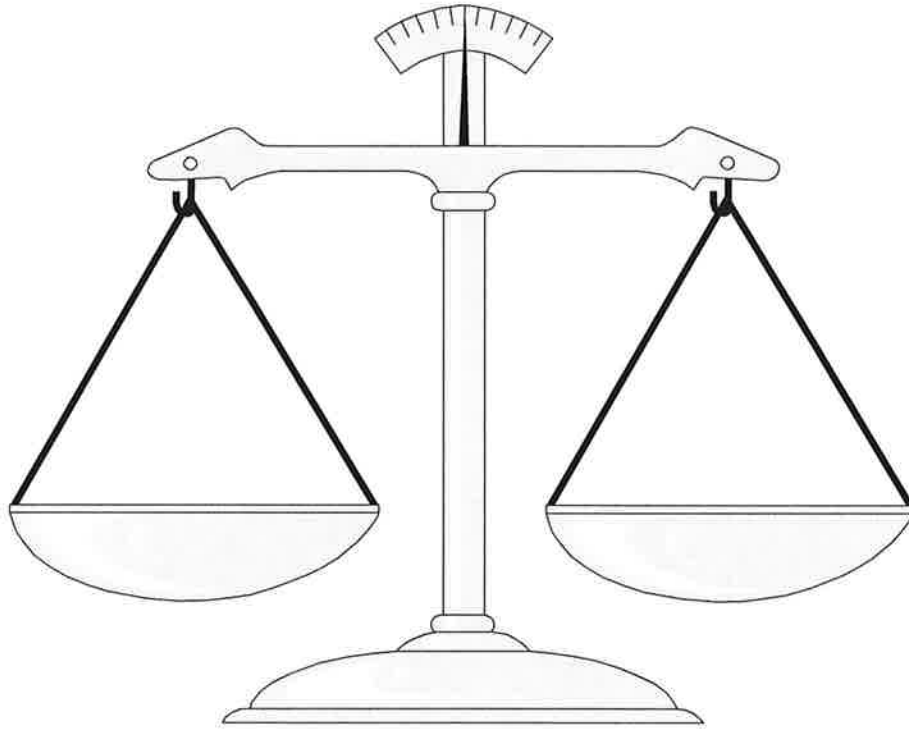


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COMMISSION ON MARINE RESOURCES

COMMISSION MEETING

December 16, 2014

**N.J. Soroie, CSR, P.O. Box 2102, Bay St. Louis, MS 39521
(228) 467-2199**

COMMISSION ON MARINE RESOURCES

MEETING OF COMMISSION ON MARINE RESOURCES

December 16, 2014

TRANSCRIPT OF MEETING OF COMMISSION ON MARINE RESOURCES AT
BOLTON STATE BUILDING, PUBLIC MEETING ROOM, 1141 BAYVIEW
AVENUE, BILOXI, MISSISSIPPI, ON THE 16TH DAY OF DECEMBER 2014
2011 COMMENCING AT 9:00 A.M. AND REPORTED BY NORMA JEAN LADNER
SOROE, CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTER.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:

RICHARD GOLLOTT, Chairman
SHELBY DRUMMOND
STEVE BOSARGE
ERNIE ZIMMERMAN

ALSO PRESENT:

JAMIE MILLER, Director DMR
SANDY CHESNUT, ESQ., Asst. Attorney General
SEAN MORRISON, Asst. Attorney General

1

C. Approval of Agenda

MR. GOLLOTT: Okay. We have approval of the
agenda. Do we have any modifications?

MR. ZIMMERMAN: This is where I need this. Yes,
sir. I'd like to remove G-1 bureau of wetlands permitting.
And I'd also like to change K-2 and L which would allow the
public to comment before we go into executive session so they
don't have to sit and wait on us to get out of executive
session if that's okay.

MR. GOLLOTT: Where do you want to move that to?

MR. ZIMMERMAN: Move K-2 to where L is and move
L up and let public comments go before we go into executive
session.

MR. GOLLOTT: Okay. Do we have a motion to
approve the agenda as modified?

MR. DRUMMOND: So moved, Mr. Chairman.

MR. GOLLOTT: Do I have a second?

MR. ZIMMERMAN: Second.

MR. GOLLOTT: All those in favor say aye.
Opposed? Motion carries.

D. Executive Director's Report

MR. GOLLOTT: We move on to the executive
director's report.

MR. MILLER: Sandy, do you want to go through
the administrative penalties?

3

A. Call to Order

MR. GOLLOTT: I'd like to welcome everybody to
our December CMR meeting, our regular meeting.

And at this time, I'd like to ask our director
to lead us in the pledge of allegiance.

B. Approval of Minutes

MR. GOLLOTT: I need approval of the minutes for
November 5 special meeting.

MR. ZIMMERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I have a couple of
changes I'd like to bring. G-1 needs to be removed.

I'm sorry. I'm sorry. I make a motion to
approve the minutes.

MR. GOLLOTT: Do I have a second?

MR. BOSARGE: So second.

MR. GOLLOTT: All those in favor say aye.
Opposed? Motion carries.

C. Approval of Agenda

MR. GOLLOTT: Now we have approval of the
minutes of the commission meeting of November 18. Do I have a
motion to approve?

MR. DRUMMOND: So moved, Mr. Chairman.

MR. GOLLOTT: Do I have a second?

MR. ZIMMERMAN: Second.

MR. GOLLOTT: All those in favor say aye.
Opposed? Motion carries.

2

MS. CHESNUT: I sure will.

We have one administrative penalty for your
consideration today. And this is in the matter of Shannon
Poole, Cause Number 101613-01, possession of red snapper during
closed season. This is the companion case to Archie Williams
that was considered at the October meeting.

On October 16, 2013, a compliance check of a
recreational vessel fishing near the back of an oil tanker in
federal waters, Mr. Poole advised that they had snapper, cobia,
dolphin, and gag grouper on board.

Marine patrol advised Mr. Poole that red snapper
season was closed. And Mr. Poole stated that he thought the
season was open based upon what he had read and what other
people had told him.

Mr. Poole and Mr. Williams were both issued an
enforcement report for possession of red snapper during closed
season.

Mr. Poole did not respond to the violation. Mr.
Williams submitted two written responses to the violations.
And those written responses have been provided to each
commissioner.

Mr. Williams requested an informal settlement
conference with the executive director and that took place on
August 15, 2014.

All supporting documentation, including

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1 photographs, have been provided to each member of the
2 commission. Mr. Poole has been notified that this matter will
3 be presented to the commission today. And the commission may
4 accept, reject, or modify the executive director's
5 recommendation upon motion.

6 And the executive director recommended a \$500
7 fine in this matter. This is the same fine that Mr. Williams
8 was assessed at the October commission meeting.

9 And if Mr. Poole is here, he is invited to come
10 forward and speak to the commission.

11 MR. POOLE: Hello.

12 MR. GOLLOTT: Would you please state your name
13 for the record?

14 MR. POOLE: Shannon Poole.

15 The thing out up there about me not responding,
16 that's not accurate. I called the director of the DMR, talked
17 to him about it, and he said he would make a note of it that I
18 did respond to the violation. So I don't know where that came
19 from at all.

20 MS. CHESNUT: Okay. I didn't have that
21 information. That will be so duly noted for the record.

22 MR. POOLE: I wasn't notified either when the
23 meeting that my father-in-law came to. I wasn't notified to be
24 here, either. And I found out about it, and I was at work so I
25 couldn't make it.

5

1 correct?

2 MS. CHESNUT: Yes, that's correct.

3 MR. GOLLOTT: Do I have a motion on this?

4 MR. ZIMMERMAN: Move to accept the executive
5 director's recommendation.

6 MR. GOLLOTT: Do I have a second?

7 MR. DRUMMOND: Second, Mr. Chairman.

8 MR. GOLLOTT: We have a motion. We have a
9 second by Mr. Drummond. All those in favor say aye. Opposed?
10 Motion carries.

11 Thank you.

12 Executive director finish his report.

13 MR. MILLER: Just to complete my report. I just
14 want to give you an update on a few of the executive office
15 activities since the last meeting.

16 On December 4, we held our legislative forum
17 where we invite our members of our coast delegation to come and
18 hear a year-end update on the agency and seasons and allow them
19 to ask questions. Also talk about possible legislative items
20 we had put forward in the session. The session begins January
21 6, and we'll have a few dates during the session that we will
22 keep the commission informed about the Capitol Day being one
23 where our agency goes and represents the DMR and the Capitol.

24 And we'll keep you informed on that.

25 Second, that following date on the 5th, we

7

1 MS. CHESNUT: Right. I think we discovered that
2 I have the wrong address in the file, that you had moved since
3 the penalty had taken place. So I had been sending
4 notifications to your previous address. So that was corrected
5 for this meeting.

6 Did you have anything else you wanted to address
7 the commission about?

8 MR. POOLE: The only thing I'd like to say is
9 that, I mean, I feel like I was misinformed because I don't
10 fish a lot and he hadn't fished in 30 years, and I took him out
11 there to go fishing, and we caught what we caught. And I was
12 under the assumption that snapper season closed that day. And
13 that's pretty much it. I mean, that's what happened.

14 It was unintentional. And I know that doesn't
15 mean anything, but neither one of us, my father-in-law or I had
16 never had any -- committed any crimes, and we feel awful about
17 it, and it was just a bad deal. For some reason, it feels like
18 snapper fishing is, you have to dig to find out the rules and
19 everything like that. We were just misinformed or really
20 uninformed.

21 That's all I have to say.

22 MS. CHESNUT: Okay. Thank you.

23 MR. GOLLOTT: Thank you, sir.

24 MR. POOLE: You're welcome.

25 MR. GOLLOTT: The recommendation is \$500 fine;

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1 toured, Dr. Kelly Lucas and I and Senator Brice Wiggins,
2 chairman of marine resources committee, toured, went to the
3 Dauphin Shellfish Lab on Dauphin Island, toured their hatchery
4 and their oyster farming area which includes mostly all bottom
5 aquaculture, just to get additional thoughts and ideas about
6 what other states are doing close to us in the Gulf.

7 We later traveled to Washington, D.C. As you
8 may know, Congress just passed an omnibus bill. We went and
9 met with our Senate appropriations staff and delegation from
10 the Senate and House offices, also Department of Interior, to
11 meet with them about funding for agency and other programs for
12 2015.

13 And then finally, we traveled to Charleston and
14 attended the International Shellfish Restoration Conference
15 where we got to meet with Mike Levino (ph.) who is the head of
16 NOAA's aquaculture division and talked to him about the Gulf
17 shellfish initiative that NOAA is undertaking and Mississippi's
18 interest in being a part of that looking forward.

19 We also attended and met with several members of
20 the State of Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, who have all
21 been for decades now at least undertaking large scale
22 restoration projects for oysters and shellfish in their region
23 of the country.

24 So we try to go out, get the best ideas, and see
25 what other parts of country, what they are doing and what

8

1 successes they're having so we can bring those back to the
2 Gulf. And we plan to kick off a very public planning process
3 early in 2015 to begin talking about those with our commission
4 and with the public.

5 So that's just a few things that we've been up
6 to in the last few weeks. Thank you. That's my report. Thank
7 you.

8 MR. GOLLOTT: Thank you, sir.

9 Next we have Chief Davis, marine patrol.

10 E. Office of Marine Patrol

11 MR. DAVIS: Good morning, commissioners,
12 executive director.

13 The office of marine patrol remains a presence
14 on the oyster reefs, as well as working several complaints of
15 crab thefts across the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

16 I have prepared a report for you on citations
17 that have been issued since your last meeting. If you have any
18 questions about that report, I can answer any of those at this
19 time.

20 MR. ZIMMERMAN: Chief Davis, I'd just like to
21 commend you. In looking through the numbers, the total stops
22 Fiscal Year 2015 year to date, 11,185 versus 5,201 in Fiscal
23 Year 2014. This definitely states what we're doing. We're out
24 on the water, and we're doing more stops, more checks. Some of
25 it's for public safety; some of it's for protection of the

9

1 resource. But a great job.

2 Thank you.

3 MR. DAVIS: Yes, sir. Our message remains the
4 same is that we want people to enjoy the resource and be safe
5 at the same time, and we want to make sure that the
6 conservation effort remains intact.

7 Thank you, sir, for pointing that out.

8 MR. GOLLOTT: Thank you, Chief.

9 Joe Jewell, office of marine patrol (sic) -- I
10 mean, office of marine fisheries.

11 F. Office of Marine Fisheries

12 MR. JEWELL: It sometimes feels like that. But
13 I'll take the title of marine fisheries.

14 Before we get into the agenda items, we have two
15 of them, I want to update the commission on a couple of things.

16 Earlier this year, the commission took action on
17 a couple of regulatory processes. Title 22 Part 2, the shrimp
18 net washing issue, and Title 22 Part 9, the mandatory red
19 snapper program. I wanted to update the commission that both
20 of those have been implemented effective December 1. They are
21 part of the public record, and they can be found -- the final
22 rules can be found on the DMR website and on the Secretary of
23 State's web page.

24 Two, the quota season update. Of course, the
25 spotted seatrout and red drum are both closed. Commercial

10

1 flounder, the quota is set at 74,000. We are currently at just
2 over 19,000. And the season is set to close December 31.

3 I wanted to give the commission a short update
4 on the oyster seasons. So far, we've been open for a total of
5 27 days. We've had no closures due to weather. We've had one
6 closure due to a holiday, Thanksgiving. To date, as of
7 December 15, we have had a total of 13,084 sacks harvested. Of
8 those, the dredgers have caught 9,161 sacks. Tongers have
9 caught 3,923 sacks. Of these, tongers, Mississippi tongers
10 have caught 2,161, and nonresidents have caught 1762.

11 Mississippi dredgers have caught 8,789, and nonresidents have
12 caught 372. There have been a total of 1,644 trips. The
13 dredgers have partaken in 950 trips and tongers have taken 694
14 trips.

15 Are there any questions?

16 MR. GOLLOTT: Looks to me like we're approaching
17 having million dollars worth of economic impact with this short
18 oyster season we have had. That's a great job.

19 The fishermen had asked me something about
20 between the bridges in Bay St. Louis. Have you gotten a report
21 on that or anything?

22 MR. JEWELL: We have. We had several requests
23 about that particular area. The water is a little cool now to
24 do our square meter grid sampling in that area. But we have
25 taken one minute dredge tows. And the staff has identified a

11

1 very limited resource in that area that is available should the
2 commission consider that.

3 MR. GOLLOTT: Thank you.

4 At this time, I'd like to make a motion that we
5 open between the bridges for tonging.

6 MR. JEWELL: If the commission so choose to do
7 that, the staff would recommend that you put a time frame on
8 that because it is a very limited resource, that you at least
9 consider that.

10 MR. GOLLOTT: What kind of time frame have you
11 got in mind --

12 MR. JEWELL: Well, there's only --

13 MR. GOLLOTT: -- to leave it open?

14 MR. JEWELL: We would recommend not doing that.
15 We would recommend a minimum of a week or two or put some time
16 frame on it so that the source is not depleted significantly.
17 It's unlike the areas that are in the open waters, Area II-A,
18 II-B, and II-C. It is a very limited resource.

19 MR. GOLLOTT: I think what I'd like to do is
20 just open it and let the executive director close it when he
21 sees fit. All right. I'd like to make that motion. Do I have
22 a second?

23 MR. DRUMMOND: I'll second the motion, Mr.
24 Chairman.

25 MR. GOLLOTT: Have a motion made and seconded.

12

1 All those in favor say aye. Opposed?
 2 MR. ZIMMERMAN: Aye.
 3 MR. GOLLOTT: We have one opposed. Motion
 4 carries.
 5 MR. BOSARGE: No.
 6 MR. ZIMMERMAN: Two opposed.
 7 MR. JEWELL: Legal?
 8 MR. GOLLOTT: We're going to have some more
 9 discussion on this.
 10 MR. BOSARGE: Sandy, I didn't quite hear what
 11 you said.
 12 MS. CHESNUT: This item is not on the agenda and
 13 this had come up before at another meeting. If the
 14 commissioner wants to object because it's not on the agenda,
 15 that's fine. If not, then you can go forward if you feel like
 16 it's an emergency or special circumstance.
 17 MR. BOSARGE: Thank you. I don't object to it,
 18 but I couldn't quite hear what you said. I wanted to make sure
 19 we were following the rules here basically.
 20 MR. JEWELL: Is that because it's a special
 21 limited season?
 22 MS. CHESNUT: No. It's because it was not on
 23 the agenda.
 24 MR. ZIMMERMAN: Not giving the public
 25 notification to have their say in these type of things is the

13

1 way the handbook is written.
 2 MS. CHESNUT: Right. It's a handbook provision.
 3 And it had come up before. So I just wanted to make sure that
 4 the commission understood where they were standing on this.
 5 MR. GOLLOTT: So do we have a commissioner that
 6 wants to object because of the rules?
 7 MR. BOSARGE: No. It's just there was just so
 8 much going on at the moment. Would you repeat the motion,
 9 please?
 10 MR. GOLLOTT: Yeah. I'd like to make a motion
 11 that we open between the bridges of Bay St. Louis on a limited
 12 basis and give the executive director to close it when he sees
 13 fit.
 14 MR. BOSARGE: All right. Puts a lot of pressure
 15 on the executive director here.
 16 MR. GOLLOTT: He's a big boy and can handle it.
 17 MR. BOSARGE: All right. I did not object to
 18 the motion.
 19 MR. GOLLOTT: Do you want to second that,
 20 Shelby?
 21 MR. DRUMMOND: Do I have to?
 22 MR. GOLLOTT: Not really.
 23 MR. DRUMMOND: I'll second the motion, Mr.
 24 Chairman.
 25 MR. GOLLOTT: Okay. All those in favor say aye.

14

1 Opposed?
 2 MR. ZIMMERMAN: Aye.
 3 MR. GOLLOTT: We have one opposed. Motion
 4 carries. Thank you.
 5 MR. JEWELL: Okay. With that being said, we'll
 6 start with our major section of the agenda. First up is Ms.
 7 Kristina Broussard with a harmful algal bloom program update.
 8 1. Harmful Algal Bloom Program Update
 9 MS. BROUSSARD: Good morning. My name is
 10 Kristina Broussard, and I'm a marine scientist for the
 11 shellfish bureau. And today I'm going to talk about our marine
 12 biotoxin contingency plan.
 13 Our marine biotoxin contingency plan was
 14 developed to define the shellfish bureau's harmful algal bloom
 15 monitoring program. So what we do is, we collect routine water
 16 samples twice per month at two separate sample sites in Pass
 17 Christian where the oyster reefs are. The two sites are at the
 18 northernmost and southernmost portions of the oyster reefs.
 19 And these samples are examined inhouse for the presence of
 20 toxic or harmful algal blooms.
 21 We often receive samples from other bureaus, as
 22 well, and we also receive samples from the Department of
 23 Environmental Quality for identification.
 24 The DMR personnel will also conduct field
 25 observations for water discoloration during our routine fecal

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1 coliform water sampling. We will also conduct flights over
 2 shellfish growing areas when necessary. And if an area is
 3 suspected of a toxic bloom, samples are taken for phytoplankton
 4 identification.
 5 We will investigate any possible toxic bloom
 6 reported by the public, especially our fishermen, any adjacent
 7 state agencies like the Mobile laboratory, federal agencies,
 8 local health agencies, and any academic agencies, which is at
 9 the bottom, like the Gulf Coast Research Laboratory.
 10 So what we do is, the shellfish growing area is
 11 immediately closed when a marine biotoxin producing organism is
 12 present in numbers that are sufficient to cause a health risk.
 13 So if we identify a bloom event, then if that
 14 number is usually 5,000 cells per meter, that will trigger
 15 closure of a shellfish growing area.
 16 In addition, the shellfish bureau participates
 17 in the phytoplankton monitoring network which is a part of
 18 NOAA. It's an outreach program that monitors and maintains HAB
 19 events throughout all of the U.S. coastal regions, and all
 20 phytoplankton cells present and observed are reported to PMN
 21 regardless of the toxicity. We began our participation with
 22 NOAA in March of 2009.
 23 So there are two bloom events that occurred
 24 within the last year and a half that I want to talk to you
 25 about today. The first one was Scrippsiella which occurred on

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1 the west end of Horn Island in August of this year. Now,
2 Scrippsiella is only considered a harmful algal bloom because
3 it's capable of reaching high densities that cause depletion in
4 oxygen, but it does not produce a toxin. This event was quick
5 and dissipated quickly. So it was -- it did not produce a fish
6 kill.

7 The second one was Ceratium furca. And this
8 happened in July of last year, 2013, and it was coastwide. So
9 if you look at Ceratium furca in the picture here, you can see
10 that it has these three horns on each cell. These horns cause
11 damage to the gills of the fish, and it eventually leads to a
12 fish kill.

13 Now if you remember this one, everyone was
14 collecting the fish off of the beach during this bloom to eat,
15 so we had to get out there quickly and identify and make sure
16 it wasn't a toxic bloom.

17 And this Ceratium furca is not a toxic
18 phytoplankton. However, it did cause a large fish kill because
19 it was throughout the entire coast. And like I said, it clogs
20 the gills of the fish, and the fish tend to produce a mucous
21 that will deplete their oxygen levels. In addition to that, it
22 will cause high biomass levels once it begins to die off which
23 will also deplete the dissolved oxygen levels in the water.

24 And this is a photo of the beach taken during
25 that bloom. You can see all of the stingrays were washed

17

1 The second is paralytic shellfish poisoning.
2 It's a group of toxins together known as Saxitoxins and
3 produced by Alexandrium species. The symptoms are numbness,
4 paralysis, disorientation, and usually death by paralysis
5 because of -- from the respiratory system.

6 The third is diarrhetic shellfish poisoning. This
7 is produced by Dinophysis which is the one that Galveston,
8 Texas, has a lot of problems with. The acid is okadaic acid,
9 and symptoms are gastrointestinal problems, nausea, vomiting,
10 abdominal pain. There are no neurological effects. And the
11 symptoms usually occur within 30 minutes of consumption. And
12 long term exposure can promote tumor growth in the digestive
13 system.

14 And the last one is neurotoxic shellfish
15 poisoning or NSP. And it's produced by Karenia brevis which is
16 the one that southern Florida has a problem with down around
17 the Keys. The toxin produced is brevetoxin. The symptoms are
18 nausea, vomiting, neurologic symptoms such as slurred speech,
19 muscle and joint pain, difficulty breathing, and double vision.
20 And Karenia brevis is the one that's known as the red tide.
21 However, that's unfortunate because there are several different
22 types of phytoplankton that can produce a red tide. This is
23 just the most significant one.

24 And that's it. Any questions?

25 Thank you.

19

1 ashore.

2 So the reason why we monitor our oyster reefs is
3 it basically is a precautionary measure. We do not have a
4 large concern with harmful algal blooms on the Mississippi Gulf
5 Coast. However, adjacent states do. Galveston, Texas, has a
6 problem with Dinophysis, and they often close their beaches
7 because of that. And southern Florida has a problem with
8 Karenia brevis, and they close a lot of their waters throughout
9 the whole year because of that.

10 So basically, like I said, the shellfish
11 monitoring program -- the shellfish HAB monitoring program is a
12 precautionary measure. The last time that we had a major bloom
13 was in 1997, and it was Karenia brevis. And we did do -- we
14 did close the oyster reefs at that time, and we had oyster meat
15 samples taken, and I believe it was () that they were
16 tested for.

17 So there are four types of shellfish poisoning.
18 The first one is amnesic shellfish poisoning, and it's caused
19 by the phytoplankton Pseudo-nitzschia here in the picture, ASP.
20 And it produces an acid known as domoic acid. The symptoms
21 range from gastrointestinal problems, neurological symptoms
22 such as headache, dizziness, confusion and disorientation,
23 permanent brain damage which is loss of short term memory, and
24 possibly death. And domoic acid is not removed from cooking or
25 freezing which is why we close the reefs in an event.

18

1 MR. GOLLOTT: Thank you.

2 MR. BOSARGE: I do have one question. Is there
3 anything we can do to change the frequency or --

4 MS. BROUSSARD: No. Luckily, Mississippi does
5 not have a high frequency of blooms. It's a naturally
6 occurring -- phytoplankton are just the plants that live
7 throughout the water column, and it's the food source for many
8 of our species. So it's naturally occurring, and --

9 MR. BOSARGE: Does it seem like it's triggered
10 more in drier years than wet years or --

11 MS. BROUSSARD: Not here in Mississippi, no.

12 MR. BOSARGE: Seems like living on the coast, we
13 have seen red tides, yeah. They seem to be more frequent now
14 or maybe we are just more aware of them.

15 MS. BROUSSARD: I think we're monitoring more
16 now.

17 MR. BOSARGE: Thank you.

18 MS. BROUSSARD: Thank you.

19 MR. JEWELL: Our final agenda item is a state
20 fish record by Ms. Emily Satterfield.

21 2. New State Saltwater Fishing Records

22 MS. SATTERFIELD: Good morning, commissioners,
23 Director Miller, and legal.

24 We have one record to consider for conventional
25 tackle state record this month.

20

1 It is speckled hind again, Epinephelus
2 drummondhayi. The new record is 12 pounds 12.16 ounces. It
3 was caught by angler Brandon Bosarge.
4 This is a picture of the fish itself. And here
5 is Mr. Bosarge with his catch.
6 MR. BOSARGE: I make a motion we adopt the new
7 state record.
8 MR. ZIMMERMAN: Second.
9 MR. GOLLOTT: We have a motion. Do we have a
10 second?
11 MR. ZIMMERMAN: Second.
12 MR. GOLLOTT: And a second. All those in favor
13 say aye. Opposed? Motion carries.
14 Thank you.
15 MS. BROUSSARD: Thank you.
16 MR. GOLLOTT: Coastal resource management, Jan
17 Boyd.
18 MR. BOYD: Mr. Chairman, that item was taken off
19 the agenda.
20 MR. GOLLOTT: Sorry about that.
21 Office of finance.
22 H. Office of Finance and Administration
23 MR. FEIDT: Good morning, everyone. Give you a
24 brief update on the agency's financial position as of the end
25 of November.

21

1 So far year to date, we have state revenue of
2 \$3.6 million. That's been impacted by the new accounting
3 system the state has implemented in that they're not booking
4 all the inner agency revenue. This isn't a concern as yet
5 because it's just a timing issue and we'll catch up later in
6 the year.
7 Total agency revenue of \$16.4 million. That
8 state revenue impacts the state net income that we've got a
9 negative number there. It will be more than offset by what
10 will be recovered later in the year.
11 Operating funds are negative \$963,000. That has
12 the state impacts, as well as the fact that the federal funds
13 are on reimbursement basis.
14 Any questions on this one?
15 MR. GOLLOTT: I don't think they have any
16 questions.
17 MR. FEIDT: Okay. From a budget standpoint,
18 we're in good shape after five months in the fiscal year. On
19 the operating funds we have 70 percent of our budget left, and
20 on tidelands we have 82 percent of the budget left.
21 MR. GOLLOTT: Any more questions of Bill?
22 MR. FEIDT: All right. Thank you.
23 MR. GOLLOTT: Thank you, sir.
24 Melissa.
25 J. Directorate

22

1 MS. SCALLAN: Good morning, commissioners,
2 Director Miller, Sandy and Sean.
3 Since the November meeting of the commission,
4 the agency has been mentioned 40 times in local, state, and
5 regional media. Most of the coverage centered around oyster
6 season. We know there's a lot of interest in that.
7 Several departments within the agency
8 participated in the Bays and Bayous Symposium held in Mobile on
9 December 2 and 3. The departments included the Grand Bay NERR,
10 coastal resources management, marine fisheries, and coastal
11 restoration and resiliency. We had several employees who made
12 presentations at the symposium, as well as we had a booth with
13 materials from the various departments and the agency.
14 The Grand Bay NERR held its holiday open house
15 on Friday. And they had a hayride and a nature walk and got to
16 look at some stars. They were blessed with some nice weather
17 and clear skies for that. It was an opportunity for the public
18 to learn more about the NERR, as well as to meet the new
19 executive director, Dr. Ayesha Gray.
20 My last thing is last month we told you about
21 Rick Ranew from the NERR who had been awarded with -- he was
22 named the outstanding marine educator for 2014 by the Southern
23 Association of Marine Educators. But he got an e-mail from a
24 teacher that I thought you would want to hear about that shows
25 the impact of these programs.

23

1 A fifth grade teacher at Ocean Springs Upper
2 Elementary School sent him an e-mail after one of his programs.
3 And she said two little girls who recruited five more chose to
4 use their recess time to pick up trash in front of the school
5 after you made them aware of it in class. They asked
6 permission and were allowed. As an informal teacher of marine
7 education, that display of stewardship is the greatest reward
8 for me. Last week I taught 100 gifted fifth graders, not only
9 about our watersheds, water quality, biodiversity and diverse
10 habitats, but also strongly emphasized action through my marine
11 litter stewardship program to become better stewards of our
12 beautiful coastal habitats. One young lady stayed after class
13 and told me that she would start a stewardship club at her
14 school to pick up litter on their campus. I was very
15 encouraged today to receive confirmation of her determination
16 to follow through with her passion to become a better steward
17 of her school campus.
18 So what we do is affecting children, and that's
19 where it has to start. So I wanted to let you know about that.
20 That's all. Thank you.
21 MR. GOLLOTT: Thank you.
22 K. Other Business
23 MR. GOLLOTT: Okay. Under other business, Sonny
24 Schindler, please.
25 MR. SCHINDLER: Sonny Schindler, Shore Thing

24

1 Fishing Charters, Bay St. Louis, Mississippi.

2 I'm here with kind of a unique dilemma I'm in.
3 I own the largest charter boat day trip company on the
4 Mississippi Gulf Coast. We employ, depending on what day of
5 the week it is, between four and nine boats. I did a rough
6 count on our trips booked the last two years. Last year, it
7 was over 750. This year we broke a thousand.

8 We also do overnight all inclusive trips to Cat
9 Island. This is where the trouble is. We do a two night
10 minimum six person minimum. We always have two boats out there
11 for safety and logistics. But in your laws that we comply
12 with, there's a ruling that says we can only possess one day
13 Mississippi limit regardless of how many days we stay out
14 there. Occasionally, we stay out there three, four, five days.
15 But as I said, there's always a two night minimum. It's not
16 worth out time and trouble to go out there for just one night.

17 So not a cheap trip to go out there. It's four
18 fifty a night, all your meals, fishing, guided, everything but
19 alcohol is included. And it's getting harder and harder to
20 sell this when someone asks how much is it, what can we do,
21 occasionally what can we keep, and we tell them you can keep 15
22 fish per person when they could hire us for a six hour trip and
23 head out to the Louisiana marsh and catch 25 per person, 25
24 trout, five redfish.

25 I also forgot to mention that all of our

25

1 captains and boats are Mississippi licensed charter boats. All
2 of our captains are licensed Louisiana charter guides. And the
3 four boats that run the excursions to Cat Island all have
4 National Seashore passes.

5 We've since stopped filing float plans because
6 it was kind of irrelevant if we could only keep a one day limit
7 per person, it wasn't really any reason to let them know how
8 many days we were out there since we could only keep a one day
9 limit.

10 We've met with Director Miller, Chief Davis, and
11 Deputy Chief Pittman on this. We've gotten as far as we could
12 with them. They were just more than accommodating with what we
13 were doing. But we're kind of limited by what the laws say.
14 And that's what I'm here to kind of -- basically I know I'm not
15 leaving here with a new ruling or endorsement, but I just
16 wanted to bring you up to speed on what we're trying to do.
17 Maybe we can move further with it with your blessing.

18 But as the law states in the definitions -- and
19 I brought y'all some literature. I'm a much better fisherman
20 than I am a computer whiz, so I just got everything printed out
21 a little bit before I came here. As the law states, final
22 destination, there's a wording in it that says Chapter 3,
23 definitions, final destination shall be defined as a place on
24 the mainland or a barrier island, not including piers or
25 jetties, where the fisherman finally lands his catch and does

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1 not further transport the fish by boat.

2 Well, it's kind of tricky because the barrier
3 island, you have to transport back to the mainland.

4 But what we're looking to do is either get a
5 rewording in the rules, or possibly some sort of endorsement
6 which may be the most simple thing. And again, I'm just here
7 at your mercy. An endorsement that may be required, a float
8 plan, charter license, seashore passes, all the things that
9 would make it extremely difficult for somebody up to no good to
10 mimic what we're trying to do to get over on the system, get
11 over on your guys.

12 A float plan would let you know where our guys
13 were at all times, let you know when we're leaving, when we're
14 returning.

15 And the other thing that we were really, really
16 hoping to get is to be able to clean our fish out there, which
17 you can do with a float plan, but because of the final
18 destination it's kind of a gray area, and we don't do gray. So
19 if it's against the rules, we want to stay in your good graces,
20 but if there's a way that we could benefit, bring some more
21 tourists down here, we booked 12 last year. This year we
22 booked 15. We can book more, but our day boats tie up a lot of
23 it, and we just don't have the manpower to run them.

24 It's been an exceptional draw. We've had, you
25 know, media exposure and local, regional, national, and

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1 international television, newspapers and magazines. It's just
2 something that we're looking to do that could benefit the
3 Mississippi charter boats for once and possibly bring some more
4 money to our area.

5 If you don't mind, I'd like to leave y'all with
6 some information. And then if anybody has any questions or
7 suggestions, please.

8 MR. GOLLOTT: Let me -- we're for you, Mr.
9 Schindler. I can say I'm for promoting commerce in
10 Mississippi. Anything to help our charter boat industry.

11 Can we address -- Sandy, can you enlighten us a
12 little bit on this? Is this state statute that we don't have
13 the authority to do?

14 MS. CHESNUT: It's a regulation. It would
15 require a regulation change. It would have to go out on public
16 notice under the Administrative Procedures Act.

17 But what I would suggest is have the staff bring
18 in suggested language and let the commission review that and
19 vote on how they want to proceed with it, and then they can
20 take it out on notice.

21 MR. GOLLOTT: Can we look at Louisiana's law
22 because I understand you can have a two day possession in
23 Louisiana. Can we explore that? Any more commissioners want
24 to get in --

25 MR. ZIMMERMAN: One of the things I'd like to

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1 mention to Sonny that we have to do, we have to make sure that
2 whatever changes we make fit the other 81,000 fishermen in the
3 State of Mississippi. That's our main objective. We can't
4 make a law that's going to impact the resource in anyway.

5 And with that said, I'd like to make a motion to
6 let Joe go out and look at this and come back with a
7 recommendation, if I could, Mr. Chairman.

8 Joe, you want to speak?

9 MR. JEWELL: I'm sorry. I didn't know I could
10 do it right straight from the table.

11 Is the commission directing the staff to go out
12 for notice of intent? We could do that directly --

13 MR. GOLLOTT: I think that's what his motion is
14 intending to do.

15 MR. ZIMMERMAN: We also need to look at the
16 impact of the law, Joe, is what I'm asking you to do more than
17 that, just to make sure that this isn't going to impact the
18 resource in any other way by allowing them to keep these fish.
19 If I go stay at Pass Marianne, am I able to clean the fish on
20 my boat and bring them in with the two day limit? That's what
21 the questions that need to be answered.

22 MR. JEWELL: Scott will come forward with a
23 presentation in January. We can do that.

24 MS. CHESNUT: Yeah. The presentation would need
25 to be made to the commission before notice of intent. They

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1 pressure.

2 MR. SCHINDLER: We don't really have any
3 competition with it because there's nothing -- there's nothing
4 like it in the northern Gulf or anywhere because I tried to
5 price it competitively. It's just hard to say you can only
6 keep this much, we're charging you this much, and they say I
7 could go hire the guy for four hours at the pier and I can keep
8 twice that, or we went out on so and so's boat and they let us
9 keep two day Louisiana limits.

10 It's nothing that we couldn't do on a day trip.
11 And, please, we're not looking to take any more than what's
12 legally allowed. If we are out there for two, three, four,
13 sometimes five days, I don't want to clean five days worth of
14 trout.

15 MR. BOSARGE: Like Commissioner Zimmerman said,
16 there's seventy or eighty thousand or more recreational
17 fishermen, and this effort is continuing, it's on an incline.
18 So we have to from my standpoint to protect the commercial
19 fishermen. I have to look and make sure that we don't just let
20 this get totally out of control.

21 MR. SCHINDLER: Sure. And in all fairness, the
22 recreational fishermen, if they were to go out there and stay
23 in their cabin style boat or any boat, for that matter, and
24 they file a float plan, right now, today, tonight, and the next
25 two or three days, they can legally go out there and do it.

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1 would vote at the January meeting presumably on whether they
2 want to go out on notice of intent at that time.

3 MR. JEWELL: Correct.

4 MR. BOSARGE: Just so I understand correctly,
5 looking at it more from a fisheries side, I understand where
6 you're coming from and what you want to do with it and I'm with
7 you. But I have to ask a few questions.

8 You said six people is usually what you pull?

9 MR. SCHINDLER: Six person minimum because we
10 always bring two boats. We also bring a cook. But six person
11 minimum, two night minimum. We've had groups up to I think 15
12 is the biggest we've ever had.

13 MR. BOSARGE: And, you know, the bag limit being
14 15 fish, you know, six people, that's 90 fish, and if you got
15 two boats, that's 180. If you book four trips a year, that's
16 what? I've got the math. Anyhow, it comes out to where, you
17 know, a lot of fish.

18 MR. SCHINDLER: But in all fairness, we would
19 actually harvest more fish on our day trips than we would where
20 we're at right now, staying out there.

21 MR. BOSARGE: I see you've got four boats that
22 each have six people, and then four trips a month, that's 4,320
23 fish. That's half of the commercial quota.

24 Anyhow, that's my problem, you know. We've just
25 got to be careful that we don't open up the resource for more

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1 We're just hindered because we step out on that
2 island, and that gets into the gray area that we don't want to
3 mess with. It's not worth it for me to lose the company over
4 ten trout. But if I can get them, sure, heck, yeah, we'd like
5 them.

6 MR. BOSARGE: We'll let Joe work on it and see
7 what we come up with.

8 MR. SCHINDLER: Okay. And I'd like to leave
9 this with you. It's got information on the island and what we
10 do there.

11 MR. GOLLOTT: Thank you, Sonny.

12 MR. SCHINDLER: Yes, sir. Thank you for your
13 time.

14 MR. GOLLOTT: We're going to go to public
15 comments now.

16 I'm sorry. We have a motion on the floor for
17 the staff to take this out. Do I have a second?

18 MR. DRUMMOND: I'll second the motion, Mr.
19 Chairman.

20 MR. GOLLOTT: We have a motion and second. All
21 those in favor. Opposed? Motion carries. Thank you.

22 Okay. Mr. Harold Strong is first up.

23 MR. STRONG: I'm going to let George go before
24 me.

25 MR. GOLLOTT: You want Mr. George Storrs to be

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1 first? Okay. Please state your name, George, for the record.

2 MR. STORRS: My name is George Storrs. I'm an
3 oyster fisherman for years.

4 I feel like years and years have gone by, and I
5 always felt like I was walking into a lion's den when I came
6 here. But this is really nice. I was asked by a few of my
7 friends, and I seem to have friends here, and it's wonderful,
8 it's a great honor for me to be here today. Thank you.

9 With that said, there's a few things that we
10 need to -- that I need to ask you for what my guys want and I
11 want. When I say my guys, I'm talking about tongers, oyster
12 tongers.

13 There's something about the staff that they like
14 to do limited things, limit this, limit that. And I'm not hard
15 on them about this except I think this season and every season
16 we have ever had will limit itself. I don't think it needs to
17 be limited by somebody saying it needs to be limited. It just
18 needs to play out when it gets played out. I don't believe in
19 taking everything that's out there. But I do know there's \$11
20 million somewhere in the system that's going to get turned
21 loose at some point. I don't know when. You guys don't,
22 either. But it's going to get turned loose, and we're going to
23 do some refurbishing. I hope we're going to earmark a bunch of
24 that money for that. And we could keep on working.

25 And a person like me, if I can make \$300 a day,

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1 it's going to happen -- could be open for tonging. It could be
2 a great tonging resource, and it will take pressure off this
3 area, this little box that we're in out there in Pass Christian
4 between the bridges. It would take a lot of pressure off.

5 The Alabama boys, there's nothing wrong with
6 them guys. They don't take them oysters home. Everything that
7 they do here, they spend their money here, they sell their
8 oysters here, they buy their licenses here. I mean, it's all
9 done right here. It's not like they're taking something and
10 leaving with it.

11 So, you know, I understand nonresident this and
12 nonresident that, but when you do everything in this state, the
13 state benefits from it and the buyers here benefit from it. So
14 just because they came from somewhere else, it just makes it
15 harder on them.

16 But it will take a little more pressure off of
17 these areas if we got something to the east opened. You know,
18 I understand there's problems, but these problems can be
19 overcome. I don't see why they can't be as far as water
20 quality, logistics, you know, the stuff that keeps us from
21 opening those areas. I think they can be done.

22 Let me think. Let me turn -- I'm not turning
23 away from you guys on purpose, but I need to ask my guys. Is
24 there something I need to say? What else do you want? Are we
25 good? Have I said enough?

35

1 it's like a gold mine to me. It's not a whole lot of money,
2 but, you know, say three hundred, that's a lot especially when
3 you haven't worked like five or six, eight months out of the
4 year anyway and made any real money.

5 So if I'm able to do this, I'm just one guy, and
6 there's more money in it a little bit now and then, but I'm
7 just one guy. Now, we got some guys out here that have crews,
8 and they're making double trips and things, and they have to.
9 They got to pay everybody. I was for a -- not a limited
10 season, but a limited number, cut the limit. But you know
11 what? They need to make a living, too. They got more people
12 than I have. And so I would like to see that limit cut so that
13 the season can last longer. But if they don't want it done,
14 then that's fine with me. But to just limit the thing because
15 we want it limited, I don't go for that. It will limit itself.
16 When it's not profitable at all, then we won't go. And we are
17 not going to take every last one because you can't do it, every
18 last oyster, that is.

19 And there are some grounds involved -- when I
20 say ground, I'm talking about areas, like Graveline. There's
21 some areas in West River, for instance, that all the relay
22 stuff came and we put it on the tonging reef this year. It's
23 the first time in a long time I've seen anything put there.

24 But that possibly -- and I don't know why it
25 couldn't be worked on and actually done quicker than probably

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1 Well, now we do have Long Beach that's supposed
2 to have some oysters on it. If we could do something about
3 Long Beach, also. And Biloxi, there's that White House reef.
4 I don't know what's on it, but I imagine it could be looked at
5 and could be -- part of that eleven million bucks could go to
6 that.

7 The more areas we have, the less strain you will
8 have on the area that we are in now because these areas we're
9 in now are taking a beating, but they can stand it as long as
10 we don't over-harvest. And I don't see how you can
11 over-harvest it at seven sacks. I would like to see it cut a
12 little bit more but to make it last longer. But I'd like this
13 thing to run all the way through April if we can do this. I
14 don't see why we can't. If we can't do it, then we won't do
15 it. And if we can't make any money, we won't make money, we'll
16 just leave it alone. You guys shut it down. Make the motion
17 to do that, and staff.

18 But if it's doable, I want you to leave it
19 alone. Let us run with the ball until we can't carry the ball
20 any more, and then you guys take it and do what you want with
21 it.

22 MR. GOLLITT: Thank you, George.

23 MR. STORRS: Thank you.

24 MR. GOLLITT: Next we have John Livings.

25 MR. LIVINGS: How are y'all? My name is John

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1 Livings. I'm both. I'm a dredger and a tonger. We do both.

2 But we're tonging this year.

3 Mr. George kind of said a lot of the stuff I was
4 going to say, so that was some of my questions was about
5 different areas that were, you know, closed for Alabama. I
6 mean, if them guys didn't have to come all the way to the Pass,
7 then it would take a lot of pressure off the reefs, you know.

8 I mean, I'm sure they would much rather stop in
9 Biloxi and work than drive all the way to Pass Christian.

10 And if we spread the boats out some, then we're
11 not doing as much damage to one spot. I mean, Alabama took the
12 plan on opening one area at a time, and they've completely
13 wiped their reefs out. They have nothing. That's why they're
14 here because they didn't manage it right.

15 And if we don't do something, we're not going to
16 have nothing here, either. I mean, you can't keep taking,
17 taking, taking, and never put anything back.

18 But as far as in between the bridges, I know the
19 resource is there. And it's definitely more than a week's
20 worth. Last year, last day we were done with our second boat
21 by twelve o'clock. So, I mean -- and that was 24 sacks we
22 caught before lunchtime.

23 And then nobody caught them on fishing poles in
24 there, so they're still there. I mean, season was closed;
25 they're there.

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1 But that's just what -- I'd just like to see
2 some other areas open. We have oysters that are just steady
3 growing and dying because they're too big. And I understand,
4 this should be the year to work it. I mean, according to the
5 news, we're in a drought. So fresh water shouldn't be an
6 issue. We've had no rain, so there's no runoff.

7 I just don't understand how the water quality
8 could be good in the middle of a rainstorm, but right now when
9 there's no rain for months, it's bad. I don't understand that.

10 MR. GOLLOTT: Thank you, John.

11 I will tell you this. Joe Jewell is working
12 very hard with the FDA to try to get Graveline open right now.
13 He's trying to get FDA's approval. So appreciate it.

14 MR. LIVINGS: I have one more question.

15 MR. GOLLOTT: Yeah, go ahead.

16 MR. LIVINGS: Who would be in charge to close it
17 on this limited season right now? Like if we work in between
18 the bridges, who would shut it down?

19 MR. GOLLOTT: Executive director.

20 MR. LIVINGS: Okay.

21 MR. GOLLOTT: If you want to fuss, fuss with
22 him.

23 MR. LIVINGS: Okay. I'll call you. Thank

24 y'all.

25 MR. GOLLOTT: Andrew Livings.

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1 MR. LIVINGS: Hello, ladies and gentlemen. My
2 name is Andrew Livings. I've been a commercial fisherman for
3 just about all my life, 25 years.

4 A lot of things have been covered already about
5 the oysters having new areas to be opened. Graveline, Bayou
6 Graveline, Davis Bayou, and out here where we did the relay in
7 2008.

8 I think water samples should be taken on a daily
9 basis in an area like that so that if the water samples are
10 good, we should be allowed to catch them in a tonging
11 environment. Don't bring no dredge boats in there because it
12 will tear it up. But tonging does turn the reef and helps it
13 to regrow without damaging it too much.

14 And that was the main thing I wanted to talk
15 about is getting different areas open to take some of the
16 pressure off of the reefs that we got.

17 And if the oysters are not able to be harvested
18 for consumption, then close our season down and allow us to
19 catch the oysters to put them on the reef where it's at so that
20 they can flush out or whatever like they have done before. You
21 know, have us catch them and then replenish our reef because we
22 have to do something about our reefs. I mean, they are in dire
23 -- they're hurting bad.

24 But you could still make a day, but it's nothing
25 -- I haven't seen it this worse, this bad in my career. And

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1 that's what my opinion is that we should be able to go and
2 catch them somewhere else and put them on there. If that means
3 closing our normal season, you know, close the season down and
4 allow us to move the oysters on there, and when they come clean
5 then we could catch them again.

6 That's all I have to say. Thank you.

7 MR. GOLLOTT: Thank you. Rudy Toler.

8 MR. TOLER: They pretty much covered everything.

9 MR. GOLLOTT: Now Mr. Harold Strong. Are you
10 ready?

11 MR. STRONG: Good day to all you fellows. Thank
12 you, commissioners, for having me here, director.

13 As you can see, I have some oysters that we
14 caught out of deep waters of St. Joe channel for presentation
15 to you here.

16 I wanted to thank all of you for getting the
17 season open, and we really needed it. We're catching more
18 oysters now than we was in the beginning. We have actually
19 more boats working. In the beginning first few days, I think
20 it was like 18 boats, and now it's up to around 40, 45 boats,
21 somewhere in that area. They're not having any problem
22 catching their limit. Those oysters was caught the limit in 45
23 minutes yesterday.

24 The deep waters down there actually have more
25 oysters than the shallow waters. Where we went on the boat

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1 when I took a couple of directors and Jamie out, and they was
2 all musseled up and everything, it's actually getting
3 cultivated pretty good, and it actually looks really good. The
4 oysters are broke down to where there's plenty room for growth
5 now.

6 The oysters get real big like this in shallow
7 water, they get so musseled up that you can't work them any
8 more. So it's really being cultivated really good, and it's
9 holding up well.

10 All the boats are getting their limit and
11 getting in in plenty of time. The only ones that don't make it
12 are the ones that might be breaking down or something goes
13 wrong with the boat itself.

14 But other than that, the area is holding up
15 fine. And we really appreciate all the fishermen that you got
16 it open for us.

17 By the way, moving that box that we had in that
18 area was a wise thing to do because now you got your boats
19 spread out. We couldn't fish where these oysters was before.
20 That was closed according to the old box.

21 A lot of areas not even been worked yet.

22 MR. DRUMMOND: How deep is the water?

23 MR. STRONG: Those oysters was caught in 27 foot
24 where most of the area that's down there is 18 foot -- ten foot
25 to 18 foot. But when you get down into the -- I need 60 foot

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1 of chain to get to the bottom with the boat moving. And that
2 don't give you but three or four wraps on the drum itself.

3 But other than that, the second thing was, I
4 just got presented with those packets that I left each one of
5 y'all this morning concerning that disaster money for the
6 spillway opening in either 2010 or '11, and I presented each
7 one of y'all with that. And some states is already working on
8 their second round of money to the fishermen. And from my
9 understanding, we haven't even got the money in this state yet.

10 I've heard rumors that we're trying to get a
11 loan processed to the fishermen. I been fishing for 50 years,
12 and when that happens to us when we have spillway opens or
13 hurricanes or anything, I don't know of anybody in this
14 department that loses their job or loses their money each week
15 or each two weeks or however you get paid, whether it's a
16 biologist, not calling or picking on anybody, but a director or
17 anybody else loses their money. Why would we have to apply for
18 a loan for something that was given to this state to give to
19 the fishermen because they was the ones that was economically
20 impacted?

21 That makes absolutely no sense, none.

22 The second thing -- the third thing is the task
23 force wants to be more involved in what's going on in this
24 state.

25 I asked for a resolution to be put forth that we

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1 have a meeting every second month on the first Tuesday so that
2 we can make presentation to this commission that makes sense.
3 We don't want to circumvent the process you have. We want to
4 work with your biologists and law enforcement and everybody
5 else. But we should have some impact into what's actually
6 impacting us. I mean, it's really the right thing to do.
7 That's why we was created to start with I thought, unless I'm
8 mistaken.

9 But unless we have some input, none of this
10 really makes much sense.

11 And I know that I do, but the other guys that's
12 on it, they don't really feel that way. A lot of them are
13 discontent. And I talked to the task force. They want to have
14 regular meetings. Every other state that's got a task force,
15 Louisiana has a task force meeting every month the week before
16 their meetings, before their state meetings, and they listen to
17 their people. We're not out here to try and do things that are
18 wrong. Right now, we have two areas open. Is that not right,
19 Jamie? For the dredgers?

20 I actually called Jamie and told him last week
21 that he could go ahead and shut down the other one because you
22 got law enforcement up there watching something that nobody is
23 working, nobody even goes around.

24 And I heard that they was worried about me going
25 out there and stealing the oysters, and I'm trying to think why

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1 would I go out there and steal oysters that's not there. You
2 can allow me to rob banks if the vault is open and it's empty.
3 I mean, really and truly, I'm not trying to be funny, but
4 that's just a fact.

5 You got law enforcement out there riding around
6 on a boat, spending money, wasting time that they could be
7 doing another job. Close it. There's nobody working it, and
8 they don't care. Close it.

9 If you want to send a guy down to Bayou Cadet,
10 send him down to Bayou Cadet. We don't care. We're not doing
11 anything wrong.

12 As you can see, the oysters don't have any spats
13 on them hardly, and what they got there is so big that they
14 open up the sacks, look at them, and there ain't no sense in
15 counting them.

16 The one more thing that we have a problem with
17 in this state is our percentage law. You're actually punished
18 for catching bigger oysters. Those oysters go about 150 to a
19 sack. So you're only allowed 15 small oysters. When a guy's
20 catching half shells, there's 380 in a sack, he's allowed 38.
21 So you get punished for catching bigger oysters.

22 One of the patrolmen went through mine and he
23 picked them out, and there was, I don't know, maybe twice that
24 size, he said that's how close you come to failing. I said,
25 yes, sir, that's how close I come to passing evidently. It's

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1 kind of like in airplanes they say that was a near miss. Well,
2 it's also a near collision. Anybody with any sense is going to
3 say it's a near collision, not a near miss.

4 But we need to get things changed, and we need
5 to work together to do it. We want to help y'all, and we want
6 y'all to help us. And we can work together and get it done.

7 Just like the reefs and everything else. I'm
8 not going to give you bad information, or I won't give you any
9 before I give you bad.

10 But those oysters need to be caught. And the
11 season does not need to be closed.

12 And I agree with the tongs. They need to be
13 allowed to go between the bridges and catch the oysters, and it
14 will close itself. I've always said that. It will close
15 itself. When we can't make a living, we will come back here
16 and say please close it so we don't have to go out there and
17 spend money riding back and forth for nothing.

18 And all it takes is common sense to do that.

19 Thank you.

20 MR. GOLLOTT: Thank you, Harold.

21 MR. ZIMMERMAN: Harold, I'd like to ask
22 something.

23 The way I understood you asked about the task
24 force was something from us. Y'all have control of the
25 meetings, just go ahead and do what y'all want to do.

45

1 MR. STRONG: But we also have to have our people
2 that's on the thing to meet. But we would rather have it where
3 we have a set time. It's not like you just call people up and
4 go, wait a minute, we want to have a task force meeting.

5 We would rather have a regular set thing to do
6 it.

7 MR. ZIMMERMAN: And lead that. Talk with the
8 commission. I know George is here. Get with the other people
9 on the task force and set it up, get with Jamie, and we can
10 make that happen. You don't need anything from us to make that
11 happen.

12 And we want -- we as a commission want that. We
13 want input.

14 MR. STRONG: You say that, but we have done it
15 before. We tried to get meetings before and was told before,
16 well, we're busy, we're doing this, we're doing that. They're
17 too busy to do what we want them to do when we want it done,
18 but they're not too busy to say, hey, wait a minute, we need
19 something done, help us.

20 It makes a lot more sense when it's something
21 that's here it is, it's black, and white. That's what we're
22 going to do.

23 MR. GOLLOTT: Harold, we'll work on it. Thank
24 you. Appreciate it.

25 MR. STRONG: Thank you.

46

1 MR. GOLLOTT: Okay. We need to go into or
2 consider going into executive session. Do we have a motion?

3 MR. DRUMMOND: Mr. Chairman, I make a motion
4 that we go into closed session to determine the need to go into
5 an executive session to consider personnel matters.

6 MR. GOLLOTT: Do I have a second?

7 MR. ZIMMERMAN: I second it.

8 MR. GOLLOTT: We have a motion and a second.

9 All those in favor say aye. Opposed? We're going into
10 executive session or consider executive session.

11 (Off the record.)

12 MS. MATTA: The commissioners are now in
13 executive session.

14 (Off the record.)

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COMMISSION ON MARINE RESOURCES

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