

Shrimp Advisory Panel Summary
 Gulf Council Office
 Tampa, FL
 February 19, 2015
 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Members Present:

Harley Londrie, Chair
 Steve Bosarge, Vice-chair
 Kim Chauvin
 Julius Collins
 Glenn Delaney
 Gary Graham
 Dennis Henderson
 Harris Lasseigne
 Alan Matherne
 Thomas Schultz, Jr.
 John Williams

Council Member

Corky Perret

NMFS-SERO Staff

Susan Gerhart
 Rick Hart
 Jim Nance
 Steve Branstetter

Others present

Sal Versaggi
 Ben Blount

Council Staff

Karen Hoak
 Morgan Kilgour
 Emily Muehlstein

The Shrimp Advisory Panels met on February 19, 2014 at the Gulf Council office in Tampa, Florida. The agenda was adopted with two items added under other business: an update on the ELB program and an overview of the AP application process. The agenda was further modified to discuss agenda item VIII- Review of the Shrimp Permit Moratorium Document (Shrimp Amendment 17) after agenda item III- Plan of work. The minutes from the March 5, 2014 meeting were approved.

NMFS Staff provided a presentation on the current scoping document for Shrimp Amendment 17. The Council has three options to consider, to let the permit moratorium expire (no action), to extend the moratorium, or to make the moratorium permit thereby creating a limited access system. The moratorium will expire in October, 2016. Several items pertinent to the Council's three options were also discussed. The Council may want to address: qualifications to limit the number of permits, apply for a new permit, or maintain a permit; a permit pool to retain a specific number of permits; and royal red shrimp endorsement criteria. The AP was also provided with a summary of the Shrimp Permit Moratorium Working Group that had met the previous day (see Shrimp Permit Moratorium Working Group Summary; Tab D-10).

There was some discussion on the annual landings report and how not all permit holders are compliant with reporting the mandatory data. It was noted that this annual landings survey is important for states where trip tickets are not mandatory. This led to discussion on consolidation of the permit and data gathering forms into a single permit packet. Permit

renewals are sent out on the permit holder's birthday. The timing of the economic and landings data is so that the previous year is collected in a timely fashion. Currently, there are efforts to better link the mandatory data requests to the permit renewal process.

An AP member presented information about shrimp permits, CPUE, catch and effort from 2000-2014. The effort was generated from the electronic logbook (ELB) data; landings were from the Gulf Shrimp Survey (GSS) data. There was discussion on removing the number of permits that are not landings shrimp and that the number of current permits would continue to decrease until the Council takes action on the Shrimp Amendment 17. The number of latent permits that have persisted over time needs to be investigated. It was reviewed that overcapacity of the shrimp fishery prompted the development of Shrimp Amendment 13, and that the moratorium established by this amendment prevented re-entry into the fishery. The AP was concerned with a reduction in the fleet allowing for an increase in foreign fishing. There AP preferred maintaining the number of permits at the current level.

The AP was concerned with the future of the fishery. Currently, building a new boat is cost prohibitive. The AP discussed how vessels are classified and the process for replacing boats. There was concern that the fleet would continue to shrink because of vessel age. The AP was also concerned about upcoming USCG regulations regarding fishing vessels. The cost of classifying a new vessel and more rigid regulations, along with the economic status of the shrimp fishery all cause concern about the future of the shrimp fishery. With an ageing fleet and no new vessels entering the fishery, the AP was concerned with the loss of infrastructure to support the fishery.

The AP discussed the following motion at length. There was considerable discussion on who should be allowed to apply for a shrimping permit and what the vessel qualifications should be. It was clarified that the current permit fee of 25 would still be in effect and there was concern that people would buy permits based on speculation. To avoid this, the AP discussed qualifications for obtaining a permit. The AP discussed in great detail a length requirement but was unable to determine a length requirement without information about the current makeup of permit holder vessel lengths. There was discussion on the requiring landings to maintain a permit, but this wasn't received well by the AP. The overall decision from the group was to not determine a length but to leave the length provision for further review.

The Shrimp AP recommends: That the current requirements of the shrimp permit moratorium remain in effect until October 26, 2026, except that-

- 1) **Any shrimp permit that-**
 - Was valid or renewable as of December 31, 2014, and**
 - Is not renewed before the close of the 1 year period after the expiration date of that permit**

Shall not permanently expire and shall instead be held by the NMFS in the "Gulf Shrimp Permit Reserve"

- 2) **NMFS shall reactivate and issue any permit in the Gulf Shrimp Permit Reserve upon the receipt of a qualified application and payment of the applicable fee on a first come, first served basis**

- 3) **To be qualified, an application must meet the following criteria:**
-Applicant qualifications: must be a US citizen or US corporation
-Vessel qualifications: vessel to which permit is attached must be no less than X ft. registered length

Motion carried with no opposition.

There was discussion about including the above motion in the scoping document. Staff informed the AP that this is not typically how the scoping process works. Staff advised that the motion that was made previously would be more appropriate for an options paper.

The Shrimp AP recommends: To request the Council include the prior motion, as adopted by the AP, recommending Amendment 17 measures in the public scoping document.

Motion carried with no opposition.

The AP was presented with an overview of the Texas Closure. Brown shrimp and white shrimp catch were below average for Texas and Louisiana in 2014, and there were some changes in the shrimp landings distribution in Texas ports. There was a request to have the number of permits in each state be provided to the AP. Overall, there has been a ~17% increase in pounds landed because of the closure.

The Shrimp AP recommends: To continue the 200 mile Texas closure

Motion carried with no opposition.

The AP was updated on the status of Shrimp Amendment 16 which has been submitted to NMFS and is in the rulemaking stage.

The AP was informed of the working group results from the Penaeid Shrimp MSY working group. The stock synthesis model output proxies for MSY and F_{msy} for penaeid shrimp developed by Rick Hart were recommended and presented. For pink shrimp, the annual MSY and F_{msy} are calculated by multiplying the monthly MSY by twelve. The brown shrimp model is an annual model with seasons and generates an annual MSY and an annual F_{msy} , so no multiplication factor was used. For white shrimp, MSY and F_{msy} had to be adjusted to compensate for spawning and recruitment cycles throughout the year. The MSY and F_{msy} were multiplied by 12 to get an annual MSY and an annual F_{msy} . For all three penaeid shrimp stocks, the fishery is currently operating well below MSY and F_{msy} . In discussion, it was clarified that these values were for Gulf of Mexico shrimp only. Staff also presented potential actions and alternatives that will be presented to the Council if the SSC approves the working group recommendations. It was clarified that the current status of the fishery is unknown, as previously overfished and overfishing definitions are based upon a model that is no longer used. The AP was hesitant to make recommendations as the SSC has not yet approved the MSY working group recommendations. There was clarification that according past amendments OY was set equal to MSY.

Pending the outcome of the SSC meeting, the Shrimp AP recommends that the Council

adopt the new MSY alternatives based on the stock synthesis model.

Motion carried with no opposition.

The AP received an update on the status of the ELB program including: how many units are active, repairs, and inactive; how the agency is handling inactive units; the future of the program; and other items.

The group was presented with the summary from the coral working group summary. It was clarified that this summary was from a working group and the next step was to submit the report to the full Coral SSC/AP and include members from affected fishing industry. There was discussion on how the areas were identified; it was clarified that the recommendations from the coral working group were based on known coral locations and coral studies and not based on habitat suitability models. The coral working group chose to encompass whole features where that have been corals observed. Based on the discussion, the AP felt that the whole shrimp AP and shrimp SSC should meet with the Coral AP and Coral SSC instead of just having representatives. The group was requested to identify members of the royal red shrimp fishery because there are no royal red shrimpers on the AP.

The AP recommends that the Council permit the Special Shrimp SSC and Shrimp AP to meet jointly with the Special Coral SSC and Coral AP.

Motion carried with no opposition.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:05 p.m.