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State of Louisiana

DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES  
OFFICE OF FISHERIES

ROBERT J. BARHAM  
SECRETARY

RANDY PAUSINA  
ASSISTANT SECRETARY

Dr. Bonnie Ponwith  
Director, Southeast Fisheries Science Center  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
75 Virginia Beach Drive, Room 207  
Miami, FL 33149

RE: Turtle Excluder Device Gear Study

Dr. Ponwith:

I write this letter to you at the request of the Louisiana Shrimp Task Force, regarding the TED Gear Evaluation Study. First of all, I would like to thank you and your staff, especially Jeff Gearhart, for attending the March 15, meeting of the shrimp task force and providing an overview of the study. It is extremely important to the fishing industry that coordination of research activities takes place and the industry remains informed.

Following Jeff's presentation the task force passed a resolution requesting that I contact you and recommend NNFS consider developing a more statistically justifiable gear testing program. There is considerable concern that the results from the study will be biased and not representative unless various types of water bottoms and vessel sizes are included in the study.

I want you to know that LDWF is committed to providing any assistance needed and wants to work closely with you and the fishing industry to provide scientifically defensible results. I feel that we can assist you to create a study that will be of great benefit to the environment, without causing negative impacts to an industry that is already struggling.

I look forward to working with you and moving this study forward.

Sincerely,

Randall B. Pausina  
Assistant Secretary

Cc: Louisiana Shrimp Task Force