

Oyster Task Force Meeting
Tuesday, August 1, 2017, 1:00PM
2021 Lakeshore Dr., STE 210
New Orleans, LA 70122

Voting Members Present:

Dan Coulon
Byron Encalade
Jakov Jurisic
Brandt LaFrance
Al Sunseri
Peter Vujnovich
Willie Daisy
Shane Bagala
Brad Robin
Sam Slavich

Voting Members Absent:

Mitch Jurisich
John Tesvich
Leo Dyson

Non-voting members Present:

Mark Schexnayder
Justin Gremillion
Chad Hebert
Frank Cole
Erin Plitsch in for Brian Lezina

Motion to approve the May 30, 2017 meeting minutes and August 1, 2017 meeting agenda by Peter Vujnovich, 2nd by Jakov Jurisic. Motion carries.

Financial Report:

Remaining Fund Balance: \$ 480, 233
Budget Balance: \$ 209, 155

Motion to accept the financial report by Jakov Jurisic, 2nd by Peter Vujnovich. Motion carries.

Public and Private Oyster Seed Grounds Committee:

No report

Enforcement Report:

May 19 – July 25

Region 6: (Terrebonne, Lafourche, Grand Isle)

- 2 - Take oysters from an unapproved area (polluted)
- 4 - Fail to have written permission
- 4 - unlawfully take oysters from private lease
- 1 - No commercial license
- 1 - No oyster harvester
- 1 - Sanitation code logbook
- 1 - Improper boat number (no numbers on top)
- 1 - Allow unlicensed fisherman to use commercial license
- 1 - Allow unlicensed fisherman use gear
- 1 - Allow unlicensed fisherman use vessel license
- 1 - Untagged Oysters
- 1 - Fail to maintain records

Physical Seizures:

- 74 Full sacks of oysters seized and returned to the water
- 50 Mini sacks of oysters seized and returned to the water
- 1 oyster log book

LDWF Seizure Order:

- 3 Scrapers
- 3 Vessels

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

- 8 - Violate sanitary code (refrigeration)
- 12 - Violate sanitary code (log book)
- 1 - Violate oyster cargo regulations
- 2 - Violate sanitary code (no tarp)
- 1 - No oyster harvester's license

Physical Seizures:

- 343 Full sacks of oysters seized and returned to the water
- 189 Mini sacks of oysters seized and returned to the water

Jakov Jurisic requested that enforcement look into following up on the status of pending citations

Brad Robin added that industry members should also follow up on violation cases they are aware of in their area to ensure the violator is prosecuted and issue is taken care of

Legislative Report:

No report

Research Report:

No report

Coastal Restoration Report:

Dan Coulon reminded task force members and the public that the Corp of Engineers is currently in the comment period for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS): Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion.

You can submit a public comment to the Army Corp of Engineers regarding the Environmental Impact Statement: Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversion by following any of the proceeding options:

HOW TO PROVIDE COMMENTS: The public and interested parties are encouraged to provide comments for the record and may do so during the scoping period as follows:

- Submit **comment cards** (available at the scoping meetings) and/or **letters** during the scoping meetings and/or by mail to: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District, Attn: CEMVN-OD-SE #MVN-2012-2806-EOO, 7400 Leake Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70118.
- Submit comments by **e-mail** at CEMVN-Midbarataria@usace.army.mil.
- Provide **verbal comments** to court reporters present at each scoping meeting.

Verbal comments provided to court reporters will be limited to three minutes, with additional opportunity to comment again, if time allows.

Informal discussions with agency staff in the open house setting are not official comments. Verbal comments submitted at the scoping meetings must be given to the designated court reporters in order to be part of the official EIS record. You do not have to be present at a meeting to make a comment for the EIS record. All comments made during the scoping period as described above will become part of the record.

Al Sunseri motioned that the Oyster Task Force submit official comment to the Army Corp of Engineers regarding the Mid-Barataria Sediment Diversions, 2nd by Peter Vujnovich. Motion carries.

Marketing Report:

Dan Coulon requested that the Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board provide the TF with an update at their next meeting

Jakov Jurisic made a marketing research request to provide feedback on industry specific target markets

Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana is putting out a brochure to promote restaurants that are recycling oyster shells. There is a seafood promotional event to follow on Saturday, October 21 in Buras, LA with an oyster bar crawl. Anyone interested in participating can contact Christa Russell, at christa.russell@crcl.org

Health Report:

Gordon Leblanc stated that new maps for September, October, and November season should be out in the next week or so and will be on display at the Jefferson Parish Health Unit. Also, next week the Health Department, along with the FDA will start conducting refrigeration evaluations.

A vibrio parahaemolyticus workshop is set to be held on September 6 and 7 in Baltimore, MD. Interested participants can visit the link below for more information: <http://www.issc.org/issc-national-vibrio-parahaemolyticus-workshop-2017-09-06>

Brad Robin stated that he would like to add an agenda item for the next meeting to discuss tagging for mini-sacks

Sustainability Report:

No report

Professionalism Report:

No report

Aquaculture Report:

No report

Joint Task Force Working Group Report:

No report

New Business:

Steve Beck addressed the task force with a presentation on the 2017 Oyster Stock Assessment and season recommendations

Dan Coulon expressed concern for environmental conditions and product factors and suggested that options be discussed in the future

Steve Beck stated that a restoration plan should be ready for presentation by the next meeting

Al Sunseri made a motion to request that the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries redo the 'Cooperative Gulf of Mexico Estuarine Inventory and Study, Mississippi' (Red Books) to analyze the hydrology, sedimentology and biology of the waters within the state of Louisiana to make a comparison to today's environment and estuary, 2nd by Brad Robin. Motion carries.

Brad Robin made a motion to send the habitat suitability index to the Public-Private Oyster Seed Grounds committee for further discussion, 2nd by Jakov Jurisic. Motion carries.

Preliminary 2017/2018 Season Recommendations:

1N: -Primary Public Grounds East of MS River, N of MRGO: November 13

SACKING ONLY: November 14: **OTF Accepted recommendation as is**

1S: -Primary Public Grounds South of MRGO: CLOSED

-American Bay/Bay Long (SACKING ONLY) October 9:

Recommended opening all of 1S on October 9

3: -Little Lake, Hackberry Bay, Barataria Bay: CLOSED:

OTF Accepted recommendation as is

5E: -Lake Tambour, Lake Chien, Lake Felicity, Deep Lake: CLOSED:

OTF Accepted recommendation as is

5W: -Sister Lake: November 13: SACKING ONLY: November 14

recommended opening October 9 for seed and sacking

-Bay Junop & Lake Mechant: CLOSED: **OTF Accepted recommendation as is**

6: -Vermilion/Atchafalaya Bay Area: November 13: **Recommended opening the season on October 9**

7: -Calcasieu Lake (West Cove Only): November 1: **OTF Accepted recommendation as is**

***** SACK LIMITS******

-50 sacks per vessel per day, 50 sack possession limit, statewide

-Bedding/Cargo Vessels: no limit

-Calcasieu Lake: 7 sacks per vessel per day

Peter Vujnovich requested that Area 3 be accepted as closed for now, but asked if it can be revisited at another time

Jakov Jurisic suggested that the area north of MRGO be revisited or sampled for reconsideration at a later date

Al Sunseri made a motion to accept the proposed recommendations of the Department with the caveat of giving the LDWF Secretary the authority to make changes where suitable during the season, 2nd Peter Vujnovich. Motion withdrawn.

Jakov Jurisic made a motion to have the 'Day in the Bay' on October 1, 2017, 2nd by Brandt LaFrance. Motion carries.

Steve Beck led discussion on cultch plants on the east of the MS River.

The department did a round of cultch planting using early restoration oil spill money back in 2012/2013; there were 6 cultch plants built across the coast. With funds left over, a supplemental cultch plant was planned in the Fortuna area.

Lake Fortuna Cultch Plant: fossil shell cultch plant over top using a footprint from the previous cultch plant and then supplementing with hatchery-raised spat on shell. The Fortuna location was chosen because the review period is greatly reduced if the cultch plant was deployed over a previously permitted area. It was also an area with greatest need for recovery with resource already present, low density, and no record of recruitment. The cultch plant portion of the project will use the remaining early restoration funds and the spat-on-shell portion will be separately funded. The department is contracting with the parish to conduct the project and they will utilize local oyster harvesters for the deployment of cultch and spat-on-shell

Doug Daigle addressed the board with a draft resolution for Louisiana's continued work on the Gulf hypoxia issue

Al Sunseri requested that the OTF receive a copy of the draft resolution and meet next month to make a recommendation for support

John Lopez led discussion on using hydrocoast maps for more successful fishing

Steve Voisin addressed the task force with a discussion on buffer zones
Expressed concern with fishing in buffer zones and enforcement discretion

Al Sunseri made a motion to table item 'F. To Consider Funding and Participation for the 2018 LA Alive and Acadiana Events until the September Oyster Task Force meeting, 2nd by Peter Vujnovich. Motion carries.

Public Comment:

Jack Isaacs provided an update on annual oyster import data

Al Sunseri made a motion to set the next Oyster Task Force meeting for Tuesday, September 5, 2017 for 1pm in New Orleans, 2nd by Brandt Lafrance. Motion carries.

Next Oyster Task Force meeting set for Tuesday, September 5, 2017 for 1pm in New Orleans

Motion to adjourn by Jakov Jurisic, 2nd by Brandt Lafrance. Motion carries.