

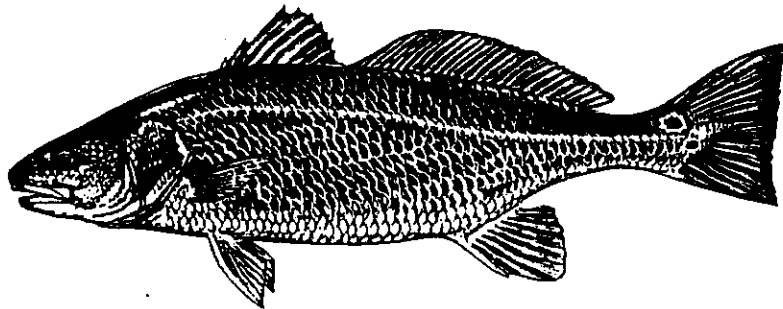


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February 1, 1995  
Volume 19 No. 2

## SEA GRANT PROGRAM



### LAGNIAPPE

#### MEETING ON FISHERY IMPACTS OF COASTAL RESTORATION

The Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service is sponsoring a meeting this month on what the impacts of coastal marsh restoration on fisheries are likely to be. Everyone agrees that saving the marsh is important, but there will definitely be some impacts on fisheries. In some instances, they may change from saltwater species to freshwater species or the saltwater species will be moved further out. The meeting will have five parts.

- 1) History and causes of coastal marsh loss.
- 2) What plans are for marsh restoration projects.
- 3) The impacts of such projects on fishermen.
- 4) Gathering recommendations from fishermen.
- 5) How fishermen can make their voice heard.

The meeting will take place at 7:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 16 at the Lafitte Civic Center in Lafitte on Hwy. 45. All commercial and recreational fishermen and other interested parties are encouraged to attend.

## **COMMISSION CREATES CATFISH TASK FORCE**

The Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission created a new Catfish Task Force at its January 5 meeting. The main focus of the task force will be the minimum size limit on channel catfish in southeastern Louisiana. The task force will collect biological, social and economic data and make recommendations for the management of blue and channel catfish.

Besides technical people, the task force will be made up of 18 voting members as follows: 6 commercial catfish fishermen, 6 catfish dealers/processors, one fish net dealer, one representative of the Louisiana Restaurant Association and one from Louisiana Consumer League, 2 recreational catfish fishermen and one representative from the Louisiana Wildlife Federation.

## **REDFISH STATUS REPORT**

The biological condition of redfish is a subject that has been on everyone's mind since the late 1980's when commercial fishermen lost their harvesting rights to the fish and recreational fishermen had their daily limits severely reduced. Since 1992, the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries has delivered an annual status report on redfish stocks to the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission. The commission, in turn, delivers a report to the state legislature, which includes a recommendation on whether or not to continue gamefish status for redfish.

The fourth of these department reports has been prepared for the commission meeting of February 9, 1995. According to this report, the biological condition of redfish has improved to the level that biologists are again for the second year saying that an increased harvest of the fish is possible without harming the resource. When the fishery was restricted in 1988, a target was set of 30% of all redfish to escape from the inshore fishery to achieve a 20% SSBR or "spawning stock biomass per recruit." SSBR is simply the ratio of the total weight of mature fish in a fished stock as compared to the total weight that would exist if the stock was unfished. When this target was passed, the harvest could be increased without overfishing.

The current redfish stock assessment shows average escapement levels of 70%, which is well above the conservation standard of 30%. In fact, escapement was at 80% in 1992 and 76% in 1993. The SSBR is now about 35%, which is well over the conservation standard of 20% SSBR. This is pleasing news for all those concerned about the health of the redfish resource and means that the redfish resource can support a larger harvest at this time.

Department biologists have not, however, recommend increased harvest based on the 30% escapement rate. Instead they took a much more conservative approach, and recommended that if harvest was increased, that it be done gradually. Some examples of various harvest rates at different escapement levels are shown below.

	30%	40%	50%	60%
<b><u>RECREATIONAL BAG</u></b>				
5	3,073,000	2,301,000	1,550,000	814,000
6	2,706,000	1,933,000	1,181,000	444,000
7	2,494,000	1,719,000	967,000	229,000
8	2,340,000	1,565,000	812,000	73,000
9	2,218,000	1,443,000	689,000	0
10	2,116,000	1,341,000	586,000	0
15	1,763,000	986,000	231,000	0
20	1,531,000	753,000	0	0
25	1,356,000	576,000	0	0
30	1,213,000	433,000	0	0
35	1,092,000	312,000	0	0
40	987,000	206,000	0	0
45	894,000	0	0	0
50	810,000	0	0	0
<b><u>COMMERCIAL QUOTA</u></b>				

Some examples of allowable recreational bag limits combined with potential commercial quotas under various escapement rates. These values are provided to demonstrate some of the values which could be derived from the allocation option figures given on the previous pages.

On the left side going down is the possible recreational daily limit shown in relation to the possible yearly commercial quota. This is shown for 30% escapement (the recommended target in 1988 and also for 40%, 50% and 60%. At one extreme, with a 60% escapement level, the commercial harvest could be 814,000 pounds with the current recreational limit of 5 redfish. If all the redfish were given to recreacionals, a 9 fish limit would be allowable and still have a 60% escapement.

At the other end is management for the originally targeted 30% escapement. Under this scenario, the extremes shown are a 3,073,000 million pound commercial quota with the same five fish limit for recreacionals or a 50 redfish daily sport limit and a 810,000 pound commercial quota. Of course, any combination somewhere in between is also possible.

Source: Fourth Annual report on the Status of Red Drum. February 1995. Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

### **CRAB INDUSTRY GROUPS PROPOSE NEW LAWS**

Two groups representing the crab industry in Louisiana met recently to get ready for the upcoming legislative session. They have been preparing proposals for changing and creating laws affecting the crab industry. The Concerned Crabbers is a fishermen's association composed mainly of commercial crabbers. The purpose of this organization is to improve the commercial crab industry. At their regular membership meeting held on January 11 of this year, the Concerned Crabbers voted to introduce the following legislation:

**\*Berry Crab By-Catch Allowance.** Would allow a two percent incidental take, or bycatch, of berry (egg-bearing) crabs. Currently there is zero-tolerance for possession of berry crabs. This bill would give fishermen some leeway by allowing for a few egg-bearing crabs that may be overlooked, thus preventing confiscation of the entire catch due to an oversight.

**\*Work Box Definition And Exemption.** This bill would provide for a definition of a "work box". Crab fishermen use work boxes to sort or cull undersized crabs from the harvest in order to obtain a legal catch. The new law would allow the possession of undersized crabs in work boxes. Commercial crabbers would be allowed to have either one (if not using a grader) or two (under the grader, if using a grader) work boxes.

The Louisiana Crab Task Force is an advisory group to the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. Its purpose is to improve Louisiana's crab industry. Members represent commercial and recreational crab fishermen, crab dealers and processors, and soft shell crab producers. At their January 18 meeting, the Crab Task Force voted to propose the enactment of several new laws as follows:

**\*Soft Crab Shedders License.** This bill would require soft shell crab operators to obtain a \$25 license in order to do business. Currently, a commercial fisherman can shed and sell his own crabs with his commercial fishing license. Soft crab shedders who buy busters from fishermen and sell the soft crabs must have a wholesale dealer's license. This proposed new law would create a new license requirement specifically for soft crab operations.

**\*Escape Vents.** Proposes that two escape vents be put into all crab traps to allow undersized crabs to escape. The minimum size would be 2 1/4 inches in diameter for round rings and 2 inches per side for square vents.

**\*Dual Liability for Undersized Crabs.** Would make both the commercial fisherman and either the wholesale dealer, retail dealer, or transporter responsible for the possession of undersized crabs. Current law provides that if the commercial fishermen who supplied the illegal crabs can be identified, then only the fisherman and not the dealer is responsible.

**\*Limited Entry.** This proposed bill would require that, in order to obtain a commercial crab gear license, a fisherman would have to show proof of making at least fifty percent of his earned income from commercial fishing. Currently, anyone that wants to, can enter the crab fishery at any time.

## **RED CROSS HOLDS C.P.R. AND FIRST AID CLASSES**

The Commercial Fishing Industry Vessel Safety Act of 1988 requires that each commercial vessel that operates outside of 12 miles with more than two people on board must have at least one person certified in first aid and CPR on board. The American Red

Cross will be holding training classes for these certifications at the Lafitte Auditorium during the month of March 1995.

First aid certification is good for three years but CPR training must be recertified each year. Anyone interested in registering for these classes should contact the Red Cross at 366-4178. The fee is \$20 for the CPR class and \$30 for the combination CPR/first aid class. All fees must be paid in advance.

### **TEDs EXCLUDE FISH TOO**

In a recent presentation to the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, Dave Harrington of the University of Georgia Sea Grant program pointed out that besides turtles, current TEDs also exclude a good many fish. This is important because the shrimp industry is coming under increasing pressure to reduce finfish bycatch. Finfish reduction in numbers in various tests of different kinds of TEDs ranged from 4 to 75%. Finfish catch reduction by weight was even greater, ranging from 18 to 73%, with most tests showing finfish catch reduction in the mid 30% range. Since finfish excluders (also called BRDs for "Bycatch Reduction Devices") cause some shrimp loss, Harrington feels that it is important that shrimpers get credit for the fish they are already excluding.

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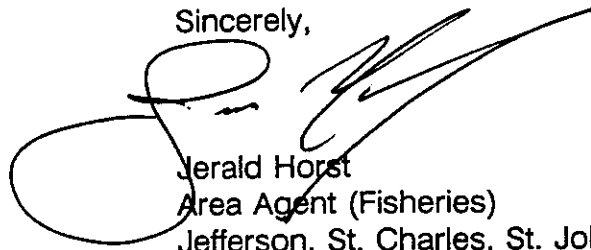
### **THE GUMBO POT**

#### **Baked Fish Supreme**

1½ lbs. fish fillets	1 tsp worcestershire sauce
1 cup sour cream	½ tsp salt
1 tsp celery salt	¼ tsp pepper
1 tsp paprika	1 cup buttery cracker crumbs
1 tsp lemon juice	½ cup finely chopped walnuts

Combine sour cream, celery salt, paprika, lemon juice, Worcestershire sauce, salt and pepper. Chill 30 minutes to blend flavors. Combine crumbs and walnuts. Dip fish in sour cream mixture; roll in crumb mixture. Place fish in a single layer on a well-greased baking 15 x 10 inch pan. Bake in a moderately hot oven, 375 degrees for 18 to 20 minutes or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Makes 4 servings.

Sincerely,



Jerald Horst  
Area Agent (Fisheries)  
Jefferson, St. Charles, St. John