

Commission on Marine Resources

COMMISSION ON MARINE RESOURCES
COMMISSION MEETING

Tuesday, December 13, 2016
9:00 a.m.
Bolton Building Auditorium
1141 Bayview Avenue
Biloxi, Mississippi 39530

Commission Members:

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

Also Present:

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

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1 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: I would like to call this
2 meeting to order.

3 First thing on the agenda is the Pledge of
4 Allegiance. Please stand and let Jamie lead us in the
5 Pledge.

6 (whereupon, the Pledge of Allegiance was
7 recited.)

8 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Next is approval of the
9 minutes.

10 Do I have a motion, or any modifications, to the
11 minutes?

12 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I make a motion we
13 approve the minutes.

14 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion.
15 Do we have a second?

16 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Mr. Chairman, I would
17 like to second that motion.

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

20 All those in favor say aye.
21 (All in favor.)

22 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Opposed?
23 (None opposed.)

24 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Motion carried.
25 Next we have approval of the agenda.

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1 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I make a motion we
2 approve the agenda.

3 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Do we have a second?

4 COMMISSIONER HAVARD: I'll second it, Mr.
5 Chairman.

6 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: All those in favor say
7 aye.

8 (All in favor.)

9 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Opposed?

10 (None opposed.)

11 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Motion carries.

12 Next we have the Executive Director's report.

13 JAMIE MILLER: Chairman, I don't have a report.

14 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Next is Office of Marine
15 Patrol, Chief Davis.

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

18 Before we get started, Marine Patrol would like
19 to wish each and every one of you a very Merry Christmas
20 and a safe and Happy New Year.

21 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Thank you, sir.

22 RUSTY PITTMAN: I don't have much to talk about,
23 on the report this month. It was kind of slow. There was
24 bad weather the last month.

25 There is one thing I would like to mention. On

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1 the Spotted Seatrout undersized citations that we wrote,
2 we have three violations. We had four complaints called
3 in from the public, and three of those calls resulted in
4 the citations written, when the officers got down there.

5 It really is helpful when the public is
6 notifying Marine Patrol on violations, or something that
7 they see that is going on and they give our dispatcher a
8 call, and we were able to send officers out there.

9 I want to give the public a big thank you for
10 helping us enhance and conserve the marine resources of
11 the State.

12 That is really all I have to talk about. I know
13 we have a big agenda coming up with Marine Fisheries.

14 If there are any questions?

15 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Thank you.

16 RUSTY PITTMAN: Thank you.

17 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Next up is the Joe show.

18 JOE JEWELL: Thank you for your kind words,
19 Commissioner Gollott.

20 I, too, want to wish everyone a Merry Christmas
21 and a Happy New Year. It has been a long and productive
22 year, and we are very happy to say the Department of
23 Marine Resources has done a very good job managing our
24 public trust.

25 First up for the Office of Marine Fisheries is a

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1 very challenging presentation. As y'all know, we started
2 this process in February of this year and, now, we have
3 arrived at the presentation for final adoption of the
4 Spotted Seatrout size and bag limits.

5 The Commission passed a Notice of Intent on
6 October the 18th. That Notice of Intent was filed with the
7 Secretary of State on October the 18th.

8 The following day public notice was given via
9 the DMR web page.

10 On October the 22nd, legal notice was published
11 in the Sun Herald.

12 Public comment period ran from October the 19th
13 through December the 12th. That is a total of fifty-five
14 days. If you count today, when the public will have an
15 opportunity to comment, it will be fifty-six days.

16 So far we have received three petitions, two
17 coast organizations have submitted comments, and forty-
18 nine individuals from the public, we have received
19 comments from.

20 Petition number one was hand delivered by the
21 CCA, on October the 21st. It had twenty-five names listed
22 from the general membership of the CCA. It requested a
23 public hearing on the recent proposed rule changes closing
24 the recreational fishery for Spotted Seatrout during the
25 months of January, February and March of 2017, and raising

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1 the minimum allowable size to fifteen inches and removing
2 the charter boat captain/crew bag limit.

3 Petition number three was submitted by the
4 Executive Board of the CCA. The Chairman Mr. Owen Johnson
5 and Government Relations Chairman F. J. Eicke signed this
6 petition.

7 "Board of Directors of Mississippi CCA
8 unanimously objects to the closed season during the months
9 of January, February and March of 2017, and requests
10 review of this action", advises the CMR gave no indication
11 the decision relied on the best available scientific
12 information, and attached State Statute 49-15-2(a)) that
13 reads:

14 "Conservation and management measures shall be
15 based upon the best scientific information available."

16 Petition number two was submitted by email by
17 Mr. J. L. McNew of Ocean Springs, on October the 22nd.
18 That is important to note, as I get into the presentation.
19 It had three hundred and thirty-seven names listed. It
20 requested a fourteen-inch size limit and a six to eight
21 bag limit to prevent a season closure.

22 Remember, this was prior to the public hearing
23 being held.

24 In addition, they requested research and
25 scientific data be used for recreational landing and to

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1 look at how BP oil spill, loss of habitat, water quality,
2 loss of bait (Menhaden), and bycatch from shrimp and
3 Menhaden industry influences the Spotted Seatrout
4 population.

5 Organization number one was submitted by Mr. Don
6 Abrams via email, on November the 14th on behalf of
7 Historic Ocean Springs Saltwater Fly Fishing Club, or
8 HOSSFLY:

9 "Strongly supports increasing minimum Spotted
10 Seatrout length from thirteen to fifteen inches. HOSSFLY
11 commends and thanks the charter fishing group for
12 suggesting and supporting the captain/mate catch
13 restriction. We support their proposal.

14 "HOSSFLY suggests that the seasonal closure,
15 January through March of 2017 recreational only, is not in
16 the best interests of the Mississippi citizens and
17 businesses, or the fishery."

18 They go on to say HOSSFLY strongly supports an
19 increase in enforcement activities related to all
20 saltwater fisheries and regulations and increases the
21 fines for the violations:

22 "We play by the rules and we expect others to do
23 the same."

24 Organization number two, submitted by the Sierra
25 Club, Mr. Steve Sheppard, on November the 14th. This group

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1 has around two hundred members here on the Coast. They
2 support the fifteen-inch size limit for Speckled Trout and
3 prefer that this limit become the new permanent size
4 limit, even after the SPR reaches twenty-five percent:

5 "The Sierra Club supports a closure of three
6 months probably as a temporary effort to allow fish to
7 survive in large numbers, but only if commercial and
8 recreational fishing is closed, and mentions human fishing
9 impacts, including the Menhaden industry and the
10 commercial shrimp industry."

11 As y'all remember, late yesterday I sent out all
12 of these comments for y'all to review and this is in
13 summary.

14 Now, we get to the point where I am summarizing
15 the actual public comments. There were forty-nine that
16 were submitted.

17 Of the forty-nine, thirty-seven commented on the
18 proposed fifteen-inch minimum size limit. Twelve of these
19 had no comment on the fifteen-inch minimum size limit.

20 Of the thirty-seven comments, twenty-eight
21 supported the size change and nine did not support it.

22 Of the forty-nine comments received, nineteen
23 commented on the proposed season closure for Spotted
24 Seatrout. Thirty of those individuals had no comment on
25 the season closure for Spotted Seatrout.

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1 Of the nineteen that did comment on the closure,
2 thirteen are opposed and six supported the season closure.

3 The Commission, in the past, has asked me to
4 address all the questions that were asked in the public
5 comment section. We only received three questions. Most
6 of them were just statements pro, or con, for the proposed
7 changes.

8 One question was asked by Brian Garragher:

9 "Who is going to pay my bills?"

10 I think Mr. Garragher was referencing the
11 potential season closure. Since the Commission, in the
12 November meeting, rescinded that vote, it no longer has an
13 impact on any potential economic hardship expressed by Mr.
14 Garragher.

15 The next question was by Mr. Larry Williams:

16 "What is the size limit, season change on the
17 commercial side?"

18 This proposed rule change only affects the
19 recreational fisheries.

20 The third question is actually two parts from
21 Mr. Bill Busby:

22 "What is the reason for the closure?"

23 The answer to that would be we presented stock
24 assessment data to the Commission, on most of the monthly
25 meeting since February, within six days of the Commission

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1 meeting. We had several workshops and conference calls.
2 Commissioner Bosarge also requested several models
3 addressing potential season closures, and all of these
4 have been presented at the meetings; a total of twelve
5 meetings, workshops, public hearings and comments all
6 presenting the best science available to the Commission.
7 That would be the reason.

8 The second part of his question was:

9 "I heard through the rumor mill that high
10 mercury levels have been found in Speckled Trout caught in
11 the Escatawpa River and that fish were not good to eat.

12 "Is there any truth to this?"

13 The DMR has no data, or information, suggesting
14 that there are high levels of mercury in the Spotted
15 Seatrout in, or near, the Escatawpa River area. Water
16 quality is generally under the purview of the Department
17 of Environmental Quality.

18 On November the 17th, 2016, Department of Marine
19 Resources conducted a Spotted Seatrout public hearing, and
20 received input from the recreational fishing community for
21 the Commission on Marine Resources to consider.

22 There were a total of thirty-seven people that
23 attended this public hearing. It was held here in the
24 Bolton Building in this room. Seventeen members of the
25 MDMR staff were present and twenty members from the

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1 public.

2 Nine members of the public gave public comment,
3 ten members of the public left written comments and one
4 person from the public gave no comment.

5 Of the ten individuals that submitted written
6 comments, eight were in favor of increasing the minimum
7 size limit of Spotted Seatrout to fifteen inches and two
8 were opposed.

9 Of the nine individuals making public comment,
10 eight were in favor of increasing the minimum size limit
11 of Spotted Seatrout to fifteen inches and one was opposed,
12 although he stated he would reluctantly support the
13 change, if it occurred.

14 With that being said, I need a motion to proceed
15 with Final Adoption of Title 22 Part 7: Increase Spotted
16 Seatrout minimum size length to fifteen inches and no take
17 for Charter Captain and Crew.

18 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Joe, let me say that Mr.
19 F. J. Eicke has submitted to make public comments.

20 Mr. Eicke, would you like to do that, now?

21 F. J. Eicke: I would, and I thank you for the
22 opportunity to talk.

23 I wanted to make clear that back in -- I don't
24 know what month it was, but we submitted a position
25 statement well back, even before y'all got into the

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1 deliberations about what you were actually going to do
2 and, in that document, we made the statement that we were
3 basically in favor of returning to a fourteen-inch Spotted
4 Seatrout, unless the scientific data indicated and the
5 models projected that we needed to do something different.
6 This was before Paul and Matt made their comments to the
7 Commission.

8 Since they have made their comments and since we
9 have the Stock Assessment, now, in its final form peer
10 reviewed, there is no doubt in CCA's position that we are
11 in favor of the fifteen-inch minimum size.

12 We also thank the charter captains for their
13 cooperation in this. It is a stand that indicates to the
14 public that we are serious about this.

15 Where this leads us, I don't know, but you have
16 indicated that there will be periodic reviews and whatever
17 those reviews begin to show, in terms of scientific data,
18 you are likely to find CCA support.

19 With that minimal statement which is unusual for
20 me, I will bid you farewell.

21 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Thank you, Mr. Eicke.

22 Steve, did you want to say something?

23 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Yes.

24 JOE JEWELL: Before y'all comment, I will give
25 y'all some stats from the data because I know that Mr.

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1 Havard loves statistics.

2 Of the comments that were received, a total of
3 six hundred and forty-two, three hundred and five
4 commenters commented specifically on the fifteen inch and
5 ten commented against the fifteen inch. Proportionately,
6 ninety-six point eight percent were in favor of raising to
7 the fifteen inch and three point two percent opposed
8 raising to the fifteen inch.

9 Now, if we consider all of the comments that
10 were submitted -- remember, there was a petition that was
11 submitted that I pointed to early in the presentation that
12 had three hundred and thirty-five signatures on it that
13 was submitted prior to the public hearing, that they
14 supported a fourteen inch minimum size limit to augment
15 the season closure.

16 It is unclear what they would have supported had
17 they known there was not going to be a season closure.
18 They certainly supported an increase in the minimum size
19 limit.

20 If you added all those together, those
21 supporting an increase was ninety-eight point five
22 percent, and those that opposed an increase was one point
23 five percent.

24 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I just wanted to make a
25 couple of comments. One is I like that tie. It's hard

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1 for me to focus on what I'm saying, looking at that tie.

2 The other thing is I just wanted to thank the
3 staff especially for working with me and trying to help me
4 understand what is going on and, as we proceed in the
5 future and run some more of these models, I appreciate all
6 the effort and help.

7 JOE JEWELL: And that's what we are here for.
8 We are happy to do that, Steve.

9 COMMISSIONER HAVARD: I'm glad to see us get a
10 goal and try to achieve that goal. You guys have put a
11 lot of hard work and a lot of hours into getting us a
12 plan, and I'm glad to see that we agree on a plan and,
13 moving forward, I expect to see the Speckled Trout
14 population increase in the fishery.

15 JOE JEWELL: Thank you.

16 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: With that, sir, I think
17 we need a motion.

18 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I'll make the motion to
19 proceed with Final Adoption of Title 22 Part 7: Increase
20 Spotted Seatrout minimum size length to fifteen inches and
21 no take for Charter Captain and Crew.

22 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion.

23 Do we have a second?

24 COMMISSIONER HARMON: I'll second that, Mr.
25 Chairman.

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1 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion and a
2 second.

3 All those in favor say aye.

4 (All in favor.)

5 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Opposed?

6 (None opposed.)

7 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Motion carries.

8 JOE JEWELL: Thank you, Commissioners.

9 Next up on the agenda for your consideration is
10 a presentation by Mr. Rick Burris for consideration of
11 Commercial Crab License Moratorium.

12 He also will be presenting Item Number Three,
13 Consideration of Establishing a Mississippi Shrimp Task
14 Force.

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

17 This morning we would like the Commission to
18 consider placing a temporary moratorium on Commercial Crab
19 Licenses until April 30, 2017, the end of the commercial
20 license year.

21 At the last meeting of the Mississippi Crab Task
22 Force, the task force voted to ask the CMR to consider
23 placing a temporary moratorium on Commercial Crab
24 Licenses.

25 They signed a resolution which you see on the

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1 screen and asked me to present it to the Commission on
2 behalf of the Mississippi Crab Task Force:

3 "At a duly convened meeting of the Mississippi
4 Crab Task Force, on October 19, 2016, the Task Force voted
5 unanimously to present to the Mississippi Commission on
6 Marine Resources a Resolution to mitigate any adverse
7 effects to the fishery due to anticipated increased effort
8 during the phase in the season when landings are lowest
9 and prices are at their peak."

10 The Resolution reads as follows:

11 "The Mississippi Crab Task Force recommends the
12 Commission on Marine Resources impose an immediate
13 moratorium on Commercial Crab Licenses, per the authority
14 provided in 49-15-15(1)(p) of the Mississippi Code, until
15 April 30, 2017, the end of the current commercial license
16 year, to conserve Mississippi's Blue Crab fishery
17 resource."

18 As y'all are all aware, the commercial license
19 year runs May the 1st through April the 30th. With the
20 exception of the Oyster License, most of our licenses are
21 sold on, or around, May the 1st for that following year.

22 So far, crab effort this year has been pretty
23 high. We sold more commercial crab licenses, since prior
24 to Katrina.

25 with that, it is anticipated that, in the near

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1 future, the demand and the price of Blue Crabs will
2 significantly increase which will promote short-term new
3 entrants into the fishery and greatly increase effort that
4 is currently at its highest.

5 with that being said, now would be a good time
6 for any discussion, before we move forward.

7 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Let's get a motion,
8 first.

9 I would like to make a motion that we put a
10 moratorium on any more crabbing licenses until the end of
11 the season.

12 RICK BURRIS: That would be until the end of the
13 license year.

14 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Yes.

15 Can I get a second on that?

16 COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: I'll second it.

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

19 Now, for discussion.

20 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I just want to say that I
21 am a member of the Crab Task Force, and there was a lot of
22 discussion on this and this is something that really needs
23 to happen for a bunch of different reasons. One is we
24 have already got a lot of effort and our crab fishery is
25 just now beginning to come back, and we can see where

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1 there is a possibility of a lot more effort coming in, so
2 this is a good thing.

3 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Anyone else?

4 (No response.)

5 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion and a
6 second.

7 All those in favor say aye.

8 (All in favor.)

9 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Opposed?

10 (None opposed.)

11 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Motion carries.

12 RICK BURRIS: Next up we would like the
13 Commission to consider establishing a Mississippi Shrimp
14 Task Force.

15 As many of you are aware, the Commission has the
16 authority to create an advisory council, or a task force,
17 per 49-15-25 of the Mississippi Code which states:

18 "The Commission may appoint an advisory council
19 of persons who may fairly be regarded as representative of
20 all the various segments of the industry. This council
21 shall aid the Commission in formulating policies and
22 discussing problems related to the administration of this
23 chapter and the advancement and protection of the
24 industry."

25 CMR currently has three other task forces under

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1 its authority. Those are the Oyster, Crab and the most
2 recently acquired For-Hire Task Force.

3 with our current task forces, we have stated
4 purposes, goals, membership and objectives which are, of
5 course, to enhance protect and conserve the industry that
6 the task force represents. We also have standard
7 operating procedures that are consistent throughout all of
8 our task forces.

9 what we are proposing for the purpose and goals
10 of the Shrimp Task Force reads as follows:

11 "The purpose of the Mississippi Shrimp Task
12 Force is to optimize Mississippi's Shrimp Fishery through
13 increased productive communication within the fishery and
14 make recommendations to the Mississippi Department of
15 Marine Resources and the Mississippi Commission on Marine
16 Resources."

17 Goals of the Mississippi Shrimp Task Force would
18 be to provide updated information relevant to the Shrimp
19 Fishery, provide a mechanism to the Shrimp Fishery to
20 provide feedback to the MDMR and to improve the overall
21 value of the Shrimp Fishery.

22 The proposed objectives would be to identify and
23 prioritize challenges in the shrimp fishery/industry, to
24 make recommendations to the MCMR pertaining to the shrimp
25 fishery that are based upon sound biological and economic

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1 principles and to take appropriate steps such as
2 preparation of proposed legislation, to resolve problems
3 and issues.

4 Finally, the proposed membership which will be
5 representing the various segments of the industry would
6 include a minimum of three commercial fishermen, one of
7 which must be a Federal Permit holder, one of which must
8 utilize Skimmer Nets and one of which must represent the
9 Vietnamese Community.

10 When I say minimum, we would anticipate more
11 than three, but, for voting purposes, it would be a
12 minimum of three and, of course, they will represent the
13 three Coastal counties.

14 Then, we have one shrimp dealer/processor, one
15 recreational shrimp fisherman, one licensed live bait
16 dealer and one Fisheries Biologist representing the
17 Mississippi Department of Marine Resources.

18 Of course, as I mentioned earlier, our standard
19 operating procedures will be consistent with the other
20 task forces that we currently have on the authority of the
21 Commission.

22 Now, would be a good time for questions.

23 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Mr. Burris, the shrimp
24 industry really does not need a task force. The shrimp
25 industry is represented by two commercial fishing people

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1 on the Commission. We have a shrimper and a processor.
 2 The task force, as I see it, needs to be an ad
 3 hoc task force to aid in the advancement plan for the
 4 sustainability program. Both the fishermen and the
 5 processors have gotten with the Nature Conservative to try
 6 to get our industry certified as being sustainable.

7 In that case, I would like to make a motion that
 8 we form an ad hoc Fisheries Advisory Panel. The American
 9 Shrimp Processors, David Veal, has been working on this
 10 pretty heavily, and give us two processors and we'll say
 11 three, or four, fishermen and let that be ad hoc.

12 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Of course, I disagree
 13 with that. I am a member of the Crab Task Force, and I
 14 have seen what that Task Force has done. It is an
 15 opportunity for everybody to get in the same room, look at
 16 what is going on within the industry, see what changes can
 17 be made that will benefit the industry, and promote
 18 sustainability which we do in the Crab Task Force.

19 I don't see any reason for an ad hoc committee.
 20 I think a Shrimp Task Force is something that has been
 21 needed for a long time. They have them in just about
 22 every other state, other than Mississippi, that has a
 23 shrimp industry as we do.

24 I would make a alternate motion to your motion
 25 which I think we need to get a second, first, that we

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1 create a Shrimp Task Force, establish a Mississippi Shrimp
 2 Task Force.

3 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Let me say this. In the
 4 twelve years that I have been on the Commission, I can't
 5 remember one issue that has come up in the shrimp
 6 industry, not one. The shrimp industry is over a hundred
 7 million dollar industry in Mississippi.

8 Our openings and closings are set. The shrimp
 9 industry really does not want to be messed with. They are
 10 doing good, and they really don't want any more
 11 regulations, or any suggestions.

12 Sustainability is the only thing that the shrimp
 13 industry is wanting, right now, and we need to cooperate
 14 with each other.

15 The second thing is the Crab Task Force is the
 16 only one that has worked, and it has worked.

17 The Oyster Task Force, I have had members tell
 18 me they are not going to come back to another meeting
 19 because they all got in a fight the last time they were
 20 there.

21 Can you say anything to that?

22 Is the staff in favor of a Shrimp Task Force?

23 RICK BURRIS: I think we are. It's good to have
 24 feedback. We get a lot of feedback. I get a lot of
 25 feedback through telephone calls and emails.

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1 To have a representative from, like we stated,
 2 each of segment of the fishery to be able come together
 3 and just talk about things and talk about sustainability.
 4 It may not need to be changed, but just things that are
 5 going on within the fishery.

6 It is not set up as a regulatory branch of the
 7 DMR, a regulatory branch of the CMR, it's just an advisory
 8 panel for us and for us to bring to y'all, just concerns
 9 within the fishery, and there may not be any. We may just
 10 meet and talk, or they may just meet and talk about what
 11 is going on within the fishery and talk about some things
 12 they can do to improve it, as far as marketability and
 13 things like that.

14 I think the staff does support it, yes.

15 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: If I'm not mistaken,
 16 right now, there is one issue that we have asked the
 17 legislature to change the Law for south of the ICW?

18 RICK BURRIS: Yes, sir.

19 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Another issue where I
 20 think the task force would be good is looking at a
 21 different measurement for shrimp trawls, circumference
 22 measurement. I think they call it corkline measurement.

23 RICK BURRIS: Yes, sir.

24 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: There are a bunch of
 25 issues, a bunch of things that I think would be beneficial

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1 to this Commission to have that group meet and talk over
 2 and work out these issues, and bring them to us.

3 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Commissioner, you have
 4 been on this Commission at least eight years, have you
 5 ever brought up a corkline measurement, or anything like
 6 that?

7 I mean, you are the task force. The Commission
 8 is the task force.

9 Mr. Burris gets calls from fishermen. He's got
 10 the right to stand up here, plus we have public hearings
 11 just like we are having today. If anybody has a problem,
 12 they can come to the Commission.

13 why form another bureaucracy in this thing, when
 14 we don't have any problems.

15 Like I say, the only reason for a task force is
 16 for this sustainability problem.

17 Mr. Ryan Bradley would like to speak.

18 RYAN BRADLEY: Thank you Commissioners for
 19 allowing me time to speak today.

20 First, I would like to say I support the
 21 formation of this Shrimp Task Force, whether it be in the
 22 form of a Shrimp Task Force, or an adhoc advisory panel.

23 I would really like to see us take a quick
 24 recess to discuss this issue a little bit more, before we
 25 take a vote, if that would be at all possible.

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1 I have a couple of things here I would like to
2 present to the Commissioners, if possible.

3 There are some really great things in the works
4 for the Mississippi Shrimp Industry. If we could just get
5 a chance to address some of these issues, it is going to
6 be a real good positive thing for the industry, for the
7 fishermen, for the processors and for the citizens of this
8 State and for all the consumers who enjoy our shrimp.

9 (Document handed to the Commissioners by Ryan
10 Bradley.)

11 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: While he is passing that
12 out, I would like to make one point. A good example is
13 had we not had the Crab Task Force, we probably would not
14 have the motion passed that we just passed a few minutes
15 ago.

16 RICK BURRIS: You are correct. Yes, sir.

17 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: That group met and
18 realized what was going to take place, and they took
19 action, and I see that as a benefit for the State, benefit
20 for the fishermen and benefit for the industry.

21 I don't understand why we are having opposition
22 to a Shrimp Task Force. I can't imagine. To me, it is
23 only a benefit.

24 RICK BURRIS: Yes, sir.

25 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Let me say this. I was

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1 for the task force, once I met with some fishermen and the
2 staff. I mean, it doesn't take a task force to convince
3 me. One of the fishermen can call me on the telephone and
4 convince me of something. It doesn't take a task force.
5 It's just another bureaucracy.

6 The Crab Task Force is the only one that works.
7 If you will tell the truth, that is the truth.

8 We don't have much of a crab industry in
9 Mississippi, so I don't think you would have a lot of
10 discussion on it.

11 Number two is I don't care for the makeup of
12 your task force here. The processors are the biggest part
13 of the industry, and you only have one representative on
14 this thing. That would leave out our representative,
15 David Veal, and maybe a couple of processors.

16 RICK BURRIS: Well, that is something we can
17 alter, if we decide to go down that road.

18 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We could form this ad hoc
19 and, if we see in the future we need something else, we
20 could come back and redo it.

21 RYAN BRADLEY: That's pretty much all I had,
22 Commissioners.

23 One last thing I wanted to mention was that the
24 overall license sales for the shrimp industry are way down
25 from historic highs. I don't have the exact numbers, but

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1 I want to say they peaked somewhere around fourteen
2 hundred several years back and, now, we are down to about
3 four hundred licensed shrimpers, as far as I'm aware. I
4 don't have those exact numbers in front of me, but there
5 are several shrimpers in this room. There are some
6 processors in this room. We are all in support of getting
7 any kind of task force together to help these guys out.
8 They need all the help they can get, right now.

9 I really appreciate the consideration.

10 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Thank you, sir.

11 Ashford Rosenberg.

12 ASHFORD ROSENBERG: Good morning.

13 My name is Ashford Rosenberg. I'm with the
14 Audubon Nature Institute, New Orleans, Louisiana, and we
15 are working with the shrimp sustainability project.

16 I wanted to just introduce myself and see if
17 there are any questions I could answer and provide clarity
18 on, on that side of things, and how the task force would
19 play into that sustainability project.

20 We see those benefits to the industry, whether
21 it is through MDMR, or an adhoc.

22 I think having it officially through MDMR would
23 give it a little bit more weight, when you are talking
24 about external pressures, or external use of the fishery,
25 from a sustainability standpoint.

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1 We work with Louisiana Shrimp Task Force a lot
2 and that has worked very well. It has been a good
3 productive process for us and I think it has helped the
4 shrimp industry there.

5 If anybody has any questions about how that
6 would pertain to a sustainability project, I'm happy to
7 answer them.

8 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: You have been working
9 through the Crab Task Force, Ashford. I've been to
10 several meetings where you have presented.

11 ASHFORD ROSENBERG: We have, yes.

12 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Is that working okay?

13 ASHFORD ROSENBERG: Yes, sir. It has been a
14 great place for us to come and talk with the industry and
15 hear what they need and kind of a place for us to tell the
16 industry what we are hearing, as far as sustainability
17 pressures outside of the Gulf region, too.

18 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I don't know if you have
19 any need to work with the charter boat guys.

20 ASHFORD ROSENBERG: No. Our work has been
21 solely with commercial harvesters.

22 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Would you have any
23 objection to working with an adhoc task force?

24 ASHFORD ROSENBERG: No, sir.

25 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Thank you.

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1 ASHFORD ROSENBERG: Thank you, sir.
2 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Can I get a second on the
3 first motion, forming an adhoc shrimp committee?
4 COMMISSIONER HARMON: I'll second that, Mr.
5 Chairman.
6 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion and a
7 second.
8 Any more discussion on it?
9 (No response.)
10 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: with no more discussion,
11 can we have a vote?
12 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: wait a minute.
13 Can we get the rules here?
14 I made an alternate motion.
15 JAMIE MILLER: Sandy, I'm going to need your
16 help on this. One motion was made and it has been
17 seconded, and there was an alternate motion made.
18 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: The alternate motion, to
19 the best of my knowledge, is asked for a second, and that
20 vote is taken first.
21 If it fails, then, it goes back to your motion.
22 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Is that correct, Sandy?
23 SANDY CHESTNUT: Yes, that's correct.
24 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: There's no problem.
25 We have an alternate motion.

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1 Do we have a second on it?
2 (No response.)
3 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: With no second, it fails.
4 Can we have a vote on the first motion to form
5 an adhoc committee?
6 We have a motion and a second.
7 All those in favor say aye.
8 (Mr. Gollott, Mr. Harmon in favor.)
9 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Opposed say no.
10 (Mr. Bosarge, Mr. Havard opposed.)
11 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Let's have a hand count.
12 Mark, how do you vote?
13 COMMISSIONER HAVARD: No.
14 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Ms. Trapani?
15 COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: I'm going to abstain from
16 the vote because I think we need to discuss this a little
17 more on the membership, who is in the membership and which
18 way to go with it. I think we need to discuss it a little
19 further, before we go with your vote.
20 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Steve?
21 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: No.
22 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Ron?
23 COMMISSIONER HARMON: Aye.
24 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have two ayes and two
25 nos. It fails. It's a tie.

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1 Thank you.
2 RICK BURRIS: Thank you.
3 JOE JEWELL: Thank you, Commissioners.
4 Next up on the agenda is an oyster season update
5 that will be presented by Mr. Erik Broussard.
6 ERIK BROUSSARD: Good morning Commissioners,
7 Director Miller, Counsel.
8 This morning I have an oyster season update
9 prepared for you.
10 To start off with I have a table prepared, a
11 five-day summary for an opening in the western Sound from
12 November 17th through the 22nd. During that period, the
13 dredgers harvested two thousand two hundred and ninety-
14 eight sacks and the tongers harvested five hundred and
15 eighty-nine sacks, for a total of two thousand eight
16 hundred and eighty-seven sacks.
17 The dredgers took a hundred and thirty-six trips
18 and tongers took seventy-three trips, for a total of two
19 hundred and nine trips in the five-day period.
20 During that time, the average dredging trip
21 harvested about seventeen sacks per trip, and the tongers
22 averaged eight sacks per trip.
23 Here we have a table. The larger table is for
24 the Western Sound. You have seen this before, so I will
25 just go over the notable changes.

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1 There will be St. Joe with twenty-seven thousand
2 five hundred and ninety-two sacks harvested and St.
3 Stanislaus Toning Reef with three thousand three hundred
4 and seventeen sacks harvested for that area, bringing the
5 total for the western Sound to thirty-one thousand seven
6 hundred and seven sacks, or about forty percent harvest,
7 based on our estimates for the western Sound.
8 The smaller table is the western reefs combined
9 with Biloxi Bay. I have a slide, after this one, for
10 Biloxi Bay, but I wanted to look at the total.
11 Thirty-one thousand seven hundred and seven
12 sacks combined, with four thousand six hundred and
13 eight sacks for Biloxi, would bring the total harvest
14 for the State of Mississippi to thirty-five thousand nine
15 hundred and fifteen sacks, or forty-two percent harvest of
16 what we had estimated. We would recommend to close the
17 reefs.
18 For Biloxi, or Area V, this area opened November
19 1st. There have been four hundred and fifty-nine trips,
20 harvesting four thousand six hundred and eighteen sacks,
21 and the average has harvested ten sacks per trip. The
22 limit for this area is fifteen sacks.
23 That is a summary of oyster season.
24 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I just wanted to ask one
25 question.

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1 With best available science, what is staff's
2 recommendation?

3 ERIK BROUSSARD: Recommendation would be to
4 close all reefs.

5 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Best available science?

6 ERIK BROUSSARD: Yes, sir.

7 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Thank you.

8 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Saying that, we have only
9 harvested what, forty-two percent of the marketable
10 oysters?

11 ERIK BROUSSARD: Forty-two percent, yes, sir.

12 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: The Oyster Biologists I
13 have talked to say there is absolutely no reason to leave
14 full-grown oysters out there on the reefs. It does
15 absolutely nothing.

16 I'm not in favor of taking a lot of oysters, but
17 I am in favor of another season, but, before we do that,
18 we've got two fishermen who would like to speak.

19 John Livings.

20 JOHN LIVINGS: Good morning.

21 We worked a lot at St. Joe. We had a relay
22 permit and we worked the season there, but, as far as the
23 seventeen sacks per boat average, on my trip tickets, I
24 made my limit every day. Every single day I left the
25 dock, we made the limit.

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1 If you want to work, you are going to stay and
2 work. I mean, the projection doesn't mean anything to a
3 fisherman because some people just don't want to work.
4 They quit at 10:00 o'clock, and they don't want to put the
5 time in and work. If they put the time in, they catch
6 their sacks. If they want to go home early, they don't
7 catch them. That messes us an average overall.

8 As far as the reef in Biloxi, I don't see the
9 purpose of closing that, right now, for tonging. I mean,
10 we are catching our limit by a couple of hours, so I don't
11 understand the purpose of closing it, especially right
12 now.

13 If everyone that worked on this project right
14 here said to close that reef, it would be a whole
15 different story.

16 They need to keep in consideration that this is
17 how we feed our kids. Shutting it down all the time is a
18 bad way to go.

19 Several of them wanted it closed before it even
20 opened this year. A lot of the fishermen are just tired
21 of it. You can see there are two of us here today.
22 That's it.

23 They keeping calling my phone, so I guess I'm
24 speaking for them, too. They just said that they feel
25 like they are never heard, or never listened to, and what

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1 they say is kind of thrown off, so they are done with
2 coming.

3 That's all I've got to say.

4 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Thank you, John.

5 We had another request to speak, but you didn't
6 put your name on it.

7 ANDREW LIVINGS: I sure didn't. Drew Livings.
8 Andrew Livings.

9 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Drew. Okay. Come on up.

10 ANDREW LIVINGS: We are brothers, in case y'all
11 didn't know.

12 I believe that in the new Biloxi area that has
13 opened, the reef is well sustainable for the remainder of
14 the season, from what I've seen. We have only touched the
15 tip of the iceberg in places.

16 The people that are getting them, we have gotten
17 them fairly early in a reasonable time because they are in
18 a fairly decent abundance. We have only worked two little
19 spots on the reef. We have not covered the whole area
20 that y'all opened yet.

21 In my opinion, I believe there are enough
22 oysters there to sustain the season for the remainder of
23 the year.

24 Also, if we could get more of these other areas
25 possibly opened, like Graveline Bayou, and maybe see what

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1 is involved in getting other areas open because the
2 fishing reefs that were built in 2008, they have oysters
3 and we should be allowed to catch oysters off of those
4 reefs.

5 I know they have boundaries set up on certain
6 reefs that were allocated for fishing, but the shells
7 would still be there. All we take are live oysters. The
8 stuff that is no good goes right back in the water to grow
9 more reef.

10 I think we need to open more areas for us, also.

11 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I've got one question.
12 How do you think we are doing, as far as
13 managing the resource, right now?

14 ANDREW LIVINGS: Fair. I'm not going to say
15 good, but I'm going to say fair. More material needs to
16 be put back on the reefs because, in all these years, we
17 have been take, take, take, take, and you can't just put
18 material one year out of ten years; one year put some
19 material on the reefs. It has to be some sort of material
20 going back so the oysters will have something to stick to,
21 to grow.

22 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: In your opinion, we are
23 building the resource, now, or it's in a rebuilding stage?

24 ANDREW LIVINGS: Yes, sir. It just needs more.
25 More material needs to be put on so that the reefs can

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1 come back even more.

2 what is there, what has been put out has been
3 producing well, other than this massive kill that we had
4 this year. We were seeing good signs, but things happen.

5 That's one reason why I think we need to get
6 more areas open so we are not depending on one area, if it
7 gets hit like this.

8 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: In your experience in
9 different states, they fish the same grounds every year,
10 year after year after year?

11 In other words, in my experience -- I just got
12 back from North Carolina, and they do the same thing --
13 never fish the same grounds two years in a row, and we
14 have, every year, fished the same ground year after year.

15 In other words, we have got to change our
16 management strategy here. I know you are oystermen. You
17 love to fish. You love to make money. You want to work.

18 At some point, we have got to say enough is
19 enough and let this resource rebuild. We have a meeting
20 after this to try to set on a management plan because the
21 management we have been doing is not working. It's the
22 same old same old we have been doing for quite a few
23 years, and you see in which direction it is headed.

24 ANDREW LIVINGS: Yes, sir.

25 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Let me ask you something,

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1 Mr. Livings.

2 ANDREW LIVINGS: Yes, sir.

3 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: what do you think would
4 have happened three years ago, when the Department
5 recommended we not open the reefs at all and we overrode
6 them and opened it and harvested twenty-seven thousand
7 sacks?

8 The next year, they had a limited, a very
9 limited season because they wanted to keep some oysters
10 out there to rebuild it, and, then, we had a disaster and
11 half of those died, and, then, this year we did the same
12 thing. We left a lot of oysters on Henderson Pointe and,
13 sure enough, they died.

14 Do you think our trying to keep the reefs open
15 as long as possible and let the fishermen harvest as much
16 as possible is helping them make a living, or do you think
17 we should have followed the staff's recommendation two
18 months ago and shut it down?

19 ANDREW LIVINGS: I don't think you should have
20 shut it down because they probably would have died anyway.
21 You let them go out and catch what they can catch.

22 I understand the sustainability idea, but it
23 seems like every single year, or every other year, we are
24 having a major ordeal where something happens to our
25 industry where it is wiping out thousands of acres of

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1 oysters and it is hurting our industry. It is killing
2 oysters everywhere.

3 If there is something there to catch, go catch
4 them because, if you try and save them, they are just
5 going to die off, and, then, you are going to have twice
6 as much loss.

7 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: The management strategy
8 we've got is working.

9 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: I don't think so.

10 ANDREW LIVINGS: I don't think so. It's kind of
11 on the shelf of it. We need some kind of management, but
12 we don't need -- I've got to watch what I say -- the type
13 of personnel that is managing it. Their way is not
14 working. We need some other kind of way, or something.

15 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Well, I don't think the
16 management folks have had a chance to put their management
17 strategy forward.

18 We had an opportunity to vote on it here, I
19 guess it's been the better part of a year ago, and their
20 strategy got voted down. We kept on maintaining the same
21 strategy we have maintained for quite a few years now, and
22 we are going to have this discussion later on this
23 afternoon.

24 I think if we are going to let the staff here
25 come up with a management strategy, we've got to let them

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1 lead.

2 Right now, I asked them what is the best
3 available science, and they said shut it down.

4 ANDREW LIVINGS: I disagree with the shutting
5 down part because all of our commercial fishing industry
6 consists of more than five, or six, or seven, members on a
7 panel. There are four hundred people out there that need
8 to go to work.

9 When you shut it down, if there are oysters
10 there -- when the reefs start getting bad, the fishermen
11 know, but, when you are out there and you go out there and
12 are able to catch the limit in two hours, the reef is
13 sustainable for work.

14 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: When we shut down St. Joe
15 which has been fished hard --

16 ANDREW LIVINGS: Right.

17 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: -- did you get your
18 limit?

19 ANDREW LIVINGS: Dredging?

20 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: Yes.

21 ANDREW LIVINGS: I think we could because there
22 are other spots out there other than St. Joe that just
23 have not been worked because nobody wants to take the time
24 to go expand out and look.

25 There are about five, or six, real fishermen

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1 that go find a spot, but, when they see those four, or
2 five, fishermen there, the whole fleet gathers up on them,
3 and, then, nobody wants to go look and they just work that
4 area.

5 If the fleet would spread out and everybody
6 would cover our ten thousand acres of reef that we've got,
7 there is life out there.

8 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: That was the suggestion I
9 have made two years in a row, I believe, that we shut St.
10 Joe down and, if they want to fish, they can fish other
11 areas. I believe it would actually help the reefs a
12 little bit.

13 ANDREW LIVINGS: Right.

14 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: To keep pounding that
15 same spot is not good.

16 ANDREW LIVINGS: I agree with you on that. If
17 you are going to close St. Joe, close St. Joe, but leave
18 the rest of the reefs open so we can go and look and try
19 to find work.

20 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Are you a St. Joe
21 fisherman?

22 ANDREW LIVINGS: I'm an oyster fisherman,
23 period. I dredge and I tong. Any way they want me to
24 catch oysters, I catch them.

25 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: The fishermen down in

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1 Bayou Caddy are telling me that there are still plenty of
2 oysters on St. Joe, and that's the reason we make y'all
3 cull them to three inches so we can leave the small
4 oysters out there for next year.

5 ANDREW LIVINGS: Right.

6 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Thank you, Drew. We
7 appreciate your comments.

8 ANDREW LIVINGS: Thank you.

9 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: After consideration of
10 the staff's presentation and listening to these fishermen,
11 I would like to make a motion.

12 I move that all western reefs be open from
13 December the 15th for five working days, not to exceed
14 December the 22nd.

15 I also move that we open the tonging areas in
16 the Pass only to be utilized when Biloxi Bay has bad
17 water, or something, or we have to move our fishermen.

18 It would just give them a place to work, if they
19 have to close Biloxi Bay because of rain, or something
20 like that.

21 If they both need to be closed down for rain,
22 then, that's another thing.

23 I would like to see us move some oysters down on
24 the tonging reef from the Pascagoula Reef so they would
25 have some stuff to tong and y'all could cultivate that

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1 reef.

2 All oyster tonging would be closed everywhere
3 the 28th of February, the end of the season, but leave
4 tonging open until next February in Mississippi,
5 alternating between Biloxi Bay and Pass Christian.

6 I have a motion.

7 Did y'all understand that?

8 JAMIE MILLER: who is working the board?

9 SANDY CHESTNUT: John is over here working.

10 JAMIE MILLER: Good to see you.

11 We need to make sure we get the motion correct.

12 The motion was to open the Western Sound for
13 dredging; all areas open for dredging -- what days would
14 it open?

15 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: The 15th.

16 JAMIE MILLER: -- the 15th through the 20th?

17 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: In other words, it would
18 be open for five working days. If we have a couple of bad
19 days, then, you can go all the way to the 22nd, but it can
20 only be open for five days.

21 JAMIE MILLER: Let's let John type that out.

22 You don't want specific days, just open on the
23 15th for five days?

24 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: For five days, yes, sir.

25 JAMIE MILLER: Open on the 15th, and it can go a

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1 maximum of five days?

2 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Yes, sir, but, if you
3 don't get your five days by the 22nd, then, it will close.

4 JOE JEWELL: Richard, does that include the area
5 between the bridges?

6 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: No.

7 SANDY CHESTNUT: If you don't have five working
8 days between the 15th and the 22nd, we are going to shut it
9 down on the 22nd?

10 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Yes, ma'am.

11 JAMIE MILLER: Then, also part of that motion
12 was to open the tonging only when Biloxi Bay is closed?

13 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Yes, sir.

14 SANDY CHESTNUT: Open tonging when?

15 JAMIE MILLER: In the Western Sound, when Biloxi
16 Bay is closed. It would basically alternate, I guess. If
17 Biloxi Bay was open, that would mean tonging in Pass would
18 be closed?

19 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Yes, sir. That would
20 give our fishermen some place to work all the time,
21 hopefully, the tongers.

22 Can I get a second on that motion?

23 COMMISSIONER HARMON: Mr. Chairman, since our
24 commercial guy probably is not going to do this, I will
25 second the motion.

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1 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion and a
 2 second.
 3 Any more discussion?
 4 JAMIE MILLER: Hold on. Sandy has one more
 5 question.
 6 SANDY CHESTNUT: I thought we had a final
 7 closing day for all oyster tonging, closed February 28th.
 8 Is that what you said?
 9 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Yes, ma'am.
 10 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I just want to make one
 11 more comment. Best available science, it seems like we
 12 use this, when it works best for us. Best available
 13 science says to shut it down.
 14 ERIK BROUSSARD: It does.
 15 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I want to make sure our
 16 environmental member hears that.
 17 SANDY CHESTNUT: I just want to make a
 18 clarification on the tonging.
 19 You are saying that the Western Sound is going
 20 to be open when Biloxi Bay is closed?
 21 When Biloxi Bay is open, the Western Sound will
 22 be closed?
 23 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Right.
 24 SANDY CHESTNUT: So it will be alternating?
 25 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Alternating.

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1 JOE JEWELL: For clarification purposes, I want
 2 to make the Commission understand that it will be open on
 3 a rotational basis, based on the management criteria,
 4 because it will be possible that both management criteria
 5 will shut both areas down.
 6 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Exactly.
 7 JOE JEWELL: I just wanted to make that clear.
 8 Thank you.
 9 SANDY CHESTNUT: Thank you, Joe.
 10 Any other clarifications, before we take a vote?
 11 COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: Yes. I have a question
 12 just to make sure because I don't have a map in front of
 13 me.
 14 That whole Western area does include St. Joe?
 15 ERIK BROUSSARD: For the five-day dredging, yes.
 16 The tonging for February 28th, the tonging line
 17 is from Bayou Caddy.
 18 COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: Then, I have an amendment
 19 to the motion. I would say open, except St. Joe, because
 20 we feel like St. Joe is the one where it has been probably
 21 fished enough, at this time. I think we should add that
 22 to the motion.
 23 JOE JEWELL: Commissioner Trapani, to clarify
 24 that, you are saying Area I "B" which incorporates the St.
 25 Joe area?

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1 COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: Right.
 2 JOE JEWELL: Thank you.
 3 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Commissioner, you are
 4 closing down a large area.
 5 Are you just talking about the channel, or are
 6 you talking about that whole area?
 7 COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: Do we have a map?
 8 I'm sorry. I don't have these maps.
 9 ERIK BROUSSARD: I don't have a map.
 10 COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: Not the channel around
 11 it, just that reef.
 12 ERIK BROUSSARD: If you remember, at the last
 13 meeting, we had a question about how we have exceeded our
 14 estimates. They were fishing on areas that are not known
 15 as traditional St. Joe Reef. A lot of these oysters come
 16 from just area I "B". That area I "B" is where the forty
 17 thousand sacks of material came from in January. There
 18 was a considerable harvest in late 2015, as well as
 19 twenty-seven thousand sacks this year. In the last
 20 twelve-month period, area I "B", in general, has been
 21 worked pretty hard.
 22 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Let me say this, too.
 23 The last time we opened it for Thanksgiving, we
 24 had lost about half of the boats that went shrimping.
 25 They had taken their gear off and went shrimping. You

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1 didn't have as much pressure as was anticipated.
 2 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: This time, you think
 3 there will be more pressure?
 4 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: I have no idea, but
 5 that's the reason we make them cull them to three inches.
 6 If those fishermen can't make sacks in a real reasonable
 7 period of time, they are going to go on other reefs and
 8 catch them.
 9 We have a friendly amendment by Commissioner
 10 Trapani.
 11 Do we have a second?
 12 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I'll second it.
 13 SANDY CHESTNUT: I think John has the amendment
 14 on the screen.
 15 JOE JEWELL: Commissioner Trapani, to clarify,
 16 at our last meeting in November, I did discuss that two
 17 different times; at the very beginning, and, then, you
 18 asked for clarification at the very end of the meeting.
 19 If you will look at that sort of dark green area
 20 there in Area I "B" -- Area I "B" is the light yellow and,
 21 then, there is a dark green area. That is St. Joe Reef,
 22 and, when we opened that area, the fishermen stayed on
 23 there for a few days, and, then, they moved off. That's
 24 where we usually get our assessments.
 25 Most of the pressure occurred in the very first

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1 days on St. Joe Reef proper, and, then, all the rest of
2 that harvest we did, the forty thousand sacks in January,
3 and, then, an additional twenty-seven thousand plus sacks
4 for the rest of the year, those sacks occurred in that
5 other large area off to the east and along that channel.

6 The whole area has been worked pretty good. Not
7 just St. Joe Reef proper, but the entire area has been
8 worked pretty good.

9 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: One of the things that is
10 being missed here is the St. Joe channel divides
11 Mississippi and Louisiana.

12 JOE JEWELL: That's correct.

13 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Who knows if some of
14 these oysters are coming out of Louisiana?

15 JOE JEWELL: Well, I have faith in our Marine
16 Patrol Officers.

17 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: I have faith, too, but,
18 if we don't let our fishermen catch them, Louisiana will.
19 Anyhow, we've got a motion and a second.

20 All those in favor hold your hand up, please.

21 JAMIE MILLER: We need clarification.

22 Is this the amended motion?

23 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Amended motion, first.

24 JAMIE MILLER: The amended motion, I think
25 Commissioner Trapani had a question about whether she was

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1 going with the entire area --

2 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: That's a big area.

3 JAMIE MILLER: -- which included the Reef, and,
4 then, the whole area is the Reef and the rest of the area.

5 COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: Just the Reef.

6 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Just the Reef, okay.

7 SANDY CHESTNUT: So you want to say all areas,
8 except St. Joe Reef?

9 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I think she said I "B".

10 SANDY CHESTNUT: The whole I "B"?

11 COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: Yes.

12 RUSTY PITTMAN: Mr. Chairman.

13 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Yes, sir.

14 RUSTY PITTMAN: We had this, I think, brought up
15 in October. There is no way to enforce just St. Joe Reef.
16 It would be too hard on the officers. That line is an
17 invisible line. That would be a hard enforcement issue
18 for us.

19 COMMISSIONER HAVARD: If we are going to shut
20 down that area, it needs to be the whole area, not just
21 the reef, for enforcement and for preservation of the
22 oysters that we have left in that area.

23 COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: I guess I will rescind
24 that because I don't want to cause it to be any more
25 complicated than it needs to be. I can understand where

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1 the water doesn't have a fine line. There's not a white
2 line.

3 I would say that whole area, but we can let them
4 fish all the other areas.

5 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion and a
6 second.

7 SANDY CHESTNUT: I'm sorry. The amendment is --
8 John can update the screen -- all areas except Area I "B".
9 Is that correct?

10 COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: Yes.

11 SANDY CHESTNUT: Okay. Now, you can take a
12 vote.

13 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Ron, how do you vote?

14 Are you for keeping Area I "B" closed?

15 COMMISSIONER HARMON: Yes, sir.

16 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Steve?

17 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I agree.

18 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Jolyne?

19 COMMISSIONER TRAPANI: I'm in favor.

20 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Mark?

21 COMMISSIONER HAVARD: I'm opposed.

22 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: And I'm opposed. We've
23 got two opposed and three in favor. Motion carries.

24 Does anybody want to reconsider their vote?
25 (No response.)

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1 JOE JEWELL: Thank you, Commissioners.

2 As we close out this year, we have one last
3 presentation that is a State Record. It's a big one. Jon
4 will be presenting this for you.

5 JON BARR: Good morning Commissioners, Director
6 Miller, Ms. Chestnut.

7 We have one new State Record up for
8 consideration this morning. It is conventional tackle.
9 It is a new record for our books. It is an Inshore
10 Lizardfish, Synodus foetens. It is four point four one
11 six ounces. The angler is Mr. Aaron Gautier.

12 This is a Lizardfish. They are mainly caught in
13 shrimp trawl bycatch (indicating photograph).

14 This is Mr. Gautier. He is a resident of
15 Pascagoula and an avid saltwater fisherman (indicating
16 photograph).

17 Motion to adopt the new State Record?

18 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: I make the motion we
19 adopt the new State Record.

20 COMMISSIONER HAVARD: I will second the motion.

21 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion and a
22 second.

23 All those in favor say aye.

24 (All in favor.)

25 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Opposed?

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(None opposed.)

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Motion carries.

Let's go back to the oysters.

What about the tonging reef?

The only thing we modified was I "B".

Right?

ERIK BROUSSARD: Yes.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: So the tonging passes to keep the season open and rotating?

ERIK BROUSSARD: Yes. The only thing that was left out is I "B".

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Everything else passes?

ERIK BROUSSARD: Yes, sir.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Thank you. That's fine.

Up next is Coastal Resource Management, Jan Boyd.

JAN BOYD: We have no report this month.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Office of Finance.

KACEY WILLIAMS: Good morning Commissioners, Director Miller, Ms. Chestnut.

These are our financial results, as of November the 30th, 2016.

At end of November, our State revenue was seven point four million. Our total Agency revenue was sixteen point nine million. Our State net income was three point

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zero. Our total Agency net income was one million.

After five months of fiscal year 2017, we have sixty-eight point one percent of our Operating Funds Budget remaining, and sixty-six point four percent of our Tidelands Trust Fund.

Any questions?

(No response.)

KACEY WILLIAMS: Thank you. Y'all have a Merry Christmas.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Thank you, ma'am.

Melissa Scallan.

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

We would like to take this time, also, to wish you a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

The agency was mentioned fifty-four times in local, state and national media, since the November meeting.

Some of the things people were most interested in were the Cat Island land donation that was recently in a press conference with the Secretary of State, the prescribed burn on Deer Island, oyster season and the proposed Speckled Trout regulations.

Marine Patrol held one boat-and-water safety class, since the last meeting, with three students. So

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far in fiscal year 2017 they have had ten classes with seventy-eight students.

Marine Patrol also participated in several special marine and community outreach events, including the Veterans Day Parade in D'Iberville, Kids' Safety Day at Lynn Meadows Discovery Center and the Christmas on the Bayou boat parade in Gulfport.

We had other agency employees, as well as Marine Patrol, that participated in Pathways 2 Possibilities. This is an event for the six lower counties, and they have six thousand eighth graders that come to the convention center. We had Marine Patrol set up at Pathways. We also had Fisheries.

Matt Kasovich, Michael Fitts and Daphne Moore participated from Marine Patrol. From Fisheries, we had Megan Fleming, Jimmy Sanders, Emily Satterfield, Harron Wise and Jack Husley.

We also did get our calendars in for 2017. We have some at the back of the room. Everybody is welcome to take one, if they would like. Thank you.

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Thank you, Melissa.

Do we have any other business to come before this Commission?

(No response.)

COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have one public

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comment, Mr. Gilbert Ramsey.

Mr. Ramsey, you've got three minutes.

GILBERT RAMSEY: I understand, sir.

Good morning. My name is Gilbert Ramsey.

I was recognized on November the 14th by the Harrison County Board of Supervisors for Enhancement and Recreational Opportunities. Enhancement and Recreational Opportunities is for senior citizens and the disabled community.

I have been introduced to the Pentagon by the VA Hospital. I'm going to the Pentagon to represent the hospitality state appropriately, Senior Olympic Games and Golden Age Olympic Games.

I initiate more amenities and options for the disabled community.

I'm looking at Cat Island. I'm looking at Heron Bay. I'm looking at Round Island. I'm looking at Deer Island. I'm looking at all of them for activities.

I'm getting a BP contract. I'm going to leverage my partnership with this agency. I'm going to leverage this initiative to introduce appropriately for international recognition of the hospitality state.

I'm introducing this to higher education to the University of Southern Mississippi and for all universities incorporated in the State of Mississippi.

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1 I'm stepping up to the plate, gentlemen. I'm
2 going to hit a home run. I've got a BP contract for
3 educational and recreational opportunities for the
4 disabled community, Project 1273.

5 I have been networking, since 2012, to introduce
6 this. No one has stepped up to the board.

7 So here we go, ladies and gentlemen. I'm here.
8 I'm here to represent this appropriately. I'm here to
9 help us.

10 So, please, at your discretion, your
11 capabilities step up.

12 Mr. Delbert Hosemann represented me
13 appropriately. I'm handling this with everyone's
14 discretion.

15 Please understand this positive outreach to
16 implement this appropriately for our hospitality state to
17 be recognized internationally.

18 Thank you very much for your attention.
19 Any questions?

20 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: No, sir. Thank you.

21 GILBERT RAMSEY: I will be looking forward to
22 this letter of introduction for this presentation.

23 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: If we don't have any
24 other business, can I get a motion to adjourn?

25 COMMISSIONER BOSARGE: So moved, Mr. Chairman.

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1 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion to
2 adjourn.

3 Second?

4 COMMISSIONER HARMON: So seconded, Mr. Chairman.

5 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: We have a motion and a
6 second.

7 All those in favor say aye.
8 (All in favor.)

9 COMMISSIONER GOLLOTT: Adjourned.

10 (Whereupon, at 10:15 o'clock, a.m., the December
11 13, 2016, meeting of the Commission on Marine Resources
12 was concluded.)
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C E R T I F I C A T E

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3 I, Lucille Morgan, Certified Shorthand Reporter, do
4 hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and
5 correct transcript of the December 13, 2016, meeting of
6 the Commission on Marine Resources, as taken by me at the
7 time and place heretofore stated in the aforementioned
8 matter in shorthand, with electronic verification, and
9 later reduced to typewritten form to the best of my skill
10 and ability; and, further, that I am not a relative,
11 employee, or agent, of any of the parties thereto, nor
12 financially interested in the cause.
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