

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES



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Commission on Streamlining Government
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Secretary Robert Barham

DEPARTMENT: Wildlife and Fisheries
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Section One: Agency Overview

Identify your overarching reform goal(s) for the agency.

- ◆ Better educate, inform, and provide the public outdoor opportunities
- ◆ Better emphasize the importance of hunting, fishing, and waterway safety
- ◆ Enhance interdepartmental relationships to further improve agency performance and increase efficiency

MISSION: To manage, conserve, and promote wise utilization of LA's renewable fish and wildlife resources and their supporting habitats through replenishment, protection, enhancement, research, development, and education for the social and economic benefit of current and future generations; to provide opportunities for knowledge of and use and enjoyment of these resources; and to promote a safe and healthy environment for the users of these resources.

Office of Management and Finance

Program: Management and Finance

Goal: To provide the most effective and efficient services, enforce compliance in all department programs, and promote good customer service; to increase public visibility of the department.

Activities: 1) Financial, human resource and other support services;
2) Licensing and boat registration;
3) Public information and Conservationist Magazine

Office of Secretary

Program: Administration

Goal: All programs will be operated efficiently and effectively through sound planning and decision-making processes resulting in achievement of the department's mission.

Activities: Executive Office

Program: Enforcement

Goal: To support natural resource preservation by providing the front line enforcement component for laws, regulations, and programs related to wildlife and fisheries use and conservation; to advance crime and safety reform by protecting Louisiana citizens of all ages from life threatening criminal activities when they are involved in recreational activities on the state's waterways; to support hurricane recovery and emergency preparedness by planning, training, coordinating local, state and federal response for search and rescue associated with natural or manmade disasters.

- Activities:** 1) Boating safety and waterway enforcement;
2) Search and rescue and maritime security;
3) Wildlife, fisheries and ecosystem enforcement

Office of Wildlife

Program: Wildlife

Goal: To enhance and conserve the habitat necessary to maintain the state's species diversity and optimum distribution and densities of wildlife populations; to increase the opportunities for the public to enjoy their outdoor experiences

- Activities:** 1) Administration;
2) Habitat/Stewardship;
3) Species Management;
4) Technical Assistance;
5) Education/Outreach

Office of Fisheries

Program: Fisheries

Goal: To improve our ability to manage living aquatic resources and their habitats through enhancement and more efficient and effective data collection, analysis, and regulation, and to improve access to and opportunity for users to enjoy those resources

- Activities:** 1) Administrative;
2) Resource Management;
3) Access, Opportunity, Outreach;
4) Industry recovery assistance

Program: Marketing

Goal: To create brand loyalty for LA seafood products resulting in increased demand and enhanced economic value of the industry

Activities: Seafood promotion and marketing

Review and briefly outline the constitutional and statutory mandates for your agency.

CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENT OF DWF:

Article 9, Section 7 – Wildlife and Fisheries Commission (defines members; duties/compensation to be provided by law)

STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS OF DWF:

R.S. 3:559.7

WF Commission shall determine species recommended for aquaculture.

R.S. 30:2503

Creates the Louisiana Environmental Education Commission within the department.

R.S. 34:851 et seq

To promote safety for persons and property in and connected with the use, operation, and equipment of vessels on all waterways of the state; includes rules of operation, identification numbering system for motorboats and sailboats, enforcement, penalties and boating safety education; also includes regulation of personal watercraft.

R.S. 34:852.1 et seq

Provides for titling and related issues for vessels and motors.

R.S. 36.601 – 609

Assigns the control and supervision of the wildlife of the state, including all aquatic life with the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission; defines members/terms.

Creates the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries; assigns the control and supervision over all wildlife of the state, including fish and all other aquatic life and over execution the laws enacted for the control and supervision of programs relating to the management, protection, conservation, and replenishment of wildlife, fish, and aquatic life, and the regulation of the shipping of wildlife, fish, furs, and skins.

Mandates the department to perform the functions of the state relating to the administration, operation, and law enforcement programs, relating to freshwater fisheries and other aquatic life, including the regulation of sport and commercial fishing, the regulation of domestic fish farming, regulation of noxious aquatic weed control, the operation, maintenance, and management of fish hatcheries and fish preserve, and boat ramps.

Assigns to the department responsibility for the conservation and management of all renewable natural resources on all wildlife management areas, wildlife refuges, scenic rivers, and wildlife preserves that it may own or lease.

Further provides for the organization of the department and the powers and duties of the secretary and the functions of the “offices” within the department.

R.S. 38:2501

Assigns authority to control and regulate all aspects of hunting, fishing, and boating in all water conservation districts defined in this chapter of law.

R.S. 41:1225

Responsibility for granting leases on state-owned waterbottoms for oyster cultivation, bedding, and harvesting.

R.S. 49:214.27

DWF shall work in conjunction with DNR for development of an overall state coastal management program.

R.S. 56 et seq

Responsibilities/mandates include but are not limited to:

- Improve, enlarge, and protect the natural oyster reefs
- Protect and propagate species of birds and game and establish preserves and hatcheries
- Enforce all law relative to the responsibilities of the department/commission within the territorial boundaries of the state and within the Gulf of Mexico outside the territorial boundaries in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Act, 16USC 1856, and cooperative enforcement agreement between the US Department of Commerce, NOAA and DWF.
- Enforcement agents are vested with full police powers to enforce all criminal statutes of the state to facilitate the effective protection of private and public rights and property and life throughout the state’s waterways and lands
- Assist in protecting all lessees of private oyster bedding grounds
- Assist in the protection of private fish ponds used by individuals to propagate fish
- Protect game preserves
- Promulgate rules for the regulation of the dredging of fill sand and fill material
- Set seasons, times, quotas, etc.
- Grant or deny all applications for permits, licenses, registrations, or compliance schedules relating to oil and gas wells and pipelines

- Promulgate rules to control the importation and private possession of non-indigenous constrictors in excess of 12 feet, venomous snakes, and nonhuman primates
- Promulgate rules to control the importation and private possession of big exotic cats
- Regulation of the breeding and propagation of wild birds and quadrupeds
- Regulate the trapping of fur-bearing animals or alligators
- Fishing and fish industry licensing (exclusive control of fish having a game or commercial value)
- Regulate mariculture activities within the coastal zone
- Regulate the commercial harvest of reptiles and amphibians
- Manage the establishment and maintenance of artificial reefs in offshore waters
- Administer programs related to the Louisiana Natural Areas Registry and Threatened and Endangered Species Conservation
- Administer the Natural and Scenic Rivers System program
- Firearm and hunter education

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

Memorandum of Understanding between the US Coast Guard and DWF to conduct boating safety programs and mutual enforcement of laws related to boating on waters of the state for recreational vessels, search and rescue, and safety patrols.

Provide federal and state enforcement functions associated with various acts of the US Congress.

Emergency Support functions as established by the Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (ESF 9 – search and rescue; ESF 13 – public safety and security).

Gulf states marine fisheries compacts to develop joint programs for the promotion and protection of fisheries and the prevention of physical waste of the fisheries from any cause.

List those mandates which impede attaining agency goal(s) and suggestions for changes in law(s).

- Office of Fisheries

Though the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is responsible for managing public water bodies, we have not been involved in the up-front design of new and proposed reservoirs. The role of LDWF should be incorporated in the enabling legislation that creates new state reservoirs (i.e. Poverty Point- RS 38:3087.1 and 38:3087.3) LDWF is mandated to manage the renewable aquatic resources of the state. With proper construction, the cost of management and maintenance could be greatly reduced.

- Proper drawdown structure would allow more efficient maintenance and management of the aquatic vegetation and fisheries resources of the lake.
- Improperly designed lakes do not provide optimum habitat for fish. Reductions in fish production will result in decreased revenue for the state from taxes on fishing related purchases.
- Proper bottom slope would result in reduced aquatic plant (hydrilla) growth and reduce the need to chemically treat the vegetation.
- Bottom channelization would optimize draining and improved drawdown capabilities.
- Bottom contouring would increase spawning capabilities and subsequent fisheries production which would reduce the need for supplemental stockings.

Section Two: Efficiency and Benchmarking

Identify under-performing programs that should be overhauled or eliminated.

DWF initiated a Nuisance Animal Control program several years ago to meet the needs of Louisiana citizens who were placing numerous phone calls to the department for assistance with various wildlife they were coming in contact with. For example, a raccoon in their garbage, a opossum eating their cat food or a squirrel in their attic. Since the department did not have sufficient staff to spend a majority of their time setting and monitoring traps to assist people with these occurrences, we developed a program with policies and regulations to began qualifying and permitting Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators (NWCO's).

As urbanization increases, the demand for assistance to the public increases, and it is evident that the current Nuisance program is not sufficient to meet the growing needs. Last fiscal year, we presented a New and Expanded request to hire 7 FTE's to be stationed statewide to help people who could not afford to contract a NWCO. This request was for \$600,000. For comparison, we also included an additional option to establish professional service contract with NWCO's around the state to help people through the request of the Nuisance Program. The contracting estimate was \$1.2 million. Neither option was funded for this fiscal year.

The department does not have the resources to establish a program that can sufficiently meet the needs of the public. Therefore, we propose to let the private sector handle this function. We provide further detail in Section Three.

Section Three: Outsourcing and privatization

List programs, functions, or activities that can be privatized or outsourced.

Office of Wildlife –

- **Nuisance Animal Control –**

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The department does not have the resources to establish a program that can sufficiently meet the needs of the public. Over the past two years, we have completed the policies and regulations, and have established a statewide web of NWCO's that are available to contract with the public. The Nuisance program has reached a point where the NWCOs can deliver the program with minimal interaction from the department.

The current Nuisance Program spends approximately \$95,000 annually; there are two employees within the program – a full-time biologist and a temporary assistant. The biologist is in charge of the permitting and policy development and the temp employee assists with the volume of phone calls. We received approximately 1,000 nuisance animal calls last year.

The Office of Wildlife is moving towards privatizing the Nuisance Wildlife Program. The biologist associated with this function will be assigned full-time to the Private Lands Technical Assistance program, one of the department's most effective outreach programs. The temporary employee will still be responsible for directing phone calls to qualified local NWCO's. Permitting will be handled at the Regional Office level. The Nuisance Wildlife Control Operators (NWCO) will provide the service on behalf of the department.

Office of Fisheries –

- Control of aquatic plants -
Overall, it may be cost effective to use contract spraying for large acreages of floating aquatic vegetation. We are currently attempting to determine how to best evaluate the performance and efficiency of contractors in the areas where we use contract sprayers. The department employees will still be required to monitor where problems occur, set up contract spraying and ensure contractors achieve desired results. Many current herbicide applications are driven by citizen complaints and involve small acreages. We are exploring options to use contractors in these areas.

- Oyster Lease Surveys -
Leasing state waterbottoms for oyster cultivation is an activity within the statutory mandate of the department (R.S. 56: 421, et seq.), and leaseholders are required to mark the leased waterbottoms at their own expense. The department is statutorily mandated to operate and maintain the system of leasing state-owned waterbottoms for oyster cultivation. Currently, the system includes approximately 1,000 entities that hold approximately 8,000 leases comprising nearly 400,000 acres. The volume of work to conduct surveys of new and renewal leases is substantial. The department has, in the past, offered lease surveying services to leaseholders for a fee, and leaseholders also had the option of privately-contracted surveying. The fee collected by the Oyster Lease Survey Section paid for the surveying services.

Currently, we are under a moratorium for issuing new oyster leases, and have been since 2002. When the moratorium is lifted, we would consider privatizing the surveying component. This would require the individual lease holders to contract a private surveyor and would require less state resources. We would continue to perform the other statutorily mandated functions required to operate and maintain the water-bottom leasing system, as well as serve a monitoring, compliance and quality control function.

Prior to the moratorium, we had three survey crews and they were housed on a quarterbarge. We housed them in the field because the work locations were so remote; it was more time efficient for the employees to complete their work. The quarterbarge operation and maintenance fees were substantial, e.g., every 2 or 3 years it would require drydocking for hull maintenance – the last estimate we had for that prior to Gustav was almost \$90,000. Each crew also required survey equipment and boats to operate in the marsh as well as vehicles to get them to the site where the barge was moored. Whenever the barge was moved to a new area we would need to either contract with an electrician to install shore power, or buy diesel to operate the generator. We also had the barge manned 7 days/week.

Currently we have one field survey crew to conduct lease surveys and to collect the data needed to verify the accuracy of privately-surveyed leases. To resume full-scale surveying again we would need to have at least three crews due to the backlog of new surveys that will be needed with the lifting of the moratorium, and

we would have to restore the quarterbarge, which was destroyed in Hurricane Gustav. To resume this function again, it would cost up to \$500,000 to restore the quarterbarge and approximately \$200,000 in annual operating costs, including personnel to support each survey crew. By requiring the lease holders to provide their own surveys and the department to serve compliance, monitoring, and quality control functions, we would not have to expend these funds.

Section Four: Information Technology Integration

List IT projects already underway designed to improve efficiency and effectiveness as well as potential projects.

Department-wide -

- We are in the process of converting our mainframe applications and data over to Windows based equivalents.
- All existing custom developed applications are being converted from Mainframe Cobol to Web based applications using the Microsoft ASP and ASP.NET language. Our motorboat registration system and enforcement citation system have already been converted. Our commercial license systems, motorboat titling system, hunting boating safety, and Alligator systems are underway. Mainframe data is being converted to Microsoft SQL. We are currently in the RFP process for a contractor to help us convert our current mainframe SAS environment to Windows server based platform.
- We are working to actively embrace server virtualization of all of our critical servers - consolidating the work of several servers onto one physical piece of hardware. We will be operating in a “greener” computer environment, one of the governor’s stated objectives for state government, and provide a more robust, fault tolerant computing environment which will allow us to more quickly recover from server failures and/or disasters. We will save on the purchase cost of the replaced servers, and we will also save on maintenance, electrical, and cooling costs.

VMWare, the technology we utilize, claims:

- Virtualization can cut energy consumption in the data center by as much as 80%.
 - Every server virtualized saves 7000kWh of electricity or about \$700 in energy cost annually.
 - Every server virtualized reduces 4 tons of CO2 emissions, the equivalent of taking 1.5 cars off the highway
- We have started the process of implementing shared (SAN) storage for our existing server environment. This is a necessary component for a robust virtual environment.
 - We are implementing a high speed “Metro-E” connection to replace HQ’s T1 lines. This will bring much needed extra bandwidth for the department immediately and at the same time simplify future expansion to accommodate bandwidth intensive applications down the road such as video conferencing, voice-over IP, and the new ERP system.

- We have implemented a centralized imaging system which allows us to electronically store much of the paper documents that we currently collect. Our HR department utilizes this system extensively storing all employee documents electronically. This system can instantly search and retrieve imaged documents, while eliminating the need to keep paper copies. The system also allows for the Optical Character Recognition of handwritten “Trip Ticket” forms from the public which eliminate the need to manually rekey the information. The newest project in the imaging section is the Seafood Dealer Survey and the Commercial Fishermen’s Survey. We will soon be scanning the surveys that are already being mailed in. This will give the agency a better insight to what the dealers and fishermen are having to content with from the recent hurricane seasons and what we can do to help them in the future.

- We are currently evaluating the potential of online backup software to remotely archive critical data in a secure manner over the internet utilizing third party providers.

- We are adopting GIS technologies.

LaGov/ERP System

It is our hope that the new ERP system will simplify the budgetary process, streamline the purchasing process, and network the various financial and administrative functions of the state to create a more accurate and timely system. If this occurs we can more accurately track and monitor the progress of the department’s activities.

Section Five: Elimination of Duplicative and Unnecessary Services

List the activities of your department that fall outside of your constitutional and statutory mandates.

Office of Fisheries –

Although not duplicative or unnecessary, there is one activity in the Office of Fisheries that falls outside of its constitutional and statutory mandates, and it takes a significant amount of time and resources to adequately administer. Fisheries Disaster Response has become an ongoing activity of the Office of Fisheries since Hurricane Andrew. These activities have been funded through congressional appropriation and grants; allowable activities are defined by congress in the enabling legislation.

Recovery activities such as oyster bed restoration and other species and/or habitat recovery projects are clearly within the agency's constitutional and statutory mandates. However, projects to provide financial and other direct assistance to the fishing industries are outside of our normal scope of work. This function may be better suited for another agency who is accustomed to developing and administering direct assistance programs.

Identify outdated activities that should no longer be part of the mission of your agency.

We did not find any outdated activities in our department. We have been proactive in continuously reviewing our programs and activities based on the needs/wants of the public and our available resources, and then subsequently redirecting existing resources accordingly. For example, the Office of Wildlife eliminated two activities that were deemed underperforming or as an inefficient use of time and resources.

- **Oaks for Wildlife**

From the late 1970's to mid 1980's the department distributed 75,000 to 100,000 oak seedlings to landowners across the state. The objective of the program was increase plantings of oak trees for wildlife. However, oak trees have specific site requirements (soils, drainage, sunlight) and most landowners lacked the expertise to match the seedlings to the appropriate site. In addition, there was no means to ensure that the seedlings were actually planted. Thus, there was concern that the intended benefits to wildlife were not being realized. In addition, during the mid 1980's the department added significant acreage to its WMA system that was in need of reforestation. The Oaks for Wildlife Program was discontinued so that the oak seedlings could be used for reforestation of newly acquired WMAs. It was thought that this was a better use of the oak seedlings and the funds used to acquire them.

- Acres for Wildlife Seed

The Acres for Wildlife Program (AFWP) was begun in the early 1980's as an effort to provide assistance to private landowners. A component of the AFWP was food plot seed distribution. Participants in the AFWP were provided free seed each year to use in establishing food plots for wildlife. The seed distribution effort was time consuming for department staff, costly, and provided minimal benefits to wildlife. Food plot establishment is among the least important wildlife management activities, and this program elevated the importance of food plots to a position disproportionate to their impact on wildlife. In addition, there was no means to ensure that the seed was actually planted or planted properly. This program was discontinued.

Identify duplication or overlap with other state agencies, with the federal government, or with public or private stakeholder groups.

Office of Fisheries -

DWF, DEQ and DHH all conduct field sampling procedures. DWF and DEQ both collect fish for sampling, and DHH collects water samples relative to oysters. While the purposes and procedures are very different for each agency, there may be some efficiencies that can be gained by combining the field sampling efforts at DWF.

LDWF collects fish to determine various fish population parameters, such as growth and relative abundance. DEQ collects fish for tissue analysis following strict guidelines required by the EPA. Tissue analysis is another practice used by DEQ to monitor the health of the environment, similar to monitoring pollutants in the water or air. The sampling methods used by the two agencies are different. Rarely is it possible to utilize fish collected during LDWF fish sampling for DEQ tissue analysis. DEQ fish have to be individually processed and packaged when caught. Fish cannot be placed on scales, a requirement of fish sampled by LDWF. Only a few lakes sampled by DEQ overlap lakes sampled by LDWF. These differences would likely require individual sampling trips for DEQ and LDWF purposes, if the programs were housed under one department. It is our understanding that the fish sampling program in DEQ is full time, so if the function was given to LDWF, additional staffing will likely be necessary; however there may be some savings realized by eliminating duplicative equipment (i.e. boats and sampling equipment).

Section Six: Civil Service and Employee Benefits.

List and identify any current initiatives or ideas related to employee benefits, hiring and promotion, and other employee regulations.

Section Seven: Studies and other Resources

Please list:

- Any studies (with a brief description) your agency has conducted that may be of interest to the Commission

We contracted with Southwick and Associates to study and report the economic impact of wildlife and fisheries activity. The most recent study, *The Economic Benefits of Fisheries, Wildlife, and Boating Resources in Louisiana*, was completed in 2008. Southwick and Associates estimated the total economic effect of wildlife and fisheries activity in the state to be appx. \$6.75 billion in 2006.

- Any national studies or studies in other states that might be of relevance
- National organizations that might be a source of potential best practices for Louisiana. If a website exists for the organization, please provide it.

The Wildlife Management Institute

SEAFWA (Southeast Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies) <http://www.seafwa.org/>

AFWA (Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies) <http://www.fishwildlife.org/>

CBMA (Conservation Business Management Association)

GSMFC (Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission) <http://www.gsmfc.org/>

GMFMC (Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council) <http://www.gulfcouncil.org/>

Section Eight: Agency Best Practices

List and identify any current successful streamlining initiatives taking place (or has taken place) within your agency.

Enforcement Division -

Enforcement/patrol effort is essential to providing adequate public safety services and supporting management and conservation efforts. The Law Enforcement Division LED, through cooperative efforts with federal agencies and reallocation of conservation dollars and other funding options, maximizes FTEs through paid overtime patrol work. Providing personnel with paid overtime accomplishes several objectives: provides necessary law enforcement coverage by increasing FTE's without hiring additional personnel and maximizes existing fleet and equipment usage.

Providing paid overtime versus hiring additional personnel streamlines work effort without paying additional employee benefits, training new personnel, and utilizes existing professional staffing to optimize span of control maximizing management functions of overall enforcement effort.

As a result of ever increasing duties and responsibilities, LDWF/LED trains its officers to have functional expertise in a wide variety of areas maximizing work effort toward a common goal "cross functional capabilities". The mandates of work wildlife enforcement agents conduct requires each officer to be trained in a wide variety of areas. Cross functional training, coupled with a streamlined chain of command, provides strategic and efficient management to a broad functioning field FTE while maximizing accountability. LED operational organization allows for clear mandates to be delivered to field personnel, thus eliminating bureaucracy and better meeting the needs of the citizens.

Enforcement agents provide regulatory management of human behavior establishing compliance with programs that support state and federal fisheries regulations, state and federal wildlife regulations, food safety regulations, full law enforcement public safety services on the lands and waterways, boating safety, boating crash investigations, marine events, hunting accident investigations, non-human primates regulations, search and rescue, maritime security, environmental crimes, community policing, public information and outreach programs statewide.

Office of Wildlife –

- **Louisiana Private Land Technical Assistance**

This is a program initiated within the Office of Wildlife to better coordinate its current staff to reach the 80% of the State's habitat located on private land. The program was accomplished through redirection of existing staff and reemphasis of priority in accomplishing our mission. Private land owners directly benefit from the federally funded assistance provided through this program. The State benefits from professional habitat management on areas previously not reached by Department activities. We believe that this outreach to the public provides a better relationship and goodwill. This program was established without the increase of positions or additional funds. This was simply a restructuring of our current staff and priorities. This type of examination and restructuring of personnel and priorities is the type of analysis that would benefit all state agencies.

- **Education Reorganization**

The Office of Wildlife Education Section initially was composed of two groups of educators. One group handled hunter education duties and the other aquatic and school visits for general wildlife education issues. Through a reorganization effort these two groups have been trained to perform both educational functions. All educators now handle both educational duties. The benefit of this reorganization is more flexibility in providing educational programs to the public. The program can now offer more services statewide. They now have more educators available. This reorganization has essentially increased hunter and aquatic educators, our statewide presence, reduced instate travel, and all of this was accomplished through proper training and not with additional personnel.

- **Upland Game Consolidation**

The primary goal of the Office of Wildlife's Turkey Program was the restoration of wild turkey populations throughout Louisiana. This effort began in 1962 and has recently been completed. Accomplishment of this goal allowed the Office to consolidate the Wild Turkey and Upland Game Programs. These programs were re-evaluated and the tasks of these programs were redistributed from the previous two personnel down to a single employee. The consolidation of these programs has allowed the Office to utilize its personnel in a more efficient manner. This consolidation was achieved by reorganizing priorities and better utilizing staff expertise.

- **Litter Hot-Line**

In 2008, the Environmental Education Commission (EEC) was transferred from the Office of the Governor to the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. The EEC's statutory function is to create a comprehensive and balanced environmental education initiative that results in a literate citizenry who will make informed decisions to effectively solve existing problems, prevent new ones and maintain a sustainable environment for future generations.

We recently learned that the Department of Environmental Quality has a Litter Hotline. The Executive Director of the EEC contends that the Litter Hotline is better suited with the EEC function, so we contacted Secretary Leggett at DEQ and we are currently in the process of making arrangements to transfer the Litter Hotline function to DWF. DWF could operate a 24 hour manned hotline rather than the current computer automated service. This would increase the effectiveness of the current program. DWF would assign existing personnel to the Litter Hotline. These personnel would be funded with the self generated 10% of fines collected. DEQ would be free to redistribute their resources to other priorities.

Office of Fisheries –

- The Office of Fisheries currently works with many state and federal agencies to avoid redundant programs, provide scientific expertise and promote efficient operations.
 - MRFSS (Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey) – In conjunction with National Oceanographic & Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service
 - Trip Ticket Program - In conjunction with National Oceanographic & Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service
 - Biological Sampling - In conjunction with National Oceanographic & Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service
 - EMAP – In conjunction with LADEQ, USGS and EPA
 - SEAMAP – In conjunction with National Oceanographic & Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service
 - National Coastal Assessment in conjunction with EPA and DEQ
 - Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration activities in conjunction with Corps of Engineers, DNR, DEQ, USFWS and NOAA

- In early 2008, the Office of Fisheries began evaluating its programs to determine if reorganization would produce efficiencies and eliminate redundant programs. From the results of the evaluation, it was decided that a reorganization designed to consolidate and centralize similar statewide programs or functions from the Inland and Marine Fisheries Divisions was warranted. The Research & Assessment Division was established in late 2008 to house those programs. The following programs were placed in the Division: Data Management, Fisheries Habitat Management, Boating Access/Fishing Opportunity/Outreach, Fisheries Research and Assessment, Gustav and Ike Disaster Relief.

- The Office of Fisheries continues its effort to identify efficiencies that could be gained and services that could be enhanced. Among these are:
 - CRMS (Coast-Wide Reference Monitoring System) – The Office of Fisheries is currently working jointly with OCPR and DNR to evaluate the possibility of coordinating sampling activity throughout coastal Louisiana to serve multiple uses such as coastal restoration/protection while providing the needed data to manage the fishery resources of the state.
 - Seismic Activity Monitoring – The Office of Fisheries is currently evaluating if efficiencies could be gained from merging existing seismic program functions into our existing field stations.