MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES & PARKS
Bureau of Fisheries and Wildlife
1505 Eastover Drive
Jackson, MS 39211

PUBLIC NOTICE F7-2999

The Mississippi Commission on Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks at a meeting in Jackson, Mississippi on May 16, 2012, under authority of Section 25-43-7, Mississippi Code of 1972, make known it's intent to adopt the following regulations on commercial fishing and the sale of minnows under authority of Sections 49-1-29; 49-7-3; 49-7-9; 49-7-12; 49-7-29; 49-7-69; 49-7-81; 49-7-83; 49-7-87; 49-7-89; 49-7-90, 49-7-91, 49-15-77, and 51-3-1.

Be it ordered that Public Notices F6-2999 are hereby repealed and the following rules, regulations and required licenses relative to freshwater commercial fishing, commercial fishing equipment tags, and wholesale minnow dealers be adopted for all residents and non-residents for public waters identified in Section 51-3-1.

Non-game gross fish, non native fish, minnows, non-game fish, crawfish_may be taken and sold from freshwaters of Mississippi, except in those waters specifically closed to freshwater commercial fishing gear as stated herein.

1. LICENSES

1.1 Persons who engage in the following activities must have a freshwater commercial fishing license:

- Fish freshwater legal commercial fishing gear (hoop or barrel nets, gill or trammel nets, slat baskets or trotlines with more than 100 hooks in aggregate)
- Selling, reselling, or purchasing for re-sale non-game gross fish, or non-native fish.
- Sell minnows at wholesale (with the exception of those Miss. residents growing minnows on their own property, Section 49-7-29) or sell minnows or nongame fish captured from the wild. Minnows are defined as golden shiners, fathead minnows, goldfish, emerald shiner, and mosquitofish.
- Harvest common snapping turtles (PN 3201)
- Selling, reselling or exporting for sale across stateliness crawfish taken from the public waters of the state.

1.2 Persons who use gill nets, trammel nets, commercial trotlines, or hoop nets must have a commercial fishing equipment tag for each piece of commercial fishing equipment, in addition to a valid Freshwater Commercial Fishing License.

1.3 Any person using a slat basket in Mississippi waters must have a valid Slat Basket License and a Slat Basket Tag for each slat basket in addition to having a valid Freshwater Commercial Fishing License

1.4 LICENSE AND TAG COSTS

Commercial Fishing License Types	Cost
Resident Freshwater Commercial Fishing License	$30
Nonresident Freshwater Commercial Fishing License	$200
Commercial Fishing Equipment Tag (for each piece of gear)	$3
Reciprocal Commercial Fishing Equipment Tag	$3
Slat Basket License (for each basket and in addition to freshwater commercial license and slat basket tags)	$30
Slat Basket Tag (for each basket)	$3

(Prices listed do not include processing fees or agent fees.)

1.5 A person holding a Freshwater Commercial Fishing License can be assisted by a helper who has any valid license issued by the Mississippi Department of Wildlife Fisheries & Parks. Persons exempt under 49-7-9(1c) who wish to serve as a Helper to a licensed commercial fisher are exempt from License requirement. Helpers who do not have a commercial fishing license cannot sell, resell or ship for sale nongame gross fish or non native fish.

1.6 Neither a license or tags are required to use legal Minnow Seines or Minnow Traps.

1.7 Persons who have a freshwater commercial fishing license are allowed to fish crawfish traps as described herein in waters permitted in section 6.

1.8 Note that PN 3428 allows use of certain fishing equipment by persons with valid sport fishing licenses, or by persons exempt.

2. FRESHWATER COMMERCIAL FISHING GEAR.

2.1. TROTLINES:

Trotlines must have hooks at least 24 inches apart and tied so they cannot slip together. No trotlines or throw lines shall exceed 1,000 feet. A commercial fishing equipment tag purchased from the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks shall be attached within 5 feet of one end of the mainline of each trotline. Season is throughout the year. Waters closed to the use of commercial trotlines are listed in 6.1.

2.2. SNAG LINES:
There is no open season on the use of Snag lines.

2.3. HOOP NETS and BARREL NET:
Hoop or barrel nets shall be made of number 15 or bigger twine or cord and treated; the minimum mesh size shall be three (3) inch square measure. Lead requirements: maximum of seven per license holder, up to 35 yards in length, three (3) inch square measure, number 15 twine or bigger and treated. Hearts may be used only in the Mississippi River where it is a common boundary between Mississippi and another state (oxbow lakes included). Hoop nets or barrel nets must be set at least 100 yards apart EXCEPT nets may be fished on each end of a lead, as such, this constitutes one set and each set must be 100 yards apart. A commercial fishing equipment tag as described in section 3 shall be attached to the front hoop (opposite from catch area) on each net.

Persons with Mississippi resident commercial fishing licenses or pertinent license of border state fishing barrel nets and/or hoop nets in Mississippi waters, which are common boundaries between Mississippi and another state (oxbow lakes included), may use the same mesh size allowed in the other state; EXCEPT, leads, hearts and wings are prohibited in Mississippi waters when attached to barrel or hoop nets with minimum mesh of less than three (3) inches square measure.

Waters closed to fishing hoop nets are listed in sections 6.1, 6.2 and 6.4

2.4. SEINES:
The use of seines is prohibited statewide, except for minnow seines as described in 2.5.

2.5. MINNOW SEINES, MINNOW TRAPS:

These gears, as described below, can be used to harvest minnows, non-game fish, non-game gross fish, and bait. Note: that a commercial fishing license is not required to fish these gears, but sale of fish authorized to be harvested from these gears does require a commercial fishing license.

Minnow Seines: These seines must be no more than 25 feet in length and four (4) feet in depth. The use of minnow seines is prohibited in all public lakes in Mississippi and in all waters listed in section 6.1.

Minnow Traps: Minnow traps or jars constructed of glass, plastic, nonmetallic or wire mesh not more than 32 inches in length and 12 inches in diameter having no wings or leads and having an entrance no larger than one inch in diameter may be used.

No minnows or non-game fish harvested from public waters may be taken outside the state for sale.

2.6 CRAWFISH TRAPS

Crawfish Traps: any device constructed of coated wire with mesh no smaller than 3/4 inch by 11/16 inch and with the opening of the throat or flues not exceeding two inches and which is used for the sole purpose of taking crawfish. Crawfish traps are typically of the pillow or pyramid style. Crawfish traps must be tagged as described in section 3.

2.7. TRAMMEL NETS and GILL NETS:
Gill nets and trammel nets of any material other than mono or multi filament twine are unlawful. Nets must be set at least 100 yards apart and no nearer than 20 yards to piers. Maximum length shall be 3,000 feet. Nets must have a minimum mesh of four (4) inches square measure.

A commercial fishing equipment tag as described in section 3 shall be attached to one end of the float line on each gill or trammel net.

Gill nets and trammel nets specified above maybe fished statewide. Exceptions are in Section 7 where special permitting is addressed and in border waters specified below.

EXCEPTION IN SPECIFIED BORDER LINE WATERS:

- A minimum of three (3) inch square mesh measure gill and trammel nets may be used in Pickwick Lake, the main channels of the Mississippi and Pearl Rivers along the MS/LA border, and in any streams, lakes, and portion of lakes, where the Mississippi/Louisiana state line occurs as depicted on the U.S. Department of the Interior, Geological Survey quadrangle maps.

- A minimum of three and one half (3.5) inch mesh square measure gill and trammel nets may be used in all public waters between the main levees of the Mississippi River where it is the state line between Arkansas and Mississippi including the main channel of the Mississippi River.

WATERS CLOSED to fishing trammel nets and gill nets are listed in sections 6.1, 6.2 and 6.5.

2.8 SLAT BASKETS are defined as commercial fishing devices used solely for the capture of catfish. Season is throughout the year. Pursuant the Mississippi Code of 1972, as amended, Section 49-7-9, ANY PERSON using a slat basket in Mississippi waters must have a valid slat basket license and a slat basket tag for each slat basket each year. Only slat basket licenses and tags issued by the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks shall be valid. Slat baskets fished in Mississippi waters shall:

Be made entirely of wood and/or plastic slats in a boxlike or cylindrical shape, not exceed six (6) feet in length or fifteen (15) inches in width and height or diameter, have no more than two (2) throats, have at least four (4) slot openings of a minimum one and one-half (1½) by twenty-four (24) inches evenly spaced around the sides of the catch area which

must begin at the rear of the basket and run twenty-four (24) inches toward the throat end of the basket.

Slat baskets shall be placed at least one hundred (100) yards apart and may not be used with any form of leads, netting or guiding devices (Section 49-7-9). Each slat basket shall have a metal slat basket tag purchased from the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks which is attached to the front end of the basket. Any violation of subsection 2.8 is a violation of subsection 7 of Section 49-7-9 and shall be a Class 1 violation as prescribed in section 49-7-141.

Slat baskets are legal statewide except in waters listed in Sections 6.1 and 6.3. Season is throughout the year.

3. TAGGING REQUIREMENTS:

Commercial Fishing Equipment Tags of blue aluminum are issued for use on commercial fishing equipment. Reciprocal Commercial Fishing Equipment tags of gold aluminum are valid on commercial fishing equipment in Mississippi reciprocal agreement waters fished by Arkansas or Louisiana resident commercial fishermen. Slat Basket tags of silver aluminum are to be attached in plain view on each slat basket. All tags are engraved with the tag type and Miss Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks. Tags may be numbered or a space may be provided for users to engrave Customer Identification (ID) number. After June 30, 2013, Commercial Fishing Equipment, Reciprocal and Slat Basket tags must display the license holders' Customer ID Number. No other tag number will be needed

The recipient of the tag is responsible for engraving their Customer Identification Number on the front of the tag (side with MDWFP writing) in legible letters at least ¼" in height.

Commercial Fishing Equipment Tag, Reciprocal Commercial Fishing Equipment Tag and Slat Basket Tags do not expire and may be used as long as the Customer ID Number and MDWFP writing is legible. Once this information is unreadable, a new tag must be purchased from the MDWFP.

A Commercial Fishing Equipment Tag shall be attached to one end of the float line of gill or trammel nets; or on the front hoop of any hoop, barrel net; or within five (5) feet of one end of the main line of each trotline, except on border waters as defined below.

Each and every slat basket fished in Mississippi waters shall have a metal slat basket tag attached to the front end of the basket. Each, and every, slat basket shall have a valid Mississippi slat box license.

All commercial fishing equipment must be tagged on those border lakes and waters that are part of the reciprocal resident license agreements between Mississippi/Louisiana (PN 2358), and between Mississippi/Arkansas (PN 3672). The reciprocal agreements DO NOT give non-residents license holders authority to fish in border waters of a state of which they do not possess a license.

Gill nets, trammel nets, hoop nets and trotlines fished by RESIDENTS of Louisiana and Arkansas in Mississippi waters specified in those reciprocal agreements must either tag their commercial fishing equipment with the type of tag specified in the state where they are licensed or purchase a Mississippi Reciprocal commercial fishing equipment tag issued by the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks. Persons with a Louisiana resident sportfishing or a basic fishing license using "recreational hoopnets" or any other commercial fishing equipment

Crawfish traps fished in public water shall be marked with a waterproof tag provided by the fishermen, with the name and MDWFP Customer Identification_number legibly printed on the tag.

4. FISHING RESTRICTIONS

4.1. No person shall possess both sport and commercial gear when engaged in fishing or out on a water body.

4.2. It is unlawful to set any freshwater commercial fishing equipment within 100 yards of another piece of commercial fishing equipment (Section 49-7-81)
Exception: a) hoop nets connected by a lead as defined in *item* 2.3; b) minnow traps, minnow seines, and crawfish traps.

4.3. It is unlawful to set any freshwater commercial fishing equipment so that it extends more than half way across any stream, channel, drain or other body of water (Section 49-7-81). A guideline that does not impede navigation may be set.

4.4. Driving or attempting to drive fish (also known as whooping, whipping or striking) into any freshwater commercial fishing gear is permitted. However, it shall be unlawful to alter or destroy any natural or man-made structure in the process of fishing for non-game gross fish or non-native fish.

4.5. It shall be unlawful to raise or run or tamper with or take fish from any legal freshwater commercial fishing gear which is not licensed (identified by commercial fishing equipment tag) in your name without written permission of the owner of the gear.

4.6. Illegal gear, untagged gear and/or improperly tagged gear may be seized by conservation officers upon discovery.

5. HARVEST SIZE AND POSSESSION RESTRICTIONS

5.1. All game fish (Section 49-7-1) caught in freshwater commercial fishing equipment shall be returned to the water immediately (Section 49-7-83). Persons with commercial fishing licenses can use bream/sunfish for bait on trotlines, as long as: (a) these fish were legally taken; (b) the daily creel limit for these species (100 fish total) is not exceeded.

5.2. It is unlawful to commercially take, to offer for sale, or to possess non-game gross fish below the following total lengths and creel limits:

Species	Total Length	Dressed Length	Creel Limit
Buffalo	16 inches	12 inches	None
Flathead Catfish see A	16 inches	12 inches	None
Other Catfish see A	12 inches	9 inches	None
Alligator Gar			Quota see 5.5
Sturgeon			0
Paddlefish			Special regulations

A) On border waters with Tennessee and Alabama persons with commercial fishing licenses shall possess no more than one catfish (blue, channel, flathead) over 34 inches in length.

Total length is measured with a flatboard with the mouth of the fish closed and tail squeezed to give the maximum overall length.

The minimum length on dressed length shall not apply to fish processed at a facility that complies with Federal and State Health regulations. All fish sold on a rural or urban route or on display at a Commercial licensed fish market shall meet total or dressed length requirements as established

5.3. PADDLEFISH: PN 3798 contains regulations on commercial harvest of paddlefish. Paddlefish (live or dead) caught in commercial fishing equipment must be released immediately unless permitted for take as established in current version of Public Notice 3798

5.4. ALL MISSISSIPPI WATERS ARE CLOSED TO THE COMMERCIAL HARVEST OF ALL STURGEON SPECIES (Alabama shovelnose sturgeon, Gulf sturgeon, Pallid sturgeon and Shovelnose sturgeon).

5.5. An annual quota of 200 conservation size (CS) alligator gar is established for commercial harvest for any calendar year. To possess a CS alligator gar caught in commercial fishing gear, or to sell a CS alligator gar, the CS alligator gar has to be tagged. Tags will be issued from the MDWFP headquarters in Jackson. Tags will be issued at a rate of 5 per applicant per month until enough tags are issued to meet the quota. Any one applicant can only be issued 5 tags per month. The harvest of CS alligator gar shall be recorded on forms supplied by MDWFP. These forms are to be submitted to MDWFP no later than January 15 of the following calendar year.

A conservation size alligator gar is defined as an alligator gar 16 inches or longer in length that has a short broad snout where the distance from the tip of the snout to the corner of the mouth is less than the distance from the corner of the mouth to the posterior end of the operculum (or gill cover).

There shall be no quota on harvest of alligator gar less than 16 inches in length.

In addition there shall be no harvest of alligator gar of any size from the following waters

- Bee Lake in Holmes County
- St. Catherine Creek watershed in Adams County.

5.6. Per Public Notice 3357 persons can not take, possess, transport, export, process or sell any species on the Official State list of Endangered Species.

5.7. Per Public Notice 3201, Non-game wildlife or their parts taken from wild Mississippi populations may not be bought sold, offered for sale or exported for sale. Any resident who takes or possesses non-game wildlife, turtles, frogs and snakes must comply with licensing, permitting, harvest restrictions, and reporting requirements as established in current version of Public Notice 3201.

6. AREAS CLOSED TO COMMERCIAL GEAR

6.1. THE FOLLOWING AREAS SHALL BE CLOSED TO ALL TYPES OF COMMERCIAL FISHING GEAR, AND COMMERCIAL FISHING unless authorized by a separate Public Notice on commercial fishing for paddlefish:

- From the outlet works in the Coldwater River of Arkabutla Dam downstream to the Corps of Engineers cable crossing, a distance of approximately one-fourth mile.
- In the Tallahatchie River and Barrow Lake below Sardis Dam from the outlet works downstream to U.S. Highway 51 bridge crossing of said river.
- In the Yocona River from the outlet works of Enid Dam downstream to the U.S. Highway 51 bridge crossing of said river.
- In the Yalobusha River from the outlet works of Grenada Dam downstream to south bound lane of the I-55 bridge crossing of said river.
- In the Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway (TTW) south from Hwy. 25 (Scrugg's Bridge) over the Yellow Creek embayment of Pickwick Lake in Tishomingo County and all impoundments (Divide Section Canal, Bay Springs Lake, Pools E, D, C, B, and A) to the confluence of the old Tombigbee River and the navigation channel at mile marker 366.3 in Aberdeen Lake southwest of Amory.
- Columbus Lake, in Monroe County from the Aberdeen Lock and Dam downstream to Hwy 45 overpass, locally known as "Morgan's Landing Boat Ramp", including the river channel bendways.
- Aliceville Lake, in Lowndes County from Columbus Lock & Dam downstream to Hwy 82 overpass at the junction of the navigation channel and the mouth of Luxapalila Creek, including the river channel bendways.
- Ross Barnett Reservoir from the Main Dam upstream to Lowhead Dam near Ludlow, Mississippi.
- Pearl River upstream from State Highway 15.
- Pearl River below Ross Barnett Reservoir from the Spillway outlet to the City of Jackson's Water Works Lowhead Dam.
- All waters of Okatibbee Reservoir.
- Muddy Bayou in Warren County from its mouth at Eagle Lake to the Muddy Bayou structure at Steele Bayou.

- Moon Lake in Coahoma County including Phillip Bayou and Yazoo Pass in Coahoma County.
- All State Fishing Lakes and State Park Lakes owned or leased by the Department.
- The Yockanookany River System between Hwy. 35 and Hwy. 429. (PN 2735)
- All waters of Back Bay Biloxi north and west of a line extending across Back Bay Biloxi beginning at the Highway 90 bridge and all rivers, bayous, bays, streams, lakes, inlets, and other waters whatsoever connecting to said designated part of Back Bay Biloxi.
- Red and Black Creeks and tributaries and water area beginning at the mouth of Dead Lake in Jackson County upstream to the origin of said creeks.
- Any connected or non-connected oxbow lake or tributary stream of the Pascagoula River where the main channel of the Pascagoula River is bordered by the Upper Pascagoula River Wildlife Management Area (WMA), the Lower Pascagoula River WMA or the Ward Bayou WMA.
- All waters of Bay St. Louis which are north of the Highway 90 bridge and all rivers, bayous, bays, streams, lakes, inlets, and other waters whatsoever connected to said designated part of Bay St. Louis.
- Bowie River and all associated oxbow lakes, tributaries and water areas upstream from it's confluence with the Leaf River.

6.2. The following areas shall be closed to the use of hoop nets, barrel nets, gill nets or trammel nets but shall be open to trotlines and slat baskets:

- Yocona River from the U.S. Highway 51 bridge crossing downstream to the Pope-Crowder Road Bridge.
- Yalobusha River from south bound Interstate 55 bridge below Grenada Dam downstream to State Highway 8 and 35 bridge crossing.
- Bull Mountain Creek from the confluence with the Tombigbee River to the Mississippi-Alabama state line.
- Luxapalilia Creek from the confluence with the Tombigbee River to the Mississippi-Alabama state line.
- Buttahatchie River from the confluence with the Tenn-Tom Waterway navigational channel to the Mississippi-Alabama state line.

6.3. Slat baskets are prohibited in the Old River Wildlife Management Area.

6.4. Commercial fishing with hoop or barrel nets shall be closed in the following rivers:

- Pascagoula River from the Wade-Vancleave Bridge downstream to the Hwy 90 Bridge including Little River and the East and West Pascagoula Rivers and all water areas in between the East and West Pascagoula Rivers.

- Escatawpa River south of Interstate 10.

6.5. From April 1 to Oct. 31, commercial fishing with gill or trammel nets shall be closed in the following rivers:

- Bogue Chitto River from the confluence of the East and West Bogue Chitto Creeks west of Hartman, MS downstream to the Mississippi/LA state line.

- Chickasawhay River from Hwy 11 bridge north of Enterprise, MS downstream to it's confluence with the Pascagoula River.

- Leaf River from I-59 bridge west of Moselle, MS downstream to it's confluence with the Pascagoula River.

- Pascagoula River from it's origin at the confluence of the Leaf and Chickasawhay Rivers north of Merrill, MS downstream to the Hwy 90 bridge. This includes the East and West Pascagoula Rivers and all water areas in between the two said rivers.

7.0 Special Permit

7.1 A special permit issued through the MDWFP Chief of Fisheries shall allow a person with a commercial fishing license to fish nets in specific waters identified in the permit. The special permits shall only be issued for waters identified by the MDWFP Fisheries Bureau where control of aquatic nuisance species is needed. Those persons issued the special permits shall report their harvest from the nets to MDWFP on forms supplied by MDWFP. Reports on the special permits shall be received by deadline set by MDWFP.

8.0 Reporting Commercial Fishing catches

Any person required to purchase a commercial fishing license must report their catch and other activities on forms provided by Department of Wildlife Fisheries and Parks

Except persons who only
- Raise nongame wildlife (PN 3201)
- Harvest common snapping turtles

Failure to submit reports or submitting reports with intentional false information is cause for a person to be denied the privilege to purchase a Commercial Fishing License till said discrepancy is corrected.

This adopted public notice will become effective the 25 day of June, 2012.
Witness my hand and seal this the 16th day of May, 2012.

MISSISSIPPI COMMISSION ON WILDLIFE, FISHERIES & PARKS

BY: _____
William (Billy) Deviney, Chairman

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE, FISHERIES & PARKS

BY: _____
Sam Polles, Ph.D., Executive Director

I certify this to be a
true and correct copy.

_____
Executive Director

_____
Notary

STATE OF MISSISSIPPI
NOTARY PUBLIC
ID # 93475
ANNETTE S. CLARK
Commission Expires
June 29, 2013
RANKIN COUNTY