

Shrimp Advisory Panel Summary

Gulf Council Office

Tampa, FL

April 5, 2018

8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Members Present:

Corky Perret, Chair

Steve Bosarge, Vice-chair

Kim Chauvin

Julius Collins

Glenn Delaney

Gary Graham

Harris Lasseigne

Lance Nacio

John Williams

Council Member

Leann Bosarge

Council Staff

Doug Gregory

Matt Freeman

Morgan Kilgour

Jessica Matos

Carrie Simmons

NMFS-SERO Staff

Roy Crabtree

Rick Hart

Frank Helies

Mike Travis

Others present

Sharon McBree

The Shrimp Advisory Panel met on April 5, 2018. The agenda was adopted with one item added under other business. The minutes from the February 16, 2017, meeting were approved with minor revisions.

Biological Review of the Texas Closure

Rick Hart provided a Biological Review of the Texas closure. Brown shrimp catch in August off the Texas coast was above average with the closure causing an increase in pounds landed between 0 and 6.3%. White shrimp catch off Texas was slightly below average for July and August. There was a shift in landings from Palacios to Brownsville, but the cause was unknown. There was discussion that Brownsville vessels typically fish for brown shrimp and Palacios vessels fish for both white and brown shrimp, causing the shift.

Motion: To recommend to the Gulf Council to continue the closure in conjunction with the state of Texas out to 200 nautical miles for 2018.

Motion passed with no opposition.

Review of the Updated Stock Assessments for Brown, White, and Pink Shrimp

Dr. Rick Hart reviewed the stock assessment update for brown, white and pink shrimp. None of the stocks are overfished or are undergoing overfishing. The AP discussed that it thought that there should be some metric of predicting catches on the east side of the Mississippi as NMFS is able to do on the west side. Dr. Hart has looked at the data, and the response to environmental conditions on the east side is not as indicative as it is on the west side (according to the model).

Dr. Hart also reviewed CPUE and the juvenile red snapper effort threshold. CPUE in 2016 was lower than in 2015, but still higher than the long term average. Effort in the area monitored for juvenile red snapper bycatch was still within the limits (a reduction of 68.6 %, a minimum of a 67% reduction is required).

Review of the PHD of Coral Amendment 9

Staff reviewed the Council’s preferred alternatives for Coral Amendment 9. Staff also presented the Shrimp AP with the SSC and the LETC recommendations for the AP to comment on. Staff clarified that the areas in the document with possible regulations as options were the same areas that had previously been evaluated at the Joint meeting of the Shrimp AP, Coral AP, and Coral SSC in August 2016. The AP expressed overall appreciation that its input was incorporated into the document thus far, and noted that it would like staff to reach out to shrimpers, in particular royal red shrimp fishermen, for providing input on the document.

After discussion of Action 1, the AP made the following motion:

Motion: To agree with the Council’s preferred alternative on Action 1.

Action 1 Preferred Alternative 4: Add a new area, Pulley Ridge South Portion A, within the Pulley Ridge North HAPC and adjacent to Pulley Ridge South HAPC with separate regulations. Within the Pulley Ridge South AN HAPC, the following regulations will apply: fishing with a bottom trawl, buoy gear*, pot or trap, and bottom anchoring by fishing vessels are prohibited year-round. Pulley Ridge South Portion A will be bound by the following coordinates, connecting in order:

Site	Point	Longitude (West)	Latitude (North)
Pulley Ridge South Portion A Depth Range: 162-654 ft (27-109 fathoms) Area: 93.6 nm ²	A	83°41.366’	24°40.000’
	B	83°42.648’	24°39.666’
	C	83°55.240’	24°47.555’
	D	83°48.405’	24°57.065’
	E	83°41.841’	24°52.859’
	F	83°47.250’	24°44.833’
	A	83°41.366’	24°40.000’

Motion passed with no objection.

Staff reviewed Action 2 and also provided the AP with the SSC’s recommendation. The AP was requested with providing input on the recommendation as it would not likely be convened again to comment on the recommendation before the document is finalized. After review of the information, the AP made the following motion:

Motion: To recommend the Coral SSC’s proposed alternative for Action 2, only in the event that Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 in Action 2 are no longer preferred.

SSC Recommended Alternative 5: Establish a new HAPC named West Florida Wall bound by the following coordinates, connecting in order:

Area	Point	Longitude (West)	Latitude (North)
West Florida Wall Depth Range:	A	84°47.955’	26°28.835’
	B	84°46.754’	26°28.816’

1308-1974 ft (218-329 fathoms) Area: 36.3 nm ²	C	84°42.076'	26°10.471'
	D	84°44.577'	26°10.528'
	E	84°47.986'	26°25.028'
	F	84°47.980'	26°25.100'
	G	84°47.955'	26°25.835'

Option a. Do not establish fishing regulations in the West Florida Wall HAPC

Option b. Prohibit bottom-tending gear in the West Florida Wall HAPC. Bottom-tending gear is defined as: bottom longline, bottom trawl, buoy gear*, dredge, pot or trap, and bottom anchoring by fishing vessels.

***Note:** Buoy gear is defined as in 50 CFR 622.2 and does not refer to HMS buoy gear (defined by 50 CFR 635.2) which is not a bottom-tending gear.

Motion carried with no opposition.

The AP expressed concern that there was not currently a transit provision provided in the document and made the following motion.

Motion: To recommend that the Council provides normal transit provisions for vessels traveling through these areas and these provisions be consistent for all areas.

Motion carried with no opposition.

Staff provided the AP with the Council’s preferred alternatives in Actions 3 and the SSC recommended modification to Alternative 7, Option c in Action 3. Staff also informed the AP of the discussion had by the LETC regarding the SSC’s proposed modification. The AP had concerns about the enforceability of the SSC’s recommendation and that only the current wording in the document would allow the royal red shrimp fishermen to continue to prosecute their fishery in this area. The AP made the following motion:

Motion: To recommend to keep the Council’s preferred Alternative 7 Option c wording for Action 3.

Preferred Alternative 7: Establish a new HAPC named Viosca Knoll 862/906 bound by the following coordinates, connecting in order:

Area	Point	Longitude (West)	Latitude (North)
Viosca Knoll 862/906 Depth Range: 984-2298 ft (164-383 fathoms) Area: 18.8 nm ²	A	88°23.608'	29°7.640'
	B	88°20.590'	29°7.603'
	C	88°20.554'	29°3.749'
	D	88°22.016'	29°3.734'
	E	88°21.998'	29°2.367'
	F	88°24.972'	29°2.281'
	G	88°25.044'	29°7.568'
	H	88°25.044'	29°7.592'
	I	88°25.045'	29°7.676'
	A	88°23.608'	29°7.640'

Option a. Do not establish fishing regulations in the Viosca Knoll 862/906 HAPC.

Option b. Prohibit bottom-tending gear in the Viosca Knoll 862/906 HAPC. Bottom-tending gear is defined as: bottom longline, bottom trawl, buoy gear*,

dredge, pot or trap, and bottom anchoring by fishing vessels.

Preferred Option c. Prohibit bottom-tending gear in the Viosca Knoll 862/906 HAPC. Bottom-tending gear is defined as: bottom longline, bottom trawl, buoy gear*, dredge, pot or trap, and bottom anchoring by fishing vessels. Provide an exemption to the bottom-tending gear for fishermen that possess a royal red shrimp endorsement and are fishing with royal red shrimp fishing gear.

Motion carried with no opposition.

Staff reviewed the rest of the document and the Council’s preferred alternatives. In Action 5, the AP was provided with the SSC’s recommendation, and the AP made the following motion:

Motion: To recommend that the Council maintain its preferred alternatives and options for Action 5.

Action 5 Preferred Alternative 2: Establish a new HAPC named Harte Bank bound by the following coordinates, connecting in order:

Area	Point	Longitude (West)	Latitude (North)
Harte Bank Depth Range: 162-492 ft (27-82 fathoms) Area: 10.8 nm ²	A	96°36.590’	26°40.826’
	B	96°32.220’	26°40.789’
	C	96°32.308’	26°37.992’
	D	96°36.636’	26°38.043’
	A	96°36.590’	26°40.826’

Preferred Option a. Do not establish fishing regulations in the Harte Bank HAPC.

Option b. Prohibit bottom-tending gear in the Harte Bank HAPC. Bottom-tending gear is defined as: bottom longline, bottom trawl, buoy gear*, dredge, pot or trap, and bottom anchoring by fishing vessels.

Preferred Alternative 3: Establish a new HAPC named Southern Bank bound by the following coordinates, connecting in order:

Area	Point	Longitude (West)	Latitude (North)
Southern Bank Depth Range: 162-330 ft (27-55 fathoms) Area: 0.8 nm ²	A	96°31.902’	27°26.923’
	B	96°30.881’	27°26.989’
	C	96°31.134’	27°25.958’
	D	96°31.892’	27°25.958’
	A	96°31.902’	27°26.923’

Preferred Option a. Do not establish fishing regulations in the Southern Bank HAPC.

Option b. Prohibit bottom-tending gear in the Southern Bank HAPC. Bottom-tending gear is defined as: bottom longline, bottom trawl, buoy gear*, dredge, pot or trap, and bottom anchoring by fishing vessels.

***Note:** Buoy gear is defined as in 50 CFR 622.2 and does not refer to HMS buoy gear (defined by 50 CFR 635.2) which is not a bottom-tending gear.

Motion carried with no opposition.

Lastly, the AP expressed concern over creating more and more areas with prohibitive fishing regulations. The AP was notified that there is a Council motion to begin work on Coral Amendment 10 when Coral Amendment 9 is completed. The AP made the following motion:

Motion: To recommend to the Council that at such time that Coral Amendment 10 is under development there be a joint meeting of the Shrimp AP, Coral AP, Shrimp SSC, and Coral SSC.

Motion carried with no opposition.

Other Business

Discussion on Permit Issues

AP members discussed some issues with getting permits this past year. Dr. Crabtree provided the statistics that of all permits sent in on time, only one with all supporting documentation was not renewed on time. All other permits were not sent in the required 30 days prior to expiration or were deficient in some portion of the permit renewal requirements (paperwork or checks). The AP asked if this process could be done electronically and was notified that this approach is underway, but not likely to be implemented in the near future. AP members also asked if they could renew their permits all at once, and NMFS staff will look into trying to streamline the process for multiple boat owners. NMFS staff will look into seeing if the primary recipient of the permit application is the same (i.e. mailing address), then perhaps all permits can be renewed at the same time.

The AP also discussed that some permits are not able to be renewed because of issues with the electronic logbook units (ELBs). NMFS will look into allowing boat owners (at the boat owner's expense) to upgrade units to prevent issues. Currently, the antenna for the units is a major problem. NMFS is looking at new units with more durability (including better antennas), as the current 3G units will no longer be compatible and will need to be upgraded; it is unclear who will have to pay for the upgraded units.

Discussion of the Hurricane Impacts from 2017

The AP members discussed their observations on the effects of the 2017 Hurricane season. The Texas coast was producing well before the hurricane, but production has been down this winter and some boats are going to Florida to fish. In shore fishery was more impacted than offshore in Texas. Some vessels couldn't fish because the vessels were housing families that had lost their homes. Processing plants that shut down affect employees and transit for offloading. Flooding caused the fisheries to be poor because of the freshwater input.

Update on the economic analysis requested at the 2017 Shrimp AP Meeting

Staff updated the AP on the Southeast Fisheries Science Center's response to the request for an economic analysis of the Texas closure and an economic analysis of closures of adjacent waters (Louisiana to Alabama). The AP wanted to make sure that the analysis was a priority and made the following motion:

Motion: To resend the letter requesting an economic analysis to the Science Center and that appropriations be made for this analysis.

Motion passed with no objection.

Draft Bill on Aquaculture

Mr. Delaney was requested with providing a draft bill on Marine Aquaculture to the AP for industry input. The AP discussed several items in the bill, including that the bill would remove authority of the regional management Councils for managing aquaculture. The AP discussed if the Council would be able to comment on the bill, and it was noted that a Congressional member would have to specifically request that the Council review a bill for the Council to provide input. However, the Council may evaluate the bill at any time; it just may not send this input to Congress without a Congressional member providing a request to do so. The AP had some concern that the bill may not have the same protections built in as the FMP currently has. The AP was also notified that there is a current aquaculture EFP that the Council will be reviewing at its April Council meeting. After discussion, the AP made the following motion:

Motion: To request the Council to review the draft Marine Aquaculture Act of 2018 and to evaluate, at a minimum, the impacts of this legislation on the

- 1) Council's authorities;**
- 2) status and implementation of the Council's Offshore Aquaculture FMP; and**
- 3) fisheries under the Council's jurisdiction.**

To further request that the Council take note that the Offshore Aquaculture FMP specifically prohibits the culture of managed shrimp species and coral species, and that it provides in its siting criteria robust protections for traditional shrimp and other commercial and recreational fishing grounds, as well as protections for essential fish habitat, endangered species, and threatened marine species.

Motion carried without opposition.

The AP meeting adjourned at 2:45 pm.