

Florida Aquaculture

Governor and Cabinet reverse shellfish aquaculture lease fee increase



Florida's New Governor and Cabinet. Left to right: Sink, Bronson, Crist and McCollum.

At the first meeting of the new Governor and Cabinet on January 19th, a planned doubling of the aquaculture lease fee paid by shellfish farmers was canceled.

Re-elected Commissioner of Agriculture Charles H. Bronson, and newly elected Governor Charlie Crist, Attorney General Bill McCollum and Chief Financial Officer Alex Sink, agreed that the doubling of aquaculture lease rates

was inappropriate following two years of devastating hurricanes that punished shellfish farmers on both coasts. Commissioner Bronson commented, "This decision is a good for Florida farmers, and a good way to start the new year and introduce the new Governor and Cabinet Officers to Florida aquaculture."

Commissioner Bronson toured devastated agricultural areas throughout

Florida the past three years and has worked tirelessly in support of disaster assistance programs. He expedited the distribution of \$3.6 million to commercial aquaculturists affected by the 2005 hurricanes and has identified the rebuilding of Florida agriculture as a top priority for his agency.

For additional information about Florida's Cabinet visit <http://www.myflorida.com/myflorida/cabinet/>

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FDA approves 35% PEROX-AID®

by Rosalie Schnick, National Coordinator for Aquaculture New Animal Drug Applications

35% PEROX-AID® (hydrogen peroxide) was approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration on January 11 for control of mortality in: (1) freshwater-reared finfish eggs due to saprolegniasis, (2) freshwater-reared salmonids due to bacterial gill disease, and (3) freshwater-reared coolwater finfish and channel catfish due to external columnaris disease.

35%PEROX-AID® is approved with over-the-counter marketing status and has no requirement for an acceptable daily intake, tolerance, withdrawal time, or regulatory method. Eka Chemicals Inc. has licensed Western Chemical Inc. as the sole distributor.

FDA Center for Veterinary Medicine has indicated that the Low Regulatory Priority Drug status for

hydrogen peroxide is rescinded. The ONLY hydrogen peroxide product that can legally be purchased and used is 35% PEROX-AID® and it is for the approved label claims. To use 35% PEROX-AID® to treat additional diseases or additional species not covered on the current label, licensed veterinarians may be able to prescribe a legal extra-label use.



The history of oyster cultch planting in Apalachicola Bay is explored on page 3.

Aquaculture grant targets agency-industry coordination

As a result of the Department of Environmental Protection's coastal zone management program planning activity, the Division of Aquaculture has received a five-year aquaculture coordination grant.

A specific section of the federal Coastal Zone Management Act implemented by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration requires coastal states, including Great Lake states, to develop coastal zone management plans, prioritize coastal resource issues, and develop five year action plans to target funds to accomplish activities to remediate coastal resource issues.

Through a multi-agency comment process, nine coastal resource issues were identified and funding allocated: Public Access, Coastal Hazards, Ocean Resources, Wetlands, Cumulative and Secondary Impacts, Marine Debris, Special Area Management Planning, Energy and Government Facility Siting, and Aquaculture. For information about Florida's coastal zone management program and its planning and project activities, visit <http://www.dep.state.fl.us/cmp/>.



During the next five years, 2006 – 2010, a multi-agency steering group composed of Aquaculture Inter-agency Coordinating Council members

will work to create agreement between the agencies to better manage aquacultural resources. As an initial effect, the steering group will conduct a series of

regional workshops for aquaculturists and state agencies with the goal of expanding knowledge of the latest technologies and production methods to address aquaculture-related resource management issues, including sovereign submerged lands management, water quality, non-native species, emerging environmental monitoring technologies, and inspection and environmental issues.

During 2007, the Division will be holding 11 state agency workshops to present and discuss the Aquaculture Certificate of Registration and Best Management Practices program. Interspersed with the agency workshops will be four aquaculture industry workshops to share summaries of the agency comments.

Florida aquaculturists are encouraged to attend the industry workshops which will be held at the following locations, dates, and times.

March 22, 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM
Big Bend Sea Grasses Aquatic Preserve Conference Room, 3266 North Sailboat Avenue, Crystal River

May 31, 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM
St. Johns River Water Management District, Palm Bay Service Center, Blue Cypress Meeting Room, 525 Community College Parkway, SE, Palm Bay.

June 22, 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM
Charlotte Harbor Aquatic Preserve Office, 12301 Burnt Store Road, Punta Gorda

July 27, 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM
Rookery Bay Estuarine Research Reserve, Environmental Learning Center, 300 Tower Road, Naples.

Please contact Lacrica Olson for additional information or workshop agenda at 850-488-4033 or olsonl1@doacs.state.fl.us.

Attend the Florida Oyster Reef Restoration Summit

The Nature Conservancy, Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services are hosting a Florida Oyster Reef Restoration Summit at the Fish and Wildlife Research Institute in St. Petersburg Florida during March 14th and 15th.

An objective of the Summit is to establish a vision for Florida's oyster reef future including restoration

goals. Other conference topics will include historical distribution and current status; ecosystems services; and the following reef restoration topics: project planning, permitting and construction, and assessment and evaluation.

A nominal \$25 conference fee has been established to cover the costs of meals and breaks. Please submit your registration information (name, address and e-mail) and conference fee to:

Laura Geselbracht
The Nature Conservancy
2455 E. Sunrise Blvd., Suite 1101
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33304

Please make checks payable to "The Nature Conservancy Florida Oyster Summit."

The Fish and Wildlife Research Institute is located at 100 Eighth Avenue SE, St. Petersburg Florida, telephone 727-896-8626.



Oyster cultch planting started in the 1880s

In 1809, a French inventor won a newspaper prize to create a cheap and effective method to preserve

large amounts of food to feed Napoleon's armies. Allied troops burned his canning factory in 1814, but by 1819 New York canners were packing oysters and during the period 1840-49,

oyster canning became a huge business in Baltimore supplied by oysters from Chesapeake Bay. By the mid-1880s several oyster canneries started in Apalachicola and hard clam canneries in Collier County.

John Ruge, an Apalachicola oyster canner, and other local canners realized the link between oyster reefs and oyster shell and began planting cultch in the late 1880s to rebuild depleted reefs. Ruge's cultch pile was reported to be at least 10 acres in size and 30 feet high.

By 1913, the Florida Legislature realized that replanting oyster cultch required state assistance and the Shell Fish Division of the Florida Department of Agriculture was created to "...encourage, protect, regulate and develop the Shell Fish Industry...." The Division surveyed and leased state lands for oyster and clam production; protected shellfish

beds with armed patrol vessels; licensed harvesters, vessels and processors; inspected canneries; and replanted thousands of barrels of oyster cultch to maintain or create productive oyster reefs.



Ruge Brothers Packing Company Apalachicola, 1895.

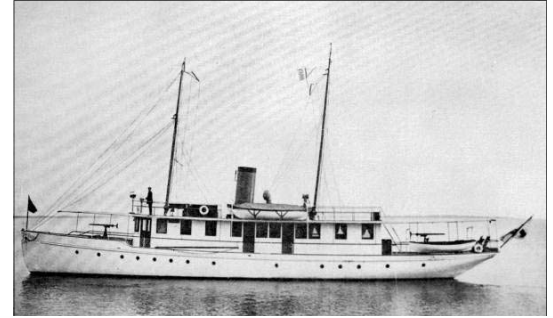
The Florida law that created the Division is remarkably similar to the responsibilities the Division of

Aquaculture has today relative to leasing, planting and management; although, the Shell Fish Division had the means to collect revenue that is a bit surprising by our current standards. The Division issued dealer licenses (\$2.00 for a shell stock dealer and \$5.00 for a shucker), a fee for each license (\$.25), vessel fee (\$.50 per ton), lease fee (\$.50 per acre), and collected a privilege tax of two cents per barrel of oysters and clams in the shell or one cent per gallon of shucked oyster or clams.

Within 18 months of being created, the Shell Fish Division bought and put into service four boats, *Sea Foam*, *Roamer*, *Myerdale* and an unnamed vessel; planted 15,000 barrels of cultch for \$551, and leased 6,059 acres for clam and oyster culture. The *Sea Foam* was a yacht purchased from Tallahasseean William C.

Lewis for \$5,000 and described as a 64-foot, gasoline-powered boat. The *Roamer* was a steam yacht purchased and sailed down from New York. Note that the *Roamer* is pictured with pedestal mounted machine guns fore and aft.

When the Division was created, the Legislature provided an appropriation of \$1,000 and at the end of their first 18 months of operation they had collected receipts of \$19,487 and spent \$19,794. The Division also recorded



that "raw houses and canning plants have used 980,204 bushels of oysters and clams during the past eighteen months that the shell fish law has been in effect." Clearly the shell fish industry was a vigorous enterprise for that day and time.

In today's money the Legislative appropriation to create the Division would be \$20,155, *Sea Foam* purchase price \$100,774, cost to lease an acre of submerged bottom \$10.08, shucker license \$101, and the Division's collected receipts \$392,757.



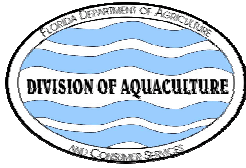
Oyster shuckers outside of C.H. Lind Oyster and Fish House, Apalachicola, 1907.

The Shell Fish Division was with the Department of Agriculture until

about 1932 when it and other state offices were merged into a newly created State Board of Conservation.

Information from the first biennial report of the Shell Fish Division, a Wikipedia canning history, and *Oyster Tins: A Half-Shell Story*. Present value of money provided by Lawrence H. Officer and Samuel H. Williamson, "Purchasing Power of Money in the United States from 1774 to 2005," MeasuringWorth.Com, August 2006. Historical images provided by The Memory Project, Florida State Archives.

Charles H. Bronson
Commissioner of Agriculture



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**Benefiting commercial aquaculture,
Conserving natural resources**

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Non-Native Pet Amnesty Day

March 24, 2007
Crest Lake Park, Clearwater, Florida
1556 Gulf to Bay Blvd (at corner of Gulf to Bay and Glenwood Ave.)
9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m.

Non-Native Pet Amnesty Day 2007 is sponsored by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and Pinellas County Animal Services and will be hosted by the City of Clearwater. People can donate their unwanted non-native pets free of charge with no questions asked. All donated pets will be examined by a licensed veterinarian and if healthy, will try to be placed with willing adopters. The Pinellas County Animal Services Animobile will be on site to provide low cost rabies vaccinations for eligible dogs and cats.



Amnesty Day is a free event and open to the public. Educational exhibits and live animals will be on display and experts will be on hand to answer questions about exotic animals. Come and learn about being a responsible non-native pet owner!

If you are interested in becoming a registered exotic pet adopter, please contact Jenny Novak at 850-926-0128.



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