

LOUISIANA WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION

MINUTES

August 3, 2006

**TERRY D. DENMON
CHAIRMAN**

BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA

The following constitute minutes of the Commission Meeting
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Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
2000 Quail Drive

Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808
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**AGENDA
LOUISIANA WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION
BATON ROUGE, LOUISIANA
AUGUST 3, 2006**

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MINUTES OF THE MEETING
OF
LOUISIANA WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION

Thursday, August 3, 2006

Chairman Terry Denmon presiding.

Earl King
Frederic Miller
Patrick Morrow
Henry Mouton
Wayne Sagrera
Robert Samanie, III

Secretary Dwight Landreneau was also present.

Chairman Denmon called for a motion for approval of the **July 6, 2006 Commission Minutes**. A motion for approval was made by Commissioner Miller and seconded by Commissioner Samanie. The motion passed with no opposition.

Under **Commission Special Announcements/Personal Privilege** for this month, Commissioner Miller asked Mr. Harry Blanchet to again give a brief update on the Citgo oil spill that occurred on Calcasieu Lake. Mr. Blanchet stated that since the last briefing there has not been a lot of new information or direct kills to the resource. Assessments were still occurring as well as looking at how much shoreline was oiled, sediment sampling, weathering of the oil which will result in a natural resource damage assessment. This process could take up to 2 years to accomplish. The fisheries impact will be included in the assessment as well as direct kills and lack of access to resources. Chairman Denmon asked what were the funding mechanisms. Mr. Blanchet stated it would come from Citgo since they were responsible for all clean up costs. Chairman Denmon then asked if the remedial work would be done with funds from Citgo and not from the Federal Government or State? Mr. Blanchet stated it was not a direct payment from Citgo but it would come eventually.

Presentation by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for Cooperative Agreement to keep Public Boat Ramps Open at Pearl River was handled by Mr. Cody Echardt, Vicksburg District. He stated that due to lack of funding, the boat ramps on the West Pearl River were to be closed. But through efforts of the Federal, State and Parish officials, an agreement was signed to take over maintenance on the boat ramps. Secretary Landreneau was one of the signers and as a token of appreciation, Mr. Echardt presented a framed Statement of

Cooperation to the Secretary. Secretary Landreneau stated notice was received through the news media and a way was found to give access to the public so they could utilize that waterway.

The agenda item, **To receive and hear Enforcement & Aviation Reports/July** was handled by Lt. Col. Keith LaCaze. A total of 1,401 citations, 431 written warnings were issued during July and agents helped in 61 instances of public assists. The primary cases centered around recreational boating and boating under the influence. Some thundershowers on the weekends helped keep those numbers down which resulted in a fairly quiet month. There were 15 reported boating accidents with 11 injuries and 2 fatalities. Year to date totals were 75 reported accidents with 49 injuries and 14 fatalities. The 2 fatalities occurred in St. Mary Parish, one on July 2 and the other on July 13. The Aviation Report showed the three planes flew a total of 42.0 hours for July. News Releases reported on included shark violations, Orleans Parish alligator poaching and sentencing for a hunter that killed a trophy buck with a shotgun on the last day of the archery season. Lt. Col. LaCaze commented agents and National Guard personnel were currently engaged in a field exercise on search and rescue.

To receive Donation from Quality Deer Management Association for deer stands began with Mr. John Sturgis stating the Hunter Education became aware of a rise in the number of tree stand accidents. The problem, hunters were not using tree stands safely. In an effort to alleviate these accidents, the Hunter Education staff was to increase their instruction on how to use tree stands safely. The Quality Deer Management Association of Louisiana has donated \$2,200 that allowed the purchase of 26 tree stands for use statewide. Mr. Sturgis hoped the increased instruction would bring the number of accidents down. He then introduced Mr. Bill Shockey who represented the Quality Deer Management Association. Mr. Shockey stated they welcomed the opportunity to work with the Department on this effort as it targeted deer hunting. This donation came from the State Chapter and the Central Louisiana Branch. The State Board made recommendations to the National Board to buy a set of night vision goggles for each Enforcement agent and to make a donation for a deer telemetry study in West Baton Rouge and Iberville Parishes. Chairman Denmon thanked the Association for the donation.

To receive and consider 2006 Waterfowl Season Dates and Other Migratory Birds started with Mr. Robert Helm stating harvest went up last year only slightly from 820,000 to 877,000. This total was very small compared to almost 2 million taken in the late 1990's. The average number of ducks per hunter per year went up from 15 to 18 last year. This indicated there were less hunters last year that were more successful. There was nothing normal about last year's season with two hurricanes followed by a drought. Nationwide, Louisiana ranked fourth behind Texas, California and Arkansas and the state ranked second in the Mississippi Flyway in total harvest. The September teal season last year was probably the least successful in more than 30 years due to the storm events. A status video produced by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was shown at this time. Mr. Helm mentioned that Mr. Dale Hall, one of the speakers on the video was a graduate of LSU in

Fisheries. Then he stated that the number of total ducks was above that of last year and well above the long term. Mallard numbers were similar. Gadwall, Louisiana's number one harvested bird, was 70 percent above its long-term average. Green-winged, blue-winged, shovelers, canvasbacks were also above the long-term average. Pintails, a specie of concern, was more than 30 percent what it was last year. Pond numbers in Canada improved from last year. The grass lands in central Saskatchewan were in excellent shape for the second and third year which bodes well for the southern portion of the Mississippi Flyway. All four Flyways have recommended the liberal package of 60 day season with 6 bird bag limit for the tenth year in a row. With this package, there should be no negative impact to next year's breeding population. Changes for this year included: a 60 day season for canvasback with a 1 bird bag limit; a full season for pintails; increasing the bag limit on hooded mergansers to 2; and increasing the length of the Canada Goose Season by a week from 9 to 16 days. Mr. Helm cautioned that all of the good news from the breeding grounds will not relate to a good hunting season in Louisiana. Weather patterns in the north and in Louisiana as well as local habitat conditions will have a lot of impact on hunting success in this area. Chairman Denmon stated he did not see the recommendation of 1 canvasback in the bag limits. Mr. Helm stated that was an oversight, it needed to be added. Chairman Denmon then asked Mr. Helm to read the season dates. The duck and coot season in the West Zone were just calendar changes from last year. It would open on November 11 to December 3, and December 16 to January 21. Dates for the East Zone were November 18 to December 3 and December 16 to January 28. Youth waterfowl weekends would be November 4 and November 5 in West Zone and November 11 and November 12 in the East Zone. Daily bag limits would be 6 ducks and may include no more than 4 mallards, 1 pintail, 3 mottled ducks, 1 black duck, 2 wood ducks, 2 scaup, 2 redheads and 1 canvasback. Daily bag limit on coots will be 15. The daily bag limit for mergansers will be 5, only 2 can be a hooded merganser. Season dates for snow and white-fronted geese will be November 11 to December 3 and December 16 to February 2 in the West Zone. For the East Zone, recommended opening was November 6 to December 3 and then December 16 to January 28. Daily bag limit on light geese will be 20 with no possession limit. Bag limit on white-fronted geese will be 2. Canada goose season dates would be January 13 to January 28. Conservation order for light geese in the West Zone would be from December 4 to December 15 and then from February 3 to March 11; in the East Zone, the dates would be December 4 to December 15 and January 29 to March 11. Mr. Helm then stated dates for several webless migratory birds were also set at this time. Rail and gallinule season dates would be November 11 to January 3. Snipe would open on November 4 and close December 5, then reopen on December 16 to February 28. Shooting hours would be from one-half hour before sunrise to sunset except for Spanish Lake Recreational Area.

Commissioner Miller thought with the conditions of scaup there would be a limit of 1. He then asked about this change. Mr. Helm stated they anticipated the Fish and Wildlife Service would limit scaup to 1, but all of the Flyways recommended leaving the bag limits as they were last year. The Service went along with the recommendations which pleasantly surprised the Flyways. Mr. Helm added that harvest was not affecting the decline in numbers. Scaup hunting in the northern states was very important and to limit

those hunters to one may eliminate this traditional hunt. Commissioner Miller then asked how far would scaup slide before something was done. Mr. Helm stated scaup numbers were fairly abundant, being third or fourth in the list of ten species that information was maintained on. Compared to the long term average, scaup was well below as was pintails. Commissioner Mouton asked if the goose season in the East Zone which was scheduled to open on a Monday could not open on Saturday November 4 since the birds come in early and eat all of the food. Mr. Helm stated they considered that, but noted they were limited in the number of days for the white-fronted goose season. This change would make the goose season end on Friday while the duck season remained open. Chairman Denmon agreed with Commissioner Mouton and wanted to have a Saturday opening since having a Monday opening would limit the hunting opportunities. He then asked if that would mean the Conservation dates would need to be adjusted. Mr. Helm answered yes it would affect those dates. Commissioner Miller stated he also agreed with the Chairman and Commissioner Mouton noting opening the goose season on Monday was not a good thing. He felt they owed the hunters the opportunity to hunt by opening on the Saturday before. Chairman Denmon agreed that the Saturday opening created more hunting opportunities. Commissioner Miller suggested taking public comments while waiting for Mr. Helm to adjust the dates. Chairman Denmon announced there were no public comments on this issue. He then suggested the Commission members read the Therefore Be It Resolved portion of the Resolution. Mr. Helm noted no other dates would need adjusting, but a News Release would be sent reminding hunters that the goose season would be closed while the duck season remained open. Chairman Denmon then asked for a motion to adopt the dates as changed except adding 1 canvasback to the bag limit and moving the goose season from November 4 and end on December 1. Commissioner Miller made a motion to adopt the Department's recommendations on season dates and bag limits except to add 1 canvasback per day to the bag limit and amend the light goose and white-fronted goose season in the East Zone to open on Saturday, November 4 and close on Friday, December 1. Commissioner Sagrera seconded the motion and it passed with no opposition.

(The full text of the Resolution is made a part of the record.)

RESOLUTION

LOUISIANA WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION
LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES
August 3, 2006

The following was adopted by the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission at its regular Commission Meeting in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, August 3, 2006.

WHEREAS, public hearings have been held to discuss the status of waterfowl, including ducks, coots, and geese in Washington, D.C., and

WHEREAS, rules and regulations governing waterfowl season framework have been developed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and

WHEREAS, the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries staff has presented recommendations for waterfowl including season dates, bag limits and shooting hours, and

WHEREAS, it is the constitutional responsibility of the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to establish hunting seasons for waterfowl within the constraints of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service framework, now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that on this date, the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission does hereby tentatively adopt the attached season dates, bag limits and shooting hours, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that these tentative dates will be ratified by Declaration of Emergency unless significant changes are mandated by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Secretary is hereby authorized and delegated the authority to take any and all steps necessary on behalf of the Commission to promulgate and effectuate these seasons as a Declaration of Emergency; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that these dates will be forwarded to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as regulations set for Louisiana's 2006-2007 Migratory Bird Hunting Regulations.

Terry D. Denmon, Chairman
Wildlife and Fisheries Commission

**TENTATIVE SEASON RECOMMENDATIONS
FOR DUCKS, COOTS AND GEESE, 2006-07**

DUCKS AND COOTS:

West Zone: (60 days) Nov. 11 (Sat.) – Dec. 3 (Sun.) (23 days)
Dec. 16 (Sat.) - Jan. 21 (Sun.) (37 days)

East Zone: (60 days) Nov. 18 (Sat.) – Dec. 3 (Sun.) (16 days)
Dec. 16 (Sat.) - Jan. 28 (Sun.) (44 days)

Youth Waterfowl Weekend - Nov. 4-5 in West Zone, Nov. 11-12 in East Zone

Daily Bag Limits

The daily bag limit on ducks is 6 and may include no more than 4 mallards (no more than 2 of which may be females), 1 pintail, 3 mottled ducks, 1 black duck, 2 wood ducks, 2 scaup, 2 redheads and 1 canvasback. Daily bag limit on coots is 15.

Mergansers - The daily bag limit for mergansers is 5, only 2 of which may be a hooded merganser. Merganser limits are in addition to the daily bag limit for ducks.

Possession Limit - The possession limit on ducks, coots and mergansers is twice the daily bag limit.

GEESE:

LIGHT GEESE (SNOW, BLUE and ROSS'S) and WHITE-FRONTED GEESE

West Zone: (72 days) Nov. 11 (Sat.) – Dec. 3 (Sun.) (23 days)
Dec. 16 (Sat.) - Feb. 2 (Fri.) (49 days)

East Zone: (72 days) Nov. 4 (Sat.) - Dec. 1 (Fri.) (28 days)
Dec. 16 (Sat.) - Jan. 28 (Sun.) (44 days)

Daily bag limit on light geese (snow, blue and Ross's): 20
Possession limit on light geese (snow, blue and Ross's): None

Daily Limit on white-fronted geese: 2
Possession Limit on white-fronted geese: 4

CANADA GEESE: CLOSED IN THE AREA DESCRIBED BELOW

Jan. 13 (Sat.) - Jan. 28 (Sun.) (16 days)

Daily Limit on Canada geese: 1
Possession limit on Canada geese: 2

The Canada Goose Season will be open statewide except for a portion of southwest Louisiana. The closed area is described as follows: Beginning at the Texas State Line, proceeding east along Hwy. 82 to the Calcasieu Ship Channel, then north along the Calcasieu Ship Channel to its junction with the Intracoastal Canal, then east along the Intracoastal Canal to its juncture with LA Hwy. 82, then south along LA Hwy. 82 to its juncture with Parish Road 3147, then south and east along Parish Road 3147 to Freshwater Bayou Canal, then south to the Gulf of Mexico, then west along the shoreline of the Gulf of Mexico to the Texas State Line, then north to the point of beginning at LA Hwy. 82.

A special permit shall be required to participate in the Canada Goose Season. A permit is required of everyone, regardless of age, and a non-refundable \$5 administrative fee will be charged. This permit may be obtained from any license vendor.

CONSERVATION ORDER FOR LIGHT GEESE (SNOW, BLUE AND ROSS'S)

West Zone: Dec. 4 (Mon.) - Dec. 15 (Fri.) (12 days)
Feb. 3 (Sat.) - Mar. 11 (Sun.) (37 days)

East Zone: Dec. 4 (Mon.) - Dec. 15 (Fri.) (12 days)
Jan. 29 (Mon.) - Mar. 11 (Sun.) (42 days)

Only snow, blue and Ross's geese may be taken under the terms of the Conservation Order, which allows the use of electronic calls and unplugged shotguns and eliminates the daily bag and possession limits. During the Conservation Order, shooting hours begins one-half hour before sunrise and extends until one-half hour after sunset.

RAILS: Nov. 11 (Sat.) – Jan. 3 (Wed.) (54 days)
KING AND CLAPPER: Daily bag limit 15 in the aggregate, possession 30.
SORA AND VIRGINIA: Daily bag and possession 25 in the aggregate.

GALLINULES: Nov. 11 (Sat.) – Jan. 3 (Wed.) (54 days)
Daily bag limit 15, Possession limit 30

SNIPE: Nov. 4 (Sat.) - Dec. 5 (Tues.) (33 days)
Dec. 16 (Sat.) - Feb. 28 (Wed.) (74 days)
Daily bag limit 8, Possession limit 16

Shooting Hours: One-half hour before sunrise to sunset, except at the Spanish Lake Recreation Area in Iberia Parish where shooting hours, including the Conservation Order, end at 2 p.m.

EXTENDED FALCONRY SEASONS FOR DUCKS, RAILS AND GALLINULES:

STATEWIDE: Nov. 4 (Sat.) - Feb. 2 (Fri.) (91 days)

Sixteen days of the total season lengths for rails, gallinules and extended falconry seasons were used during the September teal season.

To consider Resolution and Notice of Intent on the 2007 Turkey Season and further providing with respect thereto began with Mr. Dave Moreland mentioning that he gave each member a copy of the current Wild Turkey listing of trophy toms. He noted the turkey was a bird held in high esteem and was a very sacred sport. The recognition of a quality bird was based on the turkey's spur length; however, the National Wild Turkey Federation bases their recognition on spur, beard length and body weight of a turkey. Several years ago, changes occurred in the program such as reducing the limit and the days, and making a uniform season. Mr. Moreland felt this increased the number of quality birds being scored and registered in the program. He then turned the presentation over to Mr. Fred Kimmel. Mr. Kimmel began noting that from 1960 to 2000, the Department was involved in turkey restocking. With all of this work, staff was very careful and deliberate in making

season recommendations. He reminded the Commission that in 2001, a framework to open the turkey season statewide on the fourth Saturday in March was established. This was a compromise since traditionally north Louisiana had an early April opening and south Louisiana had a mid-March opening. The bag limit was also reduced from 3 to 2 birds. In the late 1990's, turkey populations were declining across the state and especially in southeast Louisiana. Goals for the Department were to reduce the gobbler kill rate, leave more adult gobblers in the population, break the "boom and bust" cycle and reduce pressure on public lands. Next question asked was "what did we expect?". Bottom line was to increase the portion of adult gobblers in the population by increasing carry over. Then came the question "were we successful?" and Mr. Kimmel stated that data suggested that gobbler harvest rate has been reduced, there are more older gobblers in the population and the population in critical portions of the state have rebounded. Other states season dates varies with Arkansas and east Texas opening on April 1 and Mississippi opening on March 15. To compare seasons with other states varies due to the different populations and habitats, hunting pressure as well as tradition. Mr. Kimmel felt Louisiana was unique as compared to neighboring states when you talk about population and habitat (43 percent of the state is forested). The uniform opening date was important since it helps distribute the harvest and moderates hunting pressure. The next slide shown was of gobbling counts conducted on north Louisiana route versus those conducted on south Louisiana routes. The trend increases from early March up until the time turkey season opens. A key date to consider was the mean incubation date which was April 19. The framework showed that the latest opening date would be March 27 and this would catch most of the first gobbling peak and all of the second gobbling peak. The earliest opening date of March 22 catches the first gobbling peak and a portion of the second. The youth hunts catches the pre-peak time when the gobbling picks up and accelerates. A later season was preferred since the gobblers fulfill their biological needs before they are killed, the hens are generally on their nest and this keeps from illegal kills occurring and the gobblers are vulnerable and receptive to calls at this time. Mr. Kimmel then noted the Department would like to continue the framework of opening the turkey season on the fourth Saturday in March on a statewide basis. He believed that this season framework meets the Department's criteria that the season be biologically based, meets the long term needs of the turkey resource and offers a reasonable opportunity for hunters to kill turkeys and have decent hunt quality. He then asked Mr. Larry Savage to present the actual season dates.

Mr. Savage explained a slide of the Fort Polk 2006 youth group hunt and noted it was a very rewarding hunt. Then he noted the state is divided into three areas due to the differences in turkey populations, habitat conditions and hunting pressure. Area A season will be for 30 days, March 24 to April 22; Area B will have 23 days, March 24 to April 15; and Area C will increase from a 9 day season to 16 days due to improvement in the turkey population. The daily bag limit recommendation would be 1 gobbler and 2 per season. Mr. Savage then commented that a survey was conducted prior to having youth hunts, and less than 1 percent of the turkey hunters took youth with them. In 2004, turkey youth hunts began and a survey in 2005 indicated that 20 percent of turkey hunters took youth with them. In 2005, an estimated 900 gobblers were killed by youth hunters. The public land youth hunt will be on March 17 and March 18 and will also be held on 11 WMAs and 2

National Wildlife Refuges. A physically challenged season for wheelchair confined will open concurrent with the youth hunt on March 17 and March 18. Indian Bayou will also host a physically challenged season on March 17 and March 18. The Jackson-Bienville WMA will have a turkey season following the regular season on April 14 through April 20. Changes in the boundaries included opening a small portion around Alexandria along the Red River in Grant and Rapides Parish the same dates as outside; an area centered on Lincoln Parish that has had a major restocking opening in prior seasons with a conservative season has resulted in a good population and it was recommended to increase from 23 days to 30 days. This was based on a 5-year gobbler mortality study. Another boundary change will occur in the Mississippi flood plain where the parish line would be used instead of detailed boundaries. The fourth change would be changing St. Tammany and Washington Parishes from Area A to Area B. A slide was shown of shots before Hurricane Katrina and after of the Pearl River WMA. The Forestry Section estimated that 80 percent of the oak had significant damage and it would be 7 to 10 years before acorn production returns to normalcy. Also, it would be 10 to 12 years before dense vegetation thins out that allow turkeys to travel that area. Another long term impact of the hurricane was residential development. There will be 26 WMAs with a turkey season encompassing about 600,000 acres; 11 WMAs will have youth lottery hunts and 17 WMAs will hold non-lottery hunts. WMAs with changes from 2006 were Big Lake, Red River, Three Rivers and Sicily Island would increase from 9 days to 16 days; Camp Beauregard had their season reduced from 16 to 9 days; and Pearl River WMA would remain closed. The Kisatchie Federal area will have a 23 day season, March 24 to April 15. The other federal areas would have calendar adjustments from last year.

Chairman Denmon asked about a bill passed in the Legislature that modified the baiting of turkeys? Mr. Kimmel stated the old turkey rule restated the law, but with the new law, they removed the baiting language since the new state law governs baiting. Chairman Denmon then read a letter, for the record, from Senator Don Hines, President of the Louisiana State Senate (Attachment A). He then asked for public comments.

Representative Tom McVea stated he appeared before the Commission 5 years ago with the same problem and that was quality of the hunt. Years back the season opened the third weekend of March and it seemed to be consistent there was a cooler more pleasant experience while turkey hunting than he has had in the last 5 or 6 years. He noted he serves in the Legislature and represents primarily the Florida parishes. His goal was to harvest a true master trophy turkey. Representative McVea then asked the Commission to go back to the way the seasons were by opening one week earlier. Last year he added that the first 2 weeks were great but the last 2 were hell. He commended the staff on their statistical report that was presented. Representative McVea did not want to jeopardize north Louisiana hunters knowing they like opening the season later than south Louisiana. He concluded stating he had the backing of the Tri-Parish, the Wild Turkey Federation, and a group from East and West Feliciana Parishes. Commissioner King asked Representative McVea what area did he hunt? He was told East and West Feliciana and St. Helena Parishes. Mr. Moreland stated that was Area A.

Mr. Duane Cowart stated he came to the meeting to deliver the letter from Senator Don Hines. He then reiterated how strongly Senator Hines felt about the issue. Mr. Cowart stated the presentation showed Texas opened on April 1, but he thought Texas had 2 different seasons. He then asked the Commission to consider Representative McVea's comments. Mr. Cowart strongly believed Louisiana should go back to 2 zones, a north zone with the dates as recommended and a south zone that opened and closed a week earlier. He did not think there would be a mass influx of north Louisiana hunters during the earlier week opening. He asked that the bag limit be kept the same.

Chairman Denmon stated one issue to consider was the youth hunts. If you move the hunt up a week, this meant the youth would be hunting before gobbling began. He thought some consideration also should be given to the fact that license sales are down to 5 percent of the U.S. population. Chairman Denmon then noted he was for getting as many youth involved in hunting as possible. If this did not occur, the numbers would continue to fall. Representative McVea stated he did not want to knock the youth out either. He then asked that the recommendation be to allow adults shoot turkeys that weekend also and encourage youth to accompany those hunters. Mr. Savage put the slide back on the screen that showed the gobbling and the youth hunt would back up to the time when gobbling had barely started. Also, he noted that the weather would not be conducive to hunting. Commissioner Miller asked Representative McVea if the weather patterns had gotten increasingly warmer earlier and the Representative stated it seemed to be the case.

Commissioner Miller asked if the breeding chronology data was statewide? Mr. Savage stated turkeys operate off the daylight length and the hens were breeding in both north and south Louisiana at the same time. Then Commissioner Miller asked if the recommendations were based on daylight length and not whether the weather was cool or warm. Mr. Savage stated yes, it was based on photo period. Mr. Kimmel understood the heat issue and appreciated the cool weather. He added that the seasons were based on the biology of the turkey regardless of the temperature. The problem with zoning was that 50 percent of the hunters would hunt public lands and hunters would move between the zones. If the state was zoned, the staff may recommend reducing the season length. The uniform state opening was an attempt to maintain quality hunting on public lands. Representative McVea stated that of the 196 tagged turkeys last year, there was a 16 percent kill rate in north central Louisiana. He assured the Department that in the Tunica Hills area, the percentage of turkeys that would go back into the population would be higher than the north Louisiana numbers.

Chairman Denmon noted the action was to introduce this as a Notice of Intent. He felt the problem was whether to move the youth hunt up one week and he was not prepared to move the youth out of hunting. He thought there may be some benefits to zoning the state.

The Chairman stated there would be some discussion for 120 days that may result in a long term solution to the problem that was addressed. Representative McVea felt that would be good. Chairman Denmon then asked Mr. Savage to read the Therefore Be It Resolved portion of the Resolution. Commissioner Sagrera made a motion to accept the Resolution and it was seconded by Commissioner Morrow. The motion passed with no opposition.

(The full text of the Resolution and Notice of Intent are made a part of the record.)

RESOLUTION
LOUISIANA WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES COMMISSION
LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES

August 3, 2006

The following was adopted by the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission at its regular Commission Meeting held in Baton Rouge LA, August 3, 2006.

WHEREAS, it is the constitutional responsibility of the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to establish a hunting season in 2007 for wild turkeys, and

WHEREAS, authority to establish seasons, bag limits, possession limits and other rules and regulations for the hunting, taking and possession of any species of wild game birds is vested in the Commission by R.S. 56:115, and

WHEREAS, this action will provide for the protection and conservation of wild turkeys and allow for recreational opportunities for sport hunting on both public and private lands, and

WHEREAS, the Commission and Department staff have jointly reviewed and considered all available biological information, now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the attached rules, regulations, season dates, and bag limits affecting sport hunting of wild turkeys are hereby adopted by the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission as a Notice of Intent.

Terry D. Denmon, Chairman
LA Wildlife and Fisheries Commission

NOTICE OF INTENT

Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
Wildlife and Fisheries Commission

The Wildlife and Fisheries Commission does hereby give notice of its intent to amend the turkey rules and regulations for the 2007 season.

Title 76

WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES

Part XIX. Hunting and WMA Regulations

Chapter 1. Resident Game Hunting Season

113. Turkey Hunting Regulations

A. Daily limit is one gobbler, two gobblers per season. Taking of hen turkeys, including bearded hens, is illegal. Still hunting only. Use of dogs, baiting, electronic calling devices and live decoys is illegal. Turkeys may be hunted with shotguns, including muzzleloading shotguns, using shot not larger than #2 lead or BB steel shot, and bow and arrow but by no other means. Shooting turkeys from a moving or stationary vehicle is prohibited. Shotguns capable of holding more than three shells prohibited.

~~B. No person shall hunt, trap or take turkeys by the aid of baiting or on or over any baited area. Baiting means placing, exposing, depositing or scattering of corn (shelled, shucked or unshucked), wheat or other grain, salt, or other feed so as to constitute a lure, attraction or enticement to, on or over any areas where hunters are attempting to take turkeys.~~

~~C. A baited area is any area where corn (shelled, shucked or unshucked), wheat or other grain, salt, or other feed capable of luring, attracting or enticing turkeys is directly or indirectly placed, exposed, deposited, distributed or scattered. Such areas remain baited areas for 15 days following complete removal of all such corn, wheat or other grain, salt, or other feed.~~

~~D. Wildlife agents are authorized to close such baited areas and to place signs in the immediate vicinity designating closed zones and dates of closure.~~

~~E. The Department of Wildlife and Fisheries strongly discourages feeding agricultural grains to wild turkeys as this practice increases the risk of birds contracting potentially lethal diseases. Repeatedly placing grain in the same area may expose otherwise healthy birds to disease contaminated soils, grain containing lethal toxins and other diseased turkeys using the same feeding site. Properly distributed food plots (clovers, wheat, millet and chufa) are far more desirable for turkeys and have the added benefit of appealing to a wide variety of wildlife.~~

~~F. B. It is unlawful to take from the wild or possess in captivity any live wild turkeys or their eggs. No pen raised turkeys from within or without the state shall be liberated (released) within the state.~~

~~G. All licensed turkey hunters are required to have a Turkey License in their possession while turkey hunting in addition to basic and big game hunting licenses. Additionally, a WMA Hunting Permit is required of any person (age 18-59) who hunts on~~

land administered by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, including Wildlife Management Areas, Wildlife Refuges, and Habitat Conservation Areas.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 56:115.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Wildlife and Fisheries Commission, LR 25:2263 (November 1999), amended LR 26:2634 (November 2000), LR 27:2270 (December 2001), LR 28:2375 (November 2002), LR 29:2512 (November 2003), LR 30:2874 (December 2004), LR 31:3167 (December 2005), LR 32: .

§115. Statewide Turkey Hunting Areas-Resident Game Birds and Animals

A. Shooting hours: one-half hour before sunrise to one-half hour after sunset.

SPECIES	SEASON DATES	DAILY BAG LIMIT	POSSESSION LIMIT
Turkey	See Schedule	1	2/Season

B. Turkey season will open in designated areas on the fourth Saturday in March. The Area A turkey season will be 30 consecutive days in length, the Area B turkey season will be 23 consecutive days in length, and the Area C turkey season will be 9 16 consecutive days in length. Wildlife Management Areas, National Forests, National Wildlife Refuges, and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers land may vary from this framework. Deviation from this framework may occur in those years when the fourth Saturday in March falls the day before Easter.

C. Statewide Youth Turkey and Physically Challenged Season on private lands shall be the weekend prior to the statewide turkey season. Only youths younger than 16 years of age or hunters possessing a Physically Challenged Hunter Permit with wheelchair classification may hunt. Youth must possess a hunter safety certification or proof of successful completion of a hunter safety course. Each youth must be accompanied by one adult 18 years of age or older. If the accompanying adult is in possession of hunter safety certification, a valid hunting license or proof of successful completion of a hunter safety course, this requirement is waived for the youth. Adults accompanying youth may not possess a firearm or bow. Youths may possess only one firearm or bow while hunting. Legal weapons and shot are the same as described for the turkey season. The supervising adult shall maintain visual and voice contact with the youth at all times. An adult may supervise only one youth during this special hunt. Only one gobbler per day may be taken and any gobbler taken by the hunter during this special season counts towards their seasonal bag limit of 2. Contact regional offices for a Physically Challenged Hunter Permit application.

D. ~~2006~~ 2007 Turkey Hunting Schedule

AREA	SEASON DATES
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A	March 25 <u>24</u> - April 23 <u>22</u>
B	March 25 <u>24</u> - April 16 <u>15</u>
C	March 25 <u>24</u> - April 2 <u>8</u>
Private Lands Youth and Physically Challenged Hunter (Wheelchair Confined) Hunt	March 18 <u>19</u> 17 - <u>18</u>

E. ~~2006~~ 2007 Turkey Hunting Season - Open Only in the Following Areas

1. Area A - March ~~25~~ 24 - April ~~23~~ 22

a. All of the following parishes are open:

i. Beauregard;

ii. Bienville;

iii. Claiborne (Exception: See Federal Lands Hunting Schedule for Kisatchie National Forest dates);

iv. East Baton Rouge;

v. East Feliciana;

vi. Grant (Exception: See Federal Lands Hunting Schedule for Kisatchie National Forest dates);

vii. Jackson;

viii. LaSalle;

ix. Lincoln;

x. Livingston;

xi. Natchitoches (Exception: See Federal Lands Hunting Schedule for Kisatchie National Forest dates);

xii. Rapides (Exception: See Federal Lands Hunting Schedule for Kisatchie National Forest dates);

xiii. Sabine;

xiv. St. Helena;

ix. — St. Tammany;

xv. Tangipahoa;

xvi. Union;

xvii. Vernon (Exception: See Federal Lands Hunting Schedule for Kisatchie National Forest dates);

xii. — Washington;

xviii. West Baton Rouge;

xix. West Feliciana (including Raccourci Island);

xxv. Winn (Exception: See Federal Lands Hunting Schedule for Kisatchie National Forest dates);

b. Portions of the following parishes are also open:

i. Allen: North of LA 104, west of LA 26 south of junction of LA 104 to US 190, north of US 190 east of Kinder, west of US 165 south of Kinder;

ii. Avoyelles: That portion bounded on the east by the Atchafalaya River, on the north by Red River to the Brouillette Community, on the west by LA 452 from Brouillette to LA 1, on the south by LA 1, eastward to Hamburg, thence by the West Atchafalaya Basin Protection levee southward;

iii. Calcasieu: North of I-10;

iv. Caldwell: West of Ouachita River southward to Catahoula Parish line;

v. ~~Catahoula: West of Ouachita River southward to LA 559 at Duty Ferry, north of LA 559 to LA 124, south and west of LA 124 from Duty Ferry to LA 8 at Harrisonburg and north and west of LA 8 to LaSalle Parish line. South and west of the Ouachita River from the Caldwell Parish line southward to LA 8 at Harrisonburg, north and west of LA 8 from Harrisonburg to the LaSalle Parish line.~~ ALSO that portion lying east of LA 15;

vi. ~~Concordia: That portion east of LA 15 and west of US 65 from its juncture with LA 15 at Clayton;~~

vii. Evangeline: North and west of LA 115, north of LA 106 from St. Landry to LA 13, west of LA 13 from Pine Prairie to Mamou and north of LA 104 west of Mamou;

viii. Franklin: That portion lying east of LA 17 and east of LA 15 from its juncture with LA 17 at Winnsboro;

~~ix. Grant: All of the parish except that portion of land that lies north of the Red River between US 71 and LA 8. Exception: See Federal Lands Hunting Schedule for Kisatchie National Forest dates;~~

~~xviii.~~ Iberville: West of LA 1. EXCEPTION: see Sherburne WMA for special season dates on all state, federal and private lands within Sherburne boundaries;

~~xix.~~ Jefferson Davis: North of US 190 from junction with LA 26 to Kinder, west of US 165 and north of I-10 west from junction of US 165;

xii. Madison: That portion lying east of US 65 from East Carroll Parish line to US 80 and south of US 80. Also, all lands east of the main channel of the Mississippi River;

xi. Morehouse: West of US 165 from the Arkansas line to the junction of LA 140 at Bonita, north and west of LA 140 to junction of LA 830-4 (Cooper Lake Road), west of LA 830-4 to US 165 at Bastrop, south of US 165 to junction of LA 3051 (Grabault Road) south of LA 3051 to junction of LA 138, west of LA 138 to junction of LA 134, north of LA 134 to the Ouachita Parish line;

xii. Ouachita: East of LA 143 from Union Parish line to US 80 in West Monroe, north of US 80 to LA 139, west of LA 139 to the Morehouse Parish line;

xiii. Pointe Coupee: All of the parish except that portion bounded on the north by LA Hwy. 1, from Innis to the junction of LA Hwy 417, on the west by LA Hwy. 417 southward toward McCrea, on the south by LA Hwy. 417 from McCrea to its junction with Delhi Lane, then by Delhi Lane to LA Hwy. 418, then LA Hwy. 418 northward to LA Hwy. 1 at Innis. EXCEPTION: see Sherburne WMA for special season dates on all state, federal and private lands within Sherburne boundaries.

~~xiv. Rapides: All of the parish except that portion of lands that lies north of the Red River and south of US 71 from its juncture with the Red River northward to the Grant Parish line. Exception: See Federal Lands Hunting Schedule for Kisatchie National Forest season dates;~~

xiv. Richland: That portion south of US 80 and east of LA 17;

xvi. St. Landry: That portion bounded on the west by the West Atchafalaya Basin Protection Levee and on the east by the Atchafalaya River. EXCEPTION: the Indian Bayou Area, see Federal Lands Hunting Schedule for Indian Bayou Area dates;

xvii. Upper St. Martin: All within the Atchafalaya Basin. EXCEPTIONS: Sherburne WMA and Indian Bayou Area, see WMA Turkey Hunting Schedule for special season dates on all state, federal and private lands within Sherburne WMA boundaries and see Federal Lands Hunting Schedule for Indian Bayou dates;

xviii. Tensas: That portion west of US 65 from the Concordia Parish line to its juncture with LA 128, north of LA 128 to St. Joseph; west and north of LA 605, 604 and 3078 northward to Port Gibson Ferry. Also all lands east of the main channel of the Mississippi River;

2. Area B - March ~~25~~ 24 - April ~~16~~ 15

a. All of the following parishes are open:

~~i. Bienville;~~

ii. Caddo;

~~iii. Claiborne (Exception: See Federal Lands Hunting Schedule for Kisatchie National Forest dates);~~

~~iv. DeSoto;~~

~~v. Jackson;~~

~~vi. Lincoln;~~

~~vii. Red River;~~

~~viii. Union;~~

iv. St. Tammany;

v. Washington.

b. Portions of the following parishes are open:

i. Ascension: All east of the Mississippi River;

ii. Bossier: All open except that portion bounded on the north by I-20, on the west by LA 164, on the south by LA 164, and on the east by the Webster Parish Line;

iii. East Carroll: East of US 65 from Arkansas state line to Madison Parish line;

iv. Iberville: All east of the Mississippi River;

~~v. Ouachita: East of LA 143 from Union Parish line to US 80 in West Monroe, north of US 80 to LA 139, west of LA 139 to the Morehouse Parish line;~~

~~vi. Morehouse: West of US 165 from the Arkansas line to Bonita, north and west of LA 140 to junction of LA 830-4 (Cooper Lake Road), west of LA 830-4 to US 165, north of US 165 to LA 139, west of LA 139 to Ouachita Parish line;~~

vii. Webster: All open except that portion bounded on the north by I-20, on the east by U.S. 371, on the south by LA 164, and on the west by the Bossier Parish line (Exception: See Federal Lands Hunting Schedule for Kisatchie National Forest dates);

3. Area C - March ~~25~~ 24 - April ~~2~~ 8

a. All of the following parishes are open:

i. Concordia:

ab. Portions of the following parishes are open:

i. Caldwell: All east of the Ouachita River;

~~ii. Catahoula: That portion lying south of Deer Creek to Boeuf River, east of Boeuf and Ouachita Rivers to LA 8 at Harrisonburg, west and north of LA 8 to LA 15, west of LA 15 to Deer Creek~~ All of the parish EXCEPT for that portion located in Area A;

~~ii. Concordia: North and east of Sugar Mill Chute (Concordia Parish) from the state line westward to Red River, east of Red River northward to Cocodrie Bayou, east of Cocodrie Bayou northward to US 84, south of US 84 eastward to LA 15 (Ferriday), east of LA 15 northward to US 65 (Clayton), east of US 65 northward to Tensas Parish line;~~

iii. Franklin: ~~That portion lying west of LA 17, from Richland Parish line to LA 577 at Crowville, north of LA 577 to LA 15 at Baskin, east of LA 15 to Big Creek, and south and east of Big Creek to Richland Parish line. Also, that portion east of~~

Turkey Creek Lake, Turkey Creek and Boeuf River, north of Deer Creek, west of LA 15 and south of LA 562 West of LA 17 from the Richland Parish line southward to Winnsboro, west of LA 15 southward to the Catahoula Parish line;

iv. Richland: West of LA 17 from Franklin Parish line to Ringle Road, south of Ringle Road to Ferguson Road, south of Ferguson Road to Little Road, south of Little Road to Big Creek, east of Big Creek to Franklin Parish line;

v. Tensas: East and south of US 65 from Concordia Parish line to LA 128, south of LA 128 to St. Joseph, east and south of LA 605, 604 and 3078 northward to Port Gibson Ferry.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 56:115.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Wildlife and Fisheries Commission, LR 25:2264 (November 1999), amended LR 26:2634 (November 2000), LR 27:2270 (December 2001), LR 28:2376 (November 2002), LR 29:2513 (November 2003), LR 30:2875 (December 2004), LR 31:3167 (December 2005), LR 32: .

§117. 2006 2007 Wildlife Management Area Turkey - Hunting Regulations

A. General

1. The following rules and regulations concerning management, protection and harvest of wildlife have been officially approved and adopted by the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission in accordance with the authority provided in Louisiana Revised Statutes of 1950, Section 109 of Title 56. Failure to comply with these regulations will subject the individual to citation and/or expulsion from the management area.

2. Only those Wildlife Management Areas listed are open to turkey hunting.

3. ATVs, ATCs and motorcycles cannot be left overnight on WMAs EXCEPT in designated camping areas. ATVs are prohibited from two hours after sunset to 3:00 AM. All roads including trails and roads designated as ATV only trails shall be closed to ATVs from March 1 through August 31 unless otherwise specified. ATV off-road or off-trail travel is prohibited. Certain trails may be open during this time period to provide access for fishing or other purposes. These trails will be marked by signs at the entrance of the trail. Otherwise, only walk-in hunting is permitted (bicycles permitted). All ATV trails on Jackson-Bienville WMA will be open for use by holders of Physically Challenged Hunter Permits (wheelchair bound classification only) during the special Physically Challenged Hunter (wheelchair bound classification) turkey season.

4. Bag limits on WMAs are part of the season bag limit. Only one turkey is allowed to be taken during special lottery hunts.

5. WMAs with youth turkey hunts are closed to all activities except turkey hunting by authorized youth hunt participants and fishing on the day(s) of the youth hunt.

B. Permits

1. Self-Clearing Permits: All turkey hunts, including lottery hunts, are self-clearing. Hunters must check in daily by obtaining a permit from a self-clearing station prior to hunting. The self-clearing permit must be in the hunter's possession while hunting. Upon completion of each days hunt, the hunter must check out by completing and depositing the hunter report portion of the permit in the check-out box at a self-clearing station before exiting the WMA.

2. Lottery Hunts: All or a portion of the turkey season on Bayou Macon, ~~Boise-Vernon~~ Clear Creek, Loggy Bayou, Sabine, Sherburne, Sicily Island, Tunica Hills, Union and West Bay WMAs are restricted to those persons selected as a result of the pre-application lottery. Special youth only lottery hunts will be held on Big Lake, Bens Creek, Fort Polk/Peason Ridge/~~KNF Calcasieu Ranger District~~, Jackson-Bienville, Loggy Bayou, Sherburne, Sicily Island, Spring Bayou, Thistlethwaite, Union and West Bay WMAs. Deadline for receiving complete applications in the Baton Rouge office for all lottery hunts is 4:30 p.m. February ~~15~~ 16, ~~2006~~ 2007. An application fee of \$5 must be sent with each application. Applicants for WMA youth hunts must be at least 8 years old on the day of the hunt. Applicants may submit only one application and will be selected for one WMA Turkey Lottery Hunt annually. Submitting more than one application will result in disqualification. Contact any district office for applications. Hunters must abide by self-clearing permit requirements. Youths chosen for special youth only hunts will be guided by members of the Louisiana Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation. One family member may accompany the youth and guide, but may not hunt.

C. Wildlife Management Area Turkey Hunting Schedule*

WMA	<u>Non-Lottery</u> Season Dates	Lottery Dates**	Permit Requirements
Bayou Macon	April 8-9 None	April 8-9 <u>7-8</u>	Self-Clearing
Bens Creek ¹	March 25 <u>24</u> -April 9 <u>8</u>	None	Self-Clearing
Big Lake	March 25 <u>24</u> -April 2 <u>8</u>	None	Self-Clearing
Bodcau	March 25 <u>24</u> -April 9 <u>8</u>	None	Self-Clearing
Boeuf	March 25 <u>24</u> -April 2 <u>1</u>	None	Self-Clearing
Clear Creek (formerly Boise Vernon)	March 25-26 April 4-23 <u>2-22</u>	March 25-26 <u>24-25</u> March 31 -April 1-2	Self-Clearing
Camp Beauregard	March 25 <u>24</u> -April 9 <u>1</u>	None	Self-Clearing

Fort Polk	March 25 <u>24</u> -April 23 <u>22</u>	None	Self-Clearing
Grassy Lake	March 25 <u>24</u> -April 9 <u>8</u>	None	Self-Clearing
Hutchinson Creek	March 25 <u>24</u> -April 23 <u>22</u>	None	Self-Clearing
Jackson-Bienville	March 25 <u>24</u> -April 9 <u>8</u>	None	Self-Clearing
Lake Ramsey	March 25 <u>24</u> -April 9 <u>8</u>	None	Self-Clearing
Little River	March 25 <u>24</u> -April 9 <u>8</u>	None	Self-Clearing
Loggy Bayou	April 15-16 <u>None</u>	April 15-16 <u>14-15</u>	Self-Clearing
Peason Ridge	March 25 <u>24</u> -April 23 <u>22</u>	None	Self-Clearing
Red River	March 25 <u>24</u> -April 2 <u>8</u>	None	Self-Clearing
Sabine	March 25-26 April 1-2 <u>None</u>	March 25-26 <u>24-25</u> March 31 -April 1-2	Self-Clearing
Sandy Hollow ¹	March 25 <u>24</u> -April 9 <u>8</u>	None	Self-Clearing
Sherburne ²	March 25 <u>29</u> -April 2 <u>1</u>	March 25-26 <u>24-25</u> March 27-29 <u>26-28</u>	Self-Clearing
Sicity Island	March 25 -April 2 <u>None</u>	March 25-27 <u>24-26</u> March 28-30 <u>27-29</u> March 31 <u>30</u> -April 2 <u>1</u> April 2-4 April 5-8	Self-Clearing
Tangipahoa Parish School Board	March 24 -April 22	None	Self-Clearing
Three Rivers	March 25 <u>24</u> -April 2 <u>8</u>	None	Self-Clearing
Tunica Hills South Tract	March 25-26 April 1-2 April 8-9 April 10-16 <u>9-15</u>	March 25-26 <u>24-25</u> March 31 -April 1-2 April 8-9 <u>7-8</u>	Self-Clearing
Tunica Hills Angola Tract ³	March 25-26 April 1-2 April 8-9 April 10-16 <u>9-15</u>	March 25-26 <u>24-25</u> March 31 -April 1-2 April 8-9 <u>7-8</u>	Self-Clearing
Union	April 8-9 <u>None</u>	April 8-9 <u>7-8</u>	Self-Clearing
Walnut Hills	March 25 <u>24</u> -April 23 <u>22</u>	None	Self-Clearing
West Bay	March 25-26	March 25-26 <u>24-25</u>	Self-Clearing

April 1-2 ~~None~~

March 31-April 1-2

*Only those Wildlife Management Areas listed have a turkey hunting season. All other areas are closed.

**The deadline for receiving applications for all turkey Lottery Hunts on WMAs is February 15 ~~16, 2006~~ 2007.

¹No turkey hunting within 100 yards of food plots identified by two yellow paint rings around the nearest tree.

²All turkeys harvested on Sherburne WMA must be weighed and checked at WMA headquarters.

³Area closed to all users April 17 ~~16~~ – August 31.

D. Wildlife Management Area Youth Hunts

WMA	Lottery Youth Hunt Date
Bens Creek	March 18 17
Big Lake	March 18 17
Fort Polk/Peason Ridge/ <u>Calcasieu Ranger Dist.</u>	March 18 17
Jackson-Bienville	March 18 17
Loggy Bayou	April 8 7
Sherburne	March 18 & 19 17-18
<u>Sicily Island</u>	<u>March 17</u>
Spring Bayou	March 18 17
Thistlethwaite	April 8 7
Union	April 1 March 31
West Bay	March 18 17

E. Wildlife Management Area Physically Challenged (Wheelchair Confined) Hunt. Jackson-Bienville WMA will be open April 14-20 to physically challenged hunters. Hunters must possess a Physically Challenged Hunter Permit with wheelchair classification. During this special hunt, ATVs may be used by physically challenged hunters on all designated ATV trails in accordance with the Physically Challenged Hunter Permit. Hunters must abide by self-clearing permit requirements. Contact regional offices for a Physically Challenged Hunter Permit application.

E F. Federal Lands Turkey Hunting Schedule

1. Kisatchie National Forest (KNF) turkey hunting schedule: Caney Ranger District, March ~~25~~ 24-April ~~9~~ 8; all remaining KNF lands, March ~~25~~ 24-April ~~16~~ 15 (including Catahoula and Red Dirt National Wildlife Management Preserves).

2. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers turkey hunting schedule: Indian Bayou Area, March ~~17-18~~ handicap physically challenged lottery only hunt, ~~March 25—April 2~~, lottery hunt only on March ~~25—26~~ 24-25 and March ~~27-29~~ 26-28, non-lottery hunt March ~~29-April 1~~. Contact USCOE at 337-585-0853 for further information. Old River Control and Lock Areas, March ~~25~~ 24-April ~~2~~ 8. Contact USCOE (225) 492-2690 for further information.

3. National Wildlife Refuges: Bogue Chitto NWR, March ~~25~~ 24-April ~~23~~ 15; Lake Ophelia NWR, March ~~25~~ 24- ~~31~~, April ~~6~~ 8-~~23~~ hunt ends at 12:00 p.m. each day; Tensas NWR, March ~~18—19~~ 17-18 (youth lottery only), March ~~25~~ 24- April ~~9~~ 8; Upper Ouachita NWR, March ~~18—19~~ 17 (youth lottery only). Contact the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for information regarding NWR hunts.

AUTHORITY NOTE: Promulgated in accordance with R.S. 56:115.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Promulgated by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Wildlife and Fisheries Commission LR 25:2265 (November 1999), amended LR 26:2636 (November 2000), LR 27:2272 (December 2001), LR 28:2377 (November 2002), LR 29:2514 (November 2003), LR 30:2876 (December 2004), LR 31:3169 (December 2005), LR 32: .

The Secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is authorized to take any and all necessary steps on behalf of the Commission to promulgate and effectuate this Notice of Intent and the final Rule, including but not limited to, the filing of the Fiscal and Economic Impact Statements, the filing of the Notice of Intent and final Rule and the preparation of reports and correspondence to other agencies of government.

Interested persons may submit written comments on the proposed Rule to David Moreland, Administrator, Wildlife Division, Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, Box 98000, Baton Rouge, LA 70898-9000 no later than October 16, 2006.

In accordance with Act #1183 of 1999, the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries/Wildlife and Fisheries Commission hereby issues its Family Impact Statement in connection with the preceding Notice of Intent: This Notice of Intent will have no impact on the six criteria set out at R.S. 49:972(B).

Terry D. Denmon
Chairman

Mr. Noel Kinler handled the next agenda item, **To receive and hear Discussion on the Alligator Populations and Habitat Conditions**. Mr. Kinler stated he was going to update the Commission on the coastal alligator population and nest production for the coming year.

He also noted the two hurricanes as being catastrophic events of 2005. Hurricane Katrina impacted the eastern portion of Louisiana while Hurricane Rita flooded all of coastal Louisiana and in particular Cameron and Vermilion Parishes. Surveys immediately following the storms showed flooded marsh all along the coast and lots of land loss resulting from erosion. Surveys from southwest Louisiana showed extensive storm surge flooding and of utmost concern was the degree of high water salinities. Limited direct mortality was observed from the storms and this did not concern the staff. Specific concerns identified relative to alligator populations were the impact of salinity on vegetation, impact of high water salinity on alligator dispersals, survival and nesting and impact of physical marsh damage. The next 3 slides in Mr. Kinler's presentation showed changes in the vegetation. From April 2006 in Cameron and Vermilion Parishes when conducting nutria herbivory survey, there was dead marsh. In July 2006 when conducting alligator nest count surveys, there was some recovery occurring along ditches, but there was a lack of surface waters due to drought. Large deep water ponds showed no water in April and again in July, there was no surface water, but a 10 to 20 percent vegetative recovery. As a result of the impacts and the continued high salinities, there were some dramatic reductions in the aerial surveys of nest productions in coastal Louisiana. In 2006, nest production estimated about 20,000 nests which was about a 50 percent reduction from the prior year. In southwest Louisiana on privately-owned marsh lands, there was about an 89 percent reduction in nest production. In a normal year, there would be a nest for every 90 acres, but this year, it was up to 426 acres per nest. In southeast Louisiana, the impacts were moderated quite substantially. There was a 30 percent reduction in nest productions this year. The next slide shown was a map of the 2005 nests observed compared with 2006 numbers. In July, the quota recommendations were made and presented to the Department Secretary. Data that was looked at were current and prior year nest densities, 5-year average nest densities, prior year harvest statistics, and the current status of habitat and how it would recover over the next several years. Cameron Parish's recommendation was to reduce harvest by 40 percent or 1900 alligators (55 percent reduction in brackish marsh, 50 percent reduction in intermediate marsh and 30 percent reduction in fresh marsh). In Vermilion Parish, staff recommended harvest reduction by about 45 percent or 1000 alligators (50 percent from brackish marsh, 50 percent reduction in intermediate marsh and 30 percent reduction in fresh marsh). Another area that needed a reduction was Plaquemines Parish in the Delacroix area where harvest was reduced by about 30 percent. St. Mary, St. John and Tangipahoa Parishes saw an increased number of nests and it was recommended there would be marginal increases in the harvest. For the rest of the coast, there would be no changes recommended in the south central and eastern portion of the state. Projected tag allocations for 2006 will be about 12 percent less statewide than in 2005 with an estimated harvest of between 29,000 to 30,000 alligators.

Following Mr. Kinler's presentation, Commissioner Sagraera asked Assistant Secretary Parke Moore if bids were asked for on a small piece of property for alligator tags. Assistant Secretary Moore answered bids were obtained for eggs from White Lake. Mr. Kinler stated they added a harvest on one of the upland WMAs, Dewey Wills, where there would be an experimental harvest for the first time. The Wildlife Division asked hunters for bids for those particular tags. Commissioner Sagraera stated he has been asked the question of

why not bid out tags on state lands when you bid out eggs. He added he did not bid on the White Lake eggs since it could possibly be considered a conflict of interest with him serving on the Commission. He wanted to add input to bidding out state lands in a more timely manner where the opportunity to receive more funds could be made. Commissioner Sagrera then talked about two incidences on bidding for tags on state lands that ended up being bidding for prices that occurred last year. He asked that the flawed process be looked into. Assistant Secretary Moore stated staff would study potential changes that would address the issue. Commissioner King asked Commissioner Sagrera how much did he pay for an alligator egg. Commissioner Sagrera stated the highest public bid for alligator eggs on state lands was \$20.10 per egg.

To consider a Resolution and Declaration of Emergency to fix the opening and closing dates for the 2006 Fall Inshore Shrimp Season and further providing with respect thereto began with Mr. Marty Bourgeois stating he had a brief presentation. The landings for the commercial shrimp fishery last year totaled about 103 billion pounds and was valued at approximately \$133 million. White shrimp comprised about 60 percent of the catch and about 69 percent of that value. The next slide was Zone 1 white shrimp size frequency distribution for work week 30 for years 2000 through 2006 versus work week 31. Only 44 percent of the white shrimp population were at sizes larger than 100 count while the mean size in Coastal Study Area 1 was about 80 mm and in Coastal Study Area 2 about 72 mm. Next was Zone 2 comparing the white shrimp size frequency distribution for work week 30 from 2000 through 2006 plotted against the current work week. Only 37 percent in Zone 2 were at sizes of 100 count per pound. Then shown was the same work week 30 for Zone 2 but Vermilion Bay was excluded and this showed an increase in the percent of the population that had sizes larger than the 100 count. Zone 3 slide showing work week 30 for the previous 6 years plotted against work week 31 had some increases in the number of smaller shrimp compared to previous years. A map of Louisiana's 3 shrimp management zones was shown. The action to open and close the fall shrimp season were to open that portion of Zone 2 from the eastern shore of the Mississippi River to the Atchafalaya River Ship Channel at Eugene Island on Monday, August 14 at 12 noon; and then open the remaining portion of Zone 2 from the Atchafalaya River Ship Channel to the western shore of Vermilion Bay, all of Zones 1 and 3 on Monday, August 21 at 12 noon. The action also would give authority to the Secretary to change any closing dates if biological or technical data indicated a need or there was an enforcement problem; also to close and reopen inside and outside waters if significant numbers of shrimp were found; and close all inside waters on Tuesday, December 18 at 6 AM except for Breton and Chandeleur Sounds which would close at 6 AM on March 31, 2007. Hearing no questions, the Chairman then asked for public comments.

Mr. George Barisich, President of United Commercial Fisherman's Association and Parish Board Member of Louisiana Shrimp Association stated any date set would not mean much since they were not getting much money for their product. He then asked Commissioner Samanie what he thought the trend would be and why were imports getting higher prices than domestic. Commissioner Samanie stated prices for shrimp was based on supply and demand and most of the cold storage facilities were already full. He added he could not

guess what the prices may be. Commissioner Samanie noted that fuel prices were not only hurting the fishermen but the American public as well since they may be using some of their “eating out” money for fuel. Mr. Barisich then stated the imports he was talking about were from Bangladesh in which they were getting better prices than Louisiana product and from the Mexican offshore. The only outlet he thought might work was to develop a shrimp subsidy and he asked the Commission to support the effort when it came to fruition.

Chairman Denmon stated the action was to set the season at the most advantageous time whether it was good or bad. He then asked the Commission’s pleasure. Commissioner King made a motion to adopt the opening and closing dates for the 2006 fall shrimp season as recommended by the Department. Commissioner Samanie seconded the motion and it passed with no opposition.

(The full text of the Resolution and Declaration of Emergency are made a part of the record.)

RESOLUTION

2006 Fall Shrimp Season
Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission
August 3, 2006

WHEREAS, R.S. 56:497 authorizes the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to fix no less than two open shrimp seasons each calendar year for all inside waters by zone, and

WHEREAS, R.S. 56:497 provides that shrimp season openings shall be based on biological and technical data which indicate that marketable shrimp, in sufficient quantities, are available for harvest, and

WHEREAS, R.S. 56:498 provides that the minimum legal possession count on saltwater white shrimp shall average no more than 100 whole specimens to the pound (100 count per pound), except during the time period from October fifteenth through the third Monday in December when there shall be no possession count, and

WHEREAS, biological sampling conducted by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries in early July indicated that white shrimp in inside waters may have potentially reached marketable sizes and average 100 count per pound minimum possession size or larger on or before the August 3rd monthly Wildlife and Fisheries Commission meeting, and

WHEREAS, on July 6th the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission authorized the Secretary of the Department to take any and all necessary steps on behalf of the Commission to promulgate and effectuate a Declaration of Emergency to

open the fall shrimp season provided biological sampling indicated the need to do so, and

WHEREAS, historical and current biological sampling conducted by the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries has indicated that white shrimp in a portion of Shrimp Management Zone 2 will average 100 count per pound minimum legal size or larger by August 14 and will average 100 count per pound minimum legal size or larger by August 21 in remaining state inside waters, now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, a Declaration of Emergency setting the 2006 Fall Shrimp Season in state inside waters currently closed to shrimping is attached to and made a part of this resolution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the Commission grants authority to the Secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to change the closing dates if biological or technical data indicate the need to do so or if enforcement problems develop and to close and reopen all or parts of state inside and outside waters if significant numbers of small white shrimp are found in these waters.

Terry D. Denmon, Chairman
Wildlife and Fisheries Commission

DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY

Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
Wildlife and Fisheries Commission

2006 Fall Shrimp Season

In accordance with the emergency provisions of R.S. 49:953(B) and R.S. 49:967 of the Administrative Procedure Act which allows the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to use emergency procedures to set shrimp seasons and R.S. 56:497 which provides that the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission shall fix no less than two open seasons each year for all or parts of state inside waters and shall have the authority to open or close state outside waters, the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission does hereby set the 2006 Fall Shrimp Season in inside waters to open as follows:

Shrimp Management Zone 1, that portion of Louisiana inside waters from the Mississippi-Louisiana state line to the eastern shore of South Pass of the Mississippi River, to open at 12:00 noon August 21, 2006, and

That portion of Shrimp Management Zone 2 from the eastern shore of South Pass of the Mississippi River to the Atchafalaya River Ship Channel at Eugene Island as delineated by the Channel red buoy line, to open at 12:00 noon August 14, 2006.

That portion of Shrimp Management Zone 2 from the Atchafalaya River Ship Channel at Eugene Island as delineated by the Channel red buoy line to the western shore of Vermilion Bay and Southwest Pass at Marsh Island, to open at 12:00 noon August 21, 2006.

Shrimp Management Zone 3, that portion of state inside waters from the western shore of Vermilion Bay and Southwest Pass at Marsh Island to the Louisiana-Texas state line, to open at 12:00 noon August 21, 2006, and

The Commission also hereby sets the closing date for the 2006 Fall Shrimp Season in inside waters at official sunset December 18, 2006 except in the open waters of Breton and Chandeleur Sounds as described by the double-rig line (R.S. 56:495.1(A)2) which shall remain open until 6:00 a.m., March 31, 2007. The Commission also grants authority to the Secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to change the closing dates if biological and technical data indicate the need to do so or if enforcement problems develop and to close and reopen all or parts of state inside and outside waters if significant numbers of small white shrimp are found in these waters.

Terry D. Denmon
Chairman

To consider a Resolution and Declaration of Emergency 2006-07 Oyster Season on Public Grounds, Seed Reservations and Tonging Areas and further providing with respect thereto was handled by Mr. Patrick Banks. Each summer, staff samples and evaluates the stock size of the oyster resource on the public grounds which was about 1.6 million acres in Louisiana. This summer's sample was extremely difficult due to the effects of the hurricanes. Data was then analyzed to produce the stock assessment report and the oyster season recommendations. Management goals of the oyster program were to maintain the overall health of the public oyster resource, provide seed oysters for use by leaseholders and to provide a supply of sack oysters that could be taken directly to market. These goals were achieved through the biological sampling program, habitat enhancement, recommending seasonal framework and the Commission setting those season dates, harvest restrictions and Enforcement agents enforcing those restrictions. Results of the sampling efforts showed that over the last several years there has been a drop off in stock size and in 2006, there was an especially large drop off in sack sized oysters. The positive side of the hurricanes was an enormous spat set, which was a large reproductive event and this resulted in a small increase in seed resources for 2006. Overall, seed resources has increased by 18 percent from the previous year, but the sack size was reduced by 70 percent. A map of the Coastal Study Areas showed where the resource was distributed along the coast. Coastal Study Area 1 held about 26 percent of the seed resources and 18 percent of the sack resources; Coastal Study Area 2 had about

62 percent of the seed resources and 41 percent of the sack resources; Coastal Study Areas 3 and 4 had less than 1 percent in both the seed and sack resources; Coastal Study Area 5 had 5 percent of the seed resources and 10 percent of the sack resources; Coastal Study Area 6 reported no figures since the reef acreage was unavailable; and Coastal Study Area 7 held 7 percent of the seed resources and 30 percent of the sack resources. Staff met with the Oyster Task Force and presented the preliminary recommendations, received their recommendations and revised them to what was being presented. The recommendations were to open the public seed grounds east of the Mississippi River on September 6 and go to September 27 and then reopen on November 13. The Bay Gardene Seed Reservation would have the same season structure and would be for bedding purposes only. Hackberry Bay would also have the same season dates except for the 2004 cultch plants which would open only for the first 3 days of the season. Lake Felicity and Lake Chien would open on November 13 and close on November 15, 2006 due to the limited amount of resource in the area. The season for Bay Junop area will be from November 13, 2006 to December 12, 2006. Seed oysters were found in samples from Vermilion Bay and that area would open on September 6, 2006. West Cove of Calcasieu Lake would open on October 6 and the East Cove would open on November 1. Hearing no comments from the Commission, Chairman Denmon asked for public comments.

Mr. John Tesvich, Oyster Task Force member, commended Mr. Banks and the staff for their presentation and research on the stock assessment. The Oyster Task Force made recommendations which were included in the packets and had some small differences. Then Mr. Tesvich stated the seed grounds in Areas 1 and 2 were the primary seed grounds and there has been an increase in the seed and the 3 week suggested season would not give the oyster fishermen enough time to plant their beds. The Task Force had asked for 1 month and they felt this was a reasonable compromise. There are a number of factors that make it important to utilize the seed and that included receiving a report of a parasite called dermo occurring in high salinity areas on the oyster population. This parasite could kill an oyster in its second summer. Mr. Tesvich asked that consideration be given to using the resource in a practical matter. He asked the Commission to consider an extra week which would allow the oyster fishermen time to plant their beds with the seed resource. Also, he asked that the season be extended past the April 1 date if the seed crop was not harvested before next summer.

Mr. George Barisich welcomed Mr. Banks back on behalf of the United Commercial Fisherman's Association. He agreed with Mr. Tesvich in the recommendation of opening for one month for bedding purposes. Commissioner Sagrera asked if the infrastructures were better this year. Mr. Barisich stated the canal was still not open and there was no processing either. He also did not foresee anything happening.

Chairman Denmon asked Mr. Banks for the downside of accommodating the fishermen with an extra week. Mr. Banks stated the original recommendation to the Task Force was 2 weeks and the 2 openings were biologically driven. He then showed a slide of spat fall on the public grounds for the last few years. Much of this did not occur during the May-June timeframe but during September-October for the last few years. The concern was that the

resource was trying to sustain itself on half of the reproductive capabilities it was used to. By allowing fishermen to harvest in September, staff was conceding that part of that spat would be removed from the population. Mr. Banks stated they were trying to preserve the October time period to let the spat fall and then to protect it until mid-November. Staff compromised between the industry's and Department's recommendation and went with a 3 week season. Commissioner Miller stated in Calcasieu Lake, fishermen have gone from hand tonging to using mechanical devices and the Task Force recommended a 15 sack limit. He asked what was the Department's sack limit. Mr. Banks stated it was 15 sacks also. Commissioner Miller then asked what was the limit in the past. Mr. Banks stated it was 10 for quite a number of years and 15 last year. Commissioner Miller asked that the staff watch the reefs closely and not let the fishermen tear them up and Mr. Banks agreed they would be watched. Chairman Denmon stated the action was a Declaration of Emergency to set the season dates and limits as described by Mr. Banks. Commissioner Morrow made a motion to adopt the Declaration of Emergency. Commissioner Miller seconded the motion and it passed with no opposition.

(The full text of the Resolution and Declaration of Emergency are made a part of the record.)

RESOLUTION

2006/2007 Oyster Season on the Public Oyster Grounds
August 3, 2006

WHEREAS, Louisiana Revised Statutes (R.S.) 56:433 provides that the Public Oyster Seed Grounds may be fished starting on the first Wednesday following Labor Day which in 2006 is September 6, and

WHEREAS, the oyster resources on the public oyster areas of Louisiana have been biologically monitored and evaluated, and the available supply and size variation has been determined, and

WHEREAS, R.S. 56:433(B.2) mandates a sacking only area on the Public Grounds east of the Mississippi River, and

WHEREAS, R.S. 56:435.1.1(D) authorizes the Commission to set the harvest limit in the Calcasieu Lake public oyster ground to be no more than 25 sacks of oysters per day per licensed vessel, and

WHEREAS, the Commission has considered the recommendations of the Louisiana Oyster Task Force as provided for in R.S. 56:433(B.1),

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the 2006/2007 oyster season on Louisiana public oyster areas is detailed in the attached Declaration of Emergency, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of the Department of

Wildlife and Fisheries is authorized to take emergency action, if necessary, to close areas if oyster mortalities are occurring, or to delay the season or close areas where significant spat catch has occurred with good probability of survival, or where it is found that there are excessive amounts of non-living reef material in seed oyster loads, or if oyster resources and/or reefs are being adversely impacted, or if enforcement problems are encountered, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is authorized to take emergency action to reopen areas previously closed if the threat to the resource has ended or may open areas if substantial oyster resources are located, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the notice of any opening, delaying, or closing of a season will be made by public notice at least 72 hours prior to such action, unless such closure is ordered by the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals for public health concerns, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, a Declaration of Emergency setting the 2006/2007 oyster seasons on the public oyster areas is attached to and made part of this resolution.

Terry D. Denmon, Chairman
Wildlife and Fisheries Commission

DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY

Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
Wildlife and Fisheries Commission

In accordance with the emergency provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act, Louisiana Revised Statutes (R.S.) 49:953(B) and 967(D), and under the authority of R.S. 56:433, R.S. 56:435.1, and R.S. 56:435.1.1(D) notice is hereby given that the Secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission hereby declare:

The oyster season in the primary public oyster seed grounds east of the Mississippi River, as described in Louisiana Administrative Code (LAC) 76:VII.511 and LAC 76:VII.513, including the sacking only area of the public grounds which is generally Lake Fortuna and Lake Machias to a line from Mozambique Point to Point Gardner to Grace Point at the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet, and including the Bay Gardene Public Oyster Seed Reservation, as described in R.S. 56:434.E, shall open one-half hour before sunrise on September 6, 2006 and close one-half hour after sunset on September 27, 2006. These areas shall then re-open at one-half hour before sunrise on November 13, 2006. Oyster

harvest during the open season in the Bay Gardene Public Oyster Seed Reservation shall be restricted to seed oysters for bedding purposes only, as described in R.S. 56:433.B(1).

The oyster season in the Hackberry Bay Public Oyster Seed Reservation as described in R.S. 56:434.E shall open one-half hour before sunrise on September 6, 2006 and will close one-half hour after sunset on September 27, 2006, except the 2004 cultch plant locations within the following coordinates which will open one-half hour before sunrise on September 6, 2006 and close one-half hour after sunset on September 8, 2006:

Hackberry Bay north cultch plant

1. 29 degrees 25 minutes 05.03 seconds N
90 degrees 01 minutes 57.01 seconds W
2. 29 degrees 25 minutes 00.39 seconds N
90 degrees 01 minutes 58.34 seconds W
3. 29 degrees 24 minutes 58.22 seconds N
90 degrees 01 minutes 48.45 seconds W
4. 29 degrees 25 minutes 02.86 seconds N
90 degrees 01 minutes 47.12 seconds W

Hackberry Bay south cultch plant

1. 29 degrees 23 minutes 20.15 seconds N
90 degrees 03 minutes 14.15 seconds W
2. 29 degrees 23 minutes 24.01 seconds N
90 degrees 03 minutes 05.55 seconds W
3. 29 degrees 23 minutes 12.77 seconds N
90 degrees 02 minutes 58.98 seconds W
4. 29 degrees 23 minutes 08.92 seconds N
90 degrees 03 minutes 07.58 seconds W

The oyster season in the Hackberry Bay Public Oyster Seed Reservation, excluding the 2004 cultch plants as described above, shall re-open at one-half hour before sunrise on November 13, 2006.

The oyster season in the Lake Felicity and Lake Chien Public Oyster Seed Grounds as described in LAC 76:VII.517 will open one-half hour before sunrise on November 13, 2006 and close one-half hour after sunset on November 15, 2006.

The oyster season in the Bay Junop Public Oyster Seed Reservation as described in R.S. 56:434.E will open one-half hour before sunrise on November 13, 2006 and close one-half hour after sunset on December 12, 2006.

The Vermilion/East and West Cote Blanche/Atchafalaya Bay Public Oyster Seed Grounds, as described in LAC 76:VII.507 and LAC 76:VII.509, will open one-half hour before sunrise on September 6, 2006.

The oyster season in the Calcasieu Lake public oyster area, as described in R.S. 56:435.1 and R.S. 56:435.1.1, is detailed as follows:

1. Calcasieu Lake West Cove Conditional Management Area (west side of Calcasieu ship channel) will open one-half hour before sunrise on October 16, 2006.
2. Calcasieu Lake Conditional Management Area (east side of Calcasieu ship channel) will open one-half hour before sunrise on November 1, 2006.

The sack limit for Calcasieu Lake is set at 15 sacks per day as provided for in R.S. 56:435.1.1. However, these conservation actions will not supercede public health closures.

The following areas will remain closed for the 2006/2007 oyster season: the Deep Lake, Lake Tambour, and Lake Mechant Public Oyster Seed Grounds (as described in LAC 76:VII.517), the Sister Lake Public Oyster Seed Reservation (as described in R.S. 56:434.E) and the Sabine Lake public oyster tonging area (as described in R.S. 56:435.1).

The Secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is authorized to take emergency action as necessary to close areas if oyster mortalities are occurring or to delay the season or close areas where significant spat catch has occurred with good probability of survival, or where it is found that there are excessive amounts of non-living reef material in seed oyster loads, or if oyster resources and/or reefs are being adversely impacted, or if enforcement problems are encountered.

The Secretary is authorized to take emergency action to reopen areas previously closed if the threat to the resource has ended, or may open areas if substantial oyster resources are located.

Notice of any opening, delaying or closing of a season will be made by public notice at least 72 hours prior to such action unless such closure is ordered by the Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals for public health concerns.

Terry D. Denmon
Chairman

The Commissioners agreed to hold the **December 2006 Meeting** on Thursday, December 7, 2006, beginning at 9:30 a.m. at the Baton Rouge Headquarters. Also, Chairman Denmon stated he would not be able to attend the Wednesday, October 4 Commission Meeting and suggested moving it back to Thursday if the other members were okay. After discussing this, it was decided the October Meeting would be held on Thursday, October 5, 2006.

Next item was to receive **Public Comments**. Mr. Ronald Coco, Avoyelles Wildlife Federation, announced there would be a skeet shoot on August 26 in an effort to promote a youth day.

Assistant Secretary John Roussel announced that Mr. Patrick Banks was back with the Department. Also, he announced Mr. Gary Tilyou was appointed the new Administrator of Inland Fisheries.

Secretary Landreneau introduced Ms. Nan Watts, Administrative Assistant working in the Secretary's Office making sure he was in the right place at the right time. Ms. Watts came from the Lt. Governor's Office. Chairman Denmon asked Ms. Watts to distribute her e-mail address to the Commissioners.

There being no further business, Commissioner Sagrera made a motion to **Adjourn** the meeting and it was seconded by Commissioner King.

Dwight Landreneau
Secretary
DL:scf