

1 GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

2
3 SHRIMP MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

4
5 IP Casino and Resort Biloxi, Mississippi

6
7 OCTOBER 17, 2016

8
9 **VOTING MEMBERS**

10 Dale Diaz.....Mississippi
11 Patrick Banks.....Louisiana
12 Chris Blankenship.....Alabama
13 Roy Crabtree.....NMFS
14 Pamela Dana.....Florida
15 John Greene.....Alabama
16 Kelly Lucas (designee for Jamie Miller).....Mississippi
17 Robin Riechers.....Texas
18 John Sanchez.....Florida

19
20 **NON-VOTING MEMBERS**

21 Leann Bosarge.....Mississippi
22 Doug Boyd.....Texas
23 LCDR Leo Danaher.....USCG
24 Dave Donaldson.....GSMFC
25 Tom Frazer.....Florida
26 Martha Guyas (designee for Nick Wiley).....Florida
27 Campo Matens.....Louisiana
28 Greg Stunz.....Texas
29 Ed Swindell.....Louisiana
30 David Walker.....Alabama

31
32 **STAFF**

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34 John Froeschke.....Fishery Biologist - Statistician
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36 Morgan Kilgour.....Fishery Biologist
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43 Carrie Simmons.....Deputy Director

44
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22 Tom Wheatley.....Pew Charitable Trusts, Tampa, FL

23
24
25

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PAGE 19: Motion to move Action 3, Alternative 6 and Action 5 to Considered but Rejected. The motion carried on page 20.

PAGE 25: Motion in Action 6 to change Alternative 2 to read as follows and remove Alternative 4. A vessel possessing shrimp may transit Gulf federal waters without a federal vessel permit if the fishing gear is appropriately stowed. Transit means non-stop progression through the area. Fishing gear appropriately stowed means the trawl doors and the nets must be out of the water, and the bag straps must be removed from the net. The motion carried on page 27.

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1 The Shrimp Management Committee of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery
2 Management Council convened at the IP Casino and Hotel, Biloxi,
3 Mississippi, Monday afternoon, October 17, 2016, and was called
4 to order by Chairman Dale Diaz.

5
6 **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**
7 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
8

9 **CHAIRMAN DALE DIAZ:** I would like to call the Shrimp Management
10 Committee to order. I want to start out by reading the
11 membership of the new committee structure. Dale Diaz is Chair,
12 Patrick Banks/Myron Fischer will be Vice Chair, Chris
13 Blankenship and Anson, Dr. Crabtree, Dr. Dana, Johnny Greene,
14 Dr. Lucas, Robin Riechers or Lance Robinson, and John Sanchez.
15 That's the makeup of the committee, and the staff person is Dr.
16 Morgan Kilgour.

17
18 First up on the agenda is the Adoption of the Agenda. I do know
19 that there is some Other Business. Dr. Kilgour, you said that
20 there's another presentation that we're going to add under Other
21 Business?

22
23 **DR. MORGAN KILGOUR:** Right. The shrimp effort for 2015 will be
24 presented by Dr. Hart.

25
26 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Does anybody else have anything that they would
27 like to add under Other Business at this time? Hearing none, I
28 would entertain a motion to adopt the agenda for the Shrimp
29 Management Committee. There's a motion by Dr. Lucas and a
30 second by Mr. Sanchez. Any opposition? The motion carries.
31 Next up is Approval of the Minutes. Any additions or edits to
32 the minutes? Hearing none, the minutes are adopted.

33
34 First up on the agenda is an Update on the National Marine
35 Fisheries Service Sea Turtle Excluder Rule, and this is going to
36 be presented by the SERO staff.

37
38 **DR. KILGOUR:** That's correct, and I will keep us on track with
39 the action guide, and so this is just for your information. Mr.
40 Hoffman from the SERO branch is going to be presenting via
41 webinar, and I think he's standing by, and I will just make sure
42 that we stay on track with the action guide.

43
44 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Hoffman, are you on the line?

45
46 **UPDATE ON NMFS TURTLE EXCLUDER DEVICE (TED) RULE**
47

48 **MR. ROBERT HOFFMAN:** Up until now, we have had scoping meetings

1 last spring, and we have the alternatives up there, and they
2 range from the status quo all the way up to all trawl vessels
3 needing TEDs that remove small turtles right now and everything
4 in between.

5
6 We have had five scoping meetings, and the comment period closed
7 in the spring, in April. We expect to complete the draft DEIS
8 and the proposed rule by the end of the year, most likely in
9 mid-December. There will be a forty-five-day comment period for
10 the DEIS and sixty days for the proposed rule itself.

11
12 The final decision on the rulemaking is expected sometime this
13 spring, late spring, and that could range anywhere from
14 finalizing what is the proposed rule, finalizing something
15 that's maybe different, based on public comments, or up to
16 withdrawing the rule, like we did last time.

17
18 The TED compliance policy was part of the requirement from the
19 2014 biological opinion. It's important to note that, in the
20 opinion, we went to great lengths to explain how we couldn't
21 come up with good numbers for the effects on turtles, due to
22 various issues in the fishery.

23
24 One, it's hard to observe turtles in the fishery. Two, even if
25 we do, there is a lot that fall out on the haul-back and some
26 other things. You may have noticed those numbers that we had,
27 and the NGOs have put them out there, at 55,000, but the bi-op
28 goes into great lengths to explain how those numbers really --
29 We don't trust them, and we don't rely on them, but we have to
30 rely on something when it combines to monitoring the effects in
31 the fishery.

32
33 Right now, it's compliance with the TED requirements and effort,
34 and so that is our proxy to determine the effects of the fishery
35 on turtles, which is required not just in Section 7, but in the
36 ESA in general.

37
38 On May 15 of 2015, we completed a draft, and we sent the draft
39 out to the states and the councils and various commissions, and
40 we got quite a few comments. We went back and forth with a lot
41 of folks, and we finalized the policy this year, on the 22nd of
42 September, and it's posted on the website.

43
44 The policy establishes sampling and compliance review timeframes
45 and the data sources we use and defines the thresholds. It
46 includes three sampling periods. The data that we get is
47 collected through the observer program, the gear monitoring team
48 out of Pascagoula, out of Pascagoula Lab, and the various law

1 enforcement agencies, NOAA OLE and state agencies and other
2 folks in the JEA program and the Coast Guard.

3
4 The data we use to determine the compliance is there's a
5 boarding form that's part of this policy that's on the website.
6 All of the enforcement agencies have it, and that's the data we
7 need to actually compile the numbers to determine compliance.

8
9 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Hoffman, I want to interrupt you for just a
10 second. Are you speaking into the phone itself or into the
11 speaker phone? We are hearing you, but it's a struggle.

12
13 **MR. HOFFMAN:** I'm speaking into the handset, because there is
14 less feedback that way.

15
16 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thank you. Proceed.

17
18 **MR. HOFFMAN:** I probably just had the phone down a little lower
19 as I was talking. The compliance thresholds, we want to
20 maintain the 88 percent TED effectiveness rate. As long as
21 we're at 88 percent or above, and we will always have GMT doing
22 outreach and that kind of stuff, but that's the only thing that
23 we need to worry about. If we're at 88 or above, we're good.

24
25 At less than 88, but higher than 84, we will do an enforcement
26 pulse and GMT outreach in areas that we think may be
27 problematic. At less than 84 percent for two consecutive
28 periods, there would be a minimum closure of thirty days.
29 That's a last resort, and, in the seventeen years that I have
30 worked for NOAA, anytime we have had TED compliance problems,
31 enforcement and outreach has always worked to bring compliance
32 back. We have never had an issue where we've had problems where
33 we did outreach and enforcement pulses that hasn't brought it
34 back to levels that we thought were sufficient. We didn't have
35 an 88 percent effectiveness rate or anything like that back
36 then, but those have always worked.

37
38 Like I said, it's important to know that the TED compliance is
39 one of the biggest parts of our ability to be able to monitor
40 the effects of the fishery on turtles.

41
42 All of these documents that I have talked about, the draft and
43 final TED compliance policy and the policy that has the boarding
44 forms, are on the Protected Resources website. Does anyone have
45 any questions?

46
47 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any questions for Mr. Hoffman? Seeing no
48 questions, Mr. Hoffman, thank you.

1
2 **MR. HOFFMAN:** Thank you very much.

3
4 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Next up will be Dr. Hart for the risk
5 assessment.

6
7 **RISK ASSESSMENT FOR THRESHOLD PERMIT NUMBERS RELATIVE TO SEA**
8 **TURTLE INCIDENTAL TAKE CONSTRAINTS**
9

10 **DR. RICK HART:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's a pleasure to
11 speak with your committee today. I am going to briefly give a
12 presentation of the overview that was the memo from the Science
13 Center to the council from a request made by the Shrimp
14 Committee.

15
16 Like I said, this is a response to a request for a risk
17 assessment of exceeding the effort threshold associated with sea
18 turtles. This presentation and the work in the memo was
19 conducted by not only myself, but Dr. Mike Travis and
20 Christopher Liese with the National Marine Fisheries Service.

21
22 In July, the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council requested
23 an analysis of the Gulf shrimp fishery data to determine the
24 probability of exceeding the total effort threshold, as set in
25 the 2014 biological opinion, associated with sea turtles under
26 each of the alternatives in the Shrimp Amendment 17B, Action 3.

27
28 The comparison for each of these cases would be the number of
29 federally-permitted vessels versus total effort in the fishery.
30 There was a caveat to that request. If a quantitative analysis
31 is not possible, the council requested a qualitative assessment
32 of the relative risk of exceeding that sea-turtle-related effort
33 threshold for each of the alternatives.

34
35 We received some feedback that there may have been some
36 confusion about the difference between the inshore and offshore
37 effort and state and federal waters and effort in those, and so
38 I wanted to just briefly go over the differences between inshore
39 and offshore and state and federal.

40
41 For the purposes of the Gulf shrimp fishery effort estimate, the
42 COLREGS line refers to this specific political line across the
43 harbor mouths and inlets for navigation. The Gulf shrimp
44 fishery operates within the inshore area, and that is the area
45 defined from the COLREGS line shoreward, and the offshore area,
46 which is designated as being from the COLREGS line seaward, and
47 so total effort is a combination of both inshore and offshore
48 effort. These are boundaries that are not the same as state and

1 federal waters, and so this analysis focused on inshore and
2 offshore and not state and federal waters, and so that's
3 important to keep in mind.

4
5 This just shows the boundaries and the difference between the
6 state and federal boundary and the COLREGS line. The COLREGS
7 line is further inshore than the state and federal boundaries.

8
9 The quantitative analysis that was requested, we determined the
10 probability of exceeding the sea-turtle-related threshold on
11 total effort under the alternatives in Action 3 could not be
12 determined, because there is no statistical relationship between
13 the number of federally-permitted vessels and total effort.

14
15 These are -- They didn't show up on the -- They're on my
16 PowerPoint, but they didn't show up on this one, but these are
17 dates, where they say "cell range", and so, if you look at the
18 number of permitted vessels relative to total effort, you can
19 see there is no relationship, and so you can have 1,500 permits
20 or you could have 1,900 permits, and the effort, the total
21 effort, may be the same, and so there is really no statistical
22 relationship between those variables.

23
24 In addition, even if a relationship between those two did exist,
25 we wouldn't be able to reasonably predict total effort in the
26 fishery, because development in the fishery in the future is
27 highly uncertain. Importantly, such things as changes in shrimp
28 prices and fuel prices weren't considered in this analysis, and
29 so this wasn't a real surprise that the lack of relationship
30 between total effort in the fishery and the number of federally-
31 permitted vessels -- It was rather expected, because the number
32 of permits really doesn't limit the number of vessels
33 participating or the amount of effort in the inshore fishery.
34 The permits are for vessels that are fishing in the EEZ.

35
36 Also, we have many federally-permitted vessels that aren't
37 active in any given year, and only active vessels generate
38 effort, and so that's another issue with why there is no real
39 relationship there.

40
41 Previous analyses examined relationships between offshore effort
42 and various measures of active vessels. There is a strong
43 positive correlation between the number of federally-permitted
44 vessels active in the offshore waters and offshore effort, and
45 that makes sense, because that's where the EEZ is, more
46 offshore.

47
48 Just a little background information. The permit moratorium for

1 the Gulf was introduced in March of 2007, and so we analyzed
2 data from 2008 to 2014, when the permit moratorium was in full
3 effect, and so, in order to relate total effort to federal
4 permits, we had to link offshore effort to all vessels active in
5 offshore waters and establish the fraction of these active
6 vessels that have federal permits, and so we also have to
7 consider latent federally-permitted vessels in our assessment.

8
9 The turtle-related effort threshold has been set at
10 approximately 133,000 nominal days fishing. That is the 2009
11 level. Days fished is simply equal to twenty-four hours of
12 towing time.

13
14 Between 2008 and 2014, the effort in inshore waters ranged from
15 35,600 to 56,400 days fished, with an average of about 47,000
16 days fished, while the effort in offshore waters ranged from
17 60,500 to 76,500 days fished, with an average of about 68,000
18 days fished.

19
20 Since we couldn't do a quantitative analysis, we did attempt to
21 do a qualitative analysis. This was to look at the relative
22 risk of exceeding the threshold, based on the number of permits
23 in the Amendment 17B alternatives.

24
25 One scenario we looked at was looking at the average effort from
26 2008 to 2014. The inshore and offshore fishery generated an
27 average annual effort of 114,800 days fished. This was
28 approximately 18,200 days fished below the 2009 turtle-related
29 effort threshold. The mean number of active vessels and active
30 permitted vessels were 1,657 and 1,010, respectively.

31
32 Given a mean annual offshore effort of 67,900 days fished, the
33 average annual offshore effort was forty-one days per active
34 vessel during the time, and so we calculated that. An
35 additional 445 average offshore vessels would need to become
36 active in order to exceed the effort threshold, under those
37 circumstances. Any federal permit level above 1,455 could,
38 mathematically, lead to the effort threshold being exceeded,
39 with all else being equal.

40
41 The second scenario we looked at was under the maximum annual
42 effort, which was the 2009 level, where the inshore and the
43 offshore fleet generated a total of 133,000 days fished during
44 that year. During that time period, 1,891 vessels were active
45 in the offshore waters that year. That's the highest number of
46 active vessels in the offshore during that time period. Of
47 those, 1,075 had a federal SPGM permit and could legally harvest
48 shrimp in the EEZ.

1
2 Using that information, we found that any federal permit level
3 above the 1,075 could lead to the threshold being exceeded if
4 the economic and biological conditions in that year are
5 experienced in the future. Relative to the other permit levels
6 in the amendment alternatives, it is moderately likely that the
7 threshold would be exceeded at a permit level at or near 1,075,
8 for example the 1,074 permits under Alternative 2.

9
10 The last scenario we looked at was the most recent effort year.
11 Total effort equaled 109,300 days fished during this year.
12 35,600 days fished was inshore, in the inshore fishery, and
13 73,700 days fished was in the offshore fishery during that year.

14
15 The number of active vessels in the offshore waters was 1,616
16 unique vessels. Of those, only 987 had federal permits. The
17 average offshore vessel generated forty-six days fished in 2014,
18 and so it would take an additional 516, average, offshore
19 vessels entering the fishery to exceed that threshold level.

20
21 A federal permit number greater than 1,503, theoretically, could
22 exceed the threshold under the same type of economic conditions,
23 and it's likely that these recent economic conditions will be
24 experienced again in the future, and so it wouldn't be
25 surprising if these average effort levels will be also
26 experienced. The likelihood of exceeding the sea turtle effort
27 threshold is relatively high under any permit level above 1,503.

28
29 This is just a table of the relative risk of exceeding the sea
30 turtle effort threshold for each of the alternatives under
31 Action 3 in Amendment 17B in the Gulf of Mexico Shrimp
32 Management Plan. I am not going to go through each of these
33 numbers, but they're in the memo.

34
35 There are some caveats to this analysis. These are sort of
36 back-of-the-envelope calculations, just to illustrate the
37 general implications of permit level decisions. There are
38 multiple caveats, though.

39
40 Latent effort, not all latent effort can be realized. Some
41 fishing vessels hold moratorium permits for non-shrimping
42 reasons. You may have vessels out there that are doing oil work
43 or maybe trawling for purposes not for shrimping, and so they
44 want to have -- These folks want to have a permit in case they
45 do encounter shrimp, and so accounting for these unused permits
46 would increase the number of permits that the fishery can
47 support without exceeding the sea-turtle-related effort
48 threshold, and so there is some unknowns out there.

1
2 The economic and biological factors, if the economy and/or
3 biological factors improve in the future and shrimping becomes
4 more profitable, we would certainly expect the latent federally-
5 permitted and state-licensed vessels to become more active and
6 those vessels that are already active to increase their effort.
7
8 If you want to really account for those relationships, it would
9 be suggested that the number of permits would need to be lower,
10 to avoid exceeding that effort threshold, because you have those
11 latent permits still out there.
12
13 In addition, predicting and partitioning the effort data,
14 measuring, and let alone predicting, effort and effort
15 partitioned into state and federal waters, is difficult, because
16 the fishery is conducted in politically-bounded, state-managed
17 inshore and offshore waters and federally-managed waters of the
18 EEZ.
19
20 The permit moratorium, as you know, really only limits potential
21 effort in the EEZ. Only the number of federal permits, and,
22 hence, federally-permitted vessels is limited and not the amount
23 of effort expended by each vessel or the amount of total effort
24 in the fishery is really controlled by the permits, and so that
25 has to be considered when looking at permit levels.
26
27 With that, that ends my presentation, and I would be happy to
28 answer any questions. I am not the economist out of that group.
29 Dr. Travis and Dr. Liese are the economists, but, if you have
30 some economics questions, I can do my best to answer those.
31 Otherwise, I can answer any of your effort or those types of
32 related questions.
33
34 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any questions for Dr. Hart? Mr. Blankenship.
35
36 **MR. BLANKENSHIP:** Dr. Hart, to get the number of active vessels,
37 that was the number of unique vessels either in the EEZ or in
38 state waters offshore that had landings during the year?
39
40 **DR. HART:** Yes, they had to have landings during the year.
41
42 **MR. BLANKENSHIP:** All right. Thank you.
43
44 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Perret, did you have a question for Dr.
45 Hart?
46
47 **DR. HART:** Hi, Corky. I'm glad to see you're there, or hear
48 you're there.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Perret is the Chair of our Shrimp Advisory
3 Panel. Mr. Perret.
4
5 **MR. CORKY PERRET:** I guess I'm nervous appearing before such an
6 august body, but it's an honor to be here. Rick, a couple of
7 questions, please. I am using Scenario 3, where offshore effort
8 was basically 737,000 and inshore was 356,000. That offshore
9 effort now, that's EEZ as well as state waters? Is that
10 correct?
11
12 **DR. HART:** That's correct.
13
14 **MR. PERRET:** Okay. My question is this. On the effort, days
15 fished, twenty-four-hour days, did the group consider the
16 different types of gear in inshore versus offshore? We all know
17 states have limitations on size of gear and that sort of thing,
18 seasons and so on and so forth. Anyway, was that a
19 consideration? Offshore vessels obviously have larger gear and
20 more nets and all that sort of thing.
21
22 **DR. HART:** No, it was not.
23
24 **MR. PERRET:** So a twenty-four-hour fishing day could be a quad
25 rig versus a twenty-five-foot trawl inshore?
26
27 **DR. HART:** That's correct.
28
29 **MR. PERRET:** Okay. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
30
31 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Hart, I'm not sure if this is a question,
32 but I struggled with these latent permits also, as I read
33 through this document, and I agree with everything you said.
34 What is the percentage of latent permits that we have now? I
35 know it's in the document, but I just can't remember it right
36 now.
37
38 **DR. HART:** I can't remember off the top of my head either. Let
39 me look.
40
41 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** It seems to me it's around 30 percent latent
42 permits, or maybe a little bit more than that, and it seems to
43 be coming down just a little bit.
44
45 **DR. HART:** I don't know, off the top of my head, without looking
46 here, but I can look to see if I can find it. That's one of
47 those economist questions.
48

1 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Just, as I look at these numbers though, we're
2 always going to have latent effort, even under great times,
3 whenever the shrimp prices are better and fuel prices are lower
4 and things make more sense, and you're still going to have a
5 substantial amount of latent permits, for a lot of different
6 reasons, and it's just hard to really figure out and try to
7 predict what we might have in the future there.

8
9 **DR. HART:** Yes, that is true, and, in some years, it's a bigger
10 issue than others. When the economy improves, obviously it
11 decreases and they come out. I will have to look for that
12 number, but I don't have it at my fingertips.

13
14 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** It's all right. That's okay, Dr. Hart. Any
15 other questions for Dr. Hart? Seeing none, thank you, Dr. Hart.

16
17 **DR. HART:** Thank you, and I will look for that number.

18
19 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Next up, we would like to recognize Dr. Powers
20 to give the SSC Comments.

21
22 **SSC REPORT**

23
24 **DR. JOE POWERS:** Thank you for having me here. I am the Vice
25 Chair of the SSC. Basically, the SSC got the same presentation
26 and had this document that Rick put together, and many of the
27 questions that you have just asked are essentially the questions
28 that the SSC asked. If you bring Rick's document or PowerPoint
29 up again, I was going to mention a couple of things.

30
31 **DR. HART:** If you can bring up the PDF of it, it should have
32 those dates in there, but maybe it doesn't, on that figure.

33
34 **DR. POWERS:** Anyway, there was a table there that had a list of
35 six or seven different alternatives. When you read this, you
36 really do have to remember some of the things that Rick has
37 said. Particularly, with this, they were being asked to produce
38 a qualitative evaluation of relative risk, and so view these
39 things as relative. On the right-hand column, where it says
40 "high", you are really talking about higher, meaning it's a
41 higher risk than some of the others that are categorized as
42 moderate or lower, more moderate or lower, and so that is a key
43 thing to remember.

44
45 Also, the major emphasis in the discussion for the SSC were
46 exactly the caveats that you were talking about for latent
47 effort and the fact that the actual relationship of effort with
48 mortality and relationship of effort is affected by economic

1 conditions, and all those things enter in.

2
3 Much of the emphasis of the people from an economics background
4 that are on the SSC were focusing on those sorts of things, and
5 so, essentially, what we're saying here is exactly the questions
6 you asked. There are limitations about how you can interpret
7 these things, and it's unlikely that, given the current set of
8 circumstances, that you can get much better than this sort of
9 qualitative assessment. Thank you.

10
11 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any questions for Dr. Powers? Thank you, Dr.
12 Powers. Next, we're going to move on down the agenda, and Dr.
13 Kilgour is going to take us through the options paper for Shrimp
14 Amendment 17B.

15
16 **REVISED OPTIONS PAPER FOR SHRIMP AMENDMENT 17B**

17
18 **DR. KILGOUR:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Hopefully this is the last
19 time you see an options paper for this document. It is our
20 intention to have a public hearing draft at the January council
21 meeting.

22
23 We got updated information that included 2014, which took a
24 little bit of time to include in the analysis for Chapters 2 and
25 3, and so I am just going to walk you through the alternatives
26 and actions, none of which have changed significantly, other
27 than the incorporation of the new data changed the numbers a
28 bit.

29
30 The very first action is that this Alternative 2 just changed
31 slightly with the aggregate MSY. I think it's in the hundreds,
32 in pounds, that it changed, and so this aggregate MSY would be
33 just over one-hundred-twelve-and-a-half-million pounds of tails.

34
35 The next action, unless there are questions on this, would be
36 the optimum yield, and so this, again, just changed slightly, to
37 85,761,596 pounds of tails. Again, that's just, I think, a
38 couple hundred pounds different than what you saw in June, and
39 this is, again, because of the inclusion of the 2014 data. The
40 model output just changes things just slightly, and so the next
41 action is Action 3, and this is what you just heard the risk
42 assessment for.

43
44 Again, all of the low, medium, and high were relative to each
45 other, and so the number of permits for active vessels changed
46 slightly for Alternatives 2, 3, 4, and 5. The only alternative,
47 I believe, that did not change at all was the number of valid
48 permits for Alternative 6. This, I didn't know if the committee

1 wanted to have any discussion about this, in light of the recent
2 risk assessment and whether or not you wanted to maintain all of
3 these alternatives or modify any of these, but now would be the
4 time to discuss them.

5
6 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** All right, committee. Are there any discussions
7 or modifications or clarifications or edits? Dr. Kilgour.

8
9 **DR. KILGOUR:** Okay. Let's move on down to Action 4. Again,
10 this is the response when a threshold number of shrimp
11 moratorium permits is reached, and so none of these have changed
12 since the last time you saw this document, because this is just
13 the response when the threshold is reached. If the committee
14 wants to discuss any additions or edits for this, now would be
15 the time. If the committee wants to go into detail for these
16 actions, I am happy to do so. Nothing has really changed since
17 you saw this last, in June.

18
19 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Is there any input from the committee?

20
21 **DR. KILGOUR:** We're going to get done early. Okay. Let's move
22 on to Action 5. Then this has changed since the committee saw
23 it in June. I was advised to remove I think it was Option d, or
24 maybe it was Option c, but it was the length requirement for a
25 vessel, and so all of that has been removed.

26
27 Do have counsel on whether or not Option b is still a feasible
28 option, on being a U.S. citizen or a business? I think that was
29 the one option that we needed discussion on. In order to obtain
30 a reserve pool permit, these are these several options that were
31 recommended by the AP and the council, and I think the only one
32 that was still contentious was this Option b, on whether or not
33 this could be an enforceable option. I am not sure, but does
34 Mara have anything to add to this? Is this still allowed?

35
36 **MS. MARA LEVY:** I mean, what I've said before is, if you're
37 going to select it as a preferred alternative, there has to be a
38 very good reason for doing this in this particular case. So
39 far, I haven't heard articulated any particularly good reason
40 for doing it, but it's also not selected as preferred, and so
41 I'm not going to say that you can't do it, but you would have to
42 have a really good reason for doing it. None of our other
43 permits have this particular type of limitation. I also said
44 that it would have to be U.S. citizen or permanent resident
45 alien, that we would have to treat those groups similarly.

46
47 **DR. KILGOUR:** I guess, from staff's perspective, is this
48 something that the committee would like to maintain in this

1 document? If so, is it acceptable for us to change the wording,
2 as Mara suggested? She said a U.S. citizen or permanent
3 resident, and is that what you said for Option b, instead of a
4 U.S. citizen or business? I guess I just need guidance from the
5 committee on whether or not you want to keep this in the
6 document and if it's acceptable to change it as Mara suggested.

7

8 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Lucas.

9

10 **DR. KELLY LUCAS:** I am fine with changing it as Mara suggested.
11 Anybody else?

12

13 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Crabtree.

14

15 **DR. ROY CRABTREE:** Well, my preference would be to take the
16 action out of the document and set the threshold. Then if we go
17 -- Most things I've seen indicate that we're five to ten years
18 out, if we ever go below the threshold. When we go below it, we
19 can figure out what we're going to do when it happens and not
20 set up some process now that's going to lock us into something
21 happening years down the road, when conditions and everything
22 can change, and then we're going to be scrambling to try and
23 deal with it. That's my preference at this point, is to just
24 the threshold and have what it triggers is the council is going
25 to come in and review it and then determine what the appropriate
26 course of action is at that point.

27

28 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Kilgour.

29

30 **DR. KILGOUR:** It was my understanding that as long we keep
31 Action 3, Alternative 6, in the document that we have to go
32 through Action 4 and Action 5, because, if the council selects
33 any of the Alternative 6 options, we are already below that
34 threshold, and so I think the current number of permits is just
35 under 1,450, and so this would be the time to open up discussion
36 on Alternative 6 in Action 3, if you want to maintain that in
37 the document. Otherwise, I think we have to keep Action 5.

38

39 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Crabtree.

40

41 **DR. CRABTREE:** I think that's right, and so I guess my
42 preference there would be to eliminate Action 3, Alternative 6
43 as well. If you look at those permit numbers, I believe all of
44 them correspond with high levels of risk, which, to me, is not
45 where we want to go. My preference would be to eliminate Action
46 3, Alternative 6 and Action 5. I would make a motion, but I
47 would like to hear a little discussion of if there's any
48 agreement on that.

1
2 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** I am going to throw something out there, and
3 maybe you can help me work through this, Dr. Crabtree.
4 Alternative 6, at least it allows for some latent permits to be
5 in there. Alternative 3, 4, and 5 are all dealing with active
6 permits, and so we really don't have -- Alternative 2 is dealing
7 with active permits too, and so, if we take Alternative 6 out,
8 we're moving towards not allowing latent permits. If that's the
9 way the committee wants to go, that's fine, but I am just
10 wondering if there might be some problems with that approach.
11 Dr. Crabtree.

12
13 **DR. CRABTREE:** I don't think that's right, because we're just
14 setting the threshold at which we're going to do something.
15 We're not getting rid of anybody's permit. I mean, people are
16 losing permits because they don't take the time to renew them,
17 period, and so we're not talking about eliminating permits.
18 We're talking about at what point would we start reissuing
19 permits, and I don't think we would want -- What's the current
20 estimate of number of permits right now? Is it fourteen-
21 hundred-and-something?

22
23 Some of these numbers are probably higher than the current
24 number of permits, and then we're saying we're going to start
25 reissuing more permits, and I just don't think that's what we
26 need to do, but no one is talking about getting rid of permits.

27
28 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Right. I understand, and I didn't mean that we
29 were talking about getting rid of permits. All of the top
30 options is dealing with the predicted number of active,
31 permitted vessels, and so that's what we're using as the
32 predictor for Alternative 2, 3, 4, and 5. We're not getting rid
33 of any.

34
35 Number 6 does not deal with the predicted number of active
36 vessels. It just has a number at the end of that year that is
37 associated with that level of permits, and so I'm just trying to
38 think through if there is some other negative consequences of
39 getting rid of Alternative 6. Mara.

40
41 **MS. LEVY:** I think the other alternatives deal with the
42 estimated number of active permits to achieve whatever that
43 alternative is talking about, and so we think that this many
44 number of active permitted vessels is going to achieve this,
45 whatever the 2008 catch per unit effort was the highest, right?

46
47 That is going to correspond to a total number of permits. I
48 think you just don't necessarily know what that is, what that

1 corresponding number of permits is, and so you have the active
2 permits and then that would correspond to some other number that
3 is the total number of permits out there, because you're always
4 going to have permits that aren't active, right?

5

6 **DR. KILGOUR:** No.

7

8 **MS. LEVY:** You aren't?

9

10 **DR. KILGOUR:** That's true, but, the way that the document is
11 written, it's not that the number of active permits will be
12 calculated, but it would be the number of permits that is
13 registered as valid or available for renewal. Once it reaches
14 that threshold number, then the action would -- It doesn't take
15 into consideration the latent effort, and so it's that number of
16 permits as soon as it gets to 1,037 that is registered in the
17 permit database. That's when this threshold would kick in

18

19 **MS. LEVY:** That's active permits?

20

21 **DR. KILGOUR:** Number of total valid or renewable permits.

22

23 **MS. LEVY:** I understand that, but I'm saying in the ones that
24 say active permitted vessels. You are going to have,
25 potentially, 880 -- Is that the number of permits that then
26 would be the active permitted -- I didn't read it like that.
27 Sorry.

28

29 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any other discussion? Dr. Crabtree.

30

31 **DR. CRABTREE:** Because we seem to not be getting much discussion
32 on this, I will go ahead and make a motion to remove Action 3,
33 Alternative 6 and all of Action 5 to the Considered but Rejected
34 appendix.

35

36 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** It's seconded by Mr. Sanchez. Dr. Crabtree.

37

38 **DR. CRABTREE:** Just to my rationale, we've got an alternative in
39 here for OY, which is the only OY alternative we have that's
40 based on some science, and it seems to correspond with Action 3,
41 Alternative 2, which is 1,072 permits. We are well above that,
42 and so I don't see the point of continuing with Action 3,
43 Alternative 6, which sets the threshold number actually higher
44 than what we have today and which puts us in a high risk mode,
45 in terms of the turtle threshold that we have, which could lead
46 to a closure of the entire fishery, which we all know how
47 catastrophic that would be.

48

1 Then, if we go with something on the order of a thousand, at the
2 level we've seen attrition of permits, we're probably a decade
3 away from hitting that, and so it just makes sense to me, before
4 we decide what happens when we get to that threshold, let's
5 decide that when it gets there, if we ever get there.

6
7 If the owners of these permits will just renew them, there
8 wouldn't be any loss of permits in the fishery, and so that just
9 seems to make sense to me, and so that's my rationale for my
10 motion.

11
12 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any other discussion on the motion? Is the
13 motion on the board correct, Dr. Crabtree?

14
15 **DR. CRABTREE:** Yes.

16
17 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** The motion is to move Action 3, Alternative 6
18 and Action 5 to Considered but Rejected. **Hearing no other**
19 **discussion, all those in favor, raise your hands.**

20
21 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Seven.

22
23 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Opposed, like sign.

24
25 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Two. **The motion passes seven to**
26 **two.**

27
28 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Kilgour.

29
30 **DR. KILGOUR:** Okay. If we move along to Action 6, this is the
31 transit provision that was added to this document. I think we
32 have some discussion ready for this, but this is -- Basically,
33 if you don't have a federal permit and you're in federal waters,
34 you can't have shrimp onboard, and so this is a way to allow
35 those shrimping vessels that might have to travel through
36 federal waters to get back to port to do so without a federal
37 permit.

38
39 The differences between Alternative 2 and 3 is one has the nets
40 out of the water. Alternative 3 has the nets on the deck, and
41 the doors have to be disconnected from the trawl gear.
42 Alternative 4 has the nets may remain on the deck, but, instead
43 of having the doors disconnected, just the bag straps are
44 removed, and this seems to be least cumbersome of the two,
45 between Alternative 3 and Alternative 4.

46
47 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any discussion? Dr. Lucas.

48

1 **DR. LUCAS:** Maybe this is something for clarification, because
2 there were several of us that were discussing this, and we think
3 we just may have some confusion. First of all, I think, on
4 Alternative 3, is there a way just to have the trawl remain on
5 the deck, but not have the trawl doors be disconnected? That
6 seems to be really cumbersome for them to accomplish all that,
7 once they have everything set as planned, and so, if there's a
8 way to -- If they're just already on the deck and you can define
9 what on the deck means, then that may be less cumbersome for the
10 shrimpers themselves. I don't know if the committee has any
11 thoughts on that one.

12
13 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** I agree with you, Dr. Lucas. I am thinking
14 about from an enforcement perspective, for under Alternative 3.
15 Basically, what you've got is you've got a boat transiting
16 through federal waters. Its trawl boards and its trawls are on
17 the deck already. I mean, that's pretty good for enforcement.

18
19 Folks would actually have to jack the rigs out on the outriggers
20 and put the nets in the water and deploy them, and I think it
21 makes a lot more sense, to me, to just have the trawls and the
22 doors on deck, which basically is being done. To disconnect the
23 trawl gear, the trawls from the trawl doors, the doors are going
24 to have to be on the deck already, and so it seems to me like
25 that would be enforceable enough and a lot less cumbersome on
26 the fishermen and be a good alternative for us to consider. Any
27 other discussion on Alternative 3? Does that mean a motion, Dr.
28 Kilgour, or can you just make that adjustment?

29
30 **DR. KILGOUR:** I think I would need a motion. The language in
31 these Alternatives 2 and 3 was modeled after the same language
32 that occurs in the South Atlantic document, and so that's why
33 they look this way, but I can certainly adjust the alternatives
34 as you would like, if you would like to make that motion, but I
35 think I would need a motion at this stage. I'm not sure.

36
37 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Crabtree.

38
39 **DR. CRABTREE:** I am just trying to understand. Alternative 3
40 now requires that the doors have to be disconnected from the
41 bridle, right? Alternative 2 doesn't require the doors to be on
42 the deck. It just requires them to be hauled up. Now, is what
43 you're saying that you want to modify Alternative 3 to require
44 the doors to be on the deck, but not that you have to disconnect
45 the bridles from it?

46
47 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** I think Alternative 3 already requires them to
48 have the doors and the nets on the deck. To disconnect the net

1 from the door, it all has to be on the deck, and so it's already
2 -- It's not a new burden on the fishermen. It's actually less
3 of a burden, because they don't have to disconnect their gear,
4 which could stop them from having some problems reconnecting it,
5 if things were refastened wrong or a tickler chain was not put
6 exactly right, like it was before or something. Dr. Crabtree.

7
8 **DR. CRABTREE:** My confusion is, if we modify Alternative 3, how
9 is it different from 4? Alternative 4 has the doors have to be
10 on the deck, and they have to remove the bag straps. I guess I
11 need someone to explain to me exactly what the bag straps are,
12 but the bridle still remains connected to the doors in
13 Alternative 4, and is that right?

14
15 **DR. KILGOUR:** The bag straps are essentially what ties off the
16 cod end, and so, if you pull those out of the net, then they
17 can't trawl. It's basically a big open loop, and so it's what
18 ties off the cod end, or that's my understanding.

19
20 **DR. CRABTREE:** Is that not adequate though, Dale, to address the
21 concerns you raised about Alternative 3?

22
23 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** The removing the bag straps from the net is not
24 included in Alternative 3, Dr. Crabtree. It is a little
25 confusing, when you go to start looking at it. We're just
26 trying to put forth some options that are as simple as possible.

27
28 **MR. BLANKENSHIP:** I just don't think it's clear in Alternative 4
29 that the doors need to be on the deck. I think, if you make
30 that change in Alternative 3, I think you need to make it clear
31 in Alternative 4 that the doors and the trawl need to be on the
32 deck.

33
34 **MS. LEANN BOSARGE:** I was going to try not to talk during this
35 committee, but, if you all will remember when we were originally
36 looking at this, we only had -- We had no action, but then we
37 only had two alternatives, and, essentially, we said, look,
38 you've got to deck your doors and you have to disconnect
39 everything or you can just jack them up and have them out of the
40 water, have your nets out of the water.

41
42 It was like there was -- One was almost too lenient, but one was
43 too strict, and so what we tried to do was create a middle-of-
44 the-road alternative, where we said, all right, jack them up and
45 you don't have to deck your doors, but you have to take your bag
46 straps out, because, at that point, you're not ready to shrimp.
47 You're not ready to trawl. You don't have that in, and you're
48 not going to -- It was something that wouldn't be overly

1 burdensome to the fishermen. It would take a little bit of
2 time, but not overly burdensome, and it's not something that's
3 quite so tedious as disconnecting everything.

4

5 **DR. CRABTREE:** Leann, how long goes it take to remove the bag
6 straps from the net?

7

8 **MS. BOSARGE:** It depends on exactly how you have your bag straps
9 done, but maybe five minutes, at the most, or ten, maybe, if
10 it's a more tedious one, but about five minutes.

11

12 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Lieutenant Commander Danaher.

13

14 **LCDR LEO DANAHER:** I just wanted to offer a little bit of a
15 perspective here, because, per the manual that we're teaching
16 our law enforcement officers to enforce for some of the closed
17 areas, where you would be transiting and need to have gear
18 stowed, the transit definition pretty matches what you already
19 have written in these alternatives, but I would just say, from
20 the gear stowage perspective, the manual says a trawl net may
21 remain on the deck, but the trawl doors must be disconnected
22 from the trawl gear and must be secured.

23

24 If you're going to go beyond that, then I think you're just
25 taking more precautions on the proper transit and stowage of
26 gear through federal waters, but, if you choose to go less than
27 that, then you're essentially kind of creating caveats to what
28 we're teaching our officers to enforce.

29

30 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Lucas.

31

32 **DR. LUCAS:** I have a question for you, in that case. You read
33 it basically the same way of "may remain on the deck", and
34 should that not read "shall remain on the deck"? "May" kind of
35 leaves it open for can or cannot, versus shall and shall not.

36

37 **LCDR DANAHER:** It says the gear may remain on deck, but you
38 shall -- The trawl doors must be disconnected, and trawl gear
39 must be secured.

40

41 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Greene.

42

43 **MR. JOHNNY GREENE:** It takes five minutes to take them out, the
44 bag straps, and how long does it take to put them back in?

45

46 **MS. BOSARGE:** I was referring to putting them back in when I
47 said five minutes. That is going to be slightly more tedious,
48 the putting it back in. Taking it out, you just kind of pull it

1 out, and you're usually good to go. It's going to be a little
2 less time to take it out, but, essentially, we were trying to --
3 Dale, if you remember the conversation, and it was you that
4 brought it up, that sometimes decking your doors can be
5 dangerous.

6
7 If it's going to get rough and it is rough or something like
8 that, I mean hopefully you've planned ahead for this, and you
9 know you're about to go through federal waters, but that's what
10 we were trying to do, was find a middle-of-the-road thing, where
11 you don't have to deck your doors, necessarily, but you've got
12 to show somehow that you're not ready to shrimp. You are not
13 ready to put that net in the water and catch shrimp with it,
14 because you're not licensed to shrimp there.

15
16 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Crabtree.

17
18 **DR. CRABTREE:** I have been through this discussion pretty
19 extensively, and I do agree that putting the doors on the deck
20 and disconnecting them is dangerous under rough conditions and
21 not really what we want to require.

22
23 In Alternative 4, it doesn't require them to do that, and so the
24 doors can be hoisted, but they have to -- I am clarifying to
25 make sure that's what it means, because Chris brought up that it
26 wasn't clear. My read on Alternative 4 is it does not require
27 the doors to be on the deck. They can be lifted, but it does
28 require them to pull the bag straps, which I am glad to hear
29 that it takes a little bit of time to put it back in, because
30 that means it is going to be more effective in making sure
31 they're just transiting, and so it seems, to me, that
32 Alternative 4 is probably about the best we're going to be able
33 to come up with, if we want to do this, with balancing these
34 things.

35
36 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Crabtree and Mr. Blankenship, if Alternative
37 4 was worded exactly like Alternative 2, with the exception of
38 that we added that they had to remove the bag straps from the
39 net, then it seems to me like that would clarify it a lot,
40 because there is some confusion about what it means to have the
41 net remain on the deck. If that was reworded in that way and
42 just had that one change added to it, I think it would
43 accomplish what you're saying, and I believe what Mr.
44 Blankenship was referring to earlier. Is that correct?

45
46 **DR. CRABTREE:** I agree with you, Dale. I think that's how it
47 ought to be written, so it would be clear.

48

1 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Does that require a motion, Morgan, or, because
2 that's something just editorial, that you could do?
3
4 **DR. KILGOUR:** I can do that.
5
6 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** All right. Mr. Blankenship.
7
8 **MR. BLANKENSHIP:** If that's the case, you can just get rid of
9 Alternative 4 and just add in Alternative 2 that they would be
10 out of the water with the strap removed out of the bag.
11
12 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Chris, are you making a motion? Mr. Banks.
13
14 **MR. PATRICK BANKS:** I would prefer to change the wording in
15 Alternative 4 than to get rid of it all together, so that we add
16 some of the language that's in Alternative 2 to Alternative 4,
17 so that it's clear that we address the doors specifically in
18 Alternative 4.
19
20 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** If we change the language like we were talking
21 about, and make it like it was in Alternative 2 and just add
22 where you remove the straps, it doesn't address doors in
23 Alternative 4, if that's what -- I am just trying to recollect
24 what we were talking about previously, Mr. Banks. Am I correct
25 on that? Mara.
26
27 **MS. LEVY:** I would just ask that you make a motion, because
28 there's a lot of discussion, and I think a lot of confusion,
29 about what exactly the committee wants to do. If you make a
30 motion and you discuss it and you vote on it, it will be a lot
31 clearer for staff on the record of exactly what to do.
32
33 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Lucas.
34
35 **DR. LUCAS:** I would like to make a motion in Alternative 4 -- If
36 you can just paste what Alternative 4 reads up there, and then
37 we can just change the last sentence, I think. **My motion is, in**
38 **Action 6, to change Alternative 2 to read as follows and remove**
39 **Alternative 4. A vessel possessing shrimp may transit Gulf**
40 **federal waters without a federal vessel permit if the fishing**
41 **gear is appropriately stowed. Transit means non-stop**
42 **progression through the area. Fishing gear appropriately stowed**
43 **means the trawl doors and the nets must be out of the water, but**
44 **the bag straps must be removed from the net.**
45
46 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Lucas made a motion. Is there a second? We
47 have a second.
48

1 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Use the word "and" instead of
2 "but".
3
4 **DR. KILGOUR:** That's right the way it is.
5
6 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Did somebody second that? It's seconded by Mr.
7 Blankenship. Now we have a motion. Any discussion on the
8 motion?
9
10 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Again, it reads better if you say
11 "and the nets must be out of the water, and the bag straps must
12 be removed from the net." Rather than "but".
13
14 **DR. LUCAS:** That is fine.
15
16 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any further discussion on the motion? Mr.
17 Walker.
18
19 **MR. DAVID WALKER:** I am not on your committee, but one thing is,
20 where it says transit means non-stop progression through the
21 area, what if -- A lot of times, I will have fuel filter
22 problems and have to stop, and that's not progression, and I
23 didn't know if you take that into consideration, but you could
24 have mechanical or some type of fuel filter go out and you have
25 to go down and change it and the Coast Guard shows up and there
26 is no progression going.
27
28 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Crabtree.
29
30 **DR. CRABTREE:** In my view, that's where officer discretion comes
31 in. If the guy stops, he better have a really good reason.
32
33 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Sanchez.
34
35 **MR. JOHN SANCHEZ:** Thank you. I agree completely with the
36 change, but just should it be under Alternative 4, where we
37 started, rather than 2, so we're not changing the AP's
38 preferred? I am just throwing that out there, if that matters
39 at all.
40
41 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Kilgour, can you comment on that?
42
43 **DR. KILGOUR:** The AP never saw Alternative 4. That was added
44 after they saw the document. From what they discussed, I think
45 they would be amendable to this modification. That's why they
46 chose this instead of Alternative 3, was they thought that
47 Alternative 3 was too restrictive.
48

1 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Lieutenant Commander Danaher.
2
3 **LCDR DANAHER:** I just wanted to address Mr. Walker's comment.
4 Safety of life at sea is paramount. The regulations are in
5 place across the board to try and prevent illegal activity, but,
6 if you're out there and it's a deteriorating situation on your
7 vessel, and you can articulate to us that, hey, I'm concerned
8 about the safety of my vessel and my crew, that's pretty much
9 going to take paramount over the other regulations.
10
11 You were out there transiting legitimately, and you ran into some
12 machinery or other types of complications, and so I agree with
13 Dr. Crabtree. It really comes down to that judgment there from
14 the officer.
15
16 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Okay. Any other discussion? **Seeing no**
17 **discussion, all in favor, raise your hands, please.**
18
19 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Nine.
20
21 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** All opposed, like sign.
22
23 **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR GREGORY:** Zero.
24
25 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** The motion carries. Any other discussion on
26 Action 6? Dr. Kilgour.
27
28 **DR. KILGOUR:** That takes us through this document, and so the
29 last thing was Dr. Hart was going to give us a very, very brief
30 update on the effort for 2015, since we're over time.
31
32 **OTHER BUSINESS**
33
34 **DR. HART:** That's correct. I am ready whenever you guys are.
35
36 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Okay, Dr. Hart. Whenever you're ready. Thank
37 you.
38
39 **DR. HART:** Thank you. I am just giving a quick update of the
40 shrimp fishing effort for 2015. Just a little background, for
41 some of the folks that may not be too familiar with this update,
42 Gulf of Mexico commercial fishing effort in the ten to thirty-
43 fathom zone of Stat Areas 10 through 21 was found to be directly
44 correlated with juvenile red snapper bycatch mortality.
45
46 To address this mortality issue, the Gulf of Mexico Joint Reef
47 Fish Amendment 27 and Shrimp Amendment 14 established an initial
48 target reduction goal of red snapper juvenile mortality of 74

1 percent below the benchmark years of 2001 and 2003. This goal
2 was reduced to a requirement of reducing mortality by 67 percent
3 beginning in 2011.

4
5 The FMP requires an annual report to the council showing the
6 current effort level compared to these 2001 and 2003 benchmark
7 years and the 2007 depth zone of Stat Areas 10 through 21, and
8 so that's what I am going to show you today.

9
10 In 2015, shrimp fishing effort in the ten to thirty-fathom zone
11 of Stat Areas 10 to 21 equaled 23,443 days fished. This equates
12 to a 71.7 percent reduction from the baseline effort period, and
13 so the reduction in effort for 2015 is greater than the required
14 threshold level, and so that's good news, in terms of effort
15 reduction.

16
17 In 2015, total effort in the fishery equaled 104,046 days
18 fished. That is also below that turtle effort cap. Offshore
19 effort equaled 59,383 days fished, and inshore effort equaled
20 44,663 days fished.

21
22 This is just the standard kind of legacy table with the graphs
23 that we show every year. It's just showing the goal on the two
24 figures on the bottom for Stat Zones 10 through 21, 10 through
25 30, and Stat Zones 13 to 21, ten to thirty-fathom zones, showing
26 that the effort was reduced by at least 67 percent. Like I
27 said, last year, it was reduced by almost 72 percent, and so
28 that's the effort report, and so that's good news for the shrimp
29 fishery. They are below the effort threshold, and so I will
30 take any questions that you might have.

31
32 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thank you, Dr. Hart. Any questions for Dr.
33 Hart? Seeing none, that concludes the Shrimp Management
34 Committee work for today.

35
36 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on October 17, 2016.)

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