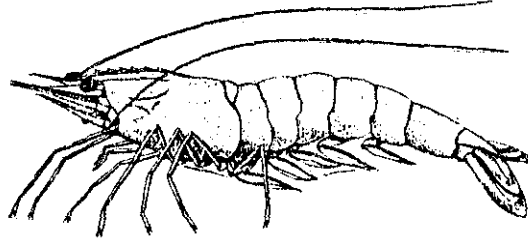


SEA GRANT PROGRAM



LAGNIAPPE

HANG FUNDS - FOR ALL FISHERMEN

In the last year, I have received a lot of questions on the two hang funds and whether they are for all fishermen or just shrimpers. The answer is that as far as trawls go, the funds are only useful to commercial shrimpers.

However, any Commercial fishermen can make a claim for hull and propeller damage from underwater obstructions. The state fund, which covers the area where most of our fishermen fish, has covered (up to \$5,000) everything from an oyster lugger's hull damaged by a pipe to a catfisherman's lower unit on his outboard that hit a submerged piling.

Since there has been so much interest (and confusion) over the two funds, I've decided to go over both the state and federal hang funds.

The State Fund

This fund has been in existence now for five years and has really proven to be a real benefit for Louisiana commercial fishermen. The fund pays for damage to both gear and vessels caused by underwater obstructions in state waters. As I mentioned earlier, this includes both inside waters and outside waters out to 3 miles off the beaches. The maximum amount that the claim fund can pay on any single claim is \$5,000.

If you feel that you have a claim in state waters, you must notify the fund office in Baton Rouge within 30 days of the damage. You can either call or write the fund as shown below:

Fishermen's Gear Compensation Fund
Dept. of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 44396
Baton Rouge, LA 70804
(504) 342-4600

When you call or write the fund they will want to know the following things:

- 1) Your name, address and telephone number
- 2) Name and registration numbers of your boat
- 3) Your commercial fishing license number
- 4) Where the damage occurred
- 5) Date and time of day of damage
- 6) Identification of obstruction, if known
- 7) Description and estimated value of the damage

After receiving this first report, they will send you a one-sheet claim form to fill out. The claim form is pretty simple, but I'd like to give you a few pointers here on filling it out.

First, answer all questions; if you leave any blank, they will have to send it back to you.

Second, be sure that you include some proof that you make at least 50% of your income from commercial fishing. That's because this fund is only for commercial fishermen. You can either send in a copy of the first page of your income tax statement which shows that you are a commercial fisherman or instead, a written statement from a seafood buyer stating that you are a commercial fisherman.

Another important part of the claim is a statement from someone who witnessed the damage. It can be from a deck hand or from someone who was fishing near you. If you were fishing alone and no one else was fishing near you, a statement from someone who saw the damage back at the dock will do.

If your deck hand can't write too well, you can write it out yourself and have him sign it. It doesn't have to be fancy, but be sure to include the name of the witness and the name or numbers of the damaged boat, the date the damage occurred and how it happened.

If the damage occurred in an area of active oil exploration or production, they will send you the name and address of a company man to contact. Write him a letter, explaining the damage and ask if his company will pay for the damage. If they do, you are home free. If they won't, then the fund will pay you after a hearing. If the damages are over \$500, you will have to attend the hearing.

I know this sounds complicated, but it is not nearly as bad as it sounds. In fact, it's really simple. I've helped many fishermen fill out their claim forms and anytime you need help on doing one, feel free to call me or drop by my office in Marrero.

I encourage fishermen to file a claim for any damage over \$100. If you mend your own nets you can even claim your own labor. Just get a receipt book from the dime store and write yourself a receipt for the hours you put in mending the net. Charge what net menders in your area would charge you by the hour to patch the nets.

Another little point might help your claim is a photograph of the damage. If you have some place to keep a camera dry on your boat, it would be good to have one handy. A picture is worth a thousand words.

The Federal Fund

If your hang or damage occurred outside of the 3 mile limit, you will need to make a report to the Fishermen's Contingency Fund within 15 days after the end of the trip in which the damage occurred.

You can make the report by calling (202) 634-4688 in Washington, D.C. The report should include the following information:

- 1) Your name and address
- 2) Boat name and Coast Guard numbers
- 3) Location of the obstruction
- 4) What you were doing when the damage occurred
- 5) A description of the damage
- 6) Date of damage
- 7) A description of the hang, if known
- 8) Whether or not the hang had a buoy or light on or near it

After they get your 15 day report, the fund will send you a formal claim form to fill out. In the past, not many fishermen have used the federal fund because of the red tape and delay. Some people had to wait over a year to get paid. Recently, they have worked very hard to streamline the claim process and they hope to be able to pay fishermen within 90 days of the claim. In addition to paying for gear damage the federal fund also will pay for the lost profits due to down-time from the damage.

Remember if you have any questions on either the state or the federal funds or if you need help in filling out a claim, feel free to contact me and I'll do what I can to help.

SEAFOOD PROMOTION BOARD GETS DIRECTOR

The Louisiana Seafood Promotion and Marketing Board has hired Virginia Elaine Wright as its full time Director. Her primary job

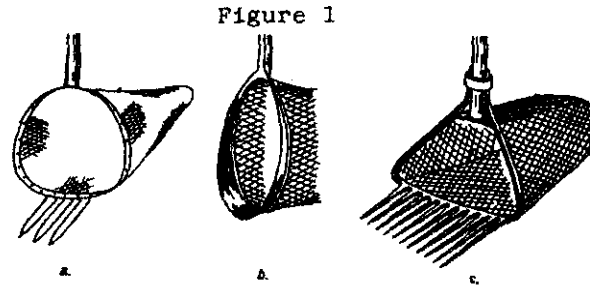
will be to enhance the image of Louisiana seafood, both in-state and out-of-state. She will also represent the state and the board at various trade shows, fairs and festivals.

According to Frank Tullos, chairman of the board, the addition of Ms. Wright will allow the board to increase its print and media efforts rapidly.

Ms. Wright may be reached at the board's office in Baton Rouge, P.O. Box 15570 Baton Rouge, La. 70895. (504) 342-9279.

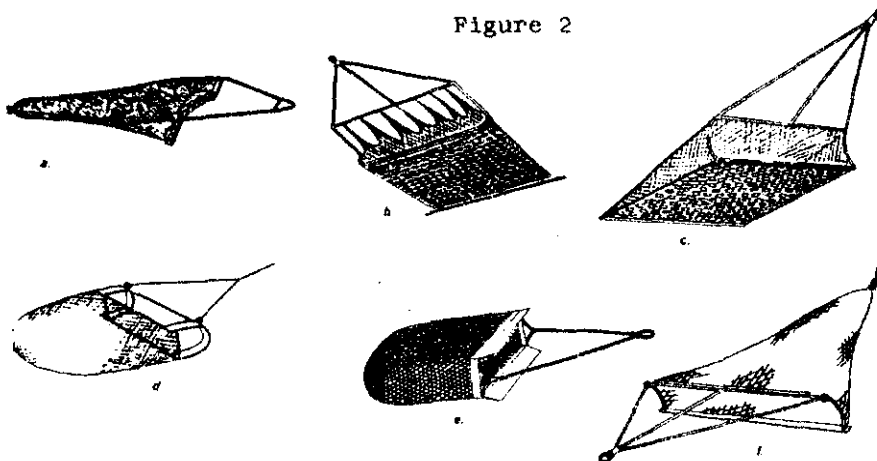
FISHING METHODS OF THE WORLD — RAKES & DREDGES

Rakes and dredges are used in various fisheries throughout the world. Here in the U. S. their primary use is for fishing oysters and clams.



A small scoop net: (a) formerly used in Malta with three prongs only (b) with a sharp edge on the frame; (c) Japanese big form with a bag of wire

Rakes (Figure 1) are just what they say they are, a rake with a cloth or metal bag attached to them. While they are very effective they do have their limitations. They are difficult to handle and fish in deep water and because of their small size, the catch is limited.



Different types of dredges: (a) small German searching dredge for shrimp; (b) Dutch mussel dredge; (c) French type; (d) Japanese "Magna" net; (e) Russian type of the Black Sea; (f) shellfish dredge of Ireland.

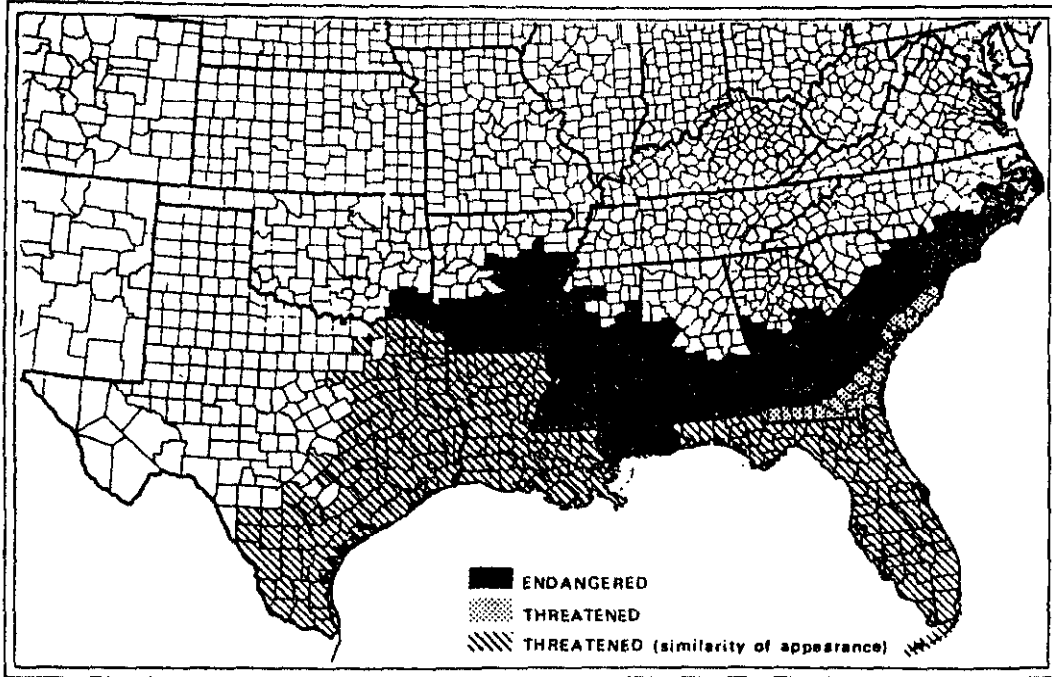
With the use of larger boats and the replacement of sails by engines, fishermen began enlarging and modifying their rakes into what we now know as dredges (Figure 2). Dredges today come in many different shapes and sizes, some with teeth and some without teeth. The main disadvantage of dredges is the fact that they are inefficient harvesting tools, missing many shellfish and under some conditions damaging many of the shellfish not harvested.

Source: Fish Catching Methods of the World. A. Brandt.

ALLIGATOR RECLASSIFIED IN FLORIDA

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has changed the classification of the alligator in Florida from "Threatened" to "Threatened (similarity of appearance)". This may open the door for the state of Florida to allow regular alligator harvests.

FEDERAL STATUS OF THE AMERICAN ALLIGATOR THROUGHOUT ITS HISTORICAL RANGE



Under the Endangered Species Act when an animal is listed as ENDANGERED, the animal is in danger of extinction and is very strictly protected. A listing of THREATENED means the animal's population is in better shape but still needs some protection. A listing of THREATENED (SIMILARITY OF APPEARANCE) is the mildest of all and allows a regular harvest. Louisiana's alligators have had such a classification since 1975 and a successful meat and hide season for a number of years. Texas had its first season last year after its alligators also were changed to "Threatened (similarity of appearance)".

THE GUMBO POT

Crabmeat-Eggplant Casserole

This month's recipe comes from my barber, Ronnie Galliano. He's an avid fisherman and an even more avid seafood eater. I think you'll enjoy this recipe especially if you serve it with fresh French bread to sop up the juices.

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 medium eggplant | 2 cups whipping cream |
| 2½ cups crabmeat | 8 oz. grated Swiss cheese |
| ½ cup cooking oil | 1 tbsp. Dijon mustard |
| 1 stick margarine | Dash of LA hot sauce |
| ½ tsp. cayenne pepper | |

Cut eggplant into ½-inch slices after peeling. Salt the slices and refrigerate for ½ hour in water. Put oil in 2" deep baking pan or casserole. Add eggplant and brown at 350 degrees. In a separate saucepan, melt the margarine. Add the crabmeat, pepper and hot sauce, mix and set aside. In another saucepan, warm and mix the Swiss cheese, whipping cream and mustard. Put crabmeat mixture in layer over eggplant, then add the whipping cream mixture. Bake in oven for 15 to 20 minutes at 350 degrees. Serves 4.

Sincerely,

Gerald Horst
Area Agent (Fisheries)
Jefferson/St. Charles Parishes