**Alternative Oyster Culture: First Steps**

**SITE SELECTION**

Before applying for an Alternative Oyster Culture Permit, you must first obtain a Coastal Use Permit from the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources. For more information, call 800-267-4019 or visit LDNR’s website at [http://www.dnr.louisiana.gov/](http://www.dnr.louisiana.gov/).

Due to significant restrictions on new AOC permits, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) highly recommends that interested persons go through the pre-application process to confirm whether the lease area is available and meets AOC regulations.

Contact the LDWF, with your name and lease number:

- In person at Oyster Lease Section, Suite 422, 2045 Lakeshore Drive, New Orleans, 70122;
- By telephone at 504-284-5277; or
- By email at [MManiscalco@wlf.la.gov](mailto:MManiscalco@wlf.la.gov).

After the Coastal Use Permit process LDWF will provide a standard oyster lease plat showing the lease boundary and the areas within the lease that are available for AOC permitting.

**PERMITTING**

From the LDWF Oyster Lease Section, you must apply (in person) for an Alternative Oyster Culture Permit. Along with the permit application, you must provide:

1. A plat(s) (hard copy and digital file) showing the oyster lease, proposed AOC Permit area, and proposed AOC activities, facilities, and equipment.
2. All other required local, state and federal permits, including:
   - State coastal use permit (as mentioned above).
   - Federal obstruction to navigation section 10 and/or section 9 permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.
   - Clean Water Act section 404 fill permit, also from the Corps.
   - State water quality certification from Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), if necessary.
   - Any other permit or authorization that may be required by a state or federal agency.
3. A cost estimate from a licensed contractor to remove and properly dispose of all equipment, facilities, and other items sought to be permitted.
4. Application fee of $100.

Once an AOC Permit is issued, you must pay the first annual permit fee, which is $2 per acre or fraction of an acre, per year, as well as a surety bond if you are located on a state lease, within 15 days of receiving the permit. If you are located on private property a surety bond is not required.

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**A valid private oyster lease is defined in Louisiana Revised Statutes 56:425.1(E) as in effect and properly recorded as of February 1, 2016.**