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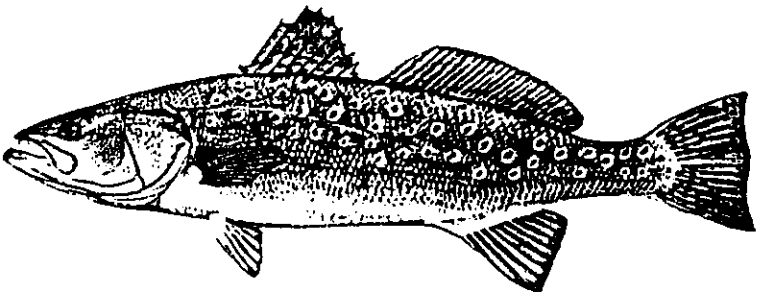
SEA GRANT PROGRAM



LAGNIAPPE

SCIENTISTS NEED HELP ON DEAD ZONE

The Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (DWF) is looking for help from commercial shrimpers and offshore charter boat operators to participate in a study of the hypoxic (dead) zone. The purpose of the study is to map the changing size of the dead zone and estimate its economic impact on the Gulf of Mexico shrimp and charter boat fleets.

Participating fishermen will keep a monthly log book of their fishing activities from now until December 31, 1998 and be paid $500 for their efforts. All information on individual participants will be completely confidential.

To qualify, shrimpers or charter operators must spend part of their time between April and September fishing outside of the beachline off of the coast of Jefferson, Terrebonne, or Lafourche Parishes. There are no vessel size requirements, and no observers or special scientific information will be on board the vessel. The data will be collected by the captain during normal fishing operations.

This is a very important study for the future of Louisiana fishermen. The hypoxic zone is suspected by many scientists to be growing in size, and possibly affecting fisheries production.

Interested fishermen may call me at my office in Marrero at 349-5644 or may directly contact DWF research coordinator Robin Roberts at (504) 765-2938.

GULF STATES GILLNET BATTLES

The use of gillnets to capture saltwater fish, especially speckled trout and redfish, has been a powerful issue for almost a quarter of a century in Louisiana. The use of saltwater gillnets as a fishing tool has also been controversial in the other states bordering the Gulf of Mexico as well. Recently, an attorney at the University of Mississippi wrote a detailed history and analysis of the debate.

Since 1981, every state bordering the Gulf of Mexico has introduced some form of restrictions on the use of gillnets. Environmental groups and many recreational fishermen argue that gillnets catch fish faster than they can reproduce, produce bycatch of nontarget fish, and entangle sea turtles, manatees, dolphins, and marine birds.

In response, commercial fishermen claim that conservationists' arguments simply cloud the real issue--resource allocation. They maintain that fish stocks are healthy, that gillnets are highly selective, and that few endangered species are caught.

Many scientists agree that fish stocks are healthy. Some scientists point out that if fish stocks are in trouble, all forms of fishing, including recreational fishing should be restricted to protect the resource. The author stated that "the goal hoped to be achieved by net restrictions will have little effect if recreational fishermen simply catch the fish that commercial fishermen are forced to leave behind per gillnet legislation."

He further said that "although fisheries data and statistics are difficult to accurately measure, both sides of the debate use data favorable to their position." Ron Lukens, Assistant Director of the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, stated that "scientific evidence did not conclusively support either side of the issue."

"Scientific data alone, does not seem to support gillnet restrictions. Instead, political and economic concerns also influence the shift in policy." During debates on gillnet restrictions, charges of deceptive campaigning, unfair fish allocations, and constitutional rights to fish have arisen. Each gulf state's gillnet restriction scheme is discussed below.

Texas

Before 1975, Texas fisheries management operated under the principle that freshwater fisheries were recreational and marine fisheries were commercial. Management decisions did not rely heavily on scientific data. In the late 1970's, the state's redfish and speckled trout populations were dropping due to overfishing. At the same time a non-profit organization, the Gulf Coast Conservation Association was formed and began intense education, lobbying and membership drives, with their sight set on eliminating the commercial fishery for speckled trout and redfish. Recreational fishermen argued that greater economic benefit would come from continuing to allow recreational fishing, while

restricting commercial fishing. An economic impact statement prepared by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department supported this claim.

In 1981, the Texas Legislature passed a two-year moratorium on the sale of speckled trout and redfish. Commercial fishermen sued in federal court and lost. The court said that while Texas' means of conserving fish stocks may have been unfair, the ban on commercial fishing was related to the state's conservation goal. The court also held that allocation of natural resources is a legitimate state interest.

In 1983, the moratorium was extended. In 1988, redfish and speckled trout were made gamefish and the use of gillnets was outlawed. The net ban in Texas served as a lesson of success for recreational fishermen and as a model for other states to enact their own gillnet restrictions.

Florida

In Florida, a coalition of conservation and animal rights groups, Save Our Sealife, launched a multimillion dollar media campaign to ban gillnets. Their approach was to bypass the legislature and put the issue in front of voters as a constitutional amendment. Most citizens knew little about gillnet use. The primary sources of information about the proposed net ban were pamphlets and radio and television ads paid for by interest groups. A commercial fishing interest group filed suit against 16 television stations claiming that the stations' misleading ads that were blatant misrepresentations in support of the ban. Their lawsuit failed.

In November, 1994, Florida citizens voted by a 72% majority for the net ban. The state legislature also drafted similar legislation the same year. Both actions spurred numerous lawsuits. A Florida judge denied a request for an emergency injunction. Lawsuits also arose over the net buy-back program in spite of $20 million set aside for that purpose.

Alabama

While possible overfishing of speckled trout and redfish was something of an issue in Alabama, the main concern was the possible influx of Florida fishermen put out of business by that state's coming net ban. Unlike Texas and Florida, recreational and commercial fishermen in Alabama worked to build a solution that both groups could live with.

In June, 1995, the Alabama legislature passed a bill that basically protected Alabama fishermen by almost totally excluding commercial finfishermen from other states. The law requires that a net license applicant must have had a net license and at least 50% of his income from commercial fishing for 2 of the 5 years between 1989 and 1993. The law also declared speckled trout and redfish to be gamefish.

In spite of the compromise, some anti-netting groups want stronger commercial restrictions, and some animal welfare organizations are attempting to restrict both commercial fishing and recreational fishing and hunting.

Louisiana

In Louisiana, conservationists argued for gillnet restrictions to protect against overfishing and the feared influx of Florida fishermen. In response, the Louisiana Legislature passed the Louisiana Marine Resources Conservation Act of 1995.

As the situation currently stands, gillnets may only be used in saltwater only for mullet and, in a restricted area east of the Mississippi River, for pompano. Both fish have seasons. To qualify for a license, an applicant must have held a gillnet license and earned more than 50% of his income from commercial fishing in 2 of the 3 years, 1993, 1994, and 1995. Also the applicant may never have had any class 3 or greater fisheries violation.

Lawsuits were filed by commercial fishermen in both state and federal courts. The federal suit contended that provisions of the act violated the U. S. Constitution's Commerce Clause and the Equal Protection Clause, and placed an unconstitutional burden on interstate commerce.

At the same time, the issue was before the state court. Preliminary rulings between state and federal court were in conflict. The federal court backed off of its early injunction and decided that no federal action would be taken until the state court made its final ruling. In late May, the state Supreme Court upheld the provisions of the Louisiana Marine Resources Conservation Act. The action is expected to be appealed in federal court.

Mississippi

Mississippi was the last state to enact gillnet restrictions. Recreational fishermen had been lobbying for commercial net bans in the state since at least 1993. In 1994, the state outlawed the use of gillnets and trammel nets in marine waters north of U. S. Highway 90.

In August, 1995, the Mississippi Commission on Marine Resources passed an emergency regulation which limited issuance of gillnet licenses to those who purchased Mississippi gill and trammel net licenses during any license year between May 1, 1990 and April 30, 1995. The commission also passed a regulation that required gillnets to be made of degradable material.

Some Mississippi conservation groups insist that fish stocks are still overfished and that the state should enact tighter regulations. On the other hand some commercial fishermen are concerned that, in spite of some access to gillnetting, that they are being pushed out of business by the effect of all the other regulations.

The author of the publication draws some conclusions, which I will quote below:

* "The gillnet issue boils down to a question of allocation. Most gillnet restrictions have been touted by proponents as a necessary means to conserving fisheries and protecting the marine environment. Upon close examination, however, it becomes clear that the restrictions and bans have been devised as a result of effective campaigning and arguments of optimal economic allocation and efficiency."

* "The parties in this debate have used the facts and data to their advantage, and it is often hard to tell which arguments are credible."

* "Conservation should play an important role in dealing with natural resources. Commercial fishermen should not decimate fish stocks for short-term profit. They ought to address the harm to endangered species and wasteful bycatch. Fisheries management policies should ensure sustainable stocks. If fish stocks are truly in danger, they need protection from all forms of harvest, from gillnets to hook and line fishing."

* "Policymakers might do better to work towards protecting fisheries for both sport and commercial use. Fish are a common property resource. If policymakers are truly concerned about sound stewardship principles, scientific evidence ought to be given as much sway as politics and economics. Shifting fishery resources from commercial to recreational access may be a wise choice, but such a choice that so dramatically affects the lives and culture of significant numbers should be rooted in rational analysis rather than on public relationship."

Source: *The Law, Policy, and Politics of Gillnet Restrictions in State Waters of the Gulf of Mexico*. John Alton Duff and William C. Harrison. St. Thomas Law Review. Volume 9, Winter 1997. St. Thomas University School of Law.

LIMITED ENTRY FOR CHARTER BOATS ????

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council is considering whether there is a need for limiting entry into the recreational "for-hire" fisheries in Gulf of Mexico federal waters. The crux of the problem is that in both the red snapper and king mackerel fisheries, the recreational sector (which includes for-hire vessels) has frequently caught over its annual harvest quota.

To prevent the recreational sector from overfishing its quota, the Gulf Council must take action. The most effective action is to reduce bag limits. Unfortunately, lowering bag limits below a certain point causes some of the clientele that hire charter boats to stop fishing and paying for fishing trips.

The council has learned from public input that part of the charter/head boat industry supports limited access. If the council starts development of such a limited entry system, it will publish notice of a control date to discourage financial speculators from getting permits for the fishery while the plan is being discussed.

Source: *Gulf Fishery News*. Volume 20, Nos. 1 & 2.

BLUE CRAB LICENSE LIMITATION

What happens when a moratorium on the sale of a commercial fishing license ends? Louisiana will find out after December 31, 1998. Crab trap gear license sales were put under a three year moratorium that began January 1, 1996. From that date until December 31, 1998, no person could purchase a commercial crab trap gear license unless he had a valid commercial crab trap gear license for two of the three years 1993, 1994 or 1995. The 1997 Louisiana Senate passed a bill to replace the moratorium with a permanent license limitation program. The bill did not pass the Louisiana House. So what will happen after December 31, 1998? It will not be until the 1999 general session of the Louisiana legislature that we will know.

The Georgia legislature faced the end of a similar crab license moratorium. Here is what happened in February of this year. They passed House Bill 1444 with only one nay vote in the House and no nays in the Senate and the Governor signed the bill. Here are a few of the main points:

Who can get a Georgia crabbing license? After July 1, 1998 only persons in possession of a crabbing license and commercial fishing boat license in two of the three license years 1995-96, 1996-97, and 1997-98. The person must also provide satisfactory evidence that they sold crabs they caught during the time they were licensed. They must apply by August 31, 1998 or lose the option.

How many licenses will be issued in the future? The number of licenses shall not exceed the number issued for the 1998-99 license year. License renewals not received by May 1 of any license year after 1998-99 shall be reissued by lottery. No person can hold more than one license.

Are licenses transferable? Only in two situations can the crabber transfer a license: 1) To the license holder's spouse, children, siblings or parents if the license holder dies or is permanently and totally disabled. No payment is allowed. 2) To any person who is the buyer of the crabber's boat that was used for

crabbing. Any person receiving a commercial crab license in either of these ways must register the transfer with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources within 30 days.

Are there other requirements? Yes. Crabbers must maintain at all times a record book showing: 1) The amount of crabs caught daily, 2) The name and address to whom the crabs were sold, 3) The date of sale and the time and place of delivery. If no crabbing occurred during a month, a report stating that must still be filed. There are fines and license suspensions when reports are not filed within 60 days.

Are there even more regulations? Yes. There is a maximum limit of 200 traps per licensee. All traps must have floats with color coding and an identifying number. The trap fee is $2.00 per trap. This is in addition to the license cost. (The license cost was not set in the bill.) Penalties for fishing without the $2.00 per trap permit are severe. The criminal fine if up to $2,000 and one year in jail. The civil fine is $100 for each excess trap a crabber uses over the amount he is permitted to have. A license suspension for one year is also likely.

FISH OIL/HUMAN HEALTH RESEARCH

Several years ago research was released that indicated that fish high in omega-3 oils reduced the risk of heart disease in humans. Omega-6 oils such as those found in the vegetable oils common in American diets do not provide this protection.

Research shows that omega-3 oils lower blood levels of fats called triglycerides in humans and slow up clumping of blood cells that cause hardening of the arteries. Human populations such as Eskimos, that eat diets high in fish have a very low level of heart disease.

Research on laboratory rats has shown that the helpful effects of high omega-3 oils in their diet was counteracted if they were also fed omega-6 oils. Scientists at the LSU Pennington Biomedical Research Center recently performed studies on humans to see if they reacted the same way to a diet with both omega-3 and omega-6 oils.

The results showed that **for humans**, consuming omega-6 oils such as vegetable oils **did not** prevent the beneficial effects of consuming omega-3 oils from occurring. The study suggests that Americans should try to increase their consumption of fish, regardless of what else they eat, in order to lower their risk of heart disease.

Source: *Eat Fish: Fish Oil Can Reduce Cardiovascular Disease, Even With Vegetable Oil*. P. S. Chanmugam, D. H. Ryan, M. Windhauser, R. T. Tulley, G. A. Bray and D. H. Hwang. Louisiana Agriculture. Louisiana State University Agricultural Center. Volume 41, Number 2.

WHERE THE SPORTS ARE

Recreational fishing, like commercial fishing, is an important activity in Louisiana. Recent years have seen an especially significant growth in numbers of saltwater anglers. Listed below are the top 15 parishes in Louisiana in recreational fishing licenses sales for the last year.

Parish	Resident Fishing	Resident Saltwater	Nonresident Season	Nonresident Trip	Nonresident Salt/season	Non-resident Salt/trip
Jefferson	54,206	53,002	344	131	327	132
E. Baton Rouge	30,718	17,294	248	117	101	95
Lafourche	28,252	28,385	597	385	595	324
Calcasieu	26,764	18,456	660	107	349	75
Terrebonne	23,364	23,498	310	286	305	298
St. Tammany	21,079	19,037	3,399	73	3,039	69
Rapides	20,030	952	180	143	4	16
Caddo	18,934	764	492	171	12	13
Lafayette	17,457	10,784	77	39	51	35
Ouachita	13,961	358	148	48	3	4
Bossier	12,187	33	137	70	0	0
St. Bernard	11,239	11,315	210	13	207	13
St. Mary	10,765	7,391	104	79	59	72
Ascension	10,649	6,307	41	5	15	5
Vermilion	10,314	9,132	21	1	30	1
State Total	**525,606**	**270,940**	**14,958**	**3,151**	**7,428**	**1,604**

Several things kind of stick out. Notice that the top 6 parishes are coastal and that Orleans, with the largest total population is not in the top 15. Also notice the large number of nonresident season and nonresident saltwater season licenses sold in St. Tammany Parish. Large numbers of Mississippi residents fish in eastern coastal Louisiana. These people simply drive to the first Louisiana parish on Interstate Hwy 10 to buy their licenses. Forty-one percent all the state's total nonresident saltwater season fishing licenses were sold in St. Tammany Parish.

Notice also that in the parishes of Lafourche, Terrebonne and St. Bernard that more resident saltwater licenses are sold than basic resident fishing licenses, in spite of the fact that the basic license must be purchased **before** the saltwater license. This is because residents who purchased their basic licenses to fish in freshwater elsewhere in the state did not purchase their saltwater license until they made a coastal fishing trip.

FEDERAL USER FEES COMING ??

User fees on commercial fishermen were proposed for the U. S. Coast Guard several years ago. Opposition from the fishing industry tabled that proposal.

Now the possibility of user fees on the commercial fishery have come up again, this time from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). In the 1999 federal budget, NMFS has requested authorization to establish such fees.

Congress reacted by providing that in Fiscal Year 1999 and thereafter, that the Secretary of the Department of Commerce (which includes NMFS) shall establish and adjust user fees for fisheries management and enforcement. Their fees cannot be larger than 1 percent of the landed value of the fish harvested. There are no provisions for such fees on recreational fishermen.

Any such user fees would have to be approved by Congress. There would also be a public notice and a public comment period. I will keep you posted if any user fee proposal is made.

HOOP NET BYCATCH RESEARCH

Hoop nets are a very commonly used type of commercial fishing gear in the freshwater areas of Louisiana. Currently, 11 of 16 southeastern states allow hoop nets to be fished commercially.

In order to determine the impact of hoop nets on freshwater gamefish species, Florida biologists conducted a study on hoop net catch and bycatch in the St. Johns River. The biologists observed the catch made by commercial fishermen in 1053 hoop nets that had been fished a total of 7320 days.

Commercial fish made up 97.1% of the catch with catfish being, by far, the predominant species. Bream (mostly bluegills) were 1.5%, crappie 0:8%, largemouth bass less than 1%, and white/yellow/striped bass combined less than 1% of the catch. Only 7 largemouth bass, all small fish were observed in the catch. Gamefish catch averaged about one-fourth of a fish per net per day. Bream (again mostly bluegills) were 64% of that catch.

The second part of the study was to determine how much of the gamefish bycatch died. Any fish that did not swim away within 5 minutes was counted as dead (initial mortality). The biologists also held some of the gamefish in hoop nets sewed closed for 2 days to determine any delayed mortality.

For crappie, initial mortality was 43 of 704 (6.1%), bream 22 of 1276 (1.7%), largemouth bass 1 of 7 (14.3%) and white/yellow/striped bass 0 of 11. Delayed mortality for crappie was 43 of 1031 (4.2%), bream 4 of 145 (2.8%), largemouth bass 1 of 5 (20%), white/yellow/striped bass 0 of 5.

The biologists determined that there was a total of 794,300 commercial net-days on the St. Johns River (one net fished for one day is a net-day). With this fishing effort, biologists determined that these nets caused the loss of 1 crappie per 24 acres of water, and one bream per 26 acres.

Because of the low bycatch and mortality rates, the biologists concluded that hoop nets had no substantial effect on gamefish populations in the river system.

Source: *Gamefish Bycatch and Mortality in Hoop Nets in the St. Johns River, Florida.* M. N. Hale, R. J. Schuler Jr., and J. E. Crumpton. Proceedings of the Forty-ninth Annual Conference, Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. 1995.

RELEASED RED SNAPPER SURVIVAL

As the minimum legal size on red snappers has increased, so have the number of fish that have to be released because they are undersized. Since many of these fish have their stomachs sticking our of their mouth because of gas bladder expansion, many fishermen question whether any of these released fish survive to grow larger.

Researchers at LSU looked at this problem over a two year period. The biologists caught red snapper near an oil platform located in 68 feet of water. The snapper used in the test were all under the legal size limit and were 1 to 5 years old.

After capture, the fish were released into a 34 foot deep nylon net held open by hoops to check how well they survived. Some of the snapper were released "as is" into the net; some had the air deflated from their expanded air bladder using a sterile disposable needle; some were tagged with fish tags; and some were both tagged and deflated.

The fish were kept in the net for 24 to 48 hours. In order to check long-term survival, 107 red snapper were transferred to the Aquarium of the Americas in New Orleans.

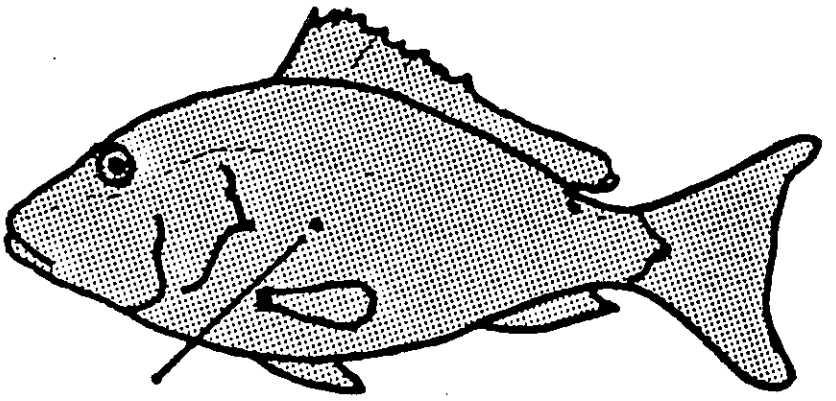


Diagram of a red snapper showing location at which needles were inserted to vent gas from the gas bladder.

The results were interesting. The death rate for the fish held in the net at the platform was between 20% and 30%, whether or not the fish were tagged and/or deflated or not. The death rate was significantly higher for fish caught in the fall than in the summer.

From this, the researchers concluded that deflating air bladders is not a useful tool to help fish survival. This is especially true since one must be very precise in locating the bladder. Some people believe that the stomach protruding from the mouth is the air bladder.

Of the 107 red snapper taken to the Aquarium of the Americas, 20 died between 2 and 37 days. Fourteen of the 20 died within the first week. These 107 fish were all fish that had survived the short-term survival tests in the net at the platform.

In another phase of the study, the researchers tested how the survival rate of red snapper was affected by the depth they were caught at. Fish were caught from 75 to 150 feet deep. As one would expect, the deeper the fish were caught, the higher the death rate.

Finally 3 fish each were caught from 91 feet and 143 feet deep and taken back to the lab to be studied for damage. In the fish caught at 91 feet, no stomachs were everted

through the mouth, and none has intusseption of their guts. One had a ruptured gas bladder, one had light muscle hemorrhage and two had liver hemorrhage.

On of the fish caught at 143 feet, two had everted stomachs and intusseption of their guts, two had ruptured gas bladders, two had liver hemorrhage and all three had muscle hemorrhage.

Source: *Mortality Rate and Movement of Hook-and-Line Caught and Released Red Snapper.* Jeffrey Render and Charles Wilson. Coastal Fisheries Institute, Center for Coastal Energy and Environmental Resources, LSU. 1993.

PREPARING YOUR BOAT FOR A HURRICANE

1. Buy the protective gear for your boat now before the storm starts and marine supplies are depleted.

2. Be ready with extra line, chafe protection for the line, additional fenders, anchors, swivels, shackles, duct tape and port plugs.

3. If you can trailer your boat, store it ashore in a garage or shed. If you must leave it outside, secure it to a strong tree or "deadman" anchor.
   (a) Take off everything on the boat that the wind might strip away.
   (b) If it is an outboard boat, increase the weight by filling it with fresh water and leaving in the drain plug.
   (c) Insert wood block between the trailer frame and the springs for extra support.
   (d) Let some air out of the trailer tires.

4. If your boat must stay in the water, before a storm is predicted, search out a good hurricane hole as far inland as possible.
   (a) Look for a deep, narrow cove or inlet surrounded by sturdy trees that will block the wind.
   (b) Make sure the trees will be able to provide a tie-off for your anchor lines.

5. IF YOUR BOAT MUST STAY IN THE HARBOR, choose a protected harbor where the bottom allows a good anchor hold.

6. IF YOU MUST DOCK YOUR BOAT, berth at a dock with sturdy pilings in a location offering reasonable shelter from open water and storm surges.
   (a) Double up mooring lines and leave enough slack so the boat can rise with the higher tides.
   (b) Cover all lines with chafe protectors at points where the lines are likely to wear. A good choice is double neoprene garden hose cut along the side and bound around the lines.

(c) Put out extra fenders and fenderboards -- as many as possible.

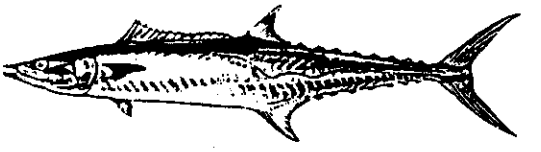
7. GET OFF THE BOAT !!
   (a) Remove valuables -- radios, documents, anything irreplaceable or subject to looting.
   (b) Remove anything loose such as masts and sails.
   (c) Stow what can't be removed as best you can.
   (d) Get off the boat ! Never stay with the boat when a hurricane is brewing or during the storm.
   (e) Don't try to fight the forces of nature. Your best bet is to BE PREPARED!

8. For a free detailed pamphlet about hurricane preparedness, call the Coast Guard Customer Infoline -- 1-800-368-5647.

Source: *St. Andrew Bay Stuffing Box*. St. Andrew Bay Power Squadron. Thanks to Gene Duley, Metairie, LA.

COUNCIL APPROVES MACKEREL CHANGES

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council took several actions concerning king mackerel at its May meeting. The first action was to approve a 10.6 million pound total allowable catch for the 1998-99 fishing year. This is the same level as last year.



A big change approved was to not allow the captain and crew of charter/head boats any possession limit on king mackerel. This was done because the recreational quota had a one million pound overrun last year and the majority of the catch appeared to come from the charter/head boat fishery. The council also approved increasing the minimum size on king mackerel from 20 to 24 inches fork length for both recreational and commercial fishermen. Both of the above changes will have to be approved by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) before they become final.

The council also made another change that they requested NMFS to take emergency action on before July 1. This involved placing a 3000 pound trip limit on commercial king mackerel fishermen in the western zone (Alabama through Texas) of the Gulf of Mexico. This action had not been approved at the time this newsletter was prepared, but is expected to be acted upon quickly. Trip limits were proposed because last year's season was only about one month long and produced very poor quality fish.

OCEANS OF ENVIRONMENTALISTS

The United Nations has dedicated 1998 as International Year of the Ocean. They estimate that oceans provide 16% of the animal protein eaten by the world's people. Amazingly this is more than either pork or beef. According to the U. S. Department of Commerce, one out of every six jobs in the United States is marine-related.

Environmental groups have recognized the importance of the oceans' fisheries and are directing a great deal of their attention toward fisheries issues. The World Wildlife Fund has launched its "Endangered Seas Campaign" with the goal of reversing overfishing.

When shark fishermen filed suit against the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to prevent a 50% cut in Atlantic shark harvest, the National Audubon Society, the Center for Marine Conservation, the Natural Resources Defense Council, and the Biodiversity Legal Foundation filed a brief in support of NMFS. The coalition received free legal representation from Earthlaw, a Colorado-based public interest law firm.

The Overfished Species List released by NMFS in October, 1997 was proposed and lobbied hard for by the Marine Fish Conservation Network. The Network was created and steered by National Audubon Society's Living Oceans Program, the Center for Marine Conservation, Greenpeace, National Coalition for Marine Conservation, and the World Wildlife Fund.

The Ocean Wildlife Campaign (a coalition including National Audubon Society, National Coalition for Marine Conservation, Natural Resources Defense Council, and World Wildlife Fund) along with the American Sportfishing Association are calling for changes in fisheries bycatch. They want to reduce bycatch by 75% by 2005, require that fishing gear either be modified to be more selective or banned from use, requiring that all bycatch be brought to the boat alive to be released, and counting bycatch against management plan catch quotas.

Source: *Living Oceans News*. Winter 1997/98. National Audubon Society.

PONTCHARTRAIN BASIN CLEAN BOATING DAY

The Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation, Louisiana Cooperative Extension Service, LSU Sea Grant and several state agencies are sponsoring a clean boating day event on July 11, 1998. This event is part of the National Clean Boating Campaign and will be held on the first Saturday of National Clean Boating Week. Campaign volunteers will be at 15 selected marinas and boat launches located in Orleans, St. Tammany, Jefferson, St. Bernard, and Tangipahoa parishes providing educational materials for boaters on the importance of clean waterways in the basin.

By collecting trash from the lake or surrounding waterways, boaters are eligible to enter the trash collection contest that features valuable prizes awarded by drawing. Some of the prizes donated by area businesses include: 2 charter fishing trips, 2 two-night stays at any Louisiana State park, a sunset sail on Lake Pontchartrain, a $50 gift certificate at West Marine, plus many more prizes.

You can determine the participating marinas and launches in your area by watching for information on the event in your local paper or by calling the Lake pontchartrain Basin Foundation (504) 836-2238. The sponsors still need volunteers. If you are interested please call.

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THE GUMBO POT
Sandlapper Fish Salad

I can hear it now -- cold boiled fish--YUK. You'll be surprised. This cool summertime dish is different and very good! Use any white-fleshed fish; just be sure it is fresh. Also, do not add the salt and pepper until after marinating. Adding salt earlier will draw water from the vegetables and make the dish watery.

1 lb cold fish fillets, boiled and flaked
1 medium/small green pepper, slivered
1 14½-oz can cut green beans
1 cucumber, sliced
1 medium onion, cut in rings
1 8 oz bottle Italian salad dressing
2 medium tomatoes, cut in wedges
salt and pepper

Mix all ingredients in large bowl. Refrigerate 1 hour, stirring once. Add tomatoes. Add salt and pepper to taste immediately before serving. Serve as is or over beds of lettuce or fresh spinach. Serves 6.

Sincerely,

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