



Public Hearing Guide

September, 2015



Shrimp Amendment 17A - Shrimp Permit Moratorium and Royal Red Shrimp Endorsement



The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council and National Marine Fisheries Service began managing the shrimp fishery in the Gulf of Mexico in 1981. Four species are included in the management plan: brown shrimp, pink shrimp, white shrimp, and royal red shrimp.

Photos courtesy of: Florida Sea Grant, NOAA Fisheries
Photo Library, Primo Fish, and Emily Muehlstein

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What is a Public Hearing?

A public hearing is held at the end of the fishery management plan process and gives the public a chance to comment on a fishery management plan or amendment that the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council is developing. Public hearings are held after the Council has selected a preferred alternative for each proposed action in the plan or amendment. Public comments should focus on the alternatives in each action.

How does a public hearing affect fisheries management?

The comments you give during the public hearing process are presented to the Council before final action is taken. Suggestions, issues, and concerns expressed during the public hearing process are presented to the Council for review and consideration as the Council deliberates and chooses the most appropriate management measures to address the issues at hand.



Federal Commercial Shrimp Permit Moratorium:

There is currently a moratorium on federal commercial shrimp permits, meaning no new permits are being issued. The permit moratorium is scheduled to expire October 26, 2016. The Council is considering whether to allow the moratorium to expire, extend the moratorium, or create a limited access permit.

The federal commercial permit for harvesting shrimp in the federal waters was established in 2001. The shrimp fishery has experienced economic losses due to high fuel costs, reduced shrimp prices, and an increase in shrimp imports, all of which contributed to a reduction in the number of vessels participating in the fishery.

In October 2006, the Council established a shrimp permit moratorium to ensure that the fishery would remain profitable for the participants remaining in the fishery. When the moratorium was put into place there were 1,933 permits issued. Since then, 463 permits that were not renewed within one year of their expiration or have been surrendered, and have been removed from the fishery. As of December 31, 2014, there were 1,470 permits remaining.

Action 1: Address the Expiration of the Federal Shrimp Permit Moratorium in the Gulf of Mexico

Alternative 1: No Action – Allow the moratorium to expire on October 26, 2016. Commercial shrimp vessel permits will become open access and available to eligible applicants.

Preferred Alternative 2: Extend the moratorium for:

Option a: 5 years

Preferred option b: 10 years

Alternative 3: Create a federal limited access permit for commercial shrimp vessels in the Gulf. Vessels must have a valid or renewable federal Gulf commercial shrimp permit on October 26, 2016 to be eligible for the limited access permit.



Royal Red Shrimp Endorsement

In 2006, a royal red shrimp endorsement was created for federally permitted shrimp vessels to harvest royal red shrimp commercially. Its main purpose was to help inform data collectors about who is targeting royal red shrimp. Currently, there are a large number of endorsements but only a small number of active royal red shrimping vessels. It's unclear if the endorsement accomplishes its desired goal of enhancing data collection, so the Council is considering whether to continue to require a royal red shrimp endorsement to harvest royal red shrimp.



Action 2: Royal Red Shrimp Endorsement

Alternative 1: No Action – Continue to require a royal red shrimp endorsement for commercial harvest of royal red shrimp.

Alternative 2: Eliminate the requirement for a royal red shrimp endorsement.



Give Us Your Input

Before taking final action the Gulf Council would like to hear your thoughts and opinions on the proposed actions.

If you would like more information about the proposed changes watch the quick video at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PPMRDIuEHJQ>

The easiest and best way to comment is to visit:

<http://tinyurl.com/p8ondaa>.

You're also welcome email us your thoughts at:

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