

Crab Trap Rodeos Start Strong

Volunteers worked through wind and cold to collect derelict crab traps at the first Derelict Crab Trap Rodeo at Sweetwater Marina in Delacroix on Feb. 25th. The volunteers, including those from the Coastal Conservation Association (CCA), Nature Conservancy, and LSU and Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries personnel, collected 875 crab traps! This total brings the number of crab traps collected in state waters since 2004 to more than 20,000. After the March 3 rodeo, the program moves to LUMCON in Chauvin on March 17 to collect traps from Terrebonne Parish. Please visit www.laseagrant.org/crabtraps for more information and to sign up!



Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council Meeting

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council has scheduled scoping meetings around the Gulf coast to discuss a proposed generic amendment addressing dealer permits and electronic logbook reporting, as well as two amendments to the Mackerel Fishery Management Plan. The two meetings in Louisiana are as follows:

Monday, April 2, 2012
Crowne Plaza New Orleans Airport
2829 Williams Boulevard
Kenner, Louisiana
504/467-5611

Tuesday, April 3, 2012
Wildlife & Fisheries Lab
195 Ludwig Lane
Grand Isle, Louisiana
985/787-2163

All meetings will begin at 6 p.m. and conclude at the end of public testimony, but no later than 9 p.m.

The proposed generic amendment considers changes to the current requirements for dealer permits and the potential for electronic reporting requirements.

Mackerel Amendment 19 considers limits or prohibition on the sale of king mackerel, Spanish mackerel and cobia that are caught under a bag limit. It also looks at changes to regulations regarding maintaining and renewing commercial fishing permits and adding a commercial permit requirement to sell cobia. Mackerel Amendment 20 considers potential changes to the existing commercial boundaries and zones and associated quotas and trip limits, along with a possible allowance for transit through closed fishing zones. Some of these proposed changes were recommended by participants in the fishery to simplify current regulations and make the fishery more efficient.

Copies of the scoping materials can be obtained by calling 813/348-1630. Materials will also be posted on the council website at www.gulfcouncil.org.

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Kathy Pereira at the council office at least five working days prior to the meeting.

GULF OF MEXICO REGULATIONS

New Gulf of Mexico Grouper Regulations

Small Entity Compliance Guide: On Jan. 24, 2012, NOAA Fisheries Service approved Amendment 32 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf of Mexico submitted by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council. A final rule implementing these regulations published in the *Federal Register* on Feb. 10, 2012 (77 FR 6988), with an effective date of March 12, 2012.

Gag is overfished (population abundance is too low) and undergoing overfishing (rate of removal too high). The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act requires that overfished stocks be rebuilt and that overfishing be halted. The primary purpose of the rule is to end overfishing of gag and allow the stock to rebuild to healthy levels. The rule also addresses red grouper and shallow-water grouper management.

The final rule makes the following changes to grouper regulations:

Setting annual catch limits

- Set the commercial gag annual catch limit at 0.788 million pounds (mp) in 2012, 0.956 mp in 2013, 1.100 mp in 2014, and 1.217 mp in 2015 and beyond.
- Set the gag recreational annual catch limits at 1.232 mp in 2012, 1.495 mp in 2013, 1.720 mp in 2014, and 1.903 mp in 2015 and beyond.
- Set the commercial red grouper annual catch limit at 6.03 mp and the recreational red grouper annual catch limit at 1.90 mp.

Commercial measures

- Set the commercial gag annual catch target (harvest goal), at 0.659 mp in 2012, 0.823 mp in 2013, 0.971 mp in 2014, and 1.092 mp in 2015 and beyond.
- Because of the harvest reductions needed for the rebuilding plan, the commercial quota includes a 14 percent reduction from the annual catch target to account for additional dead discards of gag resulting from the reduced harvest. The commercial quota is 0.567 mp in 2012, 0.708 mp in 2013, 0.835 mp in 2014, and 0.939 mp in 2015 and beyond.
- Change the gag and red grouper individual fishing quota program multi-use allocation from a fixed percentage to a formula.
- Prohibit the use of multi-use allocation to harvest a species if the stock is under a rebuilding plan.
- Reduce the commercial minimum size limit of gag from 24 inches to 22 inches to reduce discards.

Recreational measures

- Set the gag recreational annual catch target.
- Set the recreational gag season from July 1-Oct. 31 (the bag limit will remain two gag in the four grouper aggregate bag limit).

Accountability measures

- Simplify the commercial shallow-water grouper accountability measures by using the individual fishing quota program to reduce redundancy.
- Add an overage adjustment and in-season measures to the recreational gag and red grouper accountability measures to avoid exceeding the annual catch limit.
- Add an accountability measure for the red grouper bag limit that would reduce the four red grouper bag limit in the future if the red grouper recreational annual catch limit is exceeded.

This bulletin serves as a Small Entity Compliance Guide, complying with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996. Electronic copies of the amendment and final rule may be obtained from the NOAA Fisheries Service website: <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/>.

This bulletin provides only a summary of the information regarding the existing regulations. Any discrepancies between this bulletin and the regulations as published in the *Federal Register* will be resolved in favor of the *Federal Register*.

Lagniappe Fisheries Newsletter

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Commercial King Mackerel Hook-and-Line Fishing Closing

Commercial fishing for Gulf group king mackerel in the southern Florida west coast subzone closed effective 12:01 a.m., local time, Feb. 26, 2012, for commercial hook-and-line vessels. An extremely high volume of landings occurred in the southern zone during the previous two weeks, rapidly bypassing the 75 percent trigger to implement a 500-pound trip limit. NOAA Fisheries Service has determined the 2011/2012 commercial quota of 520,312 pounds of king mackerel from this subzone was reached by this date. The closure will remain in effect through the end of the fishing year, June 30, 2012. From Nov. 1 through March 31, the southern subzone is that part of the Florida west coast subzone off Collier and Monroe counties, Florida. This is the area south and west from 25° 20.4' N. lat. (a line directly east from the Miami-Dade/Monroe County boundary on the east coast of Florida) to 26° 19.8' N. lat. (a line directly west from the Lee/ Collier County boundary on the west coast of Florida).

Beginning April 1, the boundary between Atlantic and Gulf groups of king mackerel shifts south and west from the Flagler/Volusia county boundary on the Florida east coast to the Monroe/Collier county boundary on the Florida west coast. Therefore, beginning April 1, the closed southern subzone is reduced to the area off Collier County, Florida, between 25° 48' N. lat. and 26° 19.8' N. lat., and Monroe County re-opens to commercial king mackerel fishing for Atlantic group king mackerel.

Closure of the commercial king mackerel sector in the Gulf of Mexico southern Florida west coast subzone complies with regulations implemented under the Fishery Management Plan for Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic. The closure is necessary to protect the Gulf group king mackerel resource. In cooperative actions, the state of Florida will close commercial harvest of king mackerel concurrently in adjoining state waters.

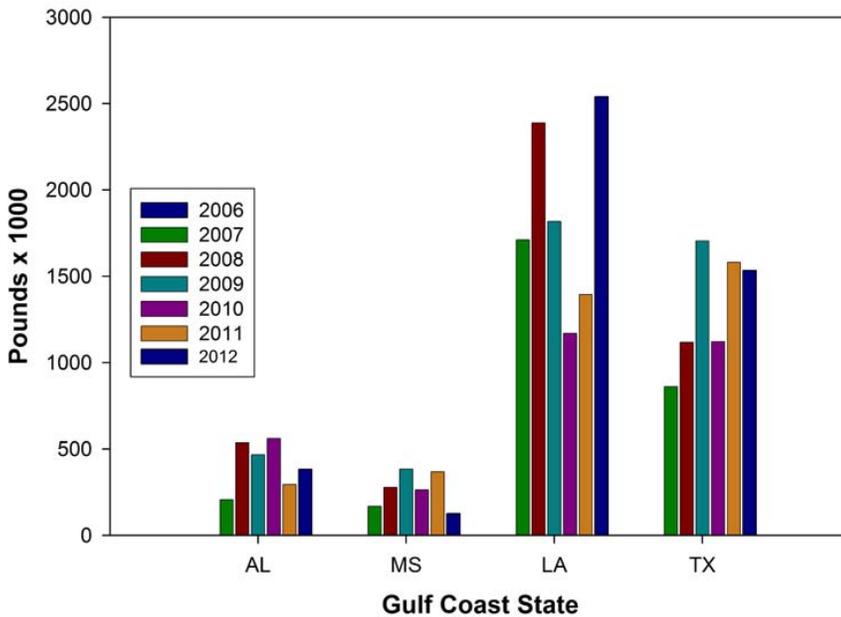
During the closure period, no person aboard a vessel for which a commercial permit for king mackerel has been issued may fish for or retain Gulf group king mackerel in federal waters of the closed subzone. There is one exception, however, for a person aboard a charter vessel or headboat. A person aboard a vessel that has a valid charter/headboat permit and also has a commercial king mackerel permit for coastal migratory pelagic fish may continue to retain king mackerel in or from the closed subzone under the two-fish daily bag limit, provided the vessel is operating as a charter vessel or headboat. Charter vessels or headboats that hold a commercial king mackerel permit are considered to be operating as a charter vessel or headboat when they carry a passenger who pays a fee or when more than three persons are aboard, including operator and crew.

During the closure, no king mackerel caught in the closed subzone may be purchased, bartered, traded or sold. This includes recreational and tournament-caught fish. The prohibition of sale, however, does not apply to trade in king mackerel that were harvested, landed ashore and bartered, traded or sold before the closure and held in cold storage by a dealer or processor.

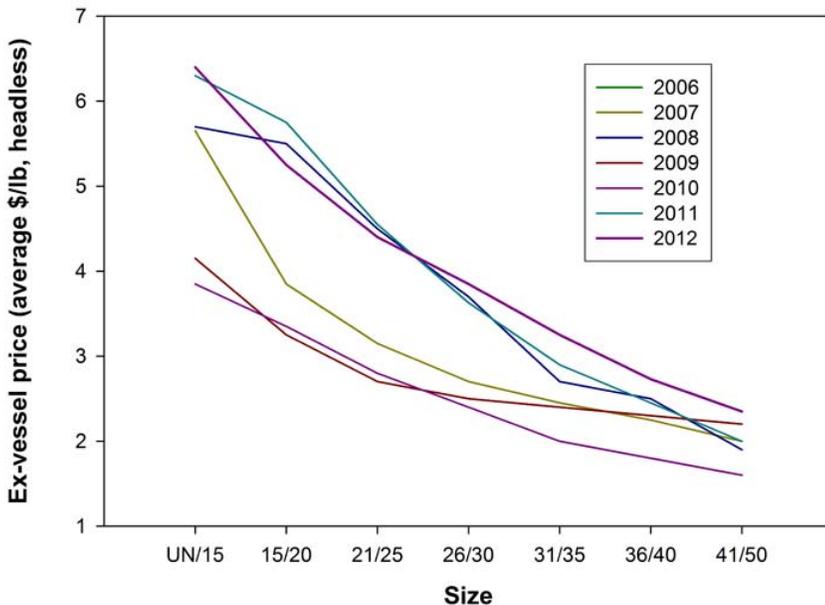
Louisiana Shrimp Watch

Louisiana specific data portrayed in the graphics are selected from preliminary data posted by NOAA on their website. All data portrayed are subject to final revision and approval by NOAA. Shrimp landings are ex-vessel prices, inclusive of all species harvested. Missing, inadequate or withheld reports are portrayed as “zero” in these graphics. Price graphics reflect central Gulf states only (Texas and Florida are reported independently). For more information, please refer to: www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/st1/market_news/index.html.

January Shrimp Harvest



January Northern GoM Shrimp Prices



Fish Gear Coordinates - January 2012

In accordance with the provisions of R.S. 56:700.1 et. seq., notice is given that 10 claims in the amount of \$41,259.71 were received for payment during the period Jan. 1, 2012 – Jan. 31, 2012.

There were nine claims paid and one claim denied.

Loran coordinates of reported underwater obstructions are:

26639.4 46780.7 CAMERON

Latitude/Longitude coordinates of reported underwater obstructions are:

2910.829	8924.703	PLAQUEMINES
2914.380	9017.600	LAFOURCHE
2926.085	9017.862	LAFOURCHE
2932.503	9100.349	TERREBONNE
2937.420	8934.800	PLAQUEMINES
2944.370	8933.271	SAINT BERNARD
2956.969	8924.235	ST. BERNARD
3005.061	8931.831	ST. BERNARD
3008.691	8936.660	ST. TAMMANY

A list of claimants and amounts paid can be obtained from Gwendolyn Thomas, administrator, Fishermen's Gear Compensation Fund, P.O. Box 44277, Baton Rouge, LA 70804 or you can call 225/342-9388.

The Gumbo Pot

If you have a favorite seafood recipe that you would like to share, please send it to Julie Anderson janderson@agcenter.lsu.edu for inclusion in future issues.



For more information, contact your local extension agent:



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We would like to hear from you! Please contact us regarding fishery questions, comments or concerns you would like to see covered in the Lagniappe. Anyone interested in submitting information, such as articles, editorials or photographs pertaining to fishing or fisheries management is encouraged to do so.

Please contact Lagniappe editor Julie Anderson at janderson@agcenter.lsu.edu.

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