

LOUISIANA FINFISH TASK FORCE BYLAWS

Section 1. Name

- A. The name of this organization is the **Louisiana Finfish Task Force**.

Section 2. Purpose and Objectives

- A. The purpose of the Louisiana Finfish Task Force is to study and monitor the finfish industry and to make recommendations to the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission (LWFC), the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF), the legislature and other state agencies for the maximization of benefit from the industry for the state of Louisiana and its citizens.
- B. Specific charges and responsibilities of the Louisiana Finfish Task Force as outlined in LA Rev Stat § 56:301.10 are:
1. Coordinate efforts to increase finfish production and marketability.
 2. Provide for the study of the decline in finfish marketability and market price, provide for the study of the impacts of imported finfish on the domestic market, assist in the development of a state finfish inspection program, assist in the development of a Louisiana finfish certification and branding program, and make recommendations to the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission, the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, and the Louisiana Department of Health for implementation of policies to help enhance the domestic finfish industry.
 3. Make recommendations with respect to issues pertaining to the finfish industry and finfish production to the various state agencies charged with responsibility for differing elements of the finfish industry in this state, including the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, the Department of Natural Resources, the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, the Louisiana Department of Health, the Department of Agriculture and Forestry, and the legislature.
 4. Develop markets and marketing strategies for the development and expansion of markets for finfish harvested from Louisiana waters.
 5. Represent the interests of the Louisiana finfish industry before federal and state administrative and legislative bodies on issues of importance to the Louisiana finfish industry.
 6. Contract for legal services to represent the interests of the Louisiana finfish industry in judicial, administrative, and legislative proceedings.
 7. Perform any acts deemed necessary and proper to carry out its duties and responsibilities.

Section 3. Governing Body

- A. The Louisiana Finfish Task Force shall operate under the authority of the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and shall be governed by its policies and regulations.
- B. The Louisiana Finfish Task Force shall operate under the open meetings law (R.S. 42:4.1-12) and the public records law (R.S. 44:1-37).

Section 4. Membership

- A. Affairs of the Louisiana Finfish Task Force shall be managed by a board of voting members.
- B. Membership in the Task Force shall include both voting and non-voting members.
- C. There shall be 7 voting members appointed by the Governor pursuant to R.S.56:301.10, consisting of the following:
 - 1. Three (3) commercial fishermen each of whom shall possess a commercial fisherman's license with a certified endorsement pursuant to R.S.56:301.103(E)
 - 2. One (1) active Louisiana dock buyer of finfish
 - 3. Three (3) recreational fishermen each of whom shall possess recreational freshwater and saltwater licenses
- D. There shall be 2 voting members appointed by the Legislature pursuant to R.S.56:301.10, consisting of the following:
 - 1. One (1) member of the Senate appointed by the president of the Senate
 - 2. One (1) member of the House of Representatives appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives
- E. Alternate members:
 - 1. Each appointed commercial and recreational fisherman shall have a designated alternate who shall be authorized to exercise the voting privileges of the appointed member in their absence
 - 2. In no case shall an alternate member exercise voting privileges of any member other than the appointed member he or she has been designated as an alternate for and only in the absence of the appointed member
 - 3. Alternate members may participate in all Task Force meetings and discussions, however, shall only be allowed to vote as provided in parts F(1) and (2) of this section
- F. There shall be 6 non-voting members, serving as technical advisors, represented as follows:
 - 1. Governor or the Governor's designee

2. LDWF Fisheries Biologist
3. LDWF Enforcement Agent
4. LDWF Economist
5. Commissioner of the LDAF or the Commissioner's designee
6. Secretary of the LDHH or the Secretary's designee

G. The Governor, through the LDWF Secretary, may remove a voting task force member.

Section 5. Vacancies

A. Vacancies that occur shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointments by the groups identified in the Louisiana Legislation pursuant to R.S.56:301.10.

Section 6. Meetings

A. Task Force meetings shall be conducted under "Roberts Rules of Order".

B. Task Force meetings shall be held at the LDWF Building in Baton Rouge. The Task Force may, however, hold meetings at other sites, for whatever reasons they deem necessary.

C. Meet regularly, not less often than once in each calendar quarter or at such times as called by the Chairman, or when requested by five members of the Task Force Task Force meetings shall begin at 1:00PM unless otherwise specified.

D. Meeting agendas and draft meeting minutes shall be mailed to Task Force members prior to each meeting.

E. Five voting members shall constitute a meeting quorum.

Section 7. Voting

A. Motions are considered "Carried" upon approval of a majority of voting members present at any duly convened meeting (quorum present, etc.), except in the case of matters concerning proposed legislation and/or in the case of changes to the bylaws.

B. Alternate members may not offer a second to any motion or vote on any motion unless recognized by the Chairman as serving in the absence of a voting member they have been designated to replace.

C.. In the cases of changes to the bylaws or matters concerning proposed legislation, an approval of two-thirds (2/3) of the voting members present at any duly convened meeting is required.

Section 8. Officer and Ex-officio Arrangements

- A. The Governor shall appoint the chairman of the Task Force for a period of one-year and thereafter the task force shall elect a chairman and vice-chairman from its membership. The chairman and vice-chairman shall serve a term of not more than one year. **Annual election of officers shall be held at a regular meeting during the first quarter of each year.**
- B. The Task Force shall have facilitative aides/technical advisors from the LDWF.
- C. The Task Force may seek and receive assistance from universities within the state as necessary.

Section 9. Powers and Limitations of the Chairman

- A. The chairman shall present all recommendations of the Task Force to the LWFC, the legislature and other governing bodies. He shall, however, have the power to appoint a speaker in his place.
- B. The chairman (or his designated speaker) shall represent the expressed wishes of the Task Force and not his personal opinion when speaking at outside meetings.
- C. The chairman should at all times serve as a neutral moderator. When the chairman feels he must express strong personal opinions on an issue during a Task Force meeting, he shall designate a temporary chairman until the issue is resolved.
- D. The chairman presiding shall have full power to call "out of order" members who engage in personal attacks and abusive behavior.
- E. The Task Force chairman shall have final right-of-approval on agenda order and content.
- F. The chairman presiding shall use his own discretion on calling for a vote. With this power, he shall seek consensus whenever possible.
- G. The Chairman shall not vote unless so required to break a tie and in matters requiring a 2/3 vote

Section 10. Powers and Limitations of Members

- A. Members shall not voluntarily use their Task Force credentials when testifying in front of public bodies or other meetings and expressing their personal or association's views. This does not prevent acknowledgment of Task Force membership if asked directly.
- B. Members wishing to question or hear from someone from the audience shall request the presiding chairman to recognize the individual. Individuals recognized from the audience shall be limited to three minutes speaking time or allotted at the discretion of the chairman.

Section 11. Absences

- A. Three consecutive unexcused absences from official Task Force meetings may be grounds for the Finfish Task Force to request a replacement.
- B. All Task Force members are expected to notify the Task Force Chairman or Facilitator of his/her inability to attend any official Task Force meeting three days prior to the meeting. Failure to do so constitutes an unexcused absence.
- C. At the Task Force meeting following a member's absence, the member may petition the Task Force to excuse his/her absence. Any absence may be excused at the discretion of the Task Force.
- D. In the case of member replacement due to absence, the Secretary of LDWF will recommend replacements to the Governor pursuant to R.S.56:301.10.

Section 12. Public Input

- A. Task Force meetings shall include a period for public testimony and public testimony maybe allowed at other times during meetings at the discretion of the chairman.
- B. Each speaker shall be limited to three minutes or allotted at the discretion of the chairman
- C. Public comment shall be limited to:
 - 1. Current agenda items
 - 2. Requests for items to be placed on future agendas

Section 13. Travel Reimbursement

- A. Members shall serve without compensation but may receive the same reimbursement of travel expenses for attending the meetings as is allowed for other state employees' travel
- B. Reimbursement of travel expenses must be properly documented on forms provided by and submitted to the LDWF . All reimbursements are subject to LDWF approval.