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Kathy Case got on the board with a 48.6-pound amberjack, also known as “reef donkeys,” caught aboard the 100 Proof with Capt. Allen Staples on Oct.12. Wishing her well is Miss Destin 2026 Kaylynn Hayles. Louisiana closed its recreational amberjack fishing season following an emergency declaration to prevent overfishing. TINA HARBUCK/THE DESTIN LOG

Emergency declaration ends ‘reef donkey’ fishing season

Greg Hilburn
Shreveport Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Secretary Tyler Bosworth has issued an emergency declaration to close the recreational amberjack season in state Gulf of America waters immediately.

Bosworth’s emergency declaration closing the season Oct. 14 comes after the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration determined the annual amount of fish allowed to be harvested has been met in federal Gulf of America

waters.

The federal season will remain closed until the start of the regularly scheduled 2027 season, currently set to begin Sept. 1, 2027.

“Compatible season regulations in state waters are preferable to provide effective rules and efficient enforcement for the fisheries and to prevent long-term overfishing of the species,” the agency said in a press release.

Commercial amberjack season typically spans from Jan. 1 through May 31 or until the total weight limit is met, which this year didn’t occur until Aug. 8.

Louisiana is considered a prime des-

tinuation for amberjack fishing with its deep water oil and gas platforms and artificial reefs with key launching hubs like Venice, Grand Isle, Port Fourchon and Cocodrie.

Amberjacks are known as “reef donkeys” and often reach more than 100 pounds.

The amberjack emergency comes as Louisiana prepares to begin its annual six-week closure of southern flounder season on Oct. 15 to allow that species to spawn and repopulate.

Greg Hilburn covers state politics for the USA TODAY Network of Louisiana. Follow him on Twitter @GregHilburn1.

‘I might have an opinion’

Landry could weigh in on final university president decisions

Greg Hilburn
Shreveport Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

Louisiana Gov. Jeff Landry said he won’t intervene in the initial search process for a new Louisiana Tech University president and didn’t do so for the new Southern University System president, but he could weigh on a final decision.

Landry has elevated the governor’s power to control Louisiana’s higher education boards through a recent law that allows him not only to appoint members to those boards, but also to select the chairs of those boards.

He also was active this year in LSU’s recruitment of Lane Kiffin to lead the LSU football team and the firing of previous LSU Athletic Director Scott Woodward.

But Landry said he wants the initial vetting of candidates to come from the boards, search committees and stakeholders.

In an interview with USA Today Network, Landry said, “I don’t want to force feed any person. I want to hear from the stakeholders.”

Landry said he spoke to northern Louisiana legislators specifically about the Tech job while the governor was in Ruston Oct 12.

“I told the delegation to find the best person to handle the job,” Landry said.

But the governor didn’t rule out exerting his influence on the final say.

See LANDRY, Page 2A

First frost in Louisiana expected in November

Presley Bo Tyler
Shreveport Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

Temperatures in Louisiana will finally begin to cool down at the end of the week after a warm start to fall, but when will it get cold enough for the first frost?

The terms “frost” and “freeze” are often used interchangeably, but frost refers to when temperatures reach at or near freezing, turning morning dew into a solid, icy form.

Freezes occur when the air temperature reaches at or below 32 degrees, but frosts may occur when temperatures are above 32 degrees.

When can Louisiana expect its first frost?

The Deep South likely won’t see its first frosts until November, according

See FROST, Page 2A

Actor Mitte called LA home before moving

Presley Bo Tyler
Shreveport Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

American actor Roy Frank “RJ” Mitte III died Monday, Oct. 12 at 1:32 p.m. in his home in Brownsville, Texas. He was 34.

A spokesperson for Mitte confirmed that Mitte died by suicide, though a medical examiner will determine his official cause of death following an autopsy, People Magazine reported.

Mitte is best known for his role as Walter “Flynn” White Jr. on the critically acclaimed series “Breaking Bad.” Mitte was also known for his philanthropy with The Mitte Foundation and advocating for disability rights and awareness.

Mitte was diagnosed with cerebral palsy at three years old. He drew from his own experience with cerebral palsy



Actor RJ Mitte was born on Aug. 21, 1992. Growing up, he spent his time on his grandparents’ ranch in Texas and in Louisiana. Mitte died Oct. 12. MARIO ANZUONI/REUTERS

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