COMMISSION ON MARINE RESOURCES

COMMISSION MEETING

Tuesday, September 22, 2020
9:00 a.m.
Zoom Webinar

Commission Members:
Ronnie Daniels, Chairman
Natalie Guess, Vice Chairman
Steve Bosarge
Richard Gollott
Mark Havard

Also Present:
Joe Spraggins, Executive Director DMR
Sandy Chesnut, Esq., Assistant Attorney General

Lucille Morgan, CSR 1251
COURT REPORTER
(228) 396-8788
COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Let’s go ahead and get started.

Since y'all have the flag in the room, would you mind leading us in the Pledge of Allegiance today?

JOE SPRAGGINS: I would not mind.

(Pledge of Allegiance recited.)

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Thank you, Joe.

Now, if we could have a moment of silence.

(Moment of silence observed.)

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Approval of the minutes for the August 18th, 2020, meeting.

Does anybody have anything to discuss on that?

(No response.)

COMMISSIONER HAVARD: Mr. Chairman, at this time, I would like to make a motion that we approve the minutes for August 18th.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: We have a motion.

Do we have a second?

COMMISSIONER GUESS: Commissioner Guess, second.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: We have a motion and a second.

All those in favor say aye.

Commissioner Guess?

COMMISSIONER GUESS: Aye.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Commissioner Bosarge?
COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Aye.
COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Commissioner Havard?
COMMISSIONER HAVARD: Aye.
COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Commissioner Daniels, aye.

Motion passes.

Approval of the agenda for today’s meeting.
Do we have a motion to approve the agenda?
COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: So moved, Mr. Chairman.
COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Commissioner Bosarge makes the motion.
I will second it.
All those in favor say aye.
Commissioner Guess?
COMMISSIONER GUESS: Aye.
COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Commissioner Bosarge?
COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Aye.
COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Commissioner Havard?
COMMISSIONER HAVARD: Aye.
COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Commissioner Daniels,
aye.

Motion passes.

Director, it is on to you.

JOE SPRAGGINS: Could we bring up the contracts?
CRYSTAL MATTA: Yes, sir.
JOE SPRAGGINS: As you can see on there, our new Chief of Marine Patrol is Chief Kyle Wilkerson. He has been approved by the Governor and sent forward.

Congratulations to Kyle. He has done a great job so far. He has been leading the department since December of last year when Chief Davis left, and I think he will continue to do a fantastic job for us. Just welcome him as our new Chief.

We are going to have a pinning for him, as far as a swearing in soon. We are just trying to work it out. So I will let everyone know when we do that. We want to do it in person, if possible, and we are trying to work it out.

Any questions on Kyle?

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Congratulations, Kyle.

JOE SPRAGGINS: Jennifer Wittmann is our new Coastal Resources Management Director. Jennifer has been with us for quite a while and she has been doing a great job there and she was promoted into that position and approved by the Governor.

Jennifer, thank you and we look forward to working with you.

Any questions for Jennifer?

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Congratulations, Jennifer.
COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Excellent choice.

JOE SPRAGGINS: Trevor Moncrief is our new Finfish Bureau Deputy Director, and Trevor has done a heck of a job.

In all of the stuff that we did in the 2011 Bonnet Carre payout and the other things that he has worked on hard, Trevor has done a great job for us and we are glad to have Trevor in that position.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Congratulations, Trevor.

JOE SPRAGGINS: We have one more that is not listed. It just happened yesterday and we were unable to get it on the agenda.

Robin Zantow is now our head of the Grants Bureau. Robin has come to us from the Coastal Resources area and she is going to head up the grants. Kimberly left, and Robin will do a great job. It is always wonderful to be able to promote within.

She has a good background in grants. She did the grants for Coastal. I think we will be having a good time with Robin and we are looking forward to getting her in that position.

Anything for Robin?

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Have you about gotten all of those positions filled there, Mr. Joe, in grants?

JOE SPRAGGINS: Well, there was one open and we
just got it filled. That is Robin. Robin is going to go
in and look at it. We have Robin and RoxAnn in, now.
They will go in after that point, and, then, decide what
we need to do further.

I wanted to get Robin onboard first before we
did anything else.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Good deal.

JOE SPRAGGINS: That is all the promotions and
updates, I think, on employment.

No new contracts.

Just to give you an idea, a lot of the contracts
that we had to put a stop work order on one July have all
been brought back, most of the contracts.

Anything to do with public access Tidelands, we
have brought back, or anything to do with GOMESA, we have
brought back on.

It was quite a few million dollars that was
brought back. A little over fifty million that we were
able to get back and started working on the 1st of
September.

That is good to hear and we are moving forward
with that, and maybe can catch up and get everything
finished in the short term.

Any questions on that?

(No response.)
JOE SPRAGGINS: Agency update. We do have a budget, and I thank the Governor and the House and the Senate and the Lieutenant Governor for helping us be able to get that.

The budget is passed and it is effective and we are ready to go, and we also were able to get everyone back pay for those five days, or whatever amount it was that they were not paid, when they were on furlough. They have already received their check for that.

Everybody is back pretty much whole and, hopefully, we can continue moving forward.

The budget has a few little issues, but we are working those as we speak.

As you know, in our Tidelands Funds, we were cut back from around eleven million last year to seven point three million this year.

In that seven point three million, we had to put a million and two to pay the bond debt, and, then, the public access took about five point three million of it, and they left us a million and thirty-nine thousand dollars to operate the agency.

This is a shortfall that we can operate. We can't continue operating under this, and I have been talking with the Governor and the Governor’s staff, Greg White and also with Liz Welch at DFA, and everyone feels
confident that we will get this straightened out in January.

It is basically the situation where the Secretary of State allowed some of the casinos not to have to make their payment on July 1st, but they were able to make it at another date. As soon as that is paid, then, that will make us whole in some of that operation.

The biggest thing is not necessarily the money. We have plenty of money in Tidelands to operate at this time and we have a lot of projects. It is just holding up a lot of our managed projects that were already in effect because we don’t have the funds -- we have the funds. We don’t have the authority. They didn’t give us enough authority in the managed projects to be able to do it.

According to DFA, even though we have seven point three million in Tidelands authority, we cannot spend more than a million and thirty-nine thousand of the managed side of it and that includes salaries and all.

We are watching it very close. I have been talking to Chairman Reed and he has very much said that he has been talking with who handles our budget there and Timmy Ladner who is over Marine Resources in the House. All of them felt that we would be able to make this whole and not have any issues.

Hopefully, we will get that done the first part
of January and we will be able to make it. We will work through it, until that point.

Are there any questions on that from the Commissioners?

(No response.)

JOE SPRAGGINS: One other thing, our COVID. The Lord has blessed us, I believe, because, out of the hundred and seventy-five people, we have only had ten to come down positive with COVID. We are very blessed to have that.

I tell you, looking at a lot of other agencies, just take the House and the Senate and you look at it and you see how many of those came down with it.

We have been very blessed with it. Our team is working extremely hard to make sure that everybody is wearing a mask when they are supposed to and they are not trying to spread anything. They are doing a lot of hand cleaning and we are doing a lot of cleaning of the areas and cleaning of our boats and our vehicles and everything that we have contact with.

Hats off to the team of DMR for what they are doing. They are really working hard to be able to make this as seamless, as far as health, as we possibly can.

Any questions from the Commissioners on that?

(No response.)
JOE SPRAGGINS: That is pretty much the agency update.

We are working on some other stuff.

To give you an idea on the CARES Act, Traci is working it with us. We are down to the point of sending NOAA back the final that we hope will go through and, if that happens, hopefully, we will be able to start sometime in October of being able to get this information to the fishermen and anyone dealing with Fisheries where we can look at possibly getting some CARES Act Funds to them and be able to disburse them as soon as possible.

We were going to use an outside agency, but we decided against that because NOAA came back and made a lot of changes as to what we had to be responsible for and because of that, we feel we can do it in house, and, then, get NOAA to pay the in house personnel to do it, and that will help us a little bit with our budget, also, and we can do it.

We were going to have to do ninety percent of what we have to do, now, anyway. So to hire an outside agency, just didn’t seem to be the right way to go.

Any questions on the CARES Act?

(No response.)

JOE SPRAGGINS: The money, we got one point five million, just a few dollars over in it and, hopefully, we
are trying to get it disbursed sometime before the 1st of
the year.

    Steve, you are talking. I see your lips moving.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: You’ve got better eyes
than me. On my screen, your head is cut off. I can see
your body, but I can't see your head.

    JOE SPRAGGINS: That is probably the best part
of me.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Our payment plan has been
approved and we are all good to go on that?

    JOE SPRAGGINS: Well, it has been approved by
the Governor, and we are waiting on NOAA. There were a
few questions.

    As a matter of fact, to be honest with you,
between back and forth and back and forth, NOAA has asked
us eighty-two different questions on this, and Traci has
done a fantastic job with this in Fisheries and they have
worked hard on it, but I think that we are down to the
point that obviously we are working this through Gulf
States and Gulf States, David Donaldson and them are
handling it and we are working everything through them,
but everything has been fine so far.

    I think we are to the point that hopefully by
the end of this month we will have an answer from NOAA to
go forward.
As soon as that happens, we will take about thirty days for everyone to get their applications in. Once all the applications are in, then, we will evaluate the money, what we have to put between each one of them. We will split it up.

I can get y’all a copy of what it is, if you would like a copy to know how much we are splitting it, like, so much for Fisheries.

Joe, do you have it by any chance?

Do you have that in your hand, Joe Jewell?

Is Traci with you?

TRACI FLOYD: This is Traci. We are following the NOAA percentages. For the commercial fishermen, it will be fifty-one point nine percent of the direct payment. For the dealer/processors, thirty-one point nine percent. For the charter boat industry, sixteen point two percent of the direct payments.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I think that is pretty much what you gave us the last time.

JOE SPRAGGINS: Yes. It hasn’t changed.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: It sounds good. I’m glad to see we are moving forward.

JOE SPRAGGINS: Any questions for Traci while she is on?

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I’m sorry. Say it again,
Mr. Joe.

JOE SPRAGGINS: Any questions for Traci while she is on?

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: No, sir.

JOE SPRAGGINS: Well, she has done a great job on that, and we will move forward.

Now, the 2019 Bonnet Carre Update. We are working with the Governor to get their approval, as far as our spend plan.

Rick Burris has been working that through Fisheries and they have done a great job. I think we’ve got it laid out.

Rick, are you on that you can talk about that a little bit?

RICK BURRIS: Yes, sir.

We have several projects involving Fisheries, fisheries improvements, habitat improvements, as well as direct payments similar to what we did a couple of months ago.

As Director Spraggins said, once we get that approved by the Governor, then, we can go out for public comment.

JOE SPRAGGINS: That is about twenty-one million dollars in that process. Hopefully, we will be able to get some funds out and get it out quickly.
I know it is a five-year program, but the five-year program part will be the rebuild. It won’t be the payout for the fishermen.

I think the five-year program will be the rebuild of what we need to do to rebuild our fisheries, as far as oysters and that type, any cultch plants and stuff that we are doing. That is where we are talking about the five-year part of it.

As far as paying out the Fisheries personnel -- Rick, tell me if I’m wrong -- we are planning on doing that as quick as possible.

RICK BURRIS: That’s correct. We were able to do it with the 2011 money in just a few months. It is going to take a little bit longer than that this time, but, as soon as we get the money, we will start processing those for those people.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Mr. Joe, on that Bonnet Carre money, I know on the CARES Act money they did a two percent administrative fee.

What are we going to do on the Bonnet Carre? Do you know?

JOE SPRAGGINS: Rick, what is that number? It’s like two million dollars?

It is ten percent, isn’t it?

RICK BURRIS: Yes. Our federally negotiated
rate was ten point five percent, ten point three percent, something like that. That is what will be applied to this grant.

The CARES Act is a little different because it is a subgrant through Gulf States that they put their own requirement of two percent for administrative costs.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Got you.

So it will be ten point two, or three, or somewhere in that neighborhood?

JOE SPRAGGINS: Yes, sir. Just a little over ten percent, I think, is what we are looking at and that is to administer the whole project.

That will be not necessarily just paying for overhead as far as financing, but it also paying the Fisheries Department to be able to handle it.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Correct. All right. Thank you.

JOE SPRAGGINS: Any other questions?

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Joe, can you email that breakdown of the CARES Act money?

JOE SPRAGGINS: I sure can. I will get that to you.

Traci, I think you are on. If you don’t mind, send it back to me, and, then, I will send it straight to them, or, if you have the Commissioners’ emails, you can
send it straight to them.

TRACI FLOYD: Yes, sir.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Thank you, Joe.

JOE SPRAGGINS: Commissioner Daniels,

Commissioner Gollott's internet is the problem, but he is trying to get on with dial-in on his phone.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Okay.

JOE SPRAGGINS: Other than that, I think that pretty much answers what we are doing here.

We lived through the storm. Obviously, the personnel did a great job in getting all of our boats secured and all of our assets secured, and we were lucky and blessed by the Lord to not get hit any harder than we were on any of the storms.

We are still keeping an eye out, and Patrick Levine handles that for us in the agency, and Patrick has done a fantastic job staying in touch with things with all of the three lower counties and the state.

We are working very hard to move that forward and everything is good. I don’t know of any damage that we have had.

We took all of our stuff up off our piers and everything else. So we shouldn’t have any damage, other than just very minor, on anything that we’ve got.

Hopefully, we will live through the rest of
this. Beta is going across, now, and we will see what happens with Beta.

Are there any questions?

(No response.)

JOE SPRAGGINS: That is my report, Commissioner Daniels.

COMMISSIONER DANIELLS: All right. Well, we sure do appreciate it. That was a lot of good information there.

Do any of our Commissioners have anything to report today?

(No response.)

COMMISSIONER DANIELLS: I don't either.

We will move on to our new Chief Kyle Wilkerson, Office of Marine Patrol.

KYLE WILKERSON: Good morning Commissioners, counsel and director.

Director, thank you for the kind words and the comments you have give me and my department. We are going to carry the torch to the future higher and better.

Thank you Commissioners for the thanks you have given me, and it really is great for me to be Chief of Marine Patrol.

Looking at the citation report, it is pretty self-explanatory. Nothing just stands out.
We are looking at a possession of Red Snapper during closed season. That was a pretty good citation. We had several boat accidents. As everyone knows, one involved a fatality. It is still pending. Tragic, tragic event there, but we will find out what happened. I promise you.

I do want to bring up the Red Snapper on Labor Day weekend. We had right at a hundred and fifty checks. Fifty-one Tails n' Scales. One violation for no Tails n' Scales. Six hundred and eighty-two people checked. Two hundred and thirteen Red Snapper checked. Three seized. Very good turnout. We were blessed. Everybody looks like they are complying which is good. That is what we strive for.

Once again, that is pretty much what I have. Nothing jumps out on the report. It looks like everybody is complying with State regulations. It looks like we are blessed. Hopefully, everyone is well. Once again, as the director said, Marine Patrol, we are well and we are a hundred percent at this time.

That's all I have.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I had a couple of questions there, Kyle.

KYLE WILKERSON: Yes, sir.
COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I know we had some boating accidents and that is sad, but I see on your list you’ve got it listed as a personal watercraft. Is that what I see “PCW”?

KYLE WILKERSON: I do see that, yes, sir. That may be a typo from dispatch. Once again, it was two vessels.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I thought I had understood that it was a regular motor vessel, in other words, instead of a jet ski. I guess you would call a personal watercraft.

KYLE WILKERSON: Yes, sir. I noticed that earlier, also.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: On the Red Snapper, you went pretty quick there on the checks and stuff. I was just curious.

I think you said six hundred and eighty-two checks on this season. Is that correct?

KYLE WILKERSON: No. That was the total people onboard. That was the individuals onboard. So it could possibly be the four to six people onboard each vessel. That was just people, individual people.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Okay. Could you give those once again?
I would like to hear them one more time just a little bit slower.

KYLE WILKERSON: Okay. I'm sorry.

It was a total of a hundred and fifty vessel checks. We are looking at fifty-one Tails n' Scales. One no Tails n' Scales. One violation during that event.

Six hundred and eighty-two people that were checked, individual people which, once again, could be four to six people onboard, or two people onboard.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Do you have it broken down where checks at sea versus checks at the boat launches?

KYLE WILKERSON: I don't on this list I have, now, but we do break that down, yes, sir.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: You do have that information broken down that way?

KYLE WILKERSON: I believe we do. I would have to double check, but I did look at some yesterday.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I would like that. If I could get it, I would appreciate it.

KYLE WILKERSON: Okay.

I think we physically looked at two hundred and thirteen Red Snapper, and three were seized due to the fact that one individual had no Tails n' Scales.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I've got you.
As far as this year versus last year, I don’t remember the number of checks last year.

Do you?

I know you weren’t Chief, but do you have that information?

KYLE WILKERSON: You are talking about a total of checks?

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Total stops, yes.

KYLE WILKERSON: No, sir. I can get that information for you.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: If I remember correctly, I don’t know why the number four hundred and something sticks in my head, but, yes, if you could get those two things, I would appreciate it.

KYLE WILKERSON: Well, this is just strictly that Labor Day opener, that one day event.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Okay. I thought you were giving total numbers.

KYLE WILKERSON: No, sir. No, sir. It is much larger than that.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I thought so. I thought that’s what I remember. You kind of threw me. All right. Congratulations on the promotion. I think you deserve it.

KYLE WILKERSON: Thank you, Commissioner. I
appreciate you.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Yes, sir.

JOE SPRAGGINS: Commissioner Daniels, we also have Commissioner Gollott on by phone.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Okay. Good deal. You made it on, Richard?

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: I can't hear you.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: We were just making sure you were on here. Welcome.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Can you hear me, now?

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Yes, sir.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Okay. I'm logged in with my telephone instead of the internet. My internet is down.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: All right. We're good. Chief, is that all we have, or have you got something else?

KYLE WILKERSON: Yes, sir, I think that is all we have, unless you have any other questions.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: No, sir.

KYLE WILKERSON: Stand by. I think Captain Levine wants to talk to you.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: We will get Captain Levine up next.

I just wanted to personally congratulate you as
well, Kyle. I look forward to seeing what you do there.

   KYLE WILKERSON: Thank you, Commissioner. I appreciate it.

   COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Patrick Levine.

   PATRICK LEVINE: Good morning Commission, director, legal.

   This morning I will be doing a presentation to receive the Commission’s recommendation on a potential no wake zone in Simmons Bayou.

   In the portal, you should all have received a letter of consideration from the Jackson County Board of Supervisors and, also, an Order from the Jackson County Board of Supervisors establishing a no wake zone in Simmons Bayou, and that was done by unanimous decision.

   We can go on to the slide that has a picture of the proposed no wake zone.

   On August 14th, 2020, I received a letter outlining the Jackson County Board of Supervisors’ passage of a no wake zone in Simmons Bayou south of Eagle Pine Island, Ocean Springs, Mississippi.

   On August 19th, 2020, Senior Master Sergeant Jeff Payne and Officer Jack Husley surveyed the area to establish probable cause for the establishment of a no wake zone.

   It was noticed, when surveying the property,
that the channel has direct contact with the homeowner’s piers. Considering this, vessels often navigate the channel at high rates of speed only a few feet from where the residents congregate.

Considering the proximity of the channel, boat operators have no reaction time should they have to deviate from the channel. Additionally, the property owners have vessels moored in the location.

In addition to observation, it was established that it is approximately sixteen hundred feet long, the proposed no wake zone, and that it takes approximately four minutes twenty-eight seconds to travel the length of the proposed zone operating at idle speed.

Considering the nature of the circumstance, the Office of Marine Patrol strongly recommends the establishment of a no wake zone for the specified location.

This decision rests on proximity of the channel in relation to piers on which people fish, boat and socialize.

The staff recommendation, as stated, is the proposal of a no wake zone in this area of Simmons Bayou and, at this time, we would like to receive any questions and/or the Commission’s recommendation on the proposed no wake zone.

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COMMISSIONER HAVARD: Mr. Levine, this is Commissioner Havard. We approved a no wake zone in Pascagoula last year, or maybe a year-and-a-half ago, and I asked the Board of Supervisors, when we passed this, to make sure it is clearly marked and enforced where everybody will know that it is a no wake zone and do it in a timely fashion.

To this day, there have been two no wake signs added and it spans about a quarter of the way of the total no wake zone that we approved.

If we are going to approve these no wake zones, we need to make sure that they are identified in a timely fashion with appropriate signs.

I know that the one in Pascagoula has to do with the railroad and the Highway Department and there are a lot of different departments that have to be touched there.

What is the case here?

Who is responsible the no wake zones, putting them up on Simmons Bayou?

PATRICK LEVINE: It will be Jackson County, also, on Simmons Bayou.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Fellow Commissioners, this is Richard Gollott. I have always been against no wake zones because it is Pandora's Box. You open one,
and, then, you are going to get a dozen behind it.

    I have been fighting this thing for ten years now, and we haven't had any problems really.

    I mean, yes, you have always got these homeowners that want to put a no wake zone right in front of their house and I don’t blame them, but it is going to clog the bayous and everything up with people just idling, and, then, of course, you get the idiots that come through there wide open.

    I have always been against it and it has been working out so far for us. We haven’t gotten a lot of no wake zones, since I have been on the Commission, and it has worked out well, as far as I can see.

    PATRICK LEVINE: Commissioner Gollott, that is one of the concerns on this particular piece of property. It is a very narrow channel and the piers are in close proximity. The channel goes right against the piers and that is the concern, as you said, the individuals that go through there extremely fast while people’s children are out there playing on the piers and people are congregating on the piers and they are in their boats.

    There is no time for boat operators to deviate who are going through there at a high rate of speed. That is why the Office of Marine Patrol puts the recommendation out there for the establishment of this no wake zone in
Simmons Bayou, and we felt confident -- after the other passage that happened in Davis Bayou, we looked at the other properties in Davis Bayou, we felt confident that this same particular body of water would be one that would be addressed in the future and here we are today addressing this particular body of water.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Patrick, can we go back to the aerial view of that?

(Aerial view on screen.)

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Whenever you are coming into that thing and you are making that curve right there going into those houses, approximately how wide is that bayou there?

PATRICK LEVINE: I would say at the widest point it is forty yards wide.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: So it is narrow?

PATRICK LEVINE: It is very, very narrow. In fact, there is no way to operate a vessel outside of one hundred feet from the property. So, when those vessels go through there at a high rate of speed, they are already in regards breaking the law operating that vessel next to property within one hundred feet.

What this no wake zone would do, it would give Jackson County and the Office of Marine Patrol some more bite to enforcing those laws in those bodies of water.
COMMISSIONER DANIELS: That looks like a pretty tight turn there. I mean, you get decent size boats at the wrong place at the wrong time right there, it looks like it could get a little hairy, in my opinion.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Is there any way we might could put a temporary no wake zone there just to see how it works out and see what kind of violations we are having; maybe a year, or something like that?

PATRICK LEVINE: As far as a temporary no wake zone, I think for the purposes of this presentation Jackson County Board of Supervisors is asking us for the establishment of a no wake zone.

We don’t like idling through those no wake zones and it is uncomfortable and it can be hot, but, when it comes to public safety, that is what they are wanting to address.

JOE SPRAGGINS: Patrick, how long is it, the distance between the two red lines?

PATRICK LEVINE: One thousand six hundred feet.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: So we are talking about less than five minutes of idling through there?

PATRICK LEVINE: Four minutes twenty-eight seconds.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: I can promise you four minutes twenty-eight seconds is not nearly as valuable as
a kid's life, or somebody getting hurt, in my opinion.

PATRICK LEVINE: We all like going through there as quick as we can and getting out to the fishing grounds as quick as we can, but it is something we need to look at and consider.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Patrick, who all would be enforcing that?

I know that you guys can enforce it, but does the Sheriff's Department?

I know they've got boats and stuff.

Who all would be enforcing that no wake zone?

PATRICK LEVINE: The Jackson County Sheriff's Office will be able to enforce that and we will be able to enforce that no wake zone.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: All right.

COMMISSIONER HAVARD: Patrick, have the homeowners attempted to put up their own no wake zone signs?

Typically, people are cordial enough that they put up the signs and people slow down.

Have the homeowners attempted to do that?

PATRICK LEVINE: Commissioner Havard, there are multiple no wake zone signs that have been placed in that area over the years and, unfortunately, courtesy is one of those things that is not as common as it used to be.
Folks aren’t quite as courteous as they used to be. So they don’t pay much attention to those no wake zone signs.

COMMISSIONER HAVARD: Has the department gone out there and stopped any of these folks?

Typically, it is three, or four, boats that ruin the whole basket for everybody.

Have y’all been out there and said, “Hey. Look guys. The bayou is only this wide. They have kids out there. Would y’all please slow down and be careful?” Just a courtesy thing.

Has anybody attempted that?

I’m with Richard on this. I mean, there are a lot of folks out there that would love to have a no wake zone in front of their house. If we open up this can, it could turn into a mess real quick, but I do agree with Commissioner Daniels that five minutes is nothing for safety of children, or humans in general.

I’m kind of mixed here. I just don’t want to open up this opportunity for everybody to start applying for a no wake zone because you ask anybody that has a pier along our three coastal counties, do you want a no wake zone in front of your house, and they are going to say yes, I want one in front of my house. I can justify that there should be one in front of my house.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: I agree with Mark and
Richard on what y'all are saying.

Me personally as a boater looking at this thing and him telling me that it is no wider than it is, that is two pretty good curves there and you even take the houses out of account, or the piers out of account, that is a pretty tight channel to navigate for boats running nowadays fifty to sixty miles an hour.

COMMISSIONER HAVARD: I understand.

COMMISSIONER GUESS: I think that if you have more people that are going to apply for no wake zones, it should be done on a case-by-case basis.

In this case, it seems like it is too narrow and it is a short enough area that under five minutes at an idle speed seems justifiable.

I'm in agreement with the staff's recommendation personally on this case.

If we get ten more no wake zone requests, that is what we can look at on a case-by-case basis.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: If this was a straightaway, I would be against it a hundred percent, but that curve right there is what gets me and the width of the bayou.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: What about a no wake zone in that curve and that would be the only time, not the whole bayou?
COMMISSIONER DANIELS: You are talking about shortening the no wake zone, Richard?

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Yes, make it for safety in that curve, if that is the only bad area there.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Patrick, would that be a possibility?

Could we move that left red line up to about where that little cove is on the top side of the bayou on that picture and let it shorten this thing up a little bit?

PATRICK LEVINE: Now, if we did that, it would be out of compliance and have a different no wake zone than the Jackson County Board of Supervisors has already proposed in their Order. So that would leave some discrepancies in the enforcement of the no wake zone between Jackson County Sheriff's Office and the Office of Marine Patrol.

That is something that we could entertain. I do not have the coordinates and/or the ability this moment to pull that up for us to vote on that as a potential option. We would have to table it, redraw it up, look at coordinates and repropose at a later meeting.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Let me rephrase my question.

Could we inquire with Jackson County about the
possibility of shortening this thing up a little bit?

    PATRICK LEVINE: We can.

    COMMISSIONER HAVARD: Also, Patrick, I would like to see an aerial that has a broader view because I'm not familiar with Simmons Bayou, but, by the looks of the population around the surrounding areas, not far down the bayou you are going to have a very similar situation potentially because that bayou is not large enough.

    COMMISSIONER DANIELS: I agree with Mark. I would like to see a wider view of it.

    COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Patrick, if I understand correctly, the Jackson County Board of Supervisors has already put this no wake zone in effect?

    In other words, they passed the ordinance?

    PATRICK LEVINE: They did, a unanimous vote from Jackson County Board of Supervisors.

    COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Do they have the authority to do that?

    PATRICK LEVINE: They do. They do have the authority to do that for Jackson County, put it as an ordinance for the county. So it is enforceable by them and what they are doing is asking us to support it by the Commission.

    For the establishment of that no wake zone for the State of Mississippi, it goes to the Board of
Supervisors first for their approval, and, then, it goes to the Commission on Marine Resources.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I'm just curious.
If we didn't approve it, it still stands.
Would it be still enforceable by you guys and the Jackson County Sheriff's Department, or just Jackson County Sheriff's Department alone?

PATRICK LEVINE: Just Jackson County Sheriff's Department alone.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Okay.

PATRICK LEVINE: I think at best they have one unit most of the time working Jackson County. I know they would appreciate any help we could give them.

COMMISSIONER HAVARD: I would like to see this thing tabled until next meeting and get a broader view of what the surrounding waters look like, in my opinion.

PATRICK LEVINE: Would that be the Commission's recommendation to the Director that we wait and get more information on this potential no wake zone?

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Mark, if you are okay with it, I would like to possibly add to that talking to Jackson County and seeing if we can shorten this thing up. Taking it all the way out to the point all the way to the left seems like a little bit of overkill to me. I think you could certainly shorten it there. Even on the back
side, you could bring it all the way up to where those pine trees are and it would be sufficient, if we did approve it.

COMMISSIONER HAVARD: I agree.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: I’m looking at it on a satellite imagery right now. That bayou goes on up in there a little ways there, but it doesn’t look like there is a whole lot -- is there a marina in there, or some condos, or something?

PATRICK LEVINE: No. It is residential properties.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Whenever you get up there where it goes under the bridge, Patrick, is that all no wake zone right there where those houses are and it looks like maybe condos, or apartments, or something, up in there?

PATRICK LEVINE: No. It opens back up. Where the houses and the condos are, it is a lot wider body of water.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Yes, I see that.

COMMISSIONER HAVARD: So this is in Gulf Park Estates, Patrick?

PATRICK LEVINE: This is in that direction, yes, sir.

COMMISSIONER HAVARD: I know exactly where this
is. Typically, people slow down there anyway. If you are running a high rate of speed through there, it’s not a good thing.

PATRICK LEVINE: I don’t know if you remember not too long ago going back further west we put in a no wake zone for the University of Southern Mississippi and I wish I could tell you people obey that no wake zone, but they don’t and, unfortunately, the university is calling us pretty consistently asking if we can send somebody out there to slow folks down.

You would think people would be courteous and slow down a little bit. Unfortunately, they don’t.

COMMISSIONER HAVARD: I can tell you this. There are a lot of houses up and down that bayou, and they are all going to have a good point when they all come up and make the whole bayou a no wake zone because really in reality that bayou is not wide enough to be running wide open; maybe up on a plane until you get to certain spots.

I think we need to postpone this, table it to the next meeting and I will personally go talk to some of the supervisors and get their opinions on it and I will personally go ride down the bayou again and make sure we make a good decision.

That is what I would like to do. I would like to make a motion that we table this to the next meeting.
COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Commissioner Gollott will second it.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Commissioner Havard made a motion to table this issue. Commissioner Gollott has seconded that.

All those in favor say aye.

Commissioner Guess?

COMMISSIONER GUESS: Aye.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Commissioner Bosarge?

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Aye.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Commissioner Havard?

COMMISSIONER HAVARD: Aye.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Commissioner Gollott?

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Aye.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Commissioner Daniels, aye.

Patrick, thank you for the presentation.

We are going to move on to Coastal Resources Management and it looks like Willa has the first presentation.

WILLA BRANTLEY: Yes. Good morning.

Can you hear me?

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Yes, ma'am.

WILLA BRANTLEY: To give a little bit of background on this, this presentation will be a little bit
different than what you normally see from us.

 Normally you see a presentation about a very specific project asking for specific impacts and specific approval.

 This one, we are asking for what we are terming a blanket variance to a regulation that we have.

 Typically, when a project needs a variance like that, we would bring the project to you and explain all the specifics of the project and the justification for that variance.

 This one, we have seen a need. As you see here, the problem that we see is that permitting living shorelines and these alternative bulkhead designs that we are trying to encourage and promote, it is harder to permit those than it is to permit a new bulkhead, or a replacement bulkhead.

 What we would like to see is to bring those down to the same level. We don’t want this to be a regulatory tool where we would use it to require people to put in living shorelines, or these alternative bulkhead designs, over bulkheads, but we would make it just as easy to permit those as it is to permit bulkheads because sometimes, actually quite frequently people choose to permit a bulkhead as opposed to a living shoreline simply because the permitting is easier.
The solution that we are asking for today we are calling it a waiver for living shorelines, and it would be a blanket approval of a variance to Chapter 8, Section 8, 114.01 of the Mississippi Coastal Program and to Mississippi Admin Code Title 22, Part 23, Chapter 8, Section 114.01.

Those both say the same thing. They are just different documents. One is our state level document. One is our federal level coastal programs document.

The regulation that we would be asking for the variance from states that permanent filling of coastal wetlands below the mean high tide line because of potential adverse and cumulative environmental impacts is not authorized.

Again, the goal of this is to streamline permitting for the alternative bulkhead designs and living shorelines.

For the applicants, they would get a quicker response to their applications for these projects. It is just an easier application process overall, and potentially a lower cost because a lot of times to get through that more complicated permitting process they hire an environmental consultant.

This would make the permitting process easier and something that a lot of the marine contractors are
used to dealing with. They are not used to dealing with that more complicated process. So they don’t encourage. They encourage bulkheads rather than living shorelines because they know how to get the permits for those. So this would make it easier for them and hopefully lower costs to the applicants overall.

   It would give a better use of time to our permitters. They wouldn’t spend so much time prepping writeups and PowerPoints and things like that to bring to the Commission and the Director and for the Commission and the Director, we would see fewer minor beneficial-type projects presented at meetings.

   Again, it would make those permitting requirements more equal. It would not give an advantage to living shorelines.

   Next.

   The location that this covers. It would be all the waters of the state located within the Coastal Zone, and the Coastal Zone is defined as the three coastal counties of Mississippi.

   The project parameters. You received a copy of the full draft of the waiver with all of the details in it, but the main project parameters are that the project would have to be equal to, or less than, five hundred linear feet in length, equal to, or less than, fifty feet
from the mean high water line, or equal to, or less than, twenty-five percent of the width of waterway whichever is less.

If the waterway was fifty feet total, they couldn't go out fifty feet. They could only go out twelve point five feet.

The projects would have to use native plants only. They would have to monitor for and remove invasive species, if they move them to the project area.

They would have to place proper signage in accordance with Coast Guard regulations.

They would have to sign a boundary agreement with the Secretary of State that would state that any shoreline accretion that resulted from these projects would not result in a change in property boundaries.

Natural accretion accrues to the property owner. It becomes their private property, just like erosion becomes property of the state.

There would have to be a mean high tide survey and they would sign that boundary agreement prior to issuance of the permit.

Next.

Notification of the proposal appeared in The Sun Herald in June of 2019. No public comments were received.

We actually did present this to the Commission
back then.

I had planned to present it hopefully in April of this year for final approval, but that got delayed thanks to COVID, but we have a few projects that would fit under this waiver, if it were approved. So we decided to go ahead and bring it, even though we are not able to do in-person meetings yet.

City and county governments in the three coastal counties were also notified and none submitted comments.

All of the MDMR offices, including Coastal Preserves, were notified of this and none of those submitted comments.

DEQ submitted no comments.

Archives and History did request a fifteen-day comment period for any of the proposed projects and that is fine. We, actually, for all of our waivers, have a thirty-day comment period. So that would fall well within that.

Again, Secretary of State requested that any authorization issued by MDMR should inform the upland property owners and applicants of the requirements to enter that boundary agreement.

What we would do is have them sign that agreement prior to issuing the waiver so that they would know that no property accretion would become their private
property. It would remain Public Trust Tidelands.

Our recommendation is that we recommend the Commission advise the Director to issue the approved variance for the projects that meet those parameters and limitations of that MDMR waiver that was written up.

The waiver parameters were based off of a nationwide permit that the Corps passed, I think it was two years ago now. They have a nationwide permit that streamlines processing of applications for living shorelines, and we wanted to create kind of the same thing for our permittees to have as a tool.

I have some pictures following this, I believe. This would be examples of the types of projects.

Typically, you would have some shorelines shaping along. A lot of times you will go out and when there has been erosion, you will have a scarp there that goes straight down. So they would shape that shoreline right there at the edge just a little bit to get a slope, do some plantings and potentially put a discontinuous breakwater structure out further (indicating photograph).

Next.

Again, this is just kind of a typical project that would fall under this waiver (indicating photograph).

These are beneficial projects. They provide much needed habitat that we are losing at a high rate that
provides lots of nursery habitat for our fishery species.

On this one, you can see the breakwater that is set out. That just knocks down the waves when a boat goes by and you have a boat wake thrown off, or we have a storm. Whether it is a tropical event, or just a thunderstorm with some high winds that kicks up waves, the breakwater breaks that wave power down before it hits the vegetation and gives that vegetation a chance to get established (indicating photograph).

I think I may have one more picture. This is a typical picture of while the construction is being done where they go in and work from the shoreline and float that shoreline down for planting, and, then, that is the breakwater that you can see sticking out of the water just a little bit. They are typically not far from shoreline. They don't extend out into navigation channels. They typically go right along the shoreline (indicating photograph).

If you have any questions, I will be happy to answer them.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: I like the idea of these living shorelines a whole lot better than just having anything bulkheaded. The idea that people were about to pass that option because the permitting is a little tougher doesn't make a lot of sense to me.
COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: If I understand you correctly, Willa, what you are doing here is to make it to where -- you are trying to get it to where a lot of these projects don't have to come before the Commission, that you could actually have a set of guidelines set out to where you can approve these permits, but they still go through the same permitting process in that it is put out -- anyhow. I'm not quite following what you are trying to accomplish.

WILLA BRANTLEY: Right now, the only way we can grant a variance to any of our requirements for regulated activities is to have that approved by the -- well, it states the Commission. So, now, it would be the Executive Director, and we have to go through a process of putting those out on public notice, potentially having a public hearing, things like that.

What we are asking for, because these are typically minor projects that would fit within these minor guidelines, they are positive beneficial projects, is that we give a blanket variance to that guideline that we would be bringing to the Commission for approval on an individual basis.

That way, like you said, we can approve each of these projects as they come to us without having to go through quite so many steps for something that we see as
minor and most importantly beneficial.

I don’t think, when the Coastal Program was initially written with this regulation, these projects were even thought of, or imagined.

Things have kind of evolved over the years. Those were written, I think, in the early eighties and haven’t changed significantly since then.

Since we have come up with these projects and want to encourage these projects, this is the route that we have seen as being the easiest to get there.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I follow what you are saying and, yes, I could see where some of these minor projects, sure, anything to streamline it because these are beneficial projects.

I just worry about a blanket waiver. Could that lead to where there is -- there are some bigger serious projects that may need -- in other words, at least over here in Jackson County, anytime you want a variance you have to go before the Board of Supervisors for the most part and there is a process.

I just don’t want to see it get quite out of hand to where on some of these larger projects, if there is a public concern, that we don’t give the public a chance to weigh in on it.

WILLA BRANTLEY: Right, and that is why we put
those limitations on the length, the extent out from the shoreline, the kinds of plants you can use, those kinds of things.

Anything that falls outside those parameters that are listed in that waiver would still have to go through the full permitting process.

For example, we had a project out at Camp Wilkes a few years ago that was a living shorelines project. We have one in Ocean Springs, I think, that Greg presented last year. Those projects would have fallen outside these parameters and been larger projects that did have to come before the Commission on an individual basis and justify that variance on that individual project and on that individual basis.

This would just cover minor projects.

Some city projects that we have had that would fall within these, minor projects around their harbors and things, and this would mainly cover residential projects where you have a shorter shoreline.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Well, that’s good. That’s a good thing because, yes, we need to promote these projects as best we can.

COMMISSIONER HAVARD: What are the parameters as far as how far north do you guys regulate this type of shoreline?
WILLA BRANTLEY: This would cover any waterways in the three coastal counties.

COMMISSIONER HAVARD: Okay.

JOE SPRAGGINS: Commissioners, I think this basically falls in line with the same thing we are doing now with bulkheads. Every bulkhead doesn't have to come for approval. There are certain parameters in there that we can do, and I don't think they want to do anything different than that with living shorelines.

Is that correct, Willa?

WILLA BRANTLEY: That is correct, sir.

Like I said, we don't want to use this as a regulatory tool that forces people to choose living shorelines over bulkheads, but we want to make it on an equal footing and as easy to permit as the bulkhead is so that permitting is not the reason that they choose to go with a bulkhead instead of a living shoreline.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Very good.

COMMISSIONER HAVARD: I think you guys have done a great job so far making sure that, I guess, the residents choose the right type of material in shorelines and all of that good stuff.

Do we need to make a motion for this?

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Are you making a motion, Mark?
COMMISSIONER HAVARD: That’s what I was asking. Is that what they are asking for is a motion?

WILLA BRANTLEY: Yes.

COMMISSIONER HAVARD: At this time, I would like to make a motion that we move forward with the department’s recommendations.

COMMISSIONER GUESS: And I will second it.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Commissioner Havard made the motion. Commissioner Guess seconded.

All in favor say aye.

Commissioner Guess?

COMMISSIONER GUESS: Aye.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Commissioner Bosarge?

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Aye.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Commissioner Gollott?

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Aye.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Commissioner Daniels is an aye.

Commissioner Havard?

COMMISSIONER HAVARD: Aye.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Motion passes.

WILLA BRANTLEY: Thank you very much.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Thank you, Willa.

Ms. Leslie Brewer, Finance and Administration.

LESLEY BREWER: Good morning Director,
Commissioners, legal.

My name is Leslie Brewer, CFO. I will be presenting the agency’s financials for the month ending August 31st, 2020.

At the end of August, our State Revenue was three point two million. Our Total Agency Revenue was three point three million.

Our State Net Income was two point five million, and our Total Agency Net Income was two million.

Next slide, Brady.

After two months of fiscal year 2021, we have ninety-seven point eight percent of the Operating Budget remaining, while the Tidelands Budget has ninety-seven point nine percent.

As you guys know, we have been watching our expenses just like in July. So it is lean, but now that we have our budget, September should get to looking a little more normal.

Does anybody have any questions?

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: This has been a hectic month, or month and a half for you.

LESLIE BREWER: It has. It has.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Thank you for everything that you do.

LESLIE BREWER: Thank you.
COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Does anybody else have any questions?

(No response.)

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Public Affairs, Ms. Charmaine.

CHARMAINE SCHMERMUND: Good morning Commissioners, Director Spraggins, Ms. Chesnut.

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources was mentioned fifty-nine times in local, state and national media since the August CMR meeting.

Popular news items included our agency’s budget resolution, Red Snapper season reopening and a cultch plant project led by our Shellfish Bureau.

We launched our annual photo contest where the winning photos will be used in the agency’s 2021 calendar.

We ask that submitted photos depict an aspect of the marine resources available on the Mississippi Gulf Coast, including recreational and commercial fishing, Coastal Preserves marine plant and animal life, marsh areas, boating and Mississippi seafood.

The deadline to submit these entries is Friday, October 23rd, and they can be emailed to Public Affairs at dmr.ms.gov.

That is all I have.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Thank you, Charmaine.
CHARMAINE SCHERMUND: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Marine Fisheries. Matt has the first presentation.

Have we got you, Matt?

MATT HILL: Yes, I'm here. I'm getting situated.

Just a quick update on the 2020 Mississippi Red Snapper Season.

We currently have a preliminary harvest total of one hundred and forty-two thousand two hundred and twenty-nine pounds.

This represents ninety-three point eight percent of our current ACL of one hundred and fifty-one thousand five hundred and eighty-four pounds.

We do set our annual catch target with a ten percent buffer which is one hundred and thirty-six thousand four hundred and twenty-six pounds.

As you can see, we had a large Saturday on that Labor Day weekend. We landed currently right in the middle of the target and the limit (indicating slide).

We do currently have nine thousand three hundred and fifty-five pounds remaining.

However, as you can see with the large catch right there, if we would have kept it open for another day, we would have more than likely gone over the limit.
So that decision was made to close the season after one day opening.

That's it.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: I think y'all made the right decision there. We certainly don't want to lose anything off of next year.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Yes.

Matt, I had a couple of questions.

MATT HILL: Yes, sir.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Where you said, after we see where that one-day catch, I don't see it. Where is it at?

MATT HILL: The one-day catch is at the very last line on there. Each line, or dot, represents a day on the chart over here (indicating slide).

See how elongated that line is. We started that Saturday below the target. We started with approximately a hundred and thirty-six thousand pounds.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Are you still there, Matt?

MATT HILL: Yes, sir.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I didn't know if you had quit talking, or what. You were kind of fading in and out.
I don’t know. I guess everybody is the same way, but we are not getting the updates anymore. I thought we had kind of been through this and we were going to get some updates.

I don’t have anything, other than what you showed us here.

You have got most of that information in front of you?

MATT HILL: I have a pretty good bit of information in front of me.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: What was the average weight of the fish this year?

MATT HILL: Six point four five pounds is the average weight.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: The average number of anglers?

MATT HILL: We had four point two anglers per vessel per trip.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: And average number of fish per angler?

In other words, this is all stuff that you used to give us, but I’m not seeing it anymore.

MATT HILL: Yes, sir. We did do the updates and it was sent out on a weekly, or biweekly, basis, but this year we did not do that.
I can provide Director Spraggins with all the details and he can pass it along, but I think I do have most of the information for you that you are asking for.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: It is just hard to have a conversation, if you have only got just a little bit of information.

It all looks good and I’m proud of what is happening, but I have questions and things I want to ask, but it is hard to ask when you don’t get much information.

What did you say the average number of fish per angler was?

MATT HILL: Right now it’s about one point two eight. We are still looking at a couple of things, but it is going to be between -- it may fluctuate a tenth, or something right there, but it is not going to be very much. Basically, one point three which is on par with what we saw last year, a tad bit lower.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Yes, I see that, and it looks like the fish are a little bigger because, I think, we were about five point five four last year.

MATT HILL: Yes, sir. Overall they were a little bit bigger. We did see a slight drop on that one-day opening on Labor Day. We really can’t explain that, but we did see a slight drop in fish that we did measure, but overall for the entire season the average weight was
COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: What was the number of trips?

MATT HILL: Four thousand six hundred and seventy-six completed trips for the year.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I’ve got you. Have you got any information on discards?

MATT HILL: We do have. We do collect that. That is one piece of information I don't have on hand right now.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Number of fish caught?

MATT HILL: We are actually turning it on right now. We can get that for you, also.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: It is no longer interim director, but Chief Kyle. I asked him the number of intercepts.

Do you know that, the number?

MATT HILL: For Kyle, for Marine Patrol, or our number of Tails n’ Scales intercepts at the dockside?

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Well, what is the difference?

MATT HILL: Well, Marine Patrol, that is enforcement. That is on the water.

We do validation surveys at the dockside to get the mean weight of the fish, get all the biological
parameters.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Is that like the MRIP?

MATT HILL: It is off the MRIP survey, but it is specialized for the Tails n' Scales system.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I would like to know. I was just curious as to how many. I asked Chief Kyle about the number of intercepts at the boat launches versus at sea intercepts. To me, that would be an interesting number to see.

Another question.

Canceled trips, how is that going?

MATT HILL: We had eight hundred and sixty abandoned trips this year which represents about eighteen point four percent of the overall trips, and that is comparable to last year. We saw roughly percentage wise twenty percent of the trips last year were abandoned. So it is right on par about one out of every five trips does get abandoned.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: One out of every five trips gets canceled?

MATT HILL: Yes, sir.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: That is a pretty steep number, in my opinion.

Are you seeing any -- we worried about folks that would go out and make their trip, and, then, come in
and cancel.

Are you seeing any indication of that?

COMMISSIONER HAVARD: I think mostly what you were seeing this year was the weather was good until you got south of the islands and it turned pretty sporty after that and people just turned around.

MATT HILL: All we can go by, Steve, is what we saw in the system and we compared it to the previous year. Overall we did have some periods of time where we did see a jump maybe for the weather, or for other reasons, but overall for the year the abandoned trips, historically it has been pretty much one out of five trips does get abandoned for some reason.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Have you had any where there was an intercept, and, then, an abandoned trip?

MATT HILL: Yes, we have.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Are we working towards maybe looking a little closer at that?

MATT HILL: Yes, we are. We are working on some things and combing through the database and working closely with Marine Patrol. We have had some discussions and are trying to come up with the best path forward to handle that.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: All right.

One other thing. I was trying to get online
here on this meeting and reading some of the Red Snapper regulation information not so much for me, but for the public, where it says on the website:

“Federal law requires non-stainless steel circle hooks when using natural baits while fishing for all reef fish species.”

Can you clarify that just a little bit?

In other words, if I was just the average person reading that, I would read that to say that anytime you are using any natural bait you can only use a non-stainless circle hook.

MATT HILL: That is correct.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Have we had any intercepts where that was looked at?

MATT HILL: That is an enforcement question. We don't look at the hooks on our intercepts at the dock. To my knowledge, I have not heard of that.

In the past years, I know we had several cases when it first came along of people being cited for it, but, speaking for this year, I don’t have that answer.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: All right. Well, maybe one day, we will get that information given to us on a weekly basis.

Matt, thank you, sir.

MATT HILL: Yes, sir.
COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Thank you for the presentation, Matt.

Are you going to be doing the State records?

Let’s see here. Jonathan Barr will be handling the State records.

JONATHAN BARR: Good morning.

We have four potential Saltwater State Records for your consideration today.

The first two are all tackle. They are both spear. The first being an Ocean Triggerfish, Canthidermis sufflamen. The old record was five pounds nine point nine six ounces. The new record is six pounds fifteen point eight four ounces. The angler is Mr. Chad Patti.

That is the Ocean Triggerfish and there is Mr. Patti with his prize (indicating photographs).

The next one is also spear, all tackle record. It's a Red Lionfish, Pterois Volitans. The old record was one pound thirteen point forty-four ounces. The new record is one pound fifteen point zero four ounces. The angler is Mr. Heath Powell.

There is the fish. There is Mr. Powell with his fish (indicating photographs).

The next one is a conventional Saltwater Fishing Record. It is a Silver Perch, Bairdiella chrysoura. The old record was four ounces. The new record is five point
one two ounces. The angler is Mr. Donald L. Bosarge, II. There is the Silver Perch. There is Mr. Donnie with his prize fish (indicating photographs). The last one is a Youth Saltwater Fishing Record. This is the first submission of a Tripletail in our Youth category. This is a new record. As I mentioned, it is a Tripletail, Lobotes surinamensis. It is nineteen pounds eight ounces. The angler is Mr. Charlie Russell. There is the Tripletail and there is the young lad with his fish (indicating photographs). That concludes the presentation.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: What a great fish. Congratulations to all these guys.

Do we have a motion to approve these records?

COMMISSIONER HAVARD: Yes. I would like to make a motion that we approve all the new records. It is good to see people out there enjoying themselves.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: I’ll second the motion. We have a motion by Commissioner Havard.

Seconded by Commissioner Daniels.

All those in favor say aye.

Commissioner Guess?

COMMISSIONER GUESS: Aye.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Commissioner Bosarge?
COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Aye.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Commissioner Gollott?

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Aye.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Commissioner Havard?

COMMISSIONER HAVARD: Aye.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Commissioner Daniels is an aye.

Do we have any other business?

(No response.)

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Director, do we have any public comments today?

JOE SPRAGGINS: We have none at this time, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Well, thank you everyone. If we could get a motion to adjourn?

COMMISSIONER GUESS: I'll make the motion.

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I'll second.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: We have a motion by Commissioner Guess. Second by Commissioner Bosarge.

All those in favor say aye.

Commissioner Guess?

COMMISSIONER GUESS: Aye.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Commissioner Bosarge?

COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Aye.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Commissioner Gollott?
COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Aye.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Commissioner Havard?

COMMISSIONER HAVARD: Aye.

COMMISSIONER DANIELS: Commissioner Daniels is

an aye.

Everybody enjoy your day. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER GUESS: Y'all have a good day.

Thank you.
CERTIFICATE

I, Lucille Morgan, Certified Shorthand Reporter, do hereby certify that the above sixty-three pages, including this page, is a true and correct transcription of the Zoom Webinar of the September 22, 2020, meeting of the Commission on Marine Resources, 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.

s/_________________________________

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