

# **LTAHA Newsletter**

On May 3, 2022, the Louisiana Fur Advisory Council (FAC) met in a regular meeting to discuss many items including the council's 2022-2023 budget. Action was taken on several items, (please see the FAC agenda and minutes at louisianafur.com) including special request by LTAHA President and Senate Designee to Council, Tony Howard, to send representatives to the annual Fur Takers of America (FTA) Rendezvous in Kansas and National Trappers Association (NTA) Convention in Lima, Ohio. Travel was approved for both events and extra travel was allowed for the NTA for a booth to be set up.

State fur biologist, Jennifer Manual, and Tony Howard attended the FTA Rendezvous on June 16-18 as spectators. There was not a booth set up at the FTA Rendezvous this year as the representatives were gathering information about education. The event had lighter attendance than expect due to the Pennsylvania Trappers Association Convention taking place on the same weekend and the fact that Kansas was under a heat wave at the time. Jennifer and Tony both attended several meetings including keynote speakers and round table discussions about the industry and our path forward.

Kansas State Fur Biologist, Matt Peek, hosted a meeting during which Tony stated that this was one of the best meetings he had attended. Matt shared Kansas state data and also discussed ways in which trappers can use science to our advantage. Matt also passed out pocket size "Key Messages for Trappers" cards. They are the size of small que cards folded in half to the size of a business card. The card gives "quick tips on how to communicate the facts and benefits of modern regulated trapping".

Dave Eckels and Dave Hasting together hosted an open round table discussion about talking with the public. Proficient and fact-based public speaking has never been more important than at the present time. At some point, almost all trappers are faced with talking to someone who doesn't understand what we do. Learn some pointers to help yourself speak proficiently to promote the use of trapping as a wildlife management tool.

The time is now for us to come out of the shadows and explain to the general public the humane and ethical approach we take to animal management and harvest.

## **Tips for Communicating Effectively**

1. Be professional and speak in a conversational tone, even if you disagree on certain topics.
2. Be respectful and acknowledge that there are people who have other points of view.
3. Show that you care about wildlife.

## **Key Messages**

The following messages are effective and useful in communicating the role of trapping in the modern society.

1. Regulated trapping does not cause wildlife to become threatened or endangered. Species for which trapping is allowed are abundant in their respective habitats.
2. Trapping is managed through scientifically based regulations that are enforced by Wildlife agents.
3. Each state's Game Commission continually reviews and develops rules, regulations, education programs and capture methods that consider animal welfare.
4. Regulated trapping provides many benefits to society, including (in certain situations): Reducing wildlife damage to crops and property, threats to human health and safety, spread of harmful diseases.
5. Trapping is an effective means of harvesting, managing, and studying these species.

When engaging with the general public on social media, it is important to ensure that we are representing the industry as a managed and controlled industry with guide-lines and rules. We need to make sure that any pictures shared will represent the industry in a good light. Most importantly we need to talk openly about the industry and stop hiding what we do. Jennifer made a statement worth repeating many times over, "It happens every day and it needs to be talked about so it can be understood."

Here are a few statements Tony found worth sharing to help us better communicate with the public.

- "Know your facts". Don't even try to lie your way through a conversation. If you don't know something, don't try to make it up as you go. Only share facts.
- "I don't know" is not a good response. "Let me research it a little and get back to you" is a better reply. Knowing the answer to every question is impossible, but representing yourself and the industry as caring and willing to seek knowledge about your skill set goes a long way when speaking with others.

The FTA was not as well attended as was hoped for, as previously stated, however there was good information which was gained and brought back for the upcoming educational workshops this year. Several connections were made including one with the incoming FTA President Jason Wisniewski. Tony Howard and Jason spoke at length at the FTA and have since exchanged a couple of phone calls. Tony is very optimistic that Jason brings a modern plan to the FTA which will expand its presence outside the midwestern states a little more.

For more information on the FTA please visit their web site. <https://www.furtakersofamerica.com/join.html>

Join Fur Takers of America and help preserve the future of trapping.

## **Perry Furs, Since 1960**

**We are a large furrier in central Louisiana with three generation of fur dealers. You can call and schedule an appointment to drop off your fur at our plant or meet our buyer at one of our "Fur Stop" around the state. For route information please contact Danny Perry at 318- 481-2780 or Rory Perry at 318-794-6640. You can also find us on the web at [www.perryfurs.net](http://www.perryfurs.net). We currently have orders for nutria, beaver, otter and bob cat. We will purchase all species of fur and beaver castor at market price. We are looking forward to trading with you this season.**

<b>Perry Furs INC</b>	
<b>946 West River Rd</b>	<b>318-481-2780</b>
<b>Oakdale LA 71463</b>	<b>3138-794-6640</b>

### **National Trappers Association**

On Tuesday, July 26 2022, Justin Ebarb and Tony Howard attended the National Trappers Association's (NTA) Board of Directors Meeting. First time attendees Justin and Tony had to start the day with a New Director Orientation presentation by Dave and Karen Linkhart. The orientation covered meeting agenda, a refresher in Roberts Rules of Order (which were followed to the T) and progression of discussions during the meeting. The orientation was helpful and kept our LTAHA Representatives from being in the dark about how the meeting would progress. Justin recalled that the meeting was called to order at 9:05 am and began with opening ceremonies, and business began right after. Tony and Justin were both impressed with the pace of the meeting and the professionalism with which it was run. Legal counsel and a 40+ year parliamentarian was present at all

times while the meeting was in session. Just as LTAHA meetings run long so did the NTA. On day one the meeting was suspended at 5 p.m. and began at 9 a.m. the following morning. Both Justin and Tony expected the meeting to wrap up around noon, however the 2022 NTA Board of Directors' meeting was adjourned at 4:45 p.m. on Wednesday, July 27. Tony reported that the overwhelming theme he feels is, "It is time to stand up and fight." No more sitting on the sideline thinking if we are "out of sight out of mind" it will pass.

While the meeting was ongoing, Justin and Tony noted that there were many sidebar discussions taking place, with many members texting information out to their colleagues as it was being presented. Justin and Tony were both sending out information as well, to board members and LDWF members, particularly regarding concerning legislative actions dealing with the Pitman-Robertson funds. Justin and Tony had a particular interest in North Carolina's presentation on the red wolf issue, as we have been following the red wolf reintroduction in our own state. Justin and Tony spent several hours at the convention speaking with the North Carolina representatives at their booth getting more details on the problems they are facing with the reintroductions. Clint Johnson has been working on researching our own issues with the red wolf reintroduction. He has spent many hours combing the internet for research pertinent to our situation and has turned up some articles on current research in southwest Louisiana.

While at lunch on Tuesday, Tony was able to speak with the Idaho Trappers Association President Mr. Rusty Kramer. Tony questioned how Idaho, a state with roughly 2,000 licensed trappers, is able to maintain an 800-member average. Rusty explained the number one reason is communication. They communicate with their membership through newsletters like this one, Facebook, and mass emails. Rusty stated that the sole purpose of the association is to represent the trappers of our states and keep them informed. So communication is the key, as he stated over and over. It was very informative listening to and learning from other association representatives about their states and how their membership is reached. Rusty also remarked that it is important to have our membership working with us toward the common goals, whether it is education, trapping laws, red wolf issues, or research. Communication with purpose is the goal of the LTAHA current administration.

Justin and Tony both relayed the importance of having a voice at the table and representation at the NTA each year. Tony will be making a proposal to the LTAHA Board of Directors about the importance of having three LTAHA members present at the NTA board meeting each year. Tony and Justin discussed each item to be voted on before the single vote was cast by LTAHA President Tony Howard. Tony feels that with three members discussing each item to be voted on, there would always be at least a 2/3 vote on the items and the LTAHA would be fully represented by the single vote we are allowed at this time.

After the meeting adjourned for 2022, Justin and Tony hurried over to the fairgrounds where they met Clint Johnson, Charles Sturgis, and Chad Gremillion to set up the LTAHA booth. As luck would have it there was another vendor that did not show up, and we were given an extra booth space to set up. We had a total of three tables and a pile of comfortable chairs that our many guests could relax in while visiting our booth. With the booth set up for the opening day, Tony and Justin had to return to the Host Hotel for the 7 p.m. Furbearers Unlimited (FBU) meeting. After the FBU meeting Justin and Tony stayed over and got clarification on what the FBU actually is. Furbearers Unlimited is the 501(c)(3) donation arm of the NTA. This is where all the donations go and all the education money comes from. Understanding this helped clear up a lot of questions.

On Thursday the NTA conventions doors opened at 9 a.m. The LTAHA booth was loaded with people by 10 a.m. Joseph Wortham, LTAHA member working in the neighboring state of Kentucky, showed up that afternoon and spent the rest of the week and weekend with us working the booth. The LTAHA would like to give a special thanks to Joseph for his help and support of the association. Because of members like him, our association is growing. Other special guests were the Ohio State Game and Fish group who spent a very long time at our booth going over education ideas and goals with LTAHA representatives. They were very impressed with the

trap box display being built by Tony Howard through funding provided by the Fur Advisory Council, with donated traps from Steve Hughes, Mark Conner of Arkansas Trappers Association, Clint Johnson and Tony Howard. The trap box is a heavy plastic gun box with all the padding removed. Sixty-five-pound magnets have been bolted in place to hold a trap of every size, number 1-5 coil spring. There is a separate box for long springs, number 1-5 and another box for body grip traps. The boxes will sit on collapsible easels which will be stored in the lids of the boxes when not in use. The idea is to have standard equipment at the education events; thus, everyone will be teaching using the same equipment, removing the need for instructors to bring extra equipment for show and tell.

NTA memberships are important to the future of the trapping industry. There are many issues which the NTA is fighting for around the country in many states currently. New Mexico residents has lost the right to trap on any government land unless they are Indigenous Americans who hold a tribal card. Oregon is attempting to ban all trapping, period. North Carolina has lost trapping in five counties due to the re-introduction efforts of the red wolf. There are so many items coming up that it is overwhelming. The NTA has monitors, alerts programs, legal counsel, lobbyists and watch dog groups which the LTAHA does not have. There is strength in numbers, and although we know it is a lot to ask members to support all that they do in these trying times, the LTAHA officers feel that it is important to support the NTA. We ask that every member join the NTA along with the LTAHA. Please go to: <https://www.nationaltrappers.com/joinnta.html> and join today. Common goals make common sense.

As mentioned earlier, the LTAHA was made aware of the red wolf issue while at the NTA. Vice President Clint Johnson researched the issue and found information which helped make clear the impact of this program. Chad Gremillion also helped research the issue when called up on to do so, leading to treasure troves of research and funding locations. Joseph Wortham brought it to the officers' attention that the Louisiana Cattleman's Association stood to lose much in the way of land in the area of re-introduction and may need to be alerted to the potential studies. After speaking with the Louisiana Cattleman's Association (LCA), Tony Howard offered the LTAHA support in any way we can help and the LCA is taking the lead on this issue at this time.

Please go to: [Louisiana Cattlemen's Association \(labeef.org\)](http://labeef.org) and join to help support the fight.

### **LTAHA Membership**

As always, remember to keep your membership current and up to date. Your support of the LTAHA is very important to the survival of our industry. The officers and board are asking every member to make an effort to sign up one new member before the end of the 2022. Help us reach our goal for the year. If you did not receive a membership card with this newsletter, this means your membership has expired. Please make every effort to re-enroll.

### **Membership Application Louisiana Trappers & Alligator Hunters**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

New Membership \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ \$20 - Primary Membership (one year)

\_\_\_\_\_ \$34 - Primary Membership w/Trappers Post magazine

\_\_\_\_\_ \$300 - Lifetime Membership w/TP magazine Mail

#### **Return to the:**

**LTAHA membership**

**251 Sandy Lane**

**Marksville LA, 71351**

**visit us on line at**

**or LTAHA.com for**

**PayPal payment**



## **Fall Rendezvous**

The LTAHA is proud to present an excellent line-up of demos with people from across the country including Cletis Richards from Missouri with Appleroads Baits and NTA President John Daniels. There will be demos for kids, and you're not going to want to miss the round table and meal Friday night! Come hang out and have a good time with us. If you are new to the association or want to learn about us, this is a great opportunity to meet and talk with the board and officers.

Friday Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>

- 6 pm Meet and Greet
- Multi State Business Discussions
- 7pm Evening Meal Fried Fish Dinner \$12
- Round Table Discussion into the Night

Saturday Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>

- 8:15am Jeff Aguillard- Mink trapping
- 9:15am Gary Ray – Survival/Fire
- 10am Troy McKnight- Alligator skinning
- 11am Danny Perry/ Perry Furs- Louisiana Fur/Nutria
- 11:30 Cam Mire- Kids Demo
- 12pm Cletis Richards with AppleRoad Lures-predator
- 1pm John Daniels /NTA President- Water Trapping-multispecies
- 1:30 Wesley-Kids Demo
- 2pm LSU Veterinarian Dr. Fabio Del Piero-Necropsy
- 3pm Aphis – Hog Trapping and Thermal Shooting
- Auction to Follow End of Demos

## **Local Hotels**

### **Hampton Inn & Suites Alexandria**

6124 W Calhoun Dr, Alexandria, LA 71303•(318) 445-4449

### **Holiday Inn Alexandria - Downtown, an IHG Hotel**

701 4th St, Alexandria, LA 71301•(318) 541-8333

### **Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott Alexandria**

2830 S MacArthur Dr, Alexandria, LA 71301•(318) 449-9000

### **The Hotel Bentley of Alexandria**

200 Desoto St, Alexandria, LA 71301•(318) 442-2226

### **Americas Best Value Inn**

1146 MacArthur Dr, Alexandria, LA 71303•(318) 443-1841

### **La Quinta Inn & Suites by Wyndham Alexandria Airport**

6116 W Calhoun Dr, Alexandria, LA 71303•(318) 442-3700

## **LTAHA Fall 2022 Survey**

As mentioned previously, the LTAHA was present at the 2022 NTA in Lima, Ohio. We were able to gather a wealth of information and made contacts with other state associations. We found that the goals of LTAHA are the same goals shared by many other state associations, with education being a top concern for all. Another area of shared concern was the lack of modern research on furbearing animals. To help the association move forward with the goal of modernizing our furbearer research and data, we are asking for your input with the questions below.

Every paying member of the association has the opportunity to make their voice heard regarding this important topic. Please give your careful consideration to these questions as we work to improve trapping opportunities in the state through better and more complete data.

As a member of the LTAHA, would you be in favor of the association funding research projects?

- Yes
- No

Should the LTAHA get involved with research projects in and around Louisiana on furbearers (i.e., nest predators, coyote, bobcat, otter, etc.)?

- Yes
- No

Would you like to be involved in assisting the LTAHA with research topics?

- Yes
- No, thank you for the consideration.

If yes, Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this survey to:

**LTAHA Secretary**

**251 Sandy Lane**

**Marksville, LA 71351**

Comments:





## Presidents Report

This has been a busy year attempting to regain momentum after the “pan-demonic”. We hit the ground running last December and have not stopped long enough to catch our breaths. After our spring convention in April, I attended the FTA in Kansas, followed by the NTA in Ohio, where I learned of many new items which needed our full attention. The red wolf reintroduction project is probably the most important issue we are focusing on right now. While at the NTA, I met members of the North Carolina Trappers Association and learned that they have already lost trapping in five counties because of the red wolf reintroduction. With their information, our own Vice President, Clint Johnson, was able to research and find a recently published article on the reintroduction efforts taking place right here in southwest Louisiana. Reading the article, we learned that the researchers are attempting to bring back a breeding population of wolves that have been extinct since 1981. Unlike the grey and timber wolf, the red wolf bred itself into extinction by breeding with coyotes and coy dogs. Clint found a second article which claims the researchers have found the missing link on Galveston Island in Texas. As often seems to be the case nowadays, we have to follow the money and there is plenty being spent attempting to research the red wolf in Louisiana. Through public records search we were able to find that \$476,000 of federal tax money was allocated to the Louisiana red wolf research program last year alone, and \$23,000 of private donations were also used. Because of the swift thinking of member, Joseph Wortham, we began talking with the Cattlemen’s Associations of Louisiana and Texas to bring them up to speed on our research. Mr. Reggie Lucas, President of the Louisiana Cattlemen’s Association has undertaken efforts to find out why reintroduction efforts are being made for an animal that bred itself out of existence.

Over three years ago, I began efforts to change the wording of the of the “coyote permit” which allows trappers to take live market coyotes out of season. The current wording states that you have to use 1 ½ rubber jaw trap, so any live market trapper or even a Nuisance Wildlife Control Operator (NWCO) who has coyote traps set on March 31<sup>st</sup> and still intends to coyote trap, has to change out all traps to Victor 1 ½ rubber jaw traps or relaxing lock snares. Having worked with the education program now for several years and reading the Best Management Practices (BMP’s), teaching the BMP’s and really digging into the research that went into developing them, it became apparent that we should be following them with the coyote permit. Many live market trappers complain that the smaller sized traps result in toe catches and do more damage to a coyote’s foot, whereas the larger sized coyote traps, even un-padded, catch above the pad and cause less stress on the animal. Armed with this knowledge and the research of the BMP’s, I began attempting to have the wording changed. I started through the FAC and presented my request to Jennifer Manual, our state fur biologist. Jennifer referred her finding to the Coyote Permit program manager, Melisa Collins. Through much discussion back and forth as the wheels of the state agency go around, the proposal is moving up the chain of command toward the Secretary’s desk and on to the commission for final approval. This will be a very small victory with huge benefit for the industry. I hope this new wording will be in print by the end of trapping season 2023.

While at the NTA, I received some up-lifting news from fellow FAC member and state fur buyer Danny Perry of Perry Furs. Danny called with news that another overseas buyer had contacted him looking for fur specific to Louisiana and in good numbers (beaver and nutria). Danny is talking about opening some of his old routes to start picking fur up in larger quantities around the state. There are many reasons for the new interest in Louisiana fur, the LTAHA is hopeful that we will see increased prices. I have been working through the FAC and LDWF with Danny Perry to develop some intense, real time, demo videos on nutria skinning in a boat. Having the ability to skin nutria in the boat could increase the value by three or more dollars each. I also have a desire to make other videos for Louisiana-specific species such as alligator. At this time with fuel prices so high and fur markets so low, every catch is going to count. The association has proven that we can educate trappers on the easy part, catching. I feel we need to now work diligently to teach what to do after the catch. If we can

show simple and time saving tips to common everyday trappers, I feel we can get a much better-quality product into the market and more buyers will look to Louisiana fur again. Quality product always sells.

The alligator market is still depressed with only interest in meat or trophy hides by lottery hunters. Over the past few years both Louisiana tanneries have moved their operations out-of-state. RTL moved all its operation back to France, and American Tanning had already circled their wagons back up in Georgia a few years back. Tanning prices are going up year by year, and there seems to be no end in sight. I am still pushing hard for a new, modern video showing the proper way to remove an alligator hide for market. So when the market comes, and it will come back, we can have experienced skinners-- or at least have a video ready to deploy before season opens. Again, it is my belief that quality always sells.

We are heading into the 2022-2023 education season for the LTAHA. Last year was over the top, and we reached a lot of folks. We held five one-day and three three-day events around the state from December 2021 through March 2022. We are always looking for instructors who can teach the basics of trapping by the Best Management Practices manual or BMP's. We are not trying to make experts; however, I have heard time and time again by older trappers coming to the classes how they are wowed by the amount of information we share. We have led more beginner trappers to their first success over the past five years than at any time in history with the education program. For comparison, the last three-day work shop we hosted for 2022, we took over 80 animals in two checks. The students' average age is approximately 34 years old. Many family units are attending these events, and our numbers are still growing as shown by the flyer in this newsletter. The numbers tell the story we have been pushing for through our joint venture with LDWF for the past five years now. It takes a lot of hard work and dedication of many people to make this a successful program and everyone wants to be on the winning team, join ours and watch the program grow larger each year.

Last, I want to ask everyone to get one friend to join the LTAHA this year before December. Let's push our membership higher. Why are numbers important you ask? As expressed at the NTA in Lima, Justin and I learned that the first question asked by a politician is, "How many members do you have?" If they are going to stick their neck out, they are going to want to do it for big numbers.