

DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY

Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Wildlife and Fisheries Commission

Reopening of the 2023/2024 Oyster Season
in the Sister Lake Public Oyster Seed Reservation
to the Harvest of Market Size Oysters

In accordance with the emergency provisions of Revised Statutes (R.S.) 49:962, under the authority of R.S. 56:433, and under the authority of a Declaration of Emergency passed by the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission on September 7, 2023, which authorized the secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to take emergency action to reopen public oyster seed grounds or reservations if sufficient quantities of oysters are available and to adjust sack limits, notice is hereby given that the secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries declares that the Sister Lake Public Oyster Seed Reservation, as described in R.S. 56:434, shall reopen to the harvest of market oysters only at one-half hour before sunrise on Monday, March 4, 2024 and close at one-half hour after sunset on Sunday, March 10, 2024, with the following conditions:

1. Any vessel from which any person(s) takes or attempts to take oysters from the public oyster seed reservations described above shall be limited to a daily take not to exceed 30 whole sacks of oysters per vessel. A sack of oysters for the purposes of this Declaration of Emergency shall be the size of a standard Louisiana measure described in R.S. 56:440. If sacks smaller than the size described in R.S. 56:440 are used, the daily harvest and possession limit shall be based on the number of sacks used, not the size of the sack or other measures.

2. This opening is limited to harvesting only market oysters for direct sale (sacking).

3. If any person on a vessel takes or attempts to take oysters from the public oyster reservation described above, all oysters contained on that vessel will be deemed to have been taken from said seed ground or reservation from the time harvest begins until all oysters are off-loaded dockside.

4. All oysters harvested from public areas, seed grounds or reservations for the purpose of market shall be uncontaminated, sealed and not gaping as described in R.S. 56:433.

5. All oysters harvested from public areas, seed grounds or reservations for the purpose of direct sale shall measure a minimum of three inches from hinge to bill as described in R.S. 56:433.

6. Market oysters harvested from any public oyster area, seed ground or reservation must be sacked, the number of sacks recorded in a log book, and each sack properly tagged prior to leaving said public oyster area, seed ground, or reservation.

7. All vessels located in public oyster areas, seed grounds or reservations during those times between one-half hour after sunset and one-half hour before sunrise must have all oyster scrapers unshackled.

8. Every vessel harvesting oysters from the Public Oyster Areas for oyster resource shall report harvest information to the department before 9 p.m. each day fished. Vessels shall provide the following information: Captain's name, date of harvest, oyster harvester number, vessel number, the total number of sacks harvested that day, the

total number of barrels of seed removed, and the oyster harvest area fished. Electronic Reporting will be allowed and shall be performed in a manner prescribed by the department. Daily harvest reporting is also available by calling 1-800-442-2511. This reporting does not substitute for trip ticket reporting as required by law.

Notice of any opening, delaying, or closing of a season will be provided by public notice at least 72 hours prior to such action, unless such closure is ordered by the Department of Health for public health concerns.

Madison D. Sheahan
Secretary

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