Order No. EO 20-22

Temporary Suspension of Commercial and Recreational Wild Oyster Harvest from the Apalachicola Bay

The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission of the State of Florida, acting under the authority of Article IV, Section 9, of the Florida Constitution, and acting through its Executive Director under Paragraph 22 of the Delegations of Authority, and due to the need to conserve oyster resources that have been depleted, hereby suspends commercial and recreational harvest of wild oysters (Crassostrea virginica) from Apalachicola Bay, as defined in 68B-27, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), for the period of August 1, 2020 – December 31, 2020. Such actions are only authorized as follows:

1. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in 68B-27, F.A.C., no person may harvest a wild oyster from Apalachicola Bay or possess a wild-harvested oyster in or on the waters of Apalachicola Bay.

2. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in 68B-27, F.A.C., the possession of tongs in or on Apalachicola Bay is prohibited. For the purposes of this order, “tongs” are defined as a hand-operated instrument used for gathering oysters consisting of a pair of long-handled rakes with inward facing teeth.

3. The provisions of this order do not apply to the authorized harvest of oysters from submerged lands leased for shellfish culture by the State of Florida within Apalachicola Bay.

4. This order shall take effect at 12:01 a.m. on August 1, 2020, and shall expire at 11:59 p.m. on December 31, 2020, unless rescinded at a sooner date.

Given under my hand and seal of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission on this 29th day of July, 2020.

[Signature]
Eric Sutton
Executive Director

Attest
Agency Clerk

/s/ Quilla Miralia
Approved as to form and legal sufficiency