



A Special Message from the Director of Louisiana Sea Grant

Dear Stakeholders,

We are asking you to help Louisiana Sea Grant tell our story in response to threats in Washington, D.C. to eliminate the Sea Grant program. In March, the President sent Congress a request for drastic cuts to federal investments related to everything from the environment to health and human services and education.

One of the programs slated to be cut by \$30 million in Fiscal Year 2017 (FY17) is the National Sea Grant College Program. In addition, the Fiscal Year 2018 (FY18) budget proposal would also eliminate funding for Sea Grant. The FY17 proposed cut wipes out the remaining budget for Sea Grant this year and would terminate the National Sea Grant Office the day such a budget cut became effective. If Congress approves this cut, we and the services we provide our state could be gone in a matter of months.

This cut would immediately eliminate funding dedicated to providing scholarships and fellowships to Louisiana college students, immediately stop us from funding research projects addressing critical issues affecting Louisiana's economy and environment, and immediately end our ability to provide huge benefits to the state as summarized in the "[Putting Science to Work](#)" document. The same would happen in each of the other 32 Sea Grant programs around the nation.

Sea Grant is lauded for its ability to use federal dollars, leveraged with private, local and state dollars, to address coastal issues identified as most important by our state constituents. Here in Louisiana, our coastal issues need every investment from the federal government that we can secure in order to deal with the significant threats to the seventh largest delta ecosystem in the world – the Mississippi River Delta – which brings wealth to our nation.

I want you to know that there is strong bipartisan support for Sea Grant in Congress. There has been for 50 years. I'm optimistic that this proposed FY17 budget cut, nor the proposed elimination in the FY18 budget, will not happen to Sea Grant because of our strong support in Congress.

This is where we need your help. It takes your support to tell our story to Congress about our value to the nation.

The President only makes requests for the federal budget — it is Congress that takes action when it comes to developing the budget. While the strong bipartisan support for Sea Grant by members of Congress has not changed, the services in research and outreach to coastal communities are facing drastic cuts in FY17 and FY18. If members of Congress receive a huge number of supportive letters and emails from people who deeply value our Sea Grant program, it will make a significant difference with regard to the outcome.

If you want to contact members of Congress about Sea Grant, we have letter templates with sample wording at www.laseagrant.org/about/did-you-know/ that you can download and personalize.

Please note that hard copy letters take months to arrive in Congressional offices. And because of that, Louisiana Sea Grant has made arrangements to have letters of support that are mailed, emailed or faxed to our offices hand-delivered to Congress. Simply send them to the address below my signature.

If you want to contact your representatives in Washington, D.C., directly, you can search for House of Representatives members email addresses at www.house.gov/representatives and Senate members at www.senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm. Some Congressional offices have online forms for receiving comments.

Thank you,

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Bull Sharks

The bull shark is a widely known predatory species with a very aggressive behavior that gets its name from its short, sturdy body form with a blunt snout that resembles a bull. This shark can be found in coastal seas around the world and is the only species of shark that can tolerate both salt and fresh water. It has the ability to swim straight from the sea into brackish or fresh water areas with ease, such as rivers, lakes and marshes, bringing them into more contact with humans than other species. This transition is possible due to a special membrane that allows the shark to separate the external environment with its internal environment, allowing for equal concentrations of water throughout its body.

Due to their close proximities with people, the bull shark has the third highest rate of recorded human attacks throughout the world. Humans are not a preferred prey for the bull shark; however, it often attacks out of curiosity, and in fresh waters rather than the ocean. When it bites a person, it usually takes one experimental bite and realizes the human is not preferred prey.

An adult bull shark can reach up to 11 feet in length and weigh up to 700 pounds, with females being larger than males. Their large size makes them a top predator, eating almost anything in sight. The diet of the shark consists of boney fish, small mammals, birds and even sea turtles and other sharks. They hunt alone in murky waters that are close to shores or banks where there is an abundance of food and rely mainly on their keen sense of smell to locate prey due to their poor eyesight. Once they find a target, they swim in a straight line towards the prey at speeds up to 11 MPH, stunning the prey once it is hit.

The average mature age for a bull shark is between 15 to 20 years and they sexually mature around 10 to 11 years. The mating period occurs in late spring and into summer, typically making both sexes more aggressive during this time. Female sharks have been found with “mating scars” on their bodies from where the male sharks bite them as part of the mating process. Females carry their young for 11 months and give live births in fresh water to one to 13 offspring. The bull shark is not a migratory species, but it can travel hundreds of miles to find regions with warmer water temperatures to mate and give birth.

Bull sharks were fished commercially in the past for their meat, skin, oils and fins, causing their population to decrease significantly. Their biggest threat now is being accidentally captured and killed in fishing nets, as well as being targeted in shark culling operations meant to promote safety for tourists and beachgoers. This process has not been proven affective and is frowned upon by conservationists. Many aquariums also use bull sharks in their display tanks due to their good adaptability to fresh water. The IUNC red list has recently added the bull shark to its “near threatened” category and is considered threatened with near extinction. Unfortunately, there are no current programs or actions to protect this species.

– Skylar Bueche



PHOTO: SYLKE ROHRLACH

www.sharksavers.org/en/education/biology/how-bull-sharks-survive-in-fresh-water/

www.flmnh.ufl.edu/fish/isaf/contributing-factors/species-implicated-attacks/

www.sharks-world.com/bull_shark/

<http://oceana.org/marine-life/sharks-rays/bull-shark>

Council Path to Louisiana's Control over Red Snapper Fishery

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) had a motion passed at the recent meeting of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (GMFMC) that could eventually allow Louisiana the ability to manage the recreational red snapper fishery in federal waters in addition to state waters.

“This motion is a victory for all anglers fishing from Louisiana ports. If this amendment is approved, federal waters will no longer be off limits for large portions of the season,” said Jack Montoucet, secretary of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

“The motion is in keeping with Gov. John Bel Edwards’ long-held support of state management of red snapper for the recreational angling community.

“LA Creel is an integral part of our scientific data collection program and the cornerstone for passage of this motion,” Montoucet said. “Louisiana anglers will be rewarded for their efforts in making LA Creel one of the best data collection programs in the country.”

LA Creel is the harvest data program designed and implemented by LDWF to closely track the amount of fish caught by recreational anglers in Louisiana. It has been widely recognized by other states and the National Marine Fisheries Service as the best in the Gulf and enables LDWF to manage fishing seasons in near real time.

The Gulf Council passed by an 11-5 vote the motion to begin the amendment to allow Louisiana the new powers at its April 6 meeting in Birmingham, Ala.

The Gulf Council will deliberate on the new amendment over the next year to refine the “Louisiana only” plan. Under this amendment, Louisiana would act as pilot for the other Gulf states. The amendment would only allow Louisiana control of the recreational red snapper fishery in federal waters adjacent to the state for three years (2019 through 2021). If the pilot is successful, a similar program could be implemented Gulf-wide.

This action includes both the private angling and for-hire components of the recreational fishery.

Red Snapper Management Comments

As the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission (LWFC) and LDWF continue to work towards a resolution regarding the management of red snapper, the LWFC invited representatives from the Louisiana commercial, charter and private sectors to their monthly meeting in April to provide input. Two representatives from each sector expressed their respective group’s concerns and comments on the topic.

The department urges Louisiana red snapper fishermen to voice their opinions and will continue to accept public comments on red snapper management via its website and email. Individuals interested in submitting a comment can visit the department’s homepage and navigate to the ‘red snapper management’ button, click [here](https://fs30.formsite.com/Jfroeba/form76/index.html) (<https://fs30.formsite.com/Jfroeba/form76/index.html>) or email redsnapper@wlf.la.gov.

Over 5,600 Abandoned Traps Removed

Over the course of the 30-day blue crab closure, volunteers, staff and members of the commercial fishing industry were in full force, collecting more than 5,600 traps during LDWF’s annual Derelict Crab Trap Rodeo.

The first volunteer day was March 4 at Sweetwater Marina in Delacroix. The Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation (LPBF) headed the event with volunteers from the general public, Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) and personnel from LDWF collected 1,542 traps. LPBF and LDWF personnel continued to work during the closure to collect an additional 1,970 and 310 traps, respectively. This effort brought the total number of derelict crab traps removed from the Pontchartrain Basin to 3,822.

“In the Pontchartrain Basin, we had a threefold increase in the number of recovered derelict traps from last year due to outstanding collaboration with volunteers, St. Bernard Parish, LDWF, commercial fishermen, CCA, Sweetwater Marina and Boat Stuf,” said John Lopez with the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation. “We estimate that over 130,000 crabs per year were saved with these efforts.”

The second volunteer day was held March 11 at Isle De Jean Charles Marina in Montegut. The event was headed by LDWF with volunteers from the general public and CCA. Four hundred and ninety three traps were collected during the volunteer event, and LDWF personnel picked up an additional 88 traps during the closure period. The effort in the Terrebonne Basin saw a total of 581 traps removed.

Additional efforts were made by the department during the closure period to remove derelict traps throughout Louisiana’s coast. Traps were removed from the Barataria Basin (213 traps), Calcasieu Basin (482 traps) and the Vermilion-Teche Basin (576 traps).

Jeff Marx, LDWF Crab and Shrimp Program manager, emphasized the importance of the annual effort, “The removal of these derelict crab traps not only benefits the blue crab population, but other marine species as well, by reducing the amount of mortality caused by ghost fishing.”

LDWF initiated the volunteer-based Derelict Crab Trap Removal Program in 2004 to address removal of derelict and abandoned crab traps. The program is funded in part by the sale of Louisiana commercial and recreational crab fishing licenses. Since the program’s inception, volunteers have assisted in removing 33,040 traps. Removal of these traps is imperative since they increase ghost-fishing mortality of blue crabs and other species captured incidentally, interfere with other commercial fishing gear types, create navigational hazards and reduce visual appeal of the environment.

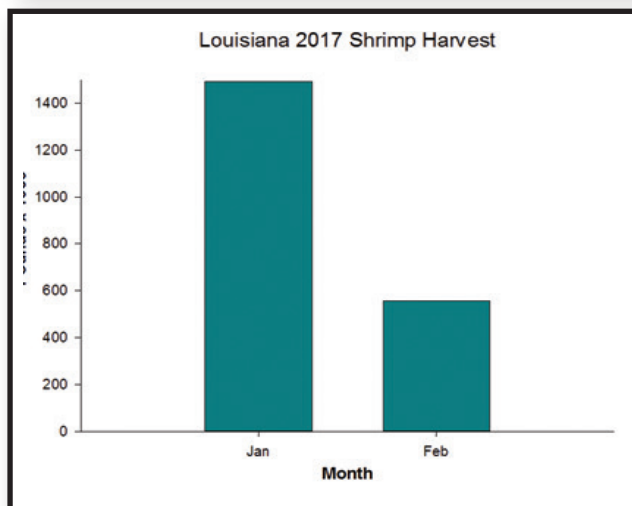
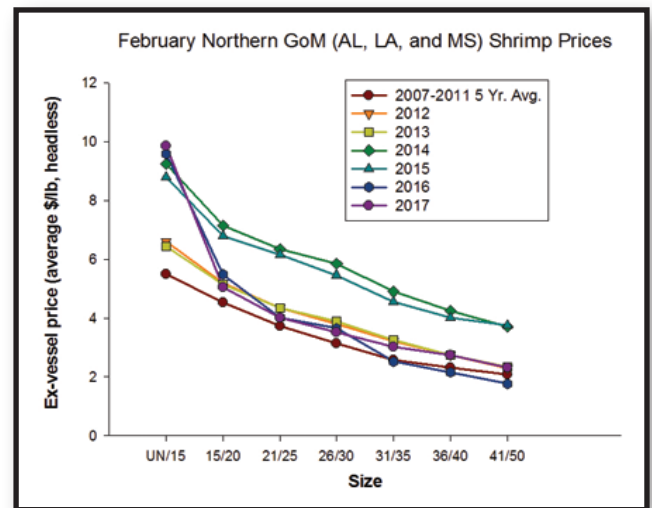
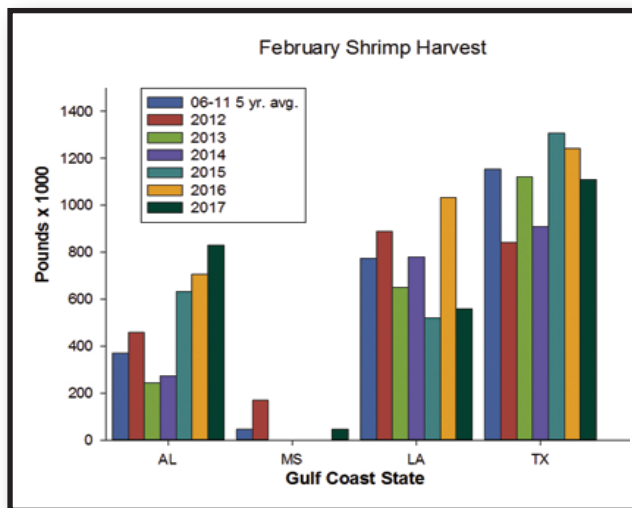
Louisiana Spring Shrimp Season

At the April LWFC meeting, Jeff Marx presented to the Commissioners what information LDWF collects and presents to open the Spring shrimp season. The Commissioners also considered a possible extra meeting in late April to set the season. While the weather has been warmer this year, the majority of public comment by Louisiana shrimpers was to wait until the May Commission meeting to set the opening of the season, often called the Brown Shrimp Season.

Louisiana Shrimp Watch

Louisiana specific data portrayed in the graphics are selected from preliminary data posted by NOAA on its 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



Fish Gear Coordinates – February and March

In accordance with the provisions of R.S. 56:700.1 et. seq., notice is given that 12 claims in the amount of \$47,433.65 were received for payment during the period Feb. 1-28, 2017.

There were 10 paid and 2 denied.

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates, in Degree Decimal Minutes, of reported underwater obstructions are:

29 10.977	90 38.707	TERREBONNE
29 13.735	89 32.780	PLAQUEMINES
29 18.128	89 48.811	PLAQUEMINES
29 20.000	89 28.112	PLAQUEMINES
29 21.497	89 56.572	JEFFERSON
29 32.318	90 09.421	JEFFERSON
29 32.870	91 40.329	IBERIA
29 40.360	89 39.778	PLAQUEMINES
29 44.852	89 24.810	SAINT BERNARD
29 52.277	93 21.056	CAMERON
29 53.694	93 21.318	CAMERON
29 55.733	93 20.450	CAMERON

In accordance with the provisions of R.S. 56:700.1 et. seq., notice is given that 13 claims in the amount of \$48,301.13 were received for payment during the period March 1-31, 2017. There were 13 paid and 0 denied.

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates, in Degree Decimal Minutes, of reported underwater obstructions are:

29 08.605	90 38.827	TERREBONNE
29 11.279	90 50.990	TERREBONNE
29 12.115	90 52.108	TERREBONNE
29 13.699	90 32.994	TERREBONNE
29 15.444	89 37.741	PLAQUEMINES
29 24.277	92 09.079	VERMILION
29 26.229	90 33.789	TERREBONNE
29 34.277	92 09.079	VERMILION
29 38.301	89 34.652	PLAQUEMINES
29 38.954	89 34.430	PLAQUEMINES
29 44.580	89 26.851	SAINT BERNARD
29 44.852	89 24.810	SAINT BERNARD
30 07.340	89 14.509	SAINT BERNARD

Important & Upcoming Events

March 30, 2017 – Recreational Greater Amberjack Fishing Season Closed

April 29, 2017 – LDWF Family Fish Fest at Calcasieu Point Landing in Lake Charles.

THE GUMBO POT

BATTERED FRIED CRAWFISH TAILS

Recipe courtesy of *Louisiana Kitchen & Culture*.

For more recipes or to subscribe to their magazine or free newsletter, please visit <http://louisiana.kitchenandculture.com/>



Ingredients:

1 egg, beaten	1 cup flour
1/4 cup evaporated milk	1/2 cup corn meal
1/2 teaspoon prepared mustard	1/2 teaspoon baking powder
3/4 teaspoon salt	1 lb. large, peeled crawfish tails
1/4 teaspoon black pepper	Oil for frying
1/4 teaspoon garlic powder	

Method:

In a bowl, beat egg; add milk, mustard, salt, pepper and garlic powder and mix well.

In another bowl, sift flour, corn meal and baking powder together and mix well.

Dip crawfish tails into the egg mixture one at a time, drain a little and dip into the flour mixture. Drop into hot oil at 375°F and fry until golden brown, drain on paper towels.

Serves 4

Be sure to visit the *Lagniappe* blog for additional news and timely events between issues.
<https://louisianalagniappe.wordpress.com/>

Lagniappe Fisheries Newsletter

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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 Lively at janderson@agcenter.lsu.edu.

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