



Louisiana Fisheries

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L.W.F.C. Adopts Notice of Intent to Relax Regulations on Taking Silver and Bighead Carp

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The Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission, in an initial step to relax regulations on the recreational harvest of silver and bighead carp, today approved a 120-day comment period for public input on the subject.

The notice of intent adopted would allow fishermen to take silver and bighead carp using dip nets, spears and snagging methods. Additionally, since silver carp can jump several feet out of the water and into boats, fishermen would be able to use their boats as a legal catching method.

These non-native species were introduced into the United States in the 1970s to help manage aquaculture ponds and wastewater lagoons. They quickly escaped into the wild and eventually descended into Louisiana waters from the north in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Silver and bighead carp are commonly found in Louisiana in the Mississippi, Red and Ouachita rivers and Atchafalaya Basin.

Included in LDWF's management plan for these carp are relaxing the regulations on fishing for these nuisance fish and creating a demand for the white, delicious meat they possess.

Because silver and bighead carp feed on plankton, they are not susceptible to traditional angling methods and pose a threat to the local Louisiana freshwater fishery by out competing local fish for food. Both of these carp species primarily feed on plankton, which is also the main diet for shad, bigmouth buffalo and paddlefish. Plankton is also the primary food of the larval stages of catfish, bass and other freshwater species.

On Tuesday, Jan. 12, LDWF along with Chef Philippe Parola will unveil a new marketing plan that will include a name change from silver and bighead carp to "Silverfin". At the event, some local chefs will be preparing Silverfin and LDWF will announce the rollout of Silverfin products being distributed by Rouses Super Market.

Public comment on this NOI can be submitted to Gary Tilyou, Administrator, Inland Fisheries Division, Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, PO Box 98000, Baton Rouge, LA 70898-9000 by March 4.

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