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SUGGESTED PROTOCOL FOR SAMPLING OYSTER LEASING AREA

Prior to sampling, written permission from the oyster leaseholder to sample the lease must be obtained. In addition, a scientific collecting permit must be obtained from the Department prior to sampling. To apply for a scientific collecting permit, contact the LDWF Marine Fisheries Division at (225) 765-2383.

1. Suggested protocol for oyster lease assessments is as follows:
 - A. Sampling of leases (obtain written permission from the oyster lease holder prior to sampling) for oyster density (via square meter samples), oyster condition, bottom condition, water depth, water temperature, water salinity and observation of oyster reef community organisms. Sampling methods and procedures used should be stated.
 - B. Information and data from sampling should be tabulated, analyzed and presented in tables, charts, and in a written format along with scale maps indicating the oyster leases in relation to the proposal, including location of samples sites, number and size (5mm increments) of both live and dead oysters, along with frequency, oyster size, distribution, mortality rates per inch group, sacks per acre >3 inches and <3 inches and photographs of oyster samples.
 - C. Summary of data results and methods to be used to avoid and/or minimize impacts to oyster reefs should be included.
 - D. Samples should be taken within a 1,500 foot radius of each location where the bucket dredging activities will occur with a well location, within a 2,640 foot **radius** of each location where prop-washing will occur, within a 500 foot **radius** of any flowline or pipeline six inches or less in diameter, within a 1,500 foot **radius** of any flowline or pipeline greater than 6 inches in diameter.
 - E. Access routes to each work site should be identified on scale maps along with water depths for the route. Drafts of all vessels used in the proposal are to be included.
 - F. If permission from the oyster lease holder can not be obtained, we suggest that poling only of the lease be done.
 - G. A signed agreement between the oyster holder and the applicant does not serve as or takes the place of an oyster assessment.

2. Notification to oyster lease holder(s) should include the how, when, and where about the proposed action. It should also include the name and phone number of the contact individual with the applicant. It is suggested that notification letters be sent in such a manner to establish a good faith effort was made to contact the oyster lease holder.
3. You may elect to use the sampling protocol established by the Oyster Lease Damage Evaluation Board. Please contact them for a copy of their protocol at (225) 342-1375 or at the following website www.dnr.state.la.us