



Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

Managing Fishery Resources in the U.S. Federal Waters of the Gulf of Mexico

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September 7, 2022

Dr. Clay Porch
Southeast Fisheries Science Center
National Marine Fisheries Service
75 Virginia Beach Dr.
Miami, Florida 33149

Dear Dr. Porch,

During its June 2022 meeting, The Gulf of Mexico (Gulf) Fishery Management Council (Council) discussed low compliance rates for returning Secure Digital (SD) cards from shrimp cellular electronic logbook (cELB) units. In an effort to assist with outreach to promote SD card return, the Council convened its Outreach and Education Technical Committee and charged it with developing communications recommendations to promote SD card return from the federal shrimp fleet. During its August 2022 meeting, the Gulf Council reviewed and approved the following recommendations:

Modifications to NOAA Mailings

- Since there is no mechanism to account for inactive boats, SD card mailings should include postcards that allow operators to complete no-fishing reports if they have not been shrimping since the last SD card return effort.
- Targeted letters should be sent to individual operators who have repeatedly been non-compliant.

Face-to-Face Outreach

- Shrimp gear experts at NOAA's Pascagoula, Mississippi Lab should promote SD card return during their scheduled workshops.
- Commercial port agents should promote SD card return when they encounter shrimp vessels.
- Shrimp observers should also promote SD card return, if possible.
- Sea Grant agents should promote SD card return, when possible.

Print and Multi-Media Materials

- Materials should explain why compliance is important. This should include examples of how vessel position data has been used to preserve access to historical fishing grounds and how it may be used in future siting of wind energy, aquaculture, or artificial reefs.
- Materials should note that manually mailing SD cards is a stop-gap measure until a new vessel position data collection program is implemented.
- Materials should be distributed through the following avenues:

Print materials

- Sea Grant agents who work with shrimpers
- NOAA Commercial port agents
- Pascagoula Lab gear experts
- State and Federal Law Enforcement agents for compliance assistance
- State agency outreach staff
- Regional and local shrimp associations

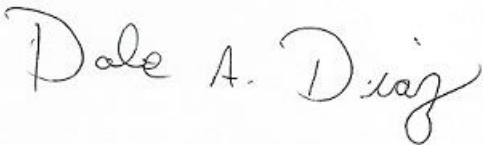
Online materials

- Gulf Council website
- Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission website
- NOAA Fisheries website
- Gulf state websites and social media
- Louisiana Fisheries
- Shrimpers of the South (Facebook)
- Shrimp Boat Enthusiasts (Facebook)
- Regional and local shrimp associations

Finally, it was suggested that materials be developed and face-to-face efforts be coordinated prior to the next mailing of SD cards in January 2023. Coordinating the timing of this outreach strategy with one of the biannual collections of SD cards should enhance return rates.

The Gulf Council would also like to offer its support in these endeavors. In addition to sharing materials and messaging across our communication network, we would be happy to help develop materials and messaging to promote SD card return until a new shrimp vessel position data collection program is implemented. Please contact Ms. Emily Muehlstein, of Council staff, or email me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Dale A. Diaz". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Dale Diaz
Council Chair

cc: Council Members / Council Staff / Rebecca Smith / Alan Lowther, Ph.D. /
David Gloeckner, Ph.D. / John Walter / Katie Siegfried, Ph.D. / Lew Coggins, Ph.D.