

Commission on Marine Resources

COMMISSION ON MARINE RESOURCES

COMMISSION MEETING

Tuesday, May 16, 2017
9:00 a.m.
Bolton Building Auditorium
1141 Bayview Avenue
Biloxi, Mississippi 39530

Commission Members:

Richard Gollott, Chairman
Steve Bosarge, Vice Chairman
Mark Havard
Ron Harmon
Jolynne Trapani

Also Present:

Jamie M. Miller, Executive Director DMR
Sandy Chestnut, Esq., Assistant Attorney General

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COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: I would like to call this meeting to order and welcome everyone to our meeting.

The first thing we are going to do is have the Pledge of Allegiance. We will ask Steve Bosarge to lead us in the pledge.

(Whereupon, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Next we have approval of the minutes.

Do we have any modifications, or can I get a motion to approve the minutes of the last meeting?

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: So moved, Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion.

Do we have a second?

COMMISSIONER HAVARD: I'll second that motion, Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion and a second.

All those in favor say aye.

(All in favor.)

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Opposed?

(None opposed.)

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Motion carries.

Next we have approval of the agenda, or a modification to the agenda.

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COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Mr. Chairman, I would like to move that we remove Item 5(a)(1) from the agenda.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion.

Do we have a second?

COMMISSIONER HARMON: So seconded, Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion and a second.

All those in favor say aye.

(All in favor.)

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Opposed?

(None opposed.)

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: The motion carries.

Sandy, do we need a motion to approve the agenda as modified?

SANDY CHESTNUT: Yes.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Can I get a motion?

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I'll make the motion that we approve the agenda as modified.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion.

Do we have a second?

COMMISSIONER HAVARD: I'll second that motion.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: All those in favor say aye.

(All in favor.)

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Opposed?

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(None opposed.)

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Motion carries.

Next we have the Executive Director's report.

JAMIE MILLER: Thank you, Chairman. I've just got two items.

First, I want to make sure y'all are aware. On May the 2nd, I traveled to Washington, D.C. I was invited to participate in a subcommittee hearing. The topic of that hearing was "Examining the Management of Red Snapper Fishing in the Gulf of Mexico".

The committee was the Oversight and Government Forum. The subcommittee was on the Interior, Energy and Environment.

I was joined by three other witnesses. I can make that testimony available to y'all. It is also online.

The hearing went well. We were able to share some of the positive things Mississippi is doing, in regards to management of Red Snapper.

We talked a lot about Tails n' Scales and how effective that program has been, in terms of getting more accurate information for landings.

I want to make sure y'all are aware of that.

The next item is I would like to call up Mr. Larry Drawdy.

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Mr. Drawdy, are you here?

LARRY DRAWDY: Yes, sir.

JAMIE MILLER: Mr. Drawdy had a positive experience with the agency and he asked if I would give him just a moment to share some of that. I wanted to include that in my executive report.

Go ahead, Mr. Drawdy.

LARRY DRAWDY: Director Miller, members of the Commission, my name is Larry Drawdy and I live in Wells Ferry Landing on the Tchoutacabouffa River right behind Academy, Lowe's and that area right through there.

Living there some twenty years, I have seen many, many times debris that has come down the river. In most cases, the debris moves on down the river and doesn't really cause a hazard in that particular area.

Recently, about a month ago, there was a huge log about fourteen to sixteen inches in diameter and over twenty feet in length that was stuck out there in the middle of the river. I kept thinking that the current, or flooding, would take the log on down, but it didn't.

I ventured out to try to contact a number of government agencies, in order to try to make sure that we could get this particular hazard removed from the river.

It was sticking up about anywhere from a foot to eighteen inches above the waterline.

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As I called various agencies in the state and also in the federal government, I was passed on down to different ones. One group told me that it was not their responsibility.

I called the Coast Guard. I called the Marine Fisheries, wildlife. I called a number of different agencies. I even contacted the Army Corps of Engineers in Mobile.

Everybody was nice, but no one really took the responsibility of trying to get the log moved out of the river.

I, then, contacted a good friend of mine, Windy Swetman, former Supervisor in that area.

Windy said, "Larry, I will take care of it."

He contacted Chief Davis and Lieutenant Ewing, Jack Ewing. That was in the afternoon on the 18th of April. The morning of the 19th, they were sitting in my yard, and I walked out there and we looked at the log. They saw what a hazard that this particular log really was.

We have a great many skiers and boaters, especially in that area, that are constantly using the river.

They said they would take care of it. Before that afternoon was over, they had done everything that

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they needed to do. I did not see them do it, but they had the log pulled out and it was laying out on the side of one of the banks, and they called the City to come in and cut it up and get rid of it.

As I said, I'm not here to condemn anyone, but to commend Chief Davis and Lieutenant Ewing for the outstanding job that they did because they put public safety above everything else.

I think, in this world we live in today, that we don't really recognize people for the good quality of work that they do, and that was a particular hazard that really needed to be removed from the river.

I thank you for the time today to say that.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Thank you, Mr. Drawdy.

JAMIE MILLER: That concludes my report, Chairman.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Next we have Marine Patrol.

RUSTY PITTMAN: Good morning Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, Director Miller, Ms. Chestnut.

I will be standing in for Chief Davis this morning. He is in Jackson. His mother is going through some major surgery. I ask that you keep them in your prayers.

On our report this month, there are just a

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couple of things I want to talk about. One of them is the Fishing License Citations.

We are still finding a lot of people without a fishing license. As you can see on the report, we wrote twenty-eight last month. We don't know why people are trying to fish without licenses. There is no excuse. Everybody should know they have to have a license. We put this law into effect years ago, in the nineties.

Some of them, if their license expired the day before, or that week, were given the opportunity to go and purchase a license without getting a citation, but most of these have been fishing without a license for two, three, four years. We still have that problem.

We will try to get some word out. Melissa will get with me and see if we can get some more coverage on making sure everybody gets their licenses.

A major thing that I want to mention, since January the 1st this year, we have already had twelve rescues. We have never had that many, in the twenty-eight years I've been here, this early in the season. This past weekend, we had four which were added to that.

A lot of them are simple mistakes. People forgetting to put the plug in their boat which is the first thing you need to check before you launch your boat. They get out there and go on anchor and start taking on

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water and, before you know it, they are calling 911 for assistance.

With our boating safety courses that we give, one of the major things that we go over is safety. Always check your equipment, your boat, your engine and make sure you have the proper safety equipment onboard before you leave the dock.

With that, if there are any questions, I will be glad to try to answer them.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: I don't think so, Rusty.

Thank you very much.

RUSTY PITTMAN: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Next is the Joe show.

JOE JEWELL: Thank you for that kind introduction.

We have five action items for the Commission's consideration and review this morning.

First is a shrimp season update and season recommendation by Mr. Rick Burris.

RICK BURRIS: Good morning Mr. Chairman, Commissioners, Director Miller, Ms. Chestnut.

It's that time of year. Today, I'm going to give the Commission an update on the 2017 Mississippi Shrimp Season.

Those of you that may not be familiar, here is a

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map of our Mississippi territorial shrimping grounds. It's a color-coded map.

The yellow area is closed to all commercial and recreational shrimp trawling. That includes our bays and rivers, Pearl River, Bay St. Louis, Biloxi Bay, Pascagoula River and the Grand Bay area. It also includes a one-mile boundary around Ship, Horn and Petit Bois Islands which are owned by the National Park Service.

Next we have this green area. It is open to our licensed live bait shrimping only. That's a half mile from shoreline from Bayou Caddy all the way to the Mississippi-Alabama line.

It's hard to see on this projector, but this red line stands for the Intracoastal Waterway, ICW. It's a channel that runs across the Mississippi Sound. That divides our shrimping waters up. All the waters north of that line to the live bait line closes seasonally on December 31st.

Then, the area below that has been subdivided into two different sections.

This dark blue area which is west of the Gulfport Ship Channel all the way to the Louisiana line closes on a seasonal basis, on April 30th.

Then, here recently -- thanks to the Commission and the Mississippi State Legislature, primarily Senator

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Gollott for authoring the bill -- State Statute 49-15-64.1 was amended to leave this area -- it's supposed to be green -- this light gray area open on an annual basis to allow our fishermen to have an area to work when the rest of the Mississippi Sound is closed like we're in, right now.

Just a little bit of background, this is a chart of our licenses sold, our shrimp licenses sold.

The red bar is resident commercial licenses. The blue bar is resident recreational licenses. This green line is non-resident commercial, and, then, this small yellow line on the bottom is our non-resident recreational.

It's hard to see on this, but, from 2005 going back, we averaged about eighteen hundred licenses a year.

Since 2005, we have averaged about nine hundred licenses a year.

Last year, we sold eight hundred and forty-three overall shrimp licenses.

This next graph shows our shrimp landings for Mississippi, all species combined. It also shows the value.

The red bar is the landings in millions of pounds.

The black line is the value in millions of

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dollars.

It is kind of the same story. Going back to prior to 2005, we averaged about fourteen million pounds head-on landed per year. Since 2005, we have landed about nine million pounds per year.

Last year, we landed eight point three million pounds with a value of fifteen million dollars.

To breakdown those landings a little bit more, we separated it out by month and by species. We have brown, white and pink shrimp which are our three major species of native shrimp that we land.

You can see the shrimp fishery is a seasonal fishery, so we don't have much landings in winter and early spring, and, then, we start seeing our brown shrimp in the month of May and it peaks in June.

May through August, our landings are dominated by our brown shrimp. Brown shrimp is a spring and summer species, and, then, our white shrimp dominate the fall and early winter. White shrimp is a fall species.

These are our opening dates going back to 1975. As you can see, it fluctuates year-by-year because, like I said, the shrimp fishery is a seasonal fishery, and it is based on environmental conditions as to how good of a season we will have, or when the shrimp will be coming out. It varies annually every year, based on

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1 environmental conditions.

2 We have opened as early as May the 25th in 2011,
3 and as late as June the 25th in 2009. Last year, we opened
4 on the 6th of June, and we typically average opening on
5 June the 10th.

6 Opening day is the largest effort that we will
7 have in any one day throughout the year and throughout the
8 season. We like to document that effort.

9 We go up in a airplane provided by the Civil Air
10 Patrol and fly state line to state line over the
11 Mississippi Sound and go out south of the islands, and
12 count all of the shrimp boats that are working on opening
13 day.

14 The same story as before. 2005 going back, we
15 reached up to a thousand boats and more going back into
16 the eighties and nineties. Since then, we have averaged
17 about two hundred and fifty boats. Last year, we counted
18 two hundred and fifty-five vessels on opening day
19 (indicating graph).

20 We have a couple of new Commissioners. I want
21 to give you an overview of how we determine and how we
22 open the shrimp season. State Statute 49-15-64.3 defines
23 that legal shrimp is sixty-eight count to the pound. That
24 means there are sixty-eight shrimp in a pound, or less.
25 We open the season, when all the shrimp in the Sound are

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1 of legal size.

2 We begin sampling, with the Gulf Coast Research
3 Lab, in February, looking for post larval brown shrimp.

4 Here is a picture of one (indicating).

5 Post larval brown shrimp, as the name suggests,
6 is after the larval stage. It's before the juvenile
7 subadult stage. They are very small. They are about
8 twenty-five millimeters, or less than an inch.

9 The Research Lab samples these, using
10 standardized beam plankton trawls. Typically, around
11 Belle Fontaine Beach is where they are going to catch the
12 most. They will bring those back and give us the count.

13 They go every other day, and we get a count
14 every other day as to how many post larval brown shrimp
15 are coming out of the Bay. We call them pulses, or peaks.

16 We take those peaks and we look at those peaks,
17 and I will show you those in a minute. Usually, thirty
18 days from those peaks is when we will see those juvenile
19 subadults show up in our trawl samples, and we will know
20 when to begin sampling.

21 We can also look at our samples and go back to
22 those peaks and figure out when those shrimp came out into
23 the system.

24 We start our trawl sampling, typically, around
25 the first week in April. We are looking for juveniles and

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1 adults.

2 You see those over here (indicating photograph).

3 We use standardized sixteen-foot trawls in
4 historical locations. We have nine historical locations,
5 and we recently added an extra sampling location. I will
6 show you those in a minute.

7 We go out and we pull the trawl for ten minutes.
8 We separate the shrimp. We bring them back to the lab,
9 and we count each shrimp in each sample and we weigh those
10 shrimp. We get a count and what we also do is we measure
11 each shrimp.

12 A legal shrimp, a sixty-eight count shrimp is a
13 hundred millimeters, or right at four inches, just under
14 four inches.

15 We are able to take those links and put them
16 into a regression analysis, and it will project the day
17 that all the shrimp in the Sound will be that sixty-eight
18 count legal requirement.

19 Here is a map of our sampling stations. Station
20 one is right off of Round Island. Station two is at the
21 Pascagoula River. Station three is Belle Fontaine Beach.
22 Station four is Horn Island. Station five is around Deer
23 Island. Station six is in the middle of the Sound in-
24 between Biloxi and Ship Island. Station seven is around
25 Gulfport Ship Channel. Station eight is in-between Long

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1 Beach and Pass Christian. Station nine is the mouth of
2 Bay St. Louis. Station ten is just off the beach in
3 Biloxi.

4 We have been sampling these same stations, since
5 about 1974, or 1975. We've got a good data set we can go
6 back and look at.

7 I mentioned to you the post larval sampling.
8 Here is a chart of that from this year. You've got the
9 number of post larval brown shrimp counted. Here are the
10 dates. Like I said, they go every other day.

11 Then, I also charted the water temperature.
12 Brown shrimp prefer water temperature above sixty-eight
13 degrees Fahrenheit. If you will look at this chart, you
14 will see that, when the temperature gets up, we start
15 seeing these post larval brown shrimp come out of the
16 bays. When it got up and it stayed above sixty-eight, we
17 got a really good pulse, a really good peak here
18 (indicating graph).

19 I will show you in a minute. We are able to see
20 these peaks as they come out in different size ranges.

21 These shrimp this year came out really early.
22 They came out in early February and some in early March,
23 and we were able to pick those up in April, when we
24 started sampling, but the majority of what is coming up is
25 later on in March and some into April. We have actually

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1 had some as of last week which is pretty nontypical.

2 We are marking each one of these peaks in our
3 samples, and I will show you that in a minute.

4 Shrimp are like a crop. They are very similar
5 to a crop, and they have to have the right environmental
6 conditions to grow at an optimum rate. The two things we
7 look at is water temperature and salinity.

8 This chart shows the water temperature in Biloxi
9 Bay going back to 2013. We use Biloxi because it is in
10 the middle of the Sound. It's not affected by outside
11 rainfall. It is localized rainfall, and we are able to
12 keep a good eye on it.

13 This chart gives you your average temperature
14 over the twelve-month period which is typical. You've got
15 the lower temperatures in the wintertime. Then, they go
16 up in the summer, and they go back down.

17 I have marked sixty-eight degrees ferhenhite,
18 the same as I did in that post larval chart. Obviously,
19 we had a very warm winter for probably the third year in a
20 row, now, and that is indicative in our 2017 water
21 temperatures in the red here (indicating).

22 You can see that in April we were well above
23 average, well above that sixty-eight. Through May the
24 15th, yesterday, we are less than average, but we have had
25 a couple of small cold fronts. We are still above that

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1 sixty-eight degrees farhenheight. We have the water
2 temperature for the brown shrimp to grow in (indicating
3 chart).

4 Salinity is the same area. We have salinity in
5 parts per thousand, charted over twelve months. Brown
6 shrimp prefer salinity above ten parts per thousand. We
7 haven't had a whole lot of rain this year. In March, you
8 can see it was way up, as opposed to previous years. In
9 April, it was a lot better than it has been the past
10 couple of years. Through yesterday, we've got good
11 salinity. We haven't had a whole lot of rain, and the
12 salinity is holding.

13 As you know, salinity is directly correlated to
14 the rainfall. This is the same type of chart, with the
15 rainfall plotted. In past couple of years, as you will
16 see in March and April, we have had increased amounts of
17 rainfall every year.

18 In April, 2015 and 2016, I believe we had record
19 amounts of rainfall. Last April, we had seventeen inches
20 of rain, and the shrimp season not only in Mississippi,
21 but in the entire Gulf of Mexico, suffered because of it.
22 The salinities were way down and the shrimp got out and
23 they couldn't grow. Those shrimp were flushed out and
24 they couldn't grow.

25 We have been sampling two times a week, since

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1 the beginning of April, and this is the sample from
2 yesterday. This is station three off of Belle Fontaine
3 Beach and, as you see, this is what I was talking about in
4 those pulses. This is a shrimp that came out in one of
5 those first pulses. This is a good legal shrimp, forty-
6 one/fifty probably, and you have some smaller shrimp, and
7 they kind of stair step down to these little fellows right
8 here which are probably two to three hundred count. These
9 little shrimp, right here, are coming out in this range
10 and they are dropping the count down (indicating
11 photographs).

12 The same thing for station two off of
13 Pascagoula. There are some legal shrimp in there, but
14 there are some very small shrimp in there.

15 The count is running kind of small, right now,
16 but I'm pretty sure this is the last of those peaks. We
17 should be able to start charting. These smaller shrimp
18 are getting their growth, and it shouldn't be too much
19 longer.

20 Because we still need to continue sampling, we
21 would like to request authorization be given to the
22 Executive Director, as we typically do, to open the 2017
23 shrimp season when sampling shows that brown shrimp have
24 reached the average of sixty-eight count per pound, the
25 State Statute requirement.

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1 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Thank you, Rick.

2 Any questions for Rick?

3 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Yes.

4 Alabama has set their season now to where they
5 open the same day of the month every year.

6 Is that going to affect us any?

7 We always try to work with them and come up with
8 a date where both states open at the same time.

9 RICK BURRIS: I don't think it will. I think,
10 if anything, our fishermen will be able to go over there,
11 if we were to open after them, and shrimp in Alabama.

12 They went to Louisiana yesterday. Louisiana
13 opened yesterday.

14 It will give them another area to work, until we
15 open our season.

16 I talked with Craig from Alabama last week.
17 They don't even sample anymore. They don't know what they
18 are opening on. We are typically about the same size
19 range. They are probably going to be pretty small, when
20 they open.

21 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Have you had any feedback
22 on the now open area south of the ICW?

23 RICK BURRIS: Yes. I have had a lot of good
24 feedback about that. The guys are able to work, and they
25 have been catching some decent shrimp.

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1 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: That's what I heard,
2 thirty-six/forty count.
3 RICK BURRIS: Yes.
4 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: That's good.
5 That's all the questions I have.
6 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: If no one else will, I
7 would like to make the motion that we give the Executive
8 Director the authority to open the brown shrimp season,
9 when the average count is sixty-eight per pound.
10 Can I get a second on that?
11 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I will second your
12 motion.
13 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion and a
14 second.
15 All those in favor say aye.
16 (All in favor.)
17 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Opposed?
18 (None opposed.)
19 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Motion carries.
20 Thank you.
21 RICK BURRIS: Thank you.
22 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Jamie, you've got it.
23 JOE JEWELL: Thank you, Rick. Thank you,
24 Commissioners.
25 Next up for your consideration is regulatory

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1 changes to Title 22 Part 7, final adoption of Greater
2 Amberjack Size Changes. Mr. Travis Williams will be
3 presenting.
4 TRAVIS WILLIAMS: Good morning Chairman,
5 Commissioners, Director Miller, Ms. Chestnut.
6 This morning's final adoption is going to be on
7 the recreational size change to Greater Amberjack. It is
8 located is Title 22 Part 7 Chapter 8.
9 CMR passed a Notice of Intent, on April 18th,
10 2017. The MDMR web page notice was published, on April
11 20th, 2017. Legal notice appeared in the Sun Herald, on
12 April 24th, 2017. The Notice of Intent was published, on
13 April 18th, 2017, through the Secretary of State.
14 Public comment period ran from April 19th through
15 May 16th, 2017, for a total of twenty-six days. To date,
16 no public comments have been received.
17 For the record, Chapter 8 Section 102 Subsection
18 102.04 will read:
19 "Recreational Bag, Possession and Size Limits.
20 102.04. Greater Amberjack thirty-four inches fork
21 length."
22 What would be required from the Commission is a
23 motion for Final Adoption of Regulatory Changes to Title
24 22 Part 7 Chapter 8 Section 102 Subsection 102.04,
25 Recreational Size Limit for Greater Amberjack.

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1 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Any questions?
2 (No response.)
3 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Can we get a motion on
4 this?
5 COMMISSIONER HARMON: Mr. Chairman, I would like
6 to make a motion for Final Adoption of Regulatory Changes
7 to Title 22 Part 7 Chapter 8 Section 102 Subsection
8 102.04, Recreational Size Limit for Greater Amberjack.
9 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Can we get a second?
10 COMMISSIONER HAVARD: Yes, Mr. Chairman. I will
11 second that motion.
12 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion and a
13 second.
14 All those in favor say aye.
15 (All in favor.)
16 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Opposed?
17 (None opposed.)
18 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Motion carries.
19 JOE JEWELL: Thank you, Travis. Thank you,
20 Commissioners.
21 Next up for your consideration is regulatory
22 changes to Title 22 Part 1.
23 For your convenience, I have actually put on the
24 title page the regulatory change. It's Notice of Intent
25 to modify Chapter 7 Section 102, adding language banning

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1 basket dredges.
2 The Commission passed the Notice of Intent, on
3 April the 19th, 2017. The MDMR published the Notice on its
4 web page, on April the 20th, 2017. Legal notice appeared
5 in the Sun Herald, on April the 24th, 2017.
6 Public comments. A total of twenty-two public
7 comments have been received so far. All of these oppose
8 the proposed ban on basket dredges.
9 Twenty public comments were hand-delivered by
10 Ms. Thao Vu, on Monday, May the 15th, 2017. All twenty of
11 the public comments are opposed to the proposed ban on
12 basket dredges and requested a public hearing be held.
13 One public comment was emailed, on Monday, May
14 the 15th, 2017, by Mr. Jesse Shifalo. This comment also
15 opposed the ban on basket dredges, the proposed ban on
16 basket dredges.
17 A petition was submitted by attorney, Mr. Morgan
18 Holder, representing Ms. Thao Vu and the Mississippi
19 Coalition for Vietnamese-American Fisher Folks and
20 Families, opposing the ban on basket dredges.
21 I have two things to say about the petition.
22 First, because it was submitted during the public
23 comment period, it will be treated as a public comment
24 opposing the ban on basket dredges.
25 Two, the petition specifically requests that the

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changes to Title 22 Part 1 Chapter 7 Section 102 be rescinded.

These are the specific items, in the petition for reconsideration, that were brought to the attention of the Commission on Marine Resources for consideration:

Number one. The prohibition on basket dredges is not supported by the best scientific information available.

Number two. The Commission failed to consider the economic impact the rule would have on citizens, and, thus, Chapter 7 Section 102 of Title 22 Part 1 must be reversed.

Number three. Chapter 7 Section 102 of Title 22 Part 1 while arguably facially neutral, its disparate impact against the Vietnamese-American violates the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution and, therefore, must be invalidated.

These are the guidelines outlined in Title 22 Part 15 Chapter 3 that allow the Commission four options for their consideration for the petition for reconsideration:

One. Make a final disposition of the petition by either granting, or denying, the requested action without further argument.

Two. Request a response from the MDMR, prior to

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making a final disposition.

Three. Set the matter for an evidentiary hearing.

Four. Make such further order as it deems appropriate under the circumstances.

I have additional information available, if the Commission would like to hear it, related to option two.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We would, Joe.

Would you elaborate on that?

JOE JEWELL: Yes, sir.

Title 22 Part 15 Subsection 102 provides the following:

If the Commission has acted upon a regulatory regulation, a party opposed to the regulation may request consideration of the Commission's decision by filing a petition for reconsideration.

The petition for reconsideration must be filed within fourteen days of the final adoption of the regulation. The final adoption date, for purposes of reconsideration, is the day that the Commission takes action and votes on the regulation and not the day that the Notice of Intent is approved.

The petition for reconsideration in this matter has been prematurely filed, in that the regulation at issue, Title 22 Part 1 Chapter 7 Section 102 has not been

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approved for final adoption.

A proposal to amend this regulation was presented at the April Commission meeting, at which time the Commission voted to send the proposed regulation out for public comment for the Notice of Intent.

The public comments received have been presented at today's Commission meeting, and the Commission was scheduled to vote on whether the proposed regulation should be adopted, reversed, or denied.

Accordingly, the petition for reconsideration should be denied, as being prematurely filed.

However, as I previously mentioned, it is to be considered a public comment opposing the proposed Notice of Intent.

I think counselor Chestnut has additional information to provide for the Commission, when considering this action.

SANDY CHESTNUT: I would just like to point out this is a technical procedural matter because this rule has not been changed. The Commission has not finally acted on this rule. To consider a petition, at this time, to rescind a rule that hasn't been changed is premature.

That is why Joe is recommending that the petition, at this time, be denied as being premature, but, then, if the Commission does change the rule and that rule

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is adverse to the petitioners, then, they could file the same petition again, at that time.

Until such time as the rule has been changed that is adverse to the parties, it is premature.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Does anybody have any questions?

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Yes.

Joe, why are we doing a petition for reconsideration, if the timing is not right?

JOE JEWELL: Well, what normally would happen is the Commission would take action.

Today, what could potentially happen is the Commission would do a final adoption like you did for the regulation for Amberjack, and, then, at that time, procedurally, if anyone had objection after the final adoption, a petition for reconsideration would be filed.

Procedurally, that is how it would happen, but, in this case, the petition for reconsideration was filed what we consider prematurely. It was done before the final adoption. It was done during the public comment period for Notice of Intent.

That is why I advised that we deny the petition, but consider it part of the public comment period, until the Commission decides what they are going to do, or what action they are going to take for the regulatory part of

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1 it.

2 You've got two things that are happening almost
3 simultaneously. You have got to consider what you are
4 going to do with the petition for reconsideration, and,
5 then, the regulatory action, but not necessarily in that
6 order, and that is what Counselor Chestnut is advising.

7 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I guess my question is,
8 we can grant a reconsideration, even though it really
9 won't matter?

10 SANDY CHESTNUT: Excuse me. I think what you
11 are asking is why are we considering it, if it is
12 premature.

13 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Correct.

14 SANDY CHESTNUT: The reason we are considering
15 it is because by our own Regulation, Title 22 Part 15, if
16 a petition is filed, it has to be brought before the
17 Commission at the next meeting. We had to bring it
18 forward, but, because there is really nothing for them to
19 be aggrieved about at this time, it is premature.

20 That's why I said they can refile it. If the
21 Commission changes the rule and that rule is adverse to
22 that party, they can refile that petition at that time.

23 The rule is just out on Notice of Intent, right
24 now. If the Commission decides to change that rule and it
25 is adverse to the parties, that is going to be on file for

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1 thirty days before it becomes effective. They would need
2 to file that petition during that thirty-day period,
3 before it became effective.

4 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Is this like I see so
5 many other Court cases where, if they file, that would
6 actually stop that regulation from becoming effective,
7 until that is settled?

8 SANDY CHESTNUT: They could request that in
9 their petition.

10 JOE JEWELL: In the petition itself, it is
11 asking that these proposed regulation changes be
12 rescinded.

13 There is a lot of different evidentiary-type
14 language in the petition itself that is in y'all's packet,
15 but these are the three main items that they are being
16 aggrieved for and they want the regulatory action
17 rescinded on.

18 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Thank you.

19 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: At this point, I would
20 like to make a motion, and, then, we will let the people
21 that signed up come up and talk.

22 The way I understand it, we have four choices we
23 could make up here.

24 JOE JEWELL: Correct.

25 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: I would like to make a

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1 motion that we go with number two, request a response from
2 the Department to make a final disposition and hear
3 additional information from the staff. I would like to
4 make that motion.

5 Can I get a second on that motion?

6 COMMISSIONER HARMON: I'll second that, Mr.
7 Chairman.

8 SANDY CHESTNUT: We have already had the
9 response that the DMR put together. At this time, the
10 staff is recommending that the petition be denied as being
11 prematurely filed. I think that is going to be the next
12 motion, if the Commission agrees with staff's
13 recommendation.

14 Does anybody have any questions?

15 (No response.)

16 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion and a
17 second.

18 All those in favor say aye.

19 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I'm sorry.

20 Which motion are we voting on?

21 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: The first one. You have
22 it highlighted right there in front of you, Steve.

23 It's just to move forward with the evidence that
24 they want, and let the staff come back and give us a
25 report on the scientific evidence, the economic impact.

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1 There were three of them, wasn't it, Joe, that
2 they asked for?

3 JOE JEWELL: I think Counselor Chestnut advised
4 correctly. What we are asking, right now, is I think the
5 Commission has to take action on the petition for
6 reconsideration, and the staff is not making a decision,
7 or a recommendation, on the actual content of the petition
8 for reconsideration.

9 What we are saying is that the petition for
10 reconsideration is premature, in that no regulatory action
11 has been taken by the Commission.

12 We are requesting the Commission to deny that
13 request for reconsideration, until such action is taken by
14 the Commission.

15 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: The way I understand it,
16 we are dealing with two different things here. The next
17 thing will be to deny it.

18 SANDY CHESTNUT: I think that's the confusion.
19 We are dealing with the petition for reconsideration, and,
20 then, we are also dealing with the Notice of Intent, the
21 action on the Notice of Intent.

22 If we can, let's go ahead and deal with the
23 petition for reconsideration, and deal with the requested
24 action of staff, whether the Commission would like to deny
25 the petition for reconsideration as being prematurely

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1 filed.

2 Like I said, that does not give up their right
3 to remedy. They will have that right, if the rule is
4 changed in a manner that they are aggrieved by later on
5 down the road.

6 JOE JEWELL: That's correct.

7 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Sandy, if I'm getting
8 this right, you want the motion to deny the petition for
9 reconsideration, if that's what we want to do, first?

10 SANDY CHESTNUT: That would procedurally be
11 first, to deal with the petition.

12 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: I will make that motion
13 that we deny the petition for reconsideration as being
14 prematurely filed.

15 JOE JEWELL: That's correct.

16 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Can I get a second on
17 that motion?

18 COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: I will second it.

19 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion and a
20 second.

21 All those in favor say aye.

22 (All in favor.)

23 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Opposed?

24 (None opposed.)

25 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Motion carries.

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1 At this point, let's go back and let the people
2 that wanted to speak come up and talk, and, then, we will
3 go back to this motion, the first motion I made.

4 Chris Lagarde.

5 CHRIS LAGARDE: Good morning. It was a lovely
6 drive from Hancock County today for those of you who
7 didn't get to make it.

8 Once again, we are standing at this crossroad,
9 and I believe we are at a dangerous point. No science.
10 No proof of any real science that basket dredges are
11 causing the problems that you seem to think they are
12 causing.

13 My real deep concern about this is that we
14 blamed Katrina, we blamed the BP oil spill and we blamed
15 the Bonnet Carre openings, plural, for the demise of the
16 oyster industry, and, now, we are blaming, maybe kind of
17 covertly, the Vietnamese community who mostly use these
18 basket dredges, as I understand it, for the demise of the
19 fishery.

20 If we pass this and three years from now we are
21 still in the same shape, then, who are we going to go
22 after?

23 If I knew for sure that basket dredges were
24 doing the damage that some folks say they are doing, then,
25 I would be all for banning basket dredges, but to say that

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1 a basket dredge is killing the reef and a regular bag
2 dredge is helping the reef, I just don't buy that.

3 I think we are in a dangerous spot here, with
4 this decision.

5 I applaud the Commission for trying to do
6 something, but, picking out this community and saying
7 y'all are the reason we lost the oysters and we are going
8 to fix it and you are going to have to get bag dredges, I
9 just think we are heading in the wrong direction.

10 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Chris, let me say this.
11 I don't think I have heard anybody say that the Vietnamese
12 community, in any way, has destroyed the oyster reefs, or
13 blame them for destroying the oyster reefs.

14 I think this is just being cautious with
15 conservation. We have heard that they do kill oysters
16 because the basket dredges dig down and bury the shells
17 and turn the bottom over, but I don't think anybody is
18 blaming the Vietnamese community for this.

19 CHRIS LAGARDE: Well, it may not be spoken, but
20 it is there, Mr. Gollott.

21 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: I would never say that.

22 CHRIS LAGARDE: Again, back to the fall of 2005,
23 these guys caught five hundred thousand sacks of oysters.
24 Look at the data. Almost five hundred thousand sacks.

25 I can't even comprehend what it would take us to

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1 have five hundred thousand sacks of oysters harvested
2 today.

3 I'm not sure what my point is, but, in fall of
4 2005, we caught five hundred thousand sacks of oysters.

5 Is there a possibility that we overfished the
6 reefs?

7 We don't know.

8 COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: Chris, I would also like
9 to add that I think the Commission as a whole believe that
10 we are not blaming the basket dredge for the decrease in
11 the oyster industry, but we are understanding that it is a
12 piece and a part of trying to do all the things necessary
13 that we can do to help bring back this industry.

14 I just want to get that straight. I don't think
15 that anyone is pinpointing and trying to blame one certain
16 thing. We understand that there are many things that have
17 attributed to this problem and we are trying, as a whole,
18 to bring back the industry.

19 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Thank you, Chris.

20 CHRIS LAGARDE: Thank y'all.

21 Morgan Holder.

22 MORGAN HOLDER: Good morning everybody. My name
23 is Morgan Holder. I represent Ms. Vu and her
24 organization, and I'm the attorney that filed this
25 petition that has seemingly a procedural matter that we

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1 are in today.

2 I apologize for any missteps that I made, in
3 that regard, but I want to ask a couple of questions of
4 Ms. Chestnut on the record, just so I'm completely clear
5 that I understand exactly what is going on here.

6 This rule technically has not passed.

7 Is that what I'm understanding?

8 SANDY CHESTNUT: That's correct. It is still
9 out on Notice of Intent open for public comment.

10 MORGAN HOLDER: Pursuant to that, will there be
11 any other hearings, prior to the passage of that, or is
12 that just a vote that gets circulated?

13 How does that happen?

14 SANDY CHESTNUT: Because we got more than ten
15 requests for a public hearing, it did throw it into the
16 requirement that there be a public hearing.

17 There will be a public hearing. Then, after the
18 public hearing, it will come back to the Commission for
19 their final action.

20 MORGAN HOLDER: Is there any indication when
21 that hearing might take place, at this time?

22 SANDY CHESTNUT: We haven't scheduled that yet.
23 It will be published.

24 MORGAN HOLDER: Once you receive ten public
25 comments that throws it into the arena of you have to have

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1 another hearing?

2 SANDY CHESTNUT: Yes.

3 MORGAN HOLDER: How far out is that usually set?

4 SANDY CHESTNUT: It is usually within a couple
5 of weeks, or so.

6 MORGAN HOLDER: So this will be something that
7 happens relatively quickly?

8 SANDY CHESTNUT: Yes.

9 MORGAN HOLDER: Since the petition has been
10 denied, I understand why because technically it is mute
11 from a procedural aspect. I'm not going to necessarily
12 get into arguing the merits of that today, other than to
13 say if this passes, obviously that petition is going to be
14 refiled.

15 There is one thing I would like to say because I
16 heard it again this morning, regarding the science on
17 these things, "because I heard they do kill oysters".

18 I would just like to emphasize that the
19 Commission has a sworn duty to follow the law and the
20 statute. Off the top of my head, I believe 49-15-2 says
21 that these decisions must be made on the best scientific
22 information available.

23 The only science that we've had, period, in all
24 the transcripts that I've read in the last three years on
25 this issue, supports not banning these things.

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1 The chief biologist for DMR said it was
2 inconclusive, and we had an certified oyster biologist
3 come in here and say that he thinks there is evidence
4 these things work better.

5 The only thing that we have is opinion, mainly
6 from people from Louisiana and Texas, when you have
7 ninety-nine percent of the people in Mississippi publicly
8 commenting that they are against the ban.

9 Who are we protecting here?

10 If there is some science out there that supports
11 this resolution, then, I'm all for hearing it, but until
12 there is some, it is just a violation of the law to pass
13 this.

14 I think the Commission should reconsider that,
15 prior to the final vote at the next hearing.

16 I will leave it at that, and I appreciate y'all
17 letting me speak this morning.

18 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Thank you, sir.

19 I think I need to add a couple of things to my
20 motion.

21 Motion to extend public comments to allow time
22 for the public hearing to be considered. Motion to direct
23 the DMR staff to report back to the Commission on the
24 matters identifying the public comments received. For
25 practicality, the Commission would like to have more

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1 information, regarding the economic impact statement, and,
2 if there is any other science out there available, come
3 back to us on that.

4 I think it was Commissioner Trapani that
5 seconded my motion.

6 Would that be okay with you, Commissioner
7 Trapani?

8 COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: Yes.

9 SANDY CHESTNUT: Can we take the first one
10 first, the motion to extend the public comment period to
11 allow time for a public hearing to be conducted?

12 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Okay.

13 You want us to do it one at a time?

14 SANDY CHESTNUT: Yes.

15 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: I'll make that motion.
16 Can I get a second on that one, the public
17 hearing?

18 COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: I'll second it.

19 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion and a
20 second.

21 All those in favor say aye.

22 (All in favor.)

23 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Opposed?

24 (None opposed.)

25 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: That motion carries.

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Now, the second one.

You want to read that one, Sandy?

SANDY CHESTNUT: Motion to direct DMR staff to report back to the Commission on the matters that have been identified by the public comments received, and the Commission would like to have more information in regards to the economic impact statement and whether there is other scientific evidence available regarding basket dredges.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: I'll make that motion, the last motion.

Can I get a second on that one?

COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: Yes. I'll second it.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion and a second.

All those in favor say aye.

(All in favor.)

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Opposed?

(None opposed.)

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Motion carries.

Thank you very much.

JOE JEWELL: Thank you, Commissioners.

With those motions, that concludes the presentation for F(3).

Next up for the consideration of the Commission

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is Item F(4), regulatory changes to Title 22 Part 7, the Sunset Clause. Mr. Matt Hill will be making that presentation.

MATT HILL: Good morning Commissioners, Director Miller, Sandy.

At the last Commission meeting, we discussed, in Title 22 Part 7 Chapter 7, a reconsideration of Sunset Clause for the for-hire two-day bag limit.

The CMR did pass the Notice of Intent, on April 19th, 2017, and it was filed with the Secretary of State's office. Public notice was given via the DMR web page, on April 20th, 2017. Legal notice appeared in the Sun Herald, on April 24th, 2017.

As previously noted, the Notice of Intent was published on April 19th, 2017, through the Secretary of State's office.

The public comment period began April 19th and ran through May 16th which is a total of twenty-six days, and no public comments have been received to date.

This is a quite lengthy regulation. I will summarize it. In summary, the regulation provides for an endorsement for the for-hire industry to obtain a two-day bag limit on certain species, if specific criteria are met.

This slide represents the information required

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to be filed with the Department, before the beginning of each of these trips, to possess these two-day bag limits for the for-hire industry.

The change does occur in Section 104. This deals specifically with the Sunset Clause, and it will now read, if the Commission so chooses:

"This Chapter shall renew automatically on an annual basis for a one-year period, unless the Commission initiates a review of this section."

If the Commission so desires to adopt this regulation change, a motion for final adoption of regulatory changes to Title 22 Part 7 Section 104 for-hire exemption for certain bag limits is required.

Do we have any questions?

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I have a few, Matt.

MATT HILL: Yes, sir.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Just out of curiosity, approximately, how many float plans were filed?

MATT HILL: We have had, approximately, six individuals purchase the endorsement, and I believe the last time I counted we had ninety-two float plans that were filed.

Now, all of them did not take advantage of the two-day bag limit, but they did file a float plan.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: If I'm correct, don't

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they have to file a float plan every time they go?

MATT HILL: That is correct.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: The ninety-two is for what period of time?

You said you had ninety-two float plans filed.

MATT HILL: The regulation actually went into effect and, as we discussed last time, we did let the Sunset Clause expire. We did talk about that.

The regulation went into effect on June the 1st of 2015, I believe. From June the 1st, 2015, until now, we have had ninety-two of these trips.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: On average in a year, how many?

MATT HILL: Roughly fifty. Approximately, fifty trips is what we are seeing.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: In a year's time?

MATT HILL: In one year's time, correct.

Most of them are from two individuals. We have had the same group of individuals. Like I said, we've had six of these endorsements, I believe, that have been sold.

One of the gentlemen was up here the other day buying his license, and it doesn't necessarily mean that they are catching their two-day bag limit. We have not run that analysis, but they have had the potential to do it.

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Commission on Marine Resources

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1 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I'm just concerned with
2 the spotted seatrout and allowing a two-day bag limit.
3 I was trying find out just how many, but, if
4 it's only fifty trips per year, that's hard to believe.
5 MATT HILL: The captain and crew have also been
6 taken out of that, and the Chandelier vessels are not
7 required to do this.
8 I know it seems like it should be a larger
9 number, but it is actually not quite as high as we what we
10 were expecting.
11 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Thank you.
12 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We need a motion on this.
13 Can I get a motion?
14 COMMISSIONER HARMON: Mr. Chairman, I would like
15 to make a motion for final adoption of regulatory changes
16 to Title 22 Part 7 Chapter 7 Section 104 For-Hire
17 Exemption for Certain Bag Limits.
18 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Can I get a second on
19 that?
20 COMMISSIONER HAVARD: I'll second that, Mr.
21 Chairman.
22 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion and a
23 second.
24 All those in favor say aye.
25 (Commissioner Gollott, Commissioner Harmon,

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1 Commissioner Havard, Commissioner Trapani in favor.)
2 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Opposed?
3 (Commissioner Bosarge opposed.)
4 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: One opposed. Motion
5 carries.
6 Thank you.
7 MATT HILL: Thank you.
8 JOE JEWELL: Thank you, Matt. Thank you,
9 Commissioners.
10 The final item for the Commission's
11 consideration is the State Finfish Records. It's a
12 conventional tackle change, and Mr. Jonathan Barr will be
13 presenting that.
14 JONATHAN BARR: Thank you, Joe.
15 Good morning Commissioners, Director Miller, Ms.
16 Chestnut.
17 We have one state record up for consideration
18 this month. The first item was removed from the agenda.
19 The one we have up is a conventional tackle record.
20 It is a Finetooth Shark, *Carcharhinus isodon*.
21 The old record was thirty-four pounds eight point six four
22 ounces. The new record is forty-six pounds ten point four
23 ounces. The angler is Ms. Shiloh Turner on vacation from
24 the Delta.
25 That is the Finetooth Shark. That is Ms. Shiloh

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1 with her state record (indicating photographs).
2 What is required is a motion to adopt this new
3 state record.
4 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We need a motion.
5 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: So moved, Mr. Chairman.
6 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion.
7 Do we have a second?
8 COMMISSIONER HAVARD: I'll second it.
9 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion and a
10 second.
11 All those in favor say aye.
12 (All in favor.)
13 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Opposed?
14 (None opposed.)
15 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Motion carries.
16 Thank you.
17 JONATHAN BARR: Thank you.
18 JOE JEWELL: Thank you, John. Thank you,
19 Commissioners.
20 With no further questions, that concludes Marine
21 Fisheries' presentation.
22 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: It looks like Marine
23 Resources doesn't have anything, and Office of Coastal
24 Restoration doesn't have anything.
25 Finance, Kacey Williams.

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1 KACEY WILLIAMS: Good morning Commissioners,
2 Director Miller, Ms. Chestnut.
3 These are the financial results as of April 30th,
4 2017.
5 We had a State revenue of eight point eight
6 million. Total Agency revenue twenty-eight point four
7 million.
8 We had State net income of six hundred thousand
9 which includes one million spending of cash on hand. We
10 also had Total Agency net income of four hundred sixty-
11 nine thousand which included six point four million
12 spending of Tidelands cash on hand.
13 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Kacey, back up just a
14 minute and let me ask you a question.
15 KACEY WILLIAMS: Okay.
16 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Am I looking at that
17 right?
18 Is there a six hundred thousand dollar loss?
19 KACEY WILLIAMS: No. We're in the positive. It
20 would have parenthesis around it, if it was negative.
21 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Okay.
22 KACEY WILLIAMS: After ten months of fiscal year
23 2017, we have forty-nine point nine percent of our
24 Operating funds budget remaining and thirty-four point one
25 percent of our Tidelands funds remaining.

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COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: You would consider us financially stable?

KACEY WILLIAMS: Yes, sir, we are.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Thank you, Kacey.

KACEY WILLIAMS: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Ms. Melissa.

MELISSA SCALLAN: Good morning Commissioners, Director Miller, Ms. Chestnut.

The agency has been mentioned forty-six times in local, state and national media, since the April meeting.

The items that got the most attention were the opening of the state season for Red Snapper and the planting of cultch material on oyster reefs in the western portion of the Sound, and I do want to point out that that news item was mentioned in U.S. News and World Report and USA Today. We are very excited about that.

The Cat Island Reef partnership that we did with CCA was put in the National CCA Magazine.

We have had quite a few community outreach events.

Jennifer Broderick and Bridgette Varone from Coastal Restoration and Resiliency worked the Earth Day celebration in Gautier.

Some members of Marine Patrol and Public Affairs were at the Shuckers Education Day in April.

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On May 6th, Jennifer Frey from Coastal Resources Management participated in an event at Bells Ferry Coastal Preserve.

Marine Patrol also participated in quite a few other events; Paddle Palooza in Gautier, the Deer Island Cleanup, Reading on the River in Moss Point, and the Dragon Boat Festival at Gulfport Lake. They have also done a lot of safety events and education and career fairs at local schools.

The last item is the Office of Marine Fisheries Shellfish Bureau hosted the 2017 Gulf and South Atlantic States Shellfish Conference. We had seventy-five people from across the country that participated in that which was about ten more than in New Orleans last year. We were pretty excited about that.

We started at the Biloxi Civic Center and they went to a field trip at the Gulf Coast Research Lab, and, then, the last day was presentations from the different states.

Joe Jewell received a letter from Laurie Farmer. She is the Director of the State Cooperative Programs for the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, and I just thought I would bring that to the Commission.

"Dear Joe,

"It was a pleasure to see you at the Gulf and

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South Atlantic States Shellfish Conference. Thank you for your leadership in putting on a exceptional conference. Everything was well done, from the opening reception to the agenda, the tour, and the sunset cruise.

"You and your staff went above and beyond to make all feel welcome.

"Thanks again,

"Laurie Farmer."

We do have the Seafood Cookoff coming up next week. If you guys are interested in going, let me know. It is going to be Thursday, May 25th, at CLIMB CDC in Gulfport.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Thank you, Melissa.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I would just like to say thank you to the staff for keeping us up here at the top. Good job.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Is there any other business to come before this Commission today?

(No response.)

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: If not, we have two public comments.

Gilbert Ramsey. Gilbert, you've got five minutes.

GILBERT RAMSEY: Good morning Commissioners, Ms. Chestnut, Mr. Miller.

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COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Sorry, Gilbert. It's three minutes.

GILBERT RAMSEY: That's fine. That's appropriate. I have no problem.

I've been networking since 2015, top of the Hancock Bank, Governor Barbour days.

I'm here to initiate a community partnership program with Keesler and the Seabees, Navy, international recognition.

We are initiating rehabilitation for the disabled community and new recreational opportunities for our senior citizens and to incorporate this venture with the Red Cross first responders and, also, NASA outreach assistance.

On June the 6th, we are initiating new manufacturing opportunity to initiate research vessels for inlet waterway pollution, environmental-friendly vessels, and we are partnering with the Choctaw Indians in Vancleave.

I would like to introduce this to you. This Saturday is Armed Forces Day. We are stepping up to the mark with signs at the location to introduce this appropriately. We are blessing the waterway.

I would like Mr. Miller's and the Commission's association to appropriately handle this with y'all's

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1 outreach assistance.

2 We are coming forth to go to the Pentagon,
3 Ladies and Gentlemen. We have been offered to go to the
4 Pentagon with Senator Roger Wicker and his assistance with
5 outreach for our hospitality state for our capabilities to
6 represent the hospitality state appropriately.

7 We are coming forth with this outreach
8 assistance. We are incorporating our passenger train,
9 CSX, Amtrak. I have the capability to bring this forth.

10 I have unlimited funds associated with this.
11 I'm here to help us out.

12 Please, direct me appropriately and address it
13 appropriately, and my counsel and my board members will
14 step up and assist you appropriately.

15 Thank you very much for your attention and your
16 cooperation.

17 Any questions?

18 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: No, sir. Thank you.

19 GILBERT RAMSEY: All right, sir.

20 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Next we have Bryan
21 Leveritt.

22 BRYAN LEVERITT: Good morning. I'm Bryan
23 Leveritt. I'm President of St. Christopher Foundation.

24 I want to give thanks to Mark Havard. He
25 pointed out to me that y'all are all volunteers and

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1 receive no pay, or other assistance, and that is really
2 what we are.

3 We are an organization. We are preparing to
4 bring online our Youth at Risk Program. We are going to
5 be working with youth out of the Mobile area and Moss
6 Point and Pascagoula.

7 Amongst our personnel, we own some vessels.
8 We've got about seven vessels from twenty-five foot to
9 eighty-seven foot, and our goal is to backup other people
10 who are already working with youth at risk, and we are
11 talking about problems, what they are feeding themselves
12 and their ears on the street and the destruction it is
13 causing.

14 What we plan on doing is backing up those people
15 by taking the kids fishing, by doing training about the
16 wildlife and marine life out on the Gulf islands. I have
17 a background with Gulf Coast Research Lab.

18 One of the things we see as a barrier to us,
19 right now, is the issue of the amount of fishing licenses.

20 For instance, if we had ten youth over sixteen
21 out of the Mobile area, we would be facing a four hundred
22 dollar fund raising issue, and we are already covering
23 fuel, maintenance and dockage on other vessels in this
24 area. All of our vessels are over here, right now.

25 We've got an offer from Sea Scouts to associate

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1 with them and that would help us on our insurance issues,
2 but I see that this is an issue about the fishing
3 licenses.

4 I would ask y'all if you would consider giving
5 us a pass on the fishing licenses; also, for disabled, or
6 veterans working with PTSD and other things.

7 We've got the vessels. It is up to us to
8 maintain them. We are going to teach the kids about boat
9 maintenance and ship building.

10 One of our youth has already gone to work a few
11 years ago for the pogy boats. He very much likes it,
12 despite the fragrance.

13 What we are doing is backing up others. There
14 are so many people out here reaching out to help, and what
15 we are hoping to do is to put a distraction in there
16 against what is going on, on the streets.

17 Thank you.

18 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Mr. Leveritt, we will ask
19 Sandy, our attorney. I don't think it is up to us to set
20 the fishing license, or give somebody a pass.

21 I think there is a State Statute, isn't it,
22 Sandy?

23 SANDY CHESTNUT: Yes, sir, that is set by State
24 Statute.

25 That would be something you might want to

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1 propose to your legislator, and you can send us a
2 proposal, as well, and we could take a look at it, but
3 that is not in the Commission's discretion because that is
4 in the State Law.

5 BRYAN LEVERITT: Who specifically do we need to
6 contact on that?

7 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Any of your senators.
8 Senator Gollott and Senator Seymour, just to name a
9 couple.

10 What about disability?

11 Isn't there some kind of clause in there?

12 SANDY CHESTNUT: There is already a disability
13 exemption. They have to have certain paperwork on file
14 and things like that.

15 I think the best way to go is to submit your
16 parameters of your proposal to the Commission and have
17 them take a look at it.

18 They can always pass a resolution supporting
19 that change and pass that on to the legislators.

20 BRYAN LEVERITT: We have two issues. I live
21 over in the Mobile area, even though my vessels are over
22 here.

23 I will be seventy this year and it is still
24 going to cost me a forty dollar fishing license. We are
25 going to be over here and everything else. That's not a

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big issue for me.

When we start getting a number of youth and we have their chaperones and other people with us that adds up in a big hurry. Already, fuel is enough to tie us in a knot.

I will definitely appreciate this, and we will get something in writing to y'all, what you need.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Thank you, sir.

SANDY CHESTNUT: Thank you.

BRYAN LEVERITT: Thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: I think that concludes our business before the Commission.

Can I get a motion to adjourn?

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: So moved, Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion to adjourn.

Do we have a second?

COMMISSIONER HARMON: Second, Mr. Chairman.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion and a second.

All those in favor say aye.

(All in favor.)

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Adjourned.

(Whereupon, at 10:17 o'clock, a.m., the May 16, 2017, meeting of the Commission on Marine Resources was

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concluded.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Lucille Morgan, Certified Shorthand Reporter, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the May 16, 2017, meeting of the Commission on Marine Resources, as taken by me t the time and place heretofore stated in the aforementioned matter in shorthand, with electronic verification, and later reduced to typewritten form to the best of my skill and ability; and, further, that I am not a relative, employee, or agent, of any of the parties thereto, nor financially interested in the cause.

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