

## **DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY**

### **Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Wildlife and Fisheries Commission**

Closure of a Portion of Public Oyster Seed Grounds East of  
the Mississippi River – Drum Bay, St. Bernard Parish

In accordance with the emergency provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act, Revised Statutes (R.S.) 49:962, which allows the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission (commission) to use emergency procedures to set oyster seasons and under the authority of R.S. 56:433 and R.S. 56:435.1.1, and under the authority of a Declaration of Emergency passed by the commission on September 5, 2024, which authorized the secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to take emergency action if oyster resources and/or reefs are being adversely impacted, notice is hereby given that the secretary does hereby declare that the harvest of oysters from the following portions of the public oyster seed grounds east of the Mississippi River shall close at one-half hour after sunset on Sunday, December 22, 2024:

That portion of the public oyster seed grounds within the Drum Bay area, St. Bernard Parish, north of a line of latitude at 29 degrees 51 minutes 58 seconds N, and west of a line of longitude at 89 degrees 14 minutes 08 seconds W.

Recent biological sampling by the department indicates the reefs in this portion of the public oyster seed grounds are experiencing a localized mortality event. Additionally, harvest surveys by the department indicate these reefs are also receiving concentrated harvest pressure. Therefore, the closure is necessary to protect the remaining oyster resource, allowing conservation of that resource for future harvest opportunities. Continued commercial harvest could threaten the long-term sustainability of remaining oyster resources in these areas. Protection of these remaining oyster resources from injury is in the best interest of these public oyster seed grounds.

Notice of any opening, delaying, or closing of an oyster 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