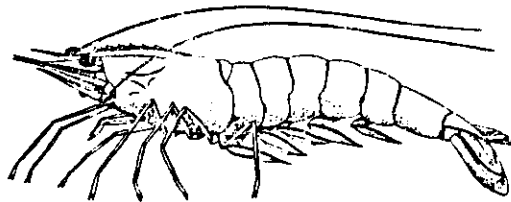




April 15, 1992  
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## SEA GRANT PROGRAM



## LAGNIAPPE

### HANG FUNDS - FOR ALL FISHERMEN

Lately, 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 fisherman 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 twelve 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. It is important to remember that any claim for damage to a vessel's hull, outriggers, propeller or lower unit must have a photograph of the damage with it. Commercial fishermen are limited to two claims per fiscal year (from July 1 to the following June 30).



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 show below:

**Fishermen's Gear Compensation Fund**  
**Dept. of Natural Resources**  
**P O Box 94396**  
**Baton Rouge, LA 70804**  
**(504) 342-0122**

After receiving this first report, they will send you a one-sheet claim for to fill out. You have 90 days from the date of the hang to get the claim back to their office. The claim for 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, you will need to prove that 50% or more of your income comes from commercial fishing. You can do this by including the front page of Form 1040 and Schedule C from your income tax statement. If you are incorporated, send the front page of Form 1120 instead of the others.

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 who saw the damage back at the dock will do.

If your deck hand doesn't write 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.

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.

**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 (301) 713-2396. 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 almost 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.

### **CRAB TRAP TAGGING INFORMATION**

As mentioned in my February newsletter, all crab traps will be required to have a stainless steel tag by July 1 of this year. The tag must have the commercial fishermen's license number (not gear license) on it. Sportsfishermen using crab traps must put their gear license number on the tag. The tag must be attached to the center of the trap's ceiling.

We now have available a list of places that sell the tags. Also included on the list are manufacturer's, so that fishermen can make their own tags. If you would like a copy of this list, call or write my office.

### **NEW SAFETY REGULATIONS**

The Commercial Fishing Industry Vessel Safety Act of 1988 directed that a new set of safety standards for commercial fishing vessels be developed. The first phase of these new regulations has gone into effect and is now law. The regulations are quite detailed and the regulations are different depending on how large your boat is or where you fish. Some sort of regulation applies to every commercial boat.

We have developed a Safety Regulations Checklist to help fishermen meet these requirements which will be enforced by the U.S. Coast Guard. The Coast Guard is offering a free inspection service. If your vessel meets the requirements, they will give you a decal to show that you meet standards. If you are missing something, they won't write you a ticket. They will let you know what you need and come back upon your request for a final inspection. If you would like a checklist call or write my office in Marrero.

## ADVISORY ON TRAWL HAZARDS

Texas A & M University has received a contract from the U.S. Minerals Management Services for a major research program in the northwestern Gulf of Mexico. The program, called LATEX will record the movements of waves, currents and tides in the Gulf.

Beginning in April, heavily anchored current meters and buoys will be set out to gather data. Since the scientists don't want to lose their equipment and fishermen do not want to tear their nets, LATEX has provided the readings for their equipment moorings in both latitude and longitude and LORAN readings. All equipment will be labeled "Texas A & M University" and will have a toll-free number to call (1-800-826-8589) in case the instruments are found adrift. This is a three year project.

Mooring	Latitude N	Longitude W	7980W	7980X	7980Y	7980Z
1	27' 16.75"	97' 13.55"	11100.4	23600.8	46710.2	64052.2
2	27' 17.03"	96' 58.80"	11100.8	23760.3	46700.2	64054.2
3	27' 17.33"	96' 44.20"	11114.0	23900.6	46700.6	64056.3
4	27' 08.00"	96' 21.80"	11140.1	24065.0	46670.6	64064.2
5	27' 28.10"	96' 04.40"	11130.2	24350.0	46670.2	64062.5
6	27' 42.20"	95' 40.05"	11120.1	24660.0	46720.2	64058.0
7	27' 52.05"	95' 05.45"	11140.2	25065.0	46730.6	64060.7
8	27' 50.03"	94' 10.67"	11190.1	25600.0	46700.5	64070.5
9	27' 49.50"	93' 30.00"	11246.0	26007.0	46680.0	64075.0
10	27' 56.00"	92' 45.00"	11320.0	26500.0	46680.2	64080.0
11	27' 51.00"	92' 00.00"	11436.1	26950.0	46680.1	64085.0
12	27' 55.81"	90' 30.00"	11780.8	27850.0	46560.0	64085.5
13	28' 08.90"	90' 30.00"	11174.1	27900.1	46640.0	64085.4
14	28' 23.72"	90' 29.60"	11700.9	27950.2	46720.2	64085.0
15	28' 39.90"	90' 30.06"	11680.0	28050.5	46720.2	64085.8
16	28' 50.87"	90' 29.43"	11620.0	28100.8	46780.7	64085.3
17	29' 11.90"	91' 57.95"	11180.2	27350.0	46880.1	64055.0
18	28' 57.00"	91' 58.50"	11242.0	27249.0	46840.0	64064.0
19	28' 27.92"	92' 02.10"	11320.9	27100.1	46740.2	64075.3
20	29' 15.62"	94' 03.83"	11050.1	26100.0	46910.7	64020.5
21	28' 50.23"	94' 04.78"	11090.0	25950.1	46850.0	64040.0
22	28' 21.37"	93' 57.30"	11140.8	25900.8	46780.4	64055.7
23	28' 42.73"	95' 31.83"	11050.0	25100.5	46860.0	64025.7
24	28' 28.50"	95' 25.98"	11070.0	25050.1	46820.0	64035.0
25	28' 10.50"	95' 26.50"	11100.6	25950.5	46780.0	64046.0
42	27' 31.75"	91' 30.00"	11600.1	27150.0	46540.9	64085.0
43	25' 48.00"	91' 30.00"	11820.0	26740.0	46195.0	64050.0
44	27' 43.53"	96' 25.38"	11050.8	24250.0	46882.1	64050.1
45	27' 25.10"	96' 07.60"	11450.0	24300.0	46700.0	64052.1
46	27' 38.30"	96' 14.30"	11040.0	24300.1	46650.0	64052.1
47	27' 19.00"	96' 14.00"	11650.0	24200.2	46630.8	64062.0
48	28' 00.00"	91' 17.00"	11560.0	27400.0	46620.0	64052.3
49	27' 23.00"	95' 55.30"	11140.0	24400.0	46590.0	64048.4
50	27' 52.90"	95' 02.30"	11050.9	25400.8	46870.0	64025.6
51	28' 50.23"	94' 04.78"	11090.0	25950.1	46850.0	64040.0
52	28' 48.10"	93' 01.00"	11160.8	26550.8	46700.0	64055.0
53	28' 48.50"	90' 58.00"	11480.0	27800.0	46780.0	64080.0

## **BROWN SHRIMP SEASON HEARING**

The Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission will be holding its annual meeting to set the brown shrimp season opening at 9:00 a.m., May 7 at the U.N.O. University Center in New Orleans. Department biologists will present the results of their research and the season outlook.

Like last year, this will be a one-day meeting, with the Commission setting the opening the same day as the hearing. The meeting is open to the public.

## **TEXAS MAKES NEW MARICULTURE RULES**

After the accidental release of Pacific white shrimp into Gulf waters from a Texas shrimp-farm, the state of Texas decided to tighten rules on aquaculture and mariculture. The release of these shrimp occurred last fall in the Rio Grande Valley and reports were made of shrimpers from Port Isabel and Brownsville catching the foreign species.

The dangers are that these shrimp could crowd out our native species or pass new diseases on to our shrimp. They could also possibly breed with our native shrimp and produce a weaker shrimp that cold weather could kill easier. Any such stock of non-native shrimp which became established in Texas would more than likely spread to Louisiana sooner or later.

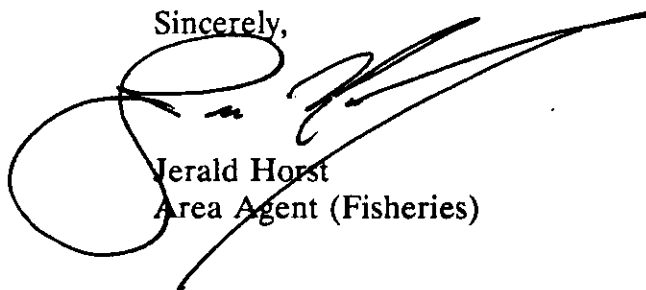
The new regulations require that mariculture operations be burglar-proof and release-proof and heavily screened. Any new imports of non-native species will have to be quarantined and certified disease-free.

Source: Texas Shoreline. Texas, March, 1992. A & M University Marine Advisory Newsletter.

## **FISHING WEEK**

The Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission has officially declared the week of June 1-7, 1992 as "Fishing Week" in Louisiana. As part of the activities, the Commission, as authorized by the Legislature, has also declared June 6 and 7 as free fishing days. This allows residents and non-residents to fish without a license for those two days. For more information, contact Paul Jackson at (504) 491-2575.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jerald Horst', is written over the typed name and title. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the beginning and a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

Jerald Horst  
Area Agent (Fisheries)

**LOUISIANA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE  
LSU AGRICULTURAL CENTER  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY AND A. & M. COLLEGE  
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