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## Alternative Oyster Culture Anchoring System to be Tested

When many alternative oyster culture (AOC) operations on Grand Isle were damaged during the 2020 hurricane season, Louisiana State University (LSU) researchers and Louisiana Sea Grant (LSG) personnel thought they found a mechanism to help AOC farms defend against tropical storms.

With a \$75,000 grant from the National Sea Grant Program, the team hoped to determine what conditions – such as geology and variability of soil properties at different water depths – caused some AOC mooring systems to fail and some to endure the 2020 storms. AOC is when oysters are grown in floating cages or in bottom-placed cages attached to anchors. This method allows the cages to be raised and lowered to protect oysters from predators, fouling and ideally the effects of hazards like hurricanes.

The research team of Navid Jafari, assistant professor of civil and environmental engineering at LSU; Brian Callam, director of the Louisiana Sea Grant (LSG) Oyster Lab and Voisin Oyster Hatchery on Grand Isle; and Rusty Gaudé, LSG and LSU AgCenter Marine Extension agent, met with many Grand Isle oyster growers to learn about the mooring systems used and how they were installed before October 2020's Hurricane Zeta struck. However, what survived the earlier storms and Zeta did not survive Hurricane Ida in 2021.

AOC operators were knocked-back to square one with their businesses. And the research team – which had hoped to provide growers with mooring solutions by the beginning of the 2022 hurricane season – had no insights to share.

As luck would have it, Gaudé was able to find an opportunity in the catastrophe. Entergy Louisiana was upgrading its transmission structures from Leeville to Grand Isle and removing the industrial-strength anchors that helped keep those structures in place. Those old anchors were no longer needed. And when Gaudé learned of their existence, he asked Entergy to donate them for an AOC pilot project. With the cooperation of MG Dyess, a contractor for Entergy, the anchors were moved to a storage location on the island.

“As a company, we’re only as strong as the communities we serve,” said Phillip May, Entergy Louisiana president and CEO.



Pictured from left: Christian Gioia with Entergy Louisiana, Eric Langston with MG Dyess Inc., Louisiana Sea Grant and LSU AgCenter marine agent Rusty Gaudé, and Grand Isle Port Commission executive director Weldon Danos stand with one of the anchors donated by Entergy. Gaudé holds a failed anchor AOC operators have traditionally used in his left hand. With extension rods also donated by Entergy, the new anchors can be buried approximately 20 feet deep into the water bottom.

“And environmental sustainability is a crucial factor in helping our communities thrive. When the opportunity presented itself to help AOC operations, it was an easy decision to make, and we were proud to partner with LSU on this endeavor.”

The moorings typically used by AOC operators on Grand Isle are about four feet in height, said Gaudé. “Two men standing in the water could screw them into the water bottom. The donated Entergy anchors are much bigger and more robust. Although they have to be installed with hydraulic equipment operated from a barge, these experimental anchors should provide many times the degree of security.

“We all know there’s additional expense to this type of installation. But what we hope the project will demonstrate is this type of mooring system will survive the meanest of hurricanes, so AOC businesses won’t be completely wiped-out when a storm hits. The objective is to make these oyster growers more resilient and storm resistant and keep their infrastructure from becoming marine debris and a navigation hazard,” Gaudé added.

The anchors donated by Entergy – which cost about \$183 each – will be installed soon at the two AOC parks operated by the Grand Isle Port Commission. This pilot project is to see how they fare throughout the 2022 hurricane season. Research results, which have application throughout the northern Gulf of Mexico, hopefully will provide AOC operators with rock-solid mooring recommendations by the start of the 2023 hurricane season.

“Building a more resilient Louisiana requires all of us to do our part,” said May. “Just as Entergy is upgrading its infrastructure to better withstand more frequent and more powerful storms, our partners at LSU are doing the same for our coast.”

## **Emergency Rule to Modify the 2022 Recreation Greater Amberjack Fishing Season**

The most recent greater amberjack stock assessment (SEDAR 70 2020) determined that greater amberjack is not making adequate rebuilding progress and is still both overfished and experiencing overfishing. Additionally, new recreational catch estimates generated using the Marine Recreational Information Program’s Fishing Effort Survey indicated that historical recreational landings are greater than previously estimated. The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council is obligated to end overfishing and revise the rebuilding plan for greater amberjack. It is currently developing an amendment that considers modifying greater amberjack catch levels and allocations. The amendment is expected to be completed in fall of 2022 with implementation anticipated in 2023.

The council is concerned that the recreational sector could overharvest the recreational greater amberjack annual catch target in the fall 2022 season. This could result in a total closure for the 2023/2024 recreational fishing year. Thus, the council requested that NOAA Fisheries implement an Emergency Rule to modify to the 2022/2023 recreational fishing season to reduce the chances of recreational overharvest this year and subsequent paybacks in the 2023/2024 recreational fishing season. The council requested that the greater amberjack recreational season be modified so that it is open in September and October of 2022. If the secretary of commerce approves this request, the recreational sector will not open for greater amberjack harvest in August 2022.

### **What is an Emergency Rule?**

An emergency rule can only be used to respond to unforeseen or recently discovered circumstances where substantial harm to or disruption of the resource, fishery or community would be caused in the time it would take to follow standard rulemaking procedures. Emergency rules are implemented for 180 days with a possible extension of 186 days (366 days total).

## **Gulf Council Recommends Allowing Federally Permitted For-Hire Vessels to Operate Under a Limited Exemption While Addressing Vessel Monitoring System Equipment Failures**

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council took final action on a Framework Action to ensure that for-hire trips are not delayed or canceled in the event of vessel monitoring system equipment failures. As of March 1, 2022, vessels with charter vessel/headboat permits for reef fish and/or coastal migratory pelagics must be equipped with a satellite or cellular position reporting unit that operates 24-hours a day, collects location data at least once an hour and automatically transmits data to NOAA Fisheries.

The council chose to create an exemption to vessel monitoring system requirements that would allow federally permitted for-hire vessels to continue to operate while addressing position-reporting equipment failures. Each vessel would be allowed to request two exemptions per calendar year and each exemption would be valid for up to 10 calendar days.

This framework action will be transmitted to the secretary of commerce for approval and implementation as soon as practicable.

## **RESCHEDULED: Soft Shell Crab Industry Workshop in Madisonville, LA**

Louisiana Sea Grant and the LSU AgCenter is offering a soft shell crab industry workshop. While the basics of the fishery remain the same, regulations, policies, economics and research continue to change in the blue crab industry. This workshop is designed to cover topics important to crab fishermen, processors, shedders and anyone else interested in the crab industry.

### **Topics Include:**

- Harvesting and Handling Peelers and Busters
- Recirculated System Maintenance and Water Quality
- Updates and Reminders for Blue Crab Regulations
- System Demo

**Date:** Aug. 19, 2022

**Time:** 9:00 am – 12:00 pm

**Location:** Lake Pontchartrain Maritime Museum, 133 Mabel Drive, Madisonville, LA 70447

**Registration Deadline:** Aug. 15, 2022

To register or for more information, contact:

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## **Louisiana Private Recreational Red Snapper Landing Estimates Through June 26, 2022**

The latest private recreational red snapper landing estimates through June 26, 2022, have been released. LA Creel, LDWF's near real-time landings data collection program, indicates that 317,121 pounds, or 39 percent, of Louisiana's 2022 annual private recreational allocation of 809,315 pounds (reduced from 816,233 pounds by payback of 6,918 pounds) have been harvested during the 2022 red snapper season.

Average weight estimates for the month of June have been updated and are reflected in the landings estimates table.

The private recreational red snapper season began May 27 in both state and federal waters. This season will run weekends only (Friday, Saturday and Sunday, including the Mondays of Memorial Day and Labor Day) with a daily bag limit of three fish per person and a 16-inch total length minimum size limit until recreational landings approach or reach Louisiana's allocation.

For more information on the 2022 red snapper season and detailed landing estimates, visit:

[www.wlf.louisiana.gov/page/red-snapper](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/page/red-snapper).

LDWF reminds charter captains and crew that they are not allowed to keep a limit of red snapper on either a state or federal charter trip.

A Recreational Offshore Landing Permit (ROLP) is required to possess tunas, billfish, swordfish, amberjacks, groupers, snappers, hinds, cobia, wahoo and dolphinfish in Louisiana waters. This permit is free of charge.

## **GMFC Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Focus Group Meeting Aug. 2-3, 2022**

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council will hold a two-day, in-person meeting of its Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Focus Group. The meeting will convene on Tuesday, Aug. 2, 2022, from 9:00 am to 5:00 pm EDT and Wednesday, Aug. 3, 2022, from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm EDT. The meeting is open to the public and will be held at the council office located at 4107 West Spruce Street, Suite 200, Tampa, Florida 33607.

The focus group is tasked with reviewing the current IFQ programs' goals and objectives, and to recommend their replacement and/or retention. The focus group is also expected to define the changes needed to improve the red snapper and grouper-tilefish IFQ programs to specifically address minimizing discards, fairness and equity, and new entrants' issues.

Public comment will be taken at the end of each day, as time allows.

For meeting agenda and materials:

<https://gulfcouncil.org/ap/ifq-focus-group-august-2022/>.

Register to listen via webinar:

<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/1144684387562308879>.

## **Louisiana Shrimp Watch**

Shrimp watch data is not yet available for this month. There are some changes to the Monthly Gulf Coast Shrimp Statistics report passed by NOAA Fisheries. Changes were being made to make the report more consistent and reliable. All landing data will be based on trip ticket data provided by Gulf States and no estimations will be made.

## **Important Dates & Upcoming Events**

Aug. 2-3, 2022 – Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council IFQ Focus Group

Aug. 2, 2022 – Crab Task Force Meeting, Houma, LA

Aug. 3, 2022 – Shrimp Task Force Meeting, Houma, LA

Aug. 16, 2022 – Oyster Task Force Meeting, Metairie, LA

Aug. 19, 2022 – Soft Shell Crab Industry Workshop, Madisonville, LA

# **THE GUMBO POT**

## **DOOKY CHASE'S BREAKFAST SHRIMP\***

Recipe courtesy of *Louisiana Kitchen & Culture*.

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



### **Ingredients:**

- 4 tomatoes, very ripe
- 1 quart boiling water
- 1 4-ounce stick unsalted butter
- 1/2 cup onion, diced
- 1/2 cup bell peppers, diced
- 2 cloves fresh garlic, fine chopped
- 2 pounds medium to large shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 2 fresh basil leaves, chopped
- 1 tablespoon parsley, chopped

### **Method:**

In a 2-quart pot, bring water to a boil. Using a slotted spoon or tongs, dip tomatoes into the boiling water for 15 to 20 seconds. Remove, rinse under cold water, slide off peels, core, seed, and chop. Set aside.

In a large saucepan over medium heat, melt butter. Add onions, green peppers and garlic. Stir until onions are transparent. Add tomatoes, shrimp and paprika, salt, cayenne pepper and basil leaves. Stir 10 minutes or until shrimp are cooked (pink throughout.)

Serve over Baked Cheese Grits (<https://louisiana.kitchenandculture.com/recipes/baked-grits-and-cheese>) and garnish with chopped parsley.

*\*Serves 6*

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

## **Lagniappe Fisheries Newsletter**

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We would like to hear from you! Please contact us regarding fishery questions, comments or concerns you would like to see covered in the Lagniappe. Anyone interested in submitting information, such as articles, editorials or photographs pertaining to fishing or fisheries management is encouraged to do so.

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