

Lagniappe



March 29, 2006, Special Edition

This special edition of the Lagniappe Newsletter is devoted to new fisheries and wetlands bills, which have been introduced into the current legislative session as of March 29. It must be noted that each senator and representative is also allowed to introduce up to five late bills before April 18. If you need information on the status on any of these bills, you may call the capital at 1-225-342-2456 or 1-800-256-3793. People with computer access can do the same by using the following Web Site address: www.legis.state.la.us. In the bill summaries below, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is referred to as LDWF, the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission as LWFC, the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources as LDNR, and the Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry as LDAF.

House Bill 85 - T. Powell

Provides that the LDWF Secretary, rather than the Governor, shall appoint the members of the Crab Task Force.

House Bill 88 - Pitre

Makes it illegal for a vessel to "hit and run" a waterline that carries drinkable water.

House Bill 91 - Farrar

Establishes no wake zones within 300 feet of any commercial docking facility where vessels are moored to load or unload fisheries products.

House Bill 568 - Smiley

Abolishes 23 boards, commissions, authorities and districts, including the Hunting and Fishing Advisory Education Council.

House Bill 702 - Odinet

Provides that the LWFC consult with the Oyster Task Force to extend the harvest of oysters from public seed ground past the closing date. Removes reference to April 2 as the closing date and to May 15 as the latest to which the season can be extended.



House Bill 802 - Frith

Repeals the closing date of April 30 for oyster season on Calcasieu Lake and provides that LWFC to set the date in consultation with the Oyster Task Force. Repeals the 15-sack harvest limit for the lake and provides that LWFC set harvest limits in consultation with the Oyster Task force. Allows the use of power dredges and scrapers up to 36 inches in size in Calcasieu Lake.

Allows, for the years 2007 through 2010, the use of power dredges and scrapers up to 36 inches in size in Sabine Lake. Repeals the season dates of November 15 to April 30 and the 10-sack harvest limit for Sabine Lake. Provides that the LWFC, in consultation with the Oyster Task Force, set seasons and harvest limits.

Repeals the law that requires LWFC to set an oyster fishery for depuration purposes for Calcasieu and Sabine Lakes.

House Bill 825 - St. Germain & others

Authorizes LWFC by emergency order to close an area for hunting or to declare a closed season for any species of fish in an emergency. Limits the closure period to not more than 7 days after the next LWFC meeting.

House Bill 832 - Jack Smith & others

Provides that any minor who is charged with a violation of boating education requirements laws, shall pay no penalty and have the violations removed from record if the minor completes a National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) boating safety class.

House Bill 836 - Jack Smith & others

Requires that any recreational boat accident that results in injury, death or more than \$500 damage must be reported immediately to LDWF, the nearest law enforcement authority or the state police. Law enforcement authorities must notify LWFC immediately after receiving such a report. Provides that LWFC will, in turn, make reports to the U.S. Coast Guard. Authorizes LWFC to charge fees for copies of reports, photographs, tapes and electronic or large documents.

House Bill 837 - Jack Smith & others and Senate Bill 65 - Dupre.

Allows the chairman of LWFC to cancel LWFC monthly meetings if the Governor declares an emergency. Authorizes the LWFC secretary to take action on agenda items, as well as non-agenda items, necessary to protect fish and wildlife. These actions shall remain in effect until 7 days after the next LWFC meeting.

House Bill 838 - St. Germain & others

Adds 8 new species to the list of invasive exotic aquatic plants that cannot be imported into Louisiana without written permission from LWFC. Authorizes LWFC to add other plants to the list beginning on January 1, 2007. Authorizes LWFC to create rules to control invasive aquatic plants. Increases penalties for violation of rules on importing these plants.

House Bill 839 - St. Germain & others

Repeals the special license required to shed softshell crabs and requires softshell crab shedders to purchase a wholesale/retail seafood dealers license. Exempts all crab traps used in Lake Pontchartrain from requirements to have escape rings.

House Bill 1034 - Frith

Creates a 1 cent per pound assessment on all crawfish tail meat sold in Louisiana, if approved by majority in a special vote of crawfish tail meat producers. The funds collected will go to the Crawfish Promotion and Research Board. Individual crawfish tail meat producers that use Louisiana crawfish can request refunds of their payments.

House Bill 1035 - Frith and Senate Bill 283 - Gautreaux

Removes the requirement that the Crawfish Promotion and Research Board spend 60% of its funds on promotion and 40% on research, and allows the board to determine what it is spent on.

House Bill 1052 - Jack Smith & others

Creates a titling system for boats from the model year 2001 or newer and worth over \$1,000.

House Bill 1053 - Daniel & others

Allows LWFC to adjust fees for licenses and permits at the same rate that the consumer price index changes.

House Bill 1060 - John Smith

Allows children (over the age of 16) and spouses of Louisiana residents on active military duty to buy a military recreational hunting and fishing license for \$ 5.

House Bills 1068 & 1079 - Thompson and Senate Bills 553 & 558 - Ellington

Removes sea catfish and suckermouth-armored catfish from the definition of "catfish" for marketing purposes. Limits the definition to blue catfish, channel catfish, white catfish, flathead catfish, brown bullhead, yellow bullhead and black bullhead.

House Bill 1129 - Thompson

Creates the Poverty Point Reservoir Development Fund as a special fund, with self-generated funds, within the state treasury.

Senate Bill 7 - Nevers

Adds aquaculture and other seafood products to the Agricultural Products Support Fund, which promotes Louisiana products. Shifts responsibilities in the program from LDAF to the Louisiana Department of Economic Development.

Senate Bill 148 - McPherson

Allows people to register to vote when they buy hunting or fishing license.

Senate Bill 149 - McPherson

Makes speckled trout gamefish. Prohibits any import for sale of speckled trout and redfish unless each fish is tagged with a metal self-locking gill cover tag. Provides that the LWFC shall create rules and regulations for a commercial fishery for black drum, sheepshead and flounder using pompano strike nets.

Senate Bill 162 - Ellington

Allows up to 25 freshwater catfish under minimum size limits to be taken by recreational fishermen using wire nets.

Senate Bill 163 - Cain

Allows the dependents of non-resident military personnel to purchase hunting and fishing licenses at the same price as residents. Allows a Louisiana resident whose parent or guardian is a Louisiana resident and is on active military duty to purchase a military recreational hunting and fishing license for \$5.

Senate Bill 315 - Marionneaux

Prohibits the spending of Atchafalaya Basin Program funds outside the defined boundaries of the Atchafalaya Basin levees.

Senate Bill 363 - Adley

Requires every motorboat registered in the name of a person to have proof of liability insurance.

Senate Bill 615 - Fontenot & others

Creates the Mercury Risk Reduction Act.

House Concurrent Resolution 13 - Richmond & others

Commends the personnel of LDWF for their response efforts following Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

House Concurrent Resolution 29 - Odinet

Suspends until 60 days after the 2007 legislative session the laws that specify closure dates for oyster harvest on public seed grounds and in Calcasieu Lake, and authorizes LWFC to open or re-open areas for oyster harvest.

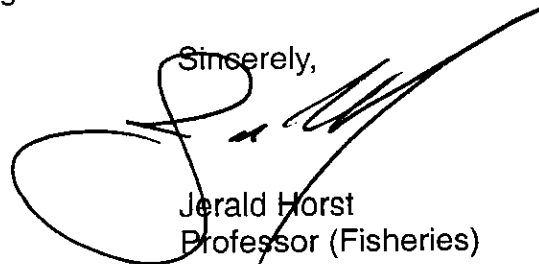
House Concurrent Resolution 35 - Hammett

Commends LDWF and LWFC for their efforts to promote hunting and fishing for the youth of Louisiana.

House Concurrent Resolution 38 - Hutter

Requests the U.S. Congress to close the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet and requests the Louisiana delegation to introduce legislation for the closure.

Sincerely,



Jerald Horst
Professor (Fisheries)