

ALLIGATOR ADVISORY COUNCIL

2017-2018

ANNUAL REPORT



Louisiana Alligator
Advisory Council



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INTRODUCTION

Louisiana leads the United States in the production of alligator skins. After rebuilding the population through research, management and law enforcement during the 1960s, the wild harvest from 1972 through 2017 has produced over 1 million wild skins. In 2017, the alligator industry, including the wild harvest, egg collection, and farm raised alligators, has generated almost 100 million in economic benefit to the state of Louisiana.

The wild harvest has averaged approximately 31,000 skins annually, averaging over \$10 million dockside including meat during the past five years. The 2017 wild harvest of 15,052 alligators was valued at over \$3.3 million, which includes the value of the alligator meat. In calendar year 2017, farmers sold 382,039 skins, which averaged 27.30 cm belly width and were valued at over \$70 million, including the value of the alligator meat. Since 1986 the Louisiana alligator ranching program has collected over 10 million eggs and returned over 1.1 million healthy alligators back to the wild.



WASHINGTON D.C. EDUCATION



The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) contracts with Glenn Delaney to stay abreast of any Legislative movement that might be of interest to LDWF, the Fur Advisory Council, or the Alligator Advisory Council. Mr. Delaney works closely with LDWF administration and program managers to address pertinent legislative issues. The funding for the contract is split equally between the Fur Advisory Council and the Alligator Advisory Council's budgets.

Mr. Delaney continues to monitor the legislative efforts of animal rights groups and their advocates on Capitol Hill and to educate and build relationships with key Members of Congress and their staff to support Louisiana's sustainable use wildlife programs.

This year, he has developed a highly constructive relationship with the Louisiana Senators. Senator Cassidy (R-LA), a veteran

of Louisiana fur and alligator issues has been a reliable proponent of Louisiana's efforts to secure funding from the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) for critical research on diseases affecting alligators. Formerly a Member of the Senate Appropriations Committee, Senator Cassidy passed that assignment on to freshman Senator John Kennedy (R-LA) whose staff has been a remarkably quick study on Louisiana's issues and priorities.

Mr. Delaney works particularly closely with key Members and their staff on House and Senate Committees to which anti-trapping and other anti-sustainable use bills are referred. These anti-sustainable use bills, such as the "Refuge From Cruel Trapping Act" (HR 1438) and the "Limiting Inhumane Federal Trapping Act" (HR 1727), appear to have stalled in Committee where no action is anticipated before the 115th Congress expires at the end of this year.

Mr. Delaney coordinates with LDWF's leadership, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA), representatives of the fur industry, and other pro-sustainable use organizations to address the 'mission drift' of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) away from its science-based sustainable use roots and in the direction of broader bans on wildlife trade. Members of this informal coalition, including LDWF administration, began ramping-up their level of activity this year - providing key leadership for a series of CITES inter-sessional meetings - and ultimately in preparation for the 2019 meeting of the Conference of the Parties in Sri Lanka.

CALIFORNIA PENAL CODE 6350

LDWF and the Alligator Advisory Council has contracted with Advocacy and Consulting to facilitate the successful passage of legislation that would eliminate the sunset clause to Penal Code 6350.

California was the only state in the United States that, prior to 2006, prohibited the sale of alligator or crocodile products under an out-dated Penal Code. That code was initially adopted when the Endangered Species Act was passed by the U.S. Congress almost 50 years ago. The State of Louisiana challenged California's ban on the sale of alligator products by providing evidence of the role that sustainable use has played in

the recovery of the American alligator.

The California ban was lifted by legislation that established a sunset clause to allow legal sale of alligator and some crocodile products which has now been extended three times (2006, 2009 and 2014) with help from the International Union for Conservation of Nature, Crocodile Specialist Group (IUCN,CSG), California Retailers Association, Beverly Hills Chamber of Commerce, the Association of Fish and Wildlife agencies representing all 50 state wildlife departments, conservationists and trade representatives from about two dozen countries who also sustainably manage

crocodilians. Mainstream conservation organizations around the world have also recognized the crocodilian trade for more than four decades as proactively addressing research, management, enforcement, compliance, trade monitoring and conservation education.

Advocacy and Consulting has worked diligently towards this goal since the contract began on April 1, 2018.

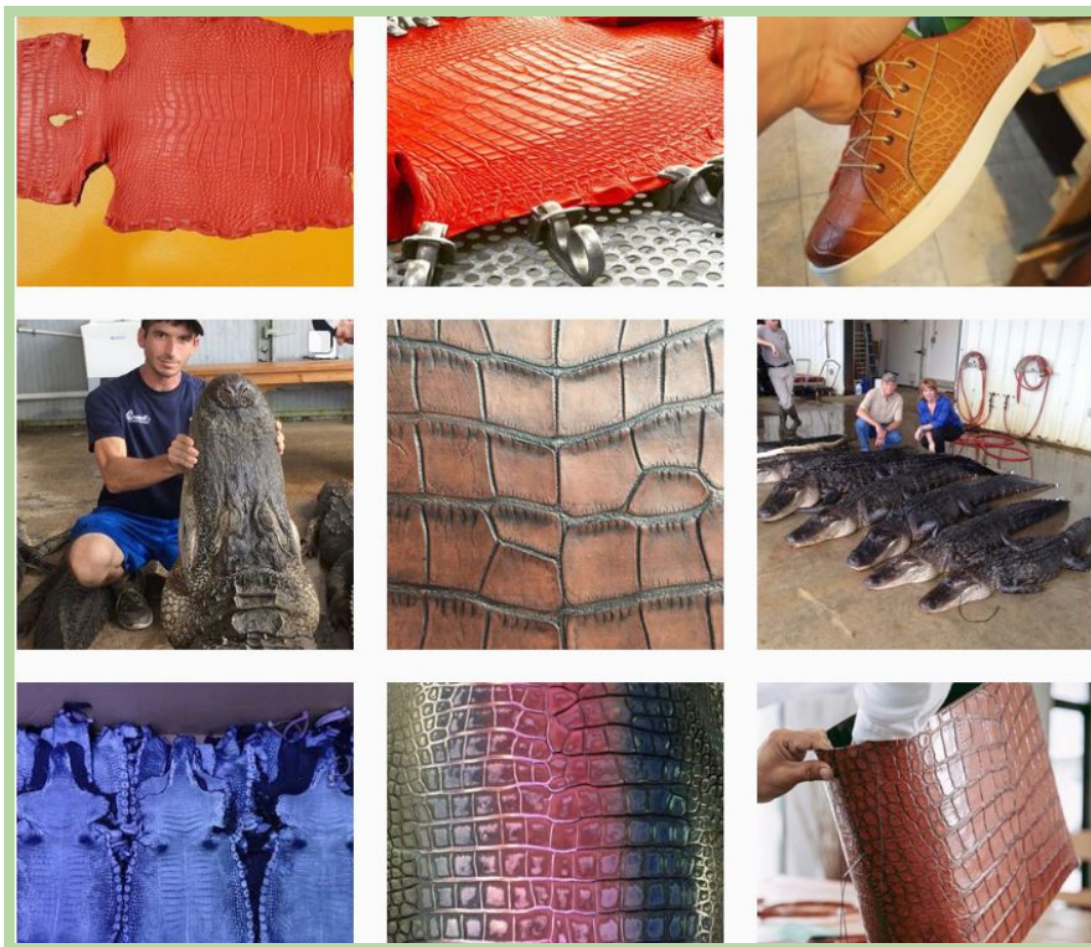
ALLIGATOR MARKETING & TECHNICAL REPRESENTATION



Crocodile Specialist Group (CSG) Steering Committee Meeting (May 2018)

The Alligator Advisory Council and LDWF contracted with Christy Plott of Monarch Marketing to provide technical representation at national and international meetings regarding alligator and crocodile management, regulation, enforcement and trades as well as to develop domestic marketing for Louisiana alligator hides.

Ms. Plott worked to establish alliances within the CSG, the IUCN, CITES. Ms. Plott attended the 25th Crocodile Specialist Group Working Meeting which was held from May 5-10, 2018 in Santa Fe, Argentina. There were over 250 CSG members in attendance from around the world. The format was mostly scientific lectures and research presentations with opportunities for breakout sessions and networking throughout the day and into the evenings. It is notable that the CSG is the only IUCN Specialist Group with significant industry participation. The industry and scientific



Louisiana Alligators
Instagram

community work harmoniously to encourage sustainable use of crocodilians.

One of the most important concerns brought up at the CSG meeting was related to the vertical integration of the luxury brands such as Hermes and Kering in the market and how that would affect sustainability. The Industry Committee held a breakout session to discuss other issues related to the crocodilian market and sustainability. These topics included the categorization of crocodilians in the international market, the oversupply of crocodilian skins currently in the global market, grading standards and the barriers they present to smaller farms, and sustainable practices in regards to both farmed and wild alligator skins.

Christy Plott was accepted as an observer to the 2018 CITES Animals Committee Meeting which was held from July 18-21, 2018 in Geneva, Switzerland. She reviewed the list of non-governmental organization members who would attend the Animals Committee meeting as well as the English translation of the ranching protocol of the

Moreletti Crocodile in preparation for this CITES meeting. She met with LDWF administrators to discuss current issues such as the formation of the International Crocodile Farmers Association (ICFA).

Ms. Plott coordinated between industry members to investigate possible solutions to the wild alligator market challenges, issues related to CITES permitting, and issues related to hide inspections during wild season. She met Alligator Advisory Council members and Louisiana Landowners Association members to discuss long term strategies for improving conditions and short term strategies for stabilizing prices.

Ms. Plott has begun planning an Alligator Leather Symposium to be held during the spring of 2019. She met with industry contacts, such as the Mendal brothers of Pan American Leathers, to garner support for this project.

Ms. Plott began updating the Marsh to Market booklets with a new layout and with new photography. She submitted a rough draft of these ideas to LDWF admin-

istration. These books will be distributed to designers who would like to know more about alligators.

Monarch Marketing pitched sustainability articles and requested that tanneries, designers, and others in the industry work to positively promote wild alligator. Ms. Plott gave an interview to Leather International Magazine, and the resulting article, published in the June/July 2018 issue, showcased the wild alligator.

Monarch Marketing created social media accounts through Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to promote Louisiana alligator. The target audiences for this marketing tool is the general public, tanners, and manufacturers. Ms. Plott used Constant Contact to create a data base of industry contacts. This contact list will continue to grow and will be used to send out industry information and newsletters during the upcoming fiscal year.

LSU DEPARTMENT OF TEXTILES

Dr. Liu of the LSU Department of Textile, Apparel Design and Merchandising completed a two-year contract to promote manufacturing with lower grade alligator skins. Dr. Liu hosted workshops, engaged in public outreach, explored new markets, and published conference papers related to alligator leather use in textiles and apparel. This contract was completed in February 2018.

Dr. Liu participated in outreach events through LSU and the Beijing Institute of Fashion and Technology in China to educate the public on alligator leather. She maintained an American Alligator Design Studio at both institutions. She displayed creative designs using Louisiana produced alligator skins at the LSU Human Ecology Building and attended the LSU President's 6th grade day that reached 1,718 middle school students. She put alligator fashion garments and accessories on display during the LSU College of Agriculture career day and hosted a cultural exhibition and display for those garments at the LSU Union Gallery.

Dr. Liu hosted two seminars to promote Louisiana produced alligator skins in Beijing, China. A total of 35 senior students

and graduate students participated. She also worked with local designers through collaboration with a non-profit social enterprise to promote a market for alligator leather and products. Designer Damien Mitchell specifically focused on leather goods design and development and explored working with donated alligator leather. Dr. Liu also worked with a graduate student, Sukyung Seo, in regards to fashion merchandising.

Dr. Liu explored markets in China, the United States, and via the internet. She visited the Guangdong Alligator Whole Market to examine the consumer market for alligator leather products in China. She visited the Haining Leather City, the largest leather wholesale market in the world to explore the global market. She examined the supply chain of alligator skins in the US and global markets to identify the bottleneck of moving alligators skins from marsh to market and completed an initial report on this research. She explored E-commerce through *Alibaba.com* and visited the headquarters in Hangzhou, China to investigate regulations or policies for selling American alligators skins through *Alibaba.com*. She also enrolled in *Esty.com* through the LSU foundation to test selling student design-

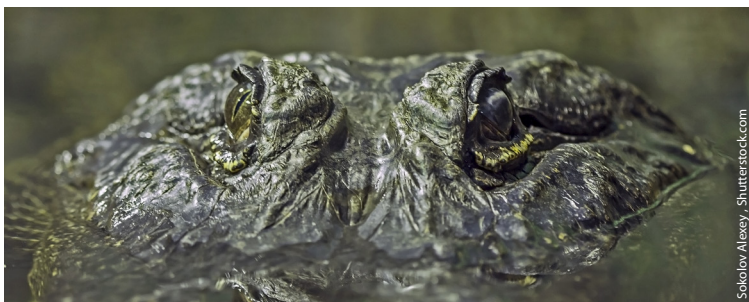


ers' created alligator leather products as market research in profitability.

Dr. Liu published three conference papers related to alligator leather and markets. One paper explored using alligator leather as a branded ingredient in products, another paper considered branding alligator leather as a whole, and a third paper looked at young consumers and the idea of fast fashion as related to alligator leather.

2017-2018 EXPENDITURES

The Alligator Advisory Council operates within the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and is responsible for reviewing and approving recommended marketing, research, and educational programs to be funded from the Louisiana Alligator Resource Fund to ensure that any monies from the funds are expended for the specific goals of the council.



ALLIGATOR RESOURCE FUNDS	
Budgeted	\$355,563.00
Salaries	\$32,615.03
Related Benefits	\$14,860.03
Travel	\$381.00
Operating Services	\$1,999.90
Supplies	\$1,566.04
Professional Services	\$108,305.41
Inter-Agency Transfer	\$1,055.90
Alligator Resource Funds Expended	\$160,783.31
Remaining	\$194,779.69

LOUISIANA ALLIGATOR ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS

LANDOWNER REPRESENTATIVES

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