard safety gear regulations. A permitted vessel may take passengers to recreationally fish for or retain any Atlantic HMS with rod and reel; tunas, sharks, and swordfish with handline; tunas with green-stick or bandit gear; and free-swimming tunas (except bluefin) with a speargun. This permit also allows some commercial sale of tunas, swordfish, and sharks, depending on the for-hire status of the vessel and possession of certain permits.

Insurance Requirements

Licensed charter boat fishing guides and mothership vessels must have proof of liability insurance in their possession while on the water and make it available for inspection by duly authorized agents LDWF. Insurance must be:

- In their name (charter boat fishing guides only)
- Currently in force
- Written by a company with at least an A- rating in the latest printing of A.M. Best's Key Rating Guide
- Of a commercial nature
- Not associated with a primary residence
- At least $300,000 in coverage per occurrence.

Regulations

Individuals fishing under the direction of a charter boat fishing guide or mothership operation south of the saltwater line for saltwater species must have a Louisiana saltwater angler's license in addition to a basic Louisiana fishing license, except those persons otherwise exempted.

Existing state and federal recreational regulations apply. See LDWF and the Gulf Council's recreational fishing regulations brochures for additional details.

- For-hire vessels operated by a legally licensed Louisiana guide with a valid recreational offshore landing permit in possession may harvest and possess a recreational limit of reef fish when fishing the waters of the state during an open season.
- Federally permitted for-hire vessels fishing in state waters must comply with federal regulations, unless state regulations are more restrictive.
- Passengers on charter vessels or headboats with two captains for trips longer than 24 hours may keep a 2-day bag limit of reef fish, king mackerel, and Spanish mackerel. One-day bag limits apply to all other species and trips, regardless of trip length.
- The captain and crew of a vessel under charter may not harvest any grouper, greater amberjack, or red snapper (their possession limit is zero).
- Operators of vessels with Gulf of Mexico reef fish charter vessel/headboat permits must comply with guidelines for proper care and release of incidentally caught smalltooth sawfish and sea turtles and must have specific gear onboard to ensure proper release of such species.
- When fishing for swordfish, a charter vessel may keep no more than 6 swordfish; a headboat may keep no more than 15.

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