

GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

SHRIMP MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Hyatt Regency Birmingham Birmingham, Alabama

APRIL 5, 2017

**VOTING MEMBERS**

- Dale Diaz.....Mississippi
- Kevin Anson (designee for Chris Blankenship).....Alabama
- Patrick Banks.....Louisiana
- Roy Crabtree.....NMFS, SERO, St. Petersburg, Florida
- Pamela Dana.....Florida
- John Greene.....Alabama
- Kelly Lucas (designee for Jamie Miller).....Mississippi
- Lance Robinson (designee for Robin Riechers).....Texas
- John Sanchez.....Florida

**NON-VOTING MEMBERS**

- Leann Bosarge.....Mississippi
- Doug Boyd.....Texas
- LCDR Leo Danaher.....USCG
- Dave Donaldson.....GSMFC
- Tom Frazer.....Florida
- Martha Guyas (designee for Nick Wiley).....Florida
- Campo Matens.....Louisiana
- Greg Stunz.....Texas
- Ed Swindell.....Louisiana
- David Walker.....Alabama

**STAFF**

- Steven Atran.....Senior Fishery Biologist
- Matt Freeman.....Economist
- John Froeschke.....Fishery Biologist-Statistician
- Douglas Gregory.....Executive Director
- Karen Hoak.....Administrative & Financial Assistant
- Morgan Kilgour.....Fishery Biologist
- Ava Lasseter.....Anthropologist
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- Camilla Shireman.....Administrative Assistant
- Carrie Simmons.....Deputy Director

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- Avery Bates.....Organized Seafood Association, AL

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2 Chris Conklin.....SAFMC  
3 Tim Essington.....University of Washington, WA  
4 Tracy Floyd.....MDMR  
5 Susan Gerhart.....NMFS  
6 Rick Hart.....NMFS  
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9 Joe Nash.....Orange Beach, AL  
10 Bart Niquet.....Panama City, FL  
11 Corky Perret.....MS  
12 Clay Porch.....SEFSC  
13 Bill Staff.....Orange Beach, AL  
14 Thao Vu.....MS Coalition for Vietnamese American Fisher Folks, MS  
15 Dale Woodruff.....Orange Beach, AL

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1  
2  
3 Table of Contents.....3  
4  
5 Table of Motions.....4  
6  
7 Adoption of Agenda and Approval of Minutes.....5  
8  
9 Action Guide and Next Steps.....5  
10  
11 Biological Review of the Texas Closure.....5  
12  
13 Review of Updated Stock Assessments.....7  
14     Presentation.....7  
15     SSC Summary Report.....12  
16  
17 Summary of the Shrimp Advisory Panel.....13  
18  
19 Final Action on Shrimp Amendment 17B.....20  
20     Public Comments.....20  
21     Review of Amendment.....25  
22     Codified Text.....30  
23  
24 Other Business.....32  
25  
26 Adjournment.....32  
27

TABLE OF MOTIONS

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
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PAGE 13: Motion to recommend that the Texas closure out to 200 miles run concurrent with the date the State of Texas recommends for the 2017 shrimp season. The motion carried on page 14.

PAGE 31: Motion to recommend the council approve Shrimp Amendment 17B and that it be forwarded to the Secretary of Commerce for review and implementation, and deem the codified text as necessary and appropriate, giving staff editorial license to make the necessary changes in the document. The Council Chair is given the authority to deem any changes to the codified text as necessary and appropriate. The motion carried on page 31.

- - -

1 The Shrimp Management Committee of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery  
2 Management Council convened at the Hyatt Regency Birmingham,  
3 Birmingham, Alabama, Wednesday morning, April 5, 2017, and was  
4 called to order by Chairman Dale Diaz.

5  
6 **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**  
7 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**  
8 **ACTION GUIDE AND NEXT STEPS**  
9

10 **CHAIRMAN DALE DIAZ:** I would like to call the Shrimp Management  
11 Committee to order. I would like to start off just by reading  
12 the membership of the committee. I am the Chair. Mr. Banks is  
13 the Vice Chair. Mr. Anson, Dr. Crabtree, Dr. Dana, Mr. Greene,  
14 Dr. Lucas, Mr. Robinson, and Mr. Sanchez are on the committee.

15  
16 I would like to make a note that Mr. Corky Perret is here. He  
17 is the Shrimp AP Chairman, and I think he's going to weigh in  
18 later and give some comments related to the Shrimp Advisory  
19 Panel. Let's start off by going over the agenda. Are there any  
20 additions to the agenda or any other business or any  
21 modifications? Any opposition to adopting the agenda? Seeing  
22 none, the agenda is adopted.

23  
24 Next up is the minutes. Are there any modifications, edits, or  
25 corrections to the minutes? Seeing none, is there any  
26 opposition to adopting the minutes? Seeing no opposition, the  
27 minutes are adopted.

28  
29 There is an action guide in the briefing book. If you would  
30 like to look at it as we go through the agenda today, you are  
31 welcome to do so. First up on the agenda, we're going to have  
32 the Biological Review of the Texas Closure by Dr. Hart.

33  
34 **BIOLOGICAL REVIEW OF THE TEXAS CLOSURE**  
35

36 **DR. RICK HART:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am going to give a  
37 review of the Texas closure. As most of you may know, the  
38 fisheries management plan implemented in 1981 for the EEZ, with  
39 the closure, the goal was to increase the yield of brown shrimp  
40 harvested from offshore Texas waters.

41  
42 Historically, the closure runs from mid-May to mid-July. Since  
43 1990, the near-shore, those depths less than four fathoms, has  
44 also been closed, and so what we look at is the offshore catch  
45 for those months and see how the shrimp have grown. Last year,  
46 in 2016, the catch was below average. Most of the shrimp, as  
47 you can see, were harvested in August of this year.

1 If we look by month, for May through August, if we look at the  
2 size distribution, most of the shrimp are in the larger or  
3 smaller count categories, the majority of them in the twenty-six  
4 to thirty count, which is really the objective of the closure,  
5 is to allow those shrimp to grow to larger, more marketable,  
6 sizes.

7  
8 Also, we look at the distribution of landings in various ports.  
9 Upper Texas ports saw a small increase in landings, in Jefferson  
10 County, and a slight decrease in Kemah. The other ports pretty  
11 much had a similar distribution. Galveston and some of the  
12 other ports had a similar distribution of the landings to the  
13 last few years.

14  
15 One port in the middle ports, Palacios, saw a large increase in  
16 landings. Brazoria, the Freeport area, had quite a large  
17 decrease in landings. They went from 3 percent of the landings  
18 down to less than 0.2 percent. There was evidently some of the  
19 people from Florida that would come over here and fish, and they  
20 did not come over last year, and so a lot of those landings  
21 didn't occur. The other ports, the other middle ports, are low  
22 in proportion to landings, but stable compared to previous  
23 years.

24  
25 When we look at the lower Texas ports, Brownsville had a slight  
26 decrease in landings, and the other lower Texas ports, Port  
27 Isabelle and Aransas, had similar landing proportions as last  
28 year.

29  
30 When we also look at the white shrimp catch, and this is July  
31 offshore, white shrimp catch for 2016, most of the catch was in  
32 the fifteen to twenty size category, and so the white shrimp  
33 they're catching are the larger ones. When we look at the white  
34 shrimp offshore catch for August, a large increase from last  
35 year, but still below the long-term average. When we look at  
36 the August catch, the long-term mean is 526,000 pounds, but,  
37 last year, they harvested 458,000, and so it was close to the  
38 long-term mean, but still below it.

39  
40 Based on the prediction model last spring, that model predicted  
41 environmental factors were above average, but it predicted that  
42 brown shrimp catch would be below the long-term average catch.  
43 Brown shrimp sizes off of Texas though were large, and only  
44 about 0.7 percent of the count of the shrimp were in the greater  
45 than sixty-seven size count category.

46  
47 We also saw some changes in the distribution, with the one port  
48 having a large decrease in landings, but the model that

1 Pascagoula does, the SEAMAP cruises, saw an increase in yield  
2 with the Texas closure, depending on mortality rates, from zero  
3 to 13 percent, and so it is doing what it was intended to do.

4  
5 White shrimp catch off of Texas is below average, was below  
6 average, for both July and August this last year, but still more  
7 shrimp harvested than last year. With that, I would entertain  
8 any questions on the closure.

9  
10 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any questions for Dr. Hart? I have one  
11 question, Dr. Hart. I know it's early, but how are conditions  
12 looking so far this spring, or is it too early to ask that  
13 question?

14  
15 **DR. HART:** I would say it's probably too early right now.

16  
17 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** If there is no questions for Dr. Hart, we can  
18 move on to the next agenda item, Dr. Hart.

19  
20 **DR. HART:** We haven't started doing the Baxter Bait Surveys yet,  
21 where we go out and start sampling at the bait camps. That will  
22 start here in the next few weeks.

23  
24 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Hart, we can move on to the next agenda  
25 item, which would be Review of the Updated Stock Assessments for  
26 Pink, White, and Brown Shrimp.

27  
28 **REVIEW OF THE UPDATED STOCK ASSESSMENTS**  
29 **PRESENTATION**

30  
31 **DR. HART:** This, I want to clarify in the title, the assessment  
32 was conducted in 2016 using 2015 data, and so I know that Morgan  
33 mentioned that some people had questions about that, the title  
34 of that, and so it's the 2016 assessment for the 2015 fishing  
35 year, to be clear.

36  
37 We now, as you know, have moved the shrimp assessments out of  
38 the old VPA into Stock Synthesis. The assessment that I am  
39 going to show today is providing updates for spawning stock  
40 biomass and fishing mortality compared to spawning stock biomass  
41 at MSY and FMSY.

42  
43 The pink shrimp assessment is done on shrimp catch from Stat  
44 Zones 1 through 11, while the brown and white shrimp assessments  
45 are Stat Zones 7 through 21. This is just a stat zone map. The  
46 pink shrimp fishery is mostly off of Florida, in the Panhandle,  
47 while white shrimp and brown shrimp are Stat Zones 7 through 21,  
48 the upper Gulf.

1  
2 The pink shrimp model is just an update. It is using 1984  
3 through 2015 monthly catch, in pounds of tails. It's also  
4 monthly catch by size categories and a monthly catch rate. We  
5 also incorporate SEAMAP data in the assessments. For the pink  
6 shrimp, we use 1987 through 2015, summer and fall survey data.  
7 We use the catch by size and the nominal CPUE index that is  
8 calculated from those surveys. We also use the 2008 through  
9 2015 summer and fall survey data, the delta log normal CPUE  
10 index, for that stock.

11  
12 For the brown shrimp model, the same time series of 1984 through  
13 2015, the same data as the pink. It's monthly catch of pounds  
14 of tails and catch by size category and catch rate, and we have  
15 a fisheries-independent index from 1984 through 2015. We use  
16 Louisiana monthly shrimp trawls, their western subset samples.  
17 They provide that catch by size and their delta lognormal CPUE  
18 index for those. In addition, we use 1987 through 2015 SEAMAP  
19 summer and fall survey data, the catch by size, as well as the  
20 delta lognormal catch rate index.

21  
22 For the white shrimp model, it's the same time series and data  
23 type as the brown shrimp. It's catch from 1984 to 2015, pounds  
24 of tails by month, and catch by size by month, monthly catch  
25 rate, and, again, we use -- The State of Louisiana provides me  
26 with their shrimp trawl survey results, catch by size and delta  
27 lognormal CPUE index, and we also use the SEAMAP summer and fall  
28 surveys, catch by size and CPUE index.

29  
30 I will go through the pink shrimp first and then brown and then  
31 white. Pink shrimp can spawn and recruit throughout the year.  
32 The current assessment model models these parameters on a  
33 continuous basis, and so we had a workshop, the SSC workshop, on  
34 how to calculate MSY indexes. What we have decided upon doing  
35 is we calculate an annual SSB at MSY by multiplying the terminal  
36 benchmark year in the Stock Synthesis Model by twelve, because  
37 that gives us an annual spawning stock biomass at MSY.

38  
39 This results in an annual SSB MSY of 23.6 million pounds of  
40 tails, and, similarly, we do the same thing with the FMSY. We  
41 get a terminal year FMSY for the benchmark year and multiply  
42 that times twelve to get an annual FMSY benchmark, and we  
43 compare that to the terminal year of the updated assessment.  
44 The FMSY reference point for the overfishing index is 1.35.

45  
46 This is just a figure of the shrimp landings and effort for 1984  
47 through 2015. This is directed effort, and so those trips with  
48 greater than 90 percent of the catch was pink shrimp. We can

1 see that effort last year increased quite a bit, as well as  
2 landings went up a little bit.

3  
4 Spawning stock biomass was equal to 86.9 million pounds, well  
5 above the overfished reference point for last year. The F  
6 estimate was at 0.2, which is well below the reference point for  
7 overfishing, and so no indication of overfishing occurring in  
8 the stock.

9  
10 The brown shrimp model is parameterized a little different than  
11 the pink and the white. It's an annual model with seasons. We  
12 get an annual SSB MSY out of that model. That is equal to 6.1  
13 million pounds of tails, and an FMSY of a little over nine.

14  
15 This is directed effort in brown shrimp landings. There was an  
16 increase in effort last year and a small increase in landings.  
17 The SSB decreased a little bit, but it was equal to 74.4 million  
18 pounds of tails, well above the SSB MSY estimate reference  
19 point. Fishing mortality was low, at 1.55, well below the  
20 reference point for overfishing, and so that stock seems to be  
21 in pretty good shape.

22  
23 The white shrimp SSB MSY and FMSY estimates, similar to the pink  
24 shrimp, we multiply the terminal year SSB at MSY terminal year  
25 of the benchmark assessment by twelve to get an annual SSB at  
26 MSY. That results in 365.6 million pounds of tails. Similarly,  
27 we do the same with the FMSY, and we have a benchmark of 3.48  
28 for the overfishing reference point.

29  
30 White shrimp directed effort and landings, there was a large  
31 increase in white shrimp directed effort last year, and landings  
32 were down a little bit, and so catch rates were down. Spawning  
33 stock biomass declined last year, but still above the reference  
34 point for an overfished condition. Fishing mortality increased  
35 a little, or actually dropped a little bit, but it's still below  
36 the reference point. It was equal to 1.74.

37  
38 In conclusion, all three stocks are below the overfishing and  
39 above the overfished index, and so we don't see any issues with  
40 the stocks right now. As I say, SSB was greater than the  
41 overfished, and fishing mortality was under the overfishing  
42 reference points.

43  
44 With that, just some acknowledgements of Dr. Methot and Dr.  
45 Nance. As you guys know, Dr. Nance retired last Friday, and so  
46 those are large shoes to fill there, but he was very, very much  
47 a part of revising these assessments. With that, I am happy to  
48 entertain question.

1  
2 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any questions for Dr. Hart? We are going to  
3 greatly miss Dr. Nance, and so we appreciate all of his hard  
4 work over the years. Ms. Bosarge.  
5  
6 **MS. LEANN BOSARGE:** Just a quick question. In that model, and I  
7 forget the term that you use for this, but there is like --  
8 Sometimes, in some models, there is a bias in the very last year  
9 of the -- Is it called a terminal year bias or something like  
10 that? Does that model have that every once in a while, a little  
11 bit of a terminal year bias?  
12  
13 **DR. HART:** Well, we have been thinking more about this.  
14 Actually, at the last SSC meeting, Jim and I were talking about  
15 how we ended up calculating that. I wouldn't say it's a bias,  
16 per se, but the way the white shrimp model -- The terminal year  
17 turns out that it's the last month of the time series, and so  
18 it's December, and so what that may result in is we're using  
19 that terminal year as the SSB MSY and multiplying that times  
20 twelve.  
21  
22 That is right at the height of the season, and so that is  
23 something that, when we do a new -- I don't know when it comes  
24 up, when we redo the assessments. That is something to look at  
25 again, on picking the terminal year, because, the way we're  
26 modeling it right now, Stock Synthesis is thinking that each of  
27 the months is treated as a year in the model, and so, if you  
28 have two years of data, it thinks there is twenty-four years in  
29 the model. Does that answer your question?  
30  
31 **MS. BOSARGE:** Yes, it does, and I don't see it as a huge issue.  
32 I mean, everything is fine, and, the next year, it will  
33 essentially correct itself, because it's just that terminal  
34 year, and so it will show you what happened. I am fine with it,  
35 but I just wondered. I saw that change, and I thought, hmmm.  
36  
37 **DR. HART:** It's something that I am going to talk with Rick  
38 Methot and maybe Clay's group about how we are treating that and  
39 extrapolating the FMSY and the SSB MSY.  
40  
41 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any other questions for Dr. Hart? Mr. Swindell.  
42  
43 **MR. ED SWINDELL:** I look at this fishery management plan on  
44 shrimp, and it's probably one of the longest running, if not the  
45 longest running, plan that the council has ever had. Have we  
46 ever done a real analysis of the benefits?  
47  
48 I mean, it looks to me like it's been beneficial over the

1 history of time, at least in the amount of shrimp that's been  
2 caught and delivered, but has it been beneficial to all the  
3 socioeconomic aspects that the plan is supposed to have? I am  
4 just curious whether or not the council has ever done an in-  
5 depth review of everything, to make sure everything is as good  
6 as it looks, from a fishery management council perspective. I  
7 like the results. I think they're good, and I don't think  
8 there's been many changes. Has there been any changes in the  
9 closure during the years?

10  
11 **DR. HART:** Is that a question directed at me? I can't speak for  
12 the council investigating the utility of it, but I know that  
13 point was raised at the Shrimp AP meeting, about evaluating the  
14 Texas closure again. It was done in the 1990s, an economic  
15 review of the efficacy, I guess, of the closure, the EEZ  
16 closure, and so I don't know if that gained traction. Maybe  
17 someone from the council could speak to that.

18  
19 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** I see our Shrimp AP Chairman had his hand up.  
20 Corky.

21  
22 **MR. CORKY PERRET:** Thank you very much, Mr. Diaz. I guess Mr.  
23 Swindell is going back to years and years ago, when the Texas  
24 closure was first put into effect. It was a very controversial  
25 issue. The State of Louisiana sued the government and all that  
26 good stuff, and Texas entered into the lawsuit as a friend of  
27 the court, and that was one of the -- Louisiana lost the  
28 lawsuit.

29  
30 One of the things that was done back then was the economic  
31 analysis, and it has not been done in a number of years, and, at  
32 the recent Shrimp Advisory Panel meeting, we had that very  
33 discussion, and one of the motions we passed, and I know all of  
34 you read everything that you get, but, in the Shrimp Advisory  
35 Panel minutes, there is a motion by the AP to ask for an  
36 economic analysis, and so we will be presenting that to you, and  
37 I am glad that Mr. Swindell is going to lead the effort to  
38 support getting that economic analysis done. Thank you.  
39 Anything else on that? Thank you.

40  
41 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thank you, Mr. Perret.

42  
43 **MR. PERRET:** While I am here, Mr. Diaz asked about the upcoming  
44 brown shrimp season. Tomorrow, Louisiana and Mississippi will  
45 be giving their prediction, and it is early, at the American  
46 Shrimp Processors Association meeting.

47  
48 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Swindell.

1  
2 **MR. SWINDELL:** I just wonder, over the period of time, as we  
3 manage all these fisheries and things environmentally change in  
4 the Gulf of Mexico, as we know it, I am just wondering if we're  
5 really staying on top of the shrimp plan to make certain that we  
6 are still doing the right thing for the closure and everything,  
7 and that's all I was asking.

8  
9 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any further questions? Seeing none, thank you,  
10 Dr. Hart. We appreciate your hard work and you traveling over  
11 to be with us today.

12  
13 **DR. HART:** Thank you.

14  
15 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Next up on the agenda is the SSC Summary Report  
16 and Dr. Barbieri.

17  
18 **SSC SUMMARY REPORT**  
19

20 **DR. LUIZ BARBIERI:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman and council members.  
21 I actually don't have a formal presentation for this. This is  
22 going to be a very short discussion of the SSC's evaluation of  
23 these stock assessments and discussion of the issues that have  
24 to do with the stock assessments and the catch advice for  
25 shrimp, the three shrimp species in the Gulf.

26  
27 The committee reviewed all three of the assessments and felt  
28 that they represent the best scientific information available.  
29 There are complexities there with shrimp life cycle, life  
30 history, and population dynamics that are difficult to capture  
31 in a framework driven by MSY, and Dr. Hart, I think, did a great  
32 job explaining some of the adjustments to the stock assessment  
33 model, as they are implemented now, to sort of account for those  
34 challenges.

35  
36 Overall, we feel that most of the concerns that we've had in the  
37 past regarding these assessments have been properly addressed,  
38 and the committee is very comfortable with the results of the  
39 assessments at this point.

40  
41 The last year of that time series, Madam Chairman, is always a  
42 concern for any stock assessment. Those last points in the  
43 distribution are more uncertain than the other ones, but, as you  
44 correctly pointed out, those issues are going to be self-  
45 corrected, hopefully, next year, and so the main points of  
46 discussion had to do with changes in the fishery over time,  
47 regarding TEDs, implementation of TEDs, and BRDs and trying to  
48 understand how those things perhaps changed the landings time

1 series and explain some of the changes in catchability of  
2 shrimp.

3  
4 Then there were some discussion points about the influence of  
5 environmental parameters, which are not yet explicitly accounted  
6 for in this stock assessment, and so Dr. Hart explained to us  
7 that this is the next step.

8  
9 Yesterday, when I mentioned the agency's comment on the improved  
10 stock assessment plan that they are trying to push forward now,  
11 this is one of the issues, to be more inclusive of  
12 environmental, ecological, and ecosystem-level parameters, to  
13 help us understand the role that they play in changes in the  
14 dynamics of the population.

15  
16 That is a work in progress. We have an effort going on in the  
17 Gulf, and we are confident that we are going to make progress in  
18 that direction, and so, unless there are any other questions,  
19 Mr. Chairman, this completes my presentation.

20  
21 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thank you, Dr. Barbieri. Any questions for Dr.  
22 Barbieri? Thank you.

23  
24 **DR. BARBIERI:** Thank you, sir.

25  
26 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Next on the agenda, Dr. Kilgour is going to give  
27 us a Summary of the Shrimp Advisory Panel Meeting. Dr. Kilgour.

28  
29 **SUMMARY OF THE SHRIMP ADVISORY PANEL MEETING**

30  
31 **DR. MORGAN KILGOUR:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and good morning.  
32 The Shrimp Advisory Panel met in February of 2017. The first  
33 thing on the agenda was to discuss the biological review of the  
34 Texas closure.

35  
36 Dr. Hart just give a very good presentation, and so I am not  
37 going to rehash all of that, except for what the group  
38 discussed, which was how fishing has changed in Texas and how  
39 some differences observed in this year can be explained by poor  
40 environmental conditions and some vessels not fishing or landing  
41 in Texas.

42  
43 It was also clarified that Texas Parks and Wildlife determines  
44 the timing of the closure, but, after that presentation and the  
45 discussion, the Shrimp Advisory Panel made a motion to recommend  
46 that the Gulf Council continue the closure in conjunction with  
47 the State of Texas out to 200 nautical miles for 2017.

48

1 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** This would be a good time, I guess, if anybody  
2 wanted to make a motion. Mr. Robinson.  
3

4 **MR. LANCE ROBINSON:** I will make that motion, and I think the  
5 staff have that motion before you. The motion would be to  
6 recommend that the Texas closure out to 200 miles run concurrent  
7 with the date that the State of Texas recommends for the 2017  
8 shrimp season.  
9

10 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** We will wait until we get that on that board.  
11 In the meantime, is there a second to that motion? Second by  
12 Mr. Anson. Is that correct, Mr. Robinson?  
13

14 **MR. ROBINSON:** Yes, that's correct.  
15

16 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** All right. Any discussion on the motion?  
17 Seeing none, is there any opposition to the motion? The motion  
18 carries. Dr. Kilgour.  
19

20 **DR. KILGOUR:** After the AP made that motion, they discussed when  
21 was the last economic analysis completed, and they were told, as  
22 you were just a few minutes ago, that it had been many years.  
23 The AP discussed that they would like to see an economic  
24 analysis of the biological closure of Texas, and so they made --  
25 They would like to see that an economic yield should be used to  
26 describe the analysis with regard to either maximizing revenues  
27 or maximizing economic profits as the outcomes of the analysis.  
28 They made the motion to request NMFS to estimate the economic  
29 yield for the fishery from the Texas closure.  
30

31 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** We will pause there. Is there any committee  
32 discussion on the AP recommendation? Ms. Bosarge.  
33

34 **MS. BOSARGE:** It has been a long time since we've done that, and  
35 it sounds like it's something the AP is interested in. I don't  
36 know what the schedule is for that group within the agency, but  
37 maybe, if the committee is comfortable, we could write a letter  
38 or something and forward that request on to them, to the agency.  
39 We can't complete it here. It's got to come from them, and I  
40 don't know what their schedule looks like, but, at some point in  
41 the future, maybe that could be a priority for them.  
42

43 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Just to make sure, Dr. Porch, this economic  
44 analysis is something that would be done through the Science  
45 Center? Is that correct?  
46

47 **DR. CLAY PORCH:** It could be, and working with the Regional  
48 Office.

1  
2 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** All right. Any discussion on this from the  
3 committee? Seeing none, Dr. Kilgour.  
4  
5 **DR. KILGOUR:** For my own clarification, is this something that I  
6 need in the form of a motion or am I -- I just want to make sure  
7 that I'm doing things correctly. Do I write a letter and ask  
8 for this analysis? Do I need a motion for that? I am not quite  
9 sure.  
10  
11 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Ms. Bosarge.  
12  
13 **MS. BOSARGE:** I was the only one that seemed to be interested,  
14 and so, if there's not other people that are interested, don't -  
15 - One person does not lead the council, and so there would have  
16 to be some interest from the committee as a whole, and I'm not  
17 even on that committee.  
18  
19 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** I do think it's a good idea, and I concur with  
20 your discussion that you just put on the record, Ms. Bosarge. I  
21 think it would be a good idea to get the economic analysis too  
22 and to see what's the most efficient way to manage this  
23 resource. Dr. Lucas.  
24  
25 **DR. KELLY LUCAS:** From the committee also, I concur. I think  
26 it's a great thing, and so, if a letter is the best way to  
27 approach that, then we'll see if we can get staff to draft a  
28 letter.  
29  
30 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** All right. Then let's proceed that way. Does  
31 anybody on the committee have any objection to writing a letter  
32 requesting the economic study? That's how we will proceed. Dr.  
33 Kilgour.  
34  
35 **DR. KILGOUR:** The AP also discussed different countries and  
36 regions have different managing strategies, such as using  
37 seasonal closures, and that wasn't unanimous in favor of an  
38 additional closure, but they were interested in seeing an  
39 analysis of what would happen if the seasonal closure was  
40 extended to other areas and different timelines.  
41  
42 After a lot of discussion on whether or not an analysis would  
43 benefit them, they requested an updated analysis to examine a  
44 closure in Statistical Area 13 through 21, the Texas closure,  
45 with and without the adjacent state closures.  
46  
47 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any discussion from the committee? Seeing none,  
48 Dr. Kilgour.

1  
2 **DR. KILGOUR:** The committee was also presented with the updated  
3 stock assessments that you just received from Dr. Hart. They  
4 did not make any specific motions regarding this, but there was  
5 some concern with the white shrimp stock. If you look at the  
6 graph on the following page, you can see that the white shrimp  
7 stock has been declining, and it looks like it's approaching  
8 that overfished status, and so there was concern about that, but  
9 that is something that's going to just have to be monitored over  
10 time.

11  
12 The committee was also presented with an update on the new  
13 proposed TED rules. Mr. Barnette from the Southeast Regional  
14 Office came and gave a presentation on what the proposed rule  
15 was going to be, and there was a lot of discussion on the down-  
16 listing or de-listing of the Kemp's ridley sea turtle and what  
17 would be required for down-listing them.

18  
19 There was also discussion on the definition of effort for  
20 skimmer trawls, and it was clarified that this was primarily  
21 based on the number of permits, and the committee also discussed  
22 perhaps using alternative funding sources to help fund these  
23 newly-required TEDs, if the final rule goes through, by using  
24 NFWF or RESTORE Act money.

25  
26 The committee also reviewed Shrimp Amendment 17B and looked at  
27 the council's preferred alternatives for Action 4 and 5. They  
28 also concurred with the council's preferred alternatives. They  
29 made all of the council's preferred alternatives their preferred  
30 alternatives, and we will be going through 17B in just a bit.

31  
32 The last little bit was that staff provided the locations for  
33 the public hearings for Shrimp Amendment 17B. The AP felt that  
34 there should have been additional locations selected from  
35 Louisiana, and they made the motion to recommend that the  
36 council -- That future public hearings for any shrimp document  
37 include Abbeville and Belle Chasse, Louisiana in addition to  
38 Houma.

39  
40 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Ms. Bosarge.

41  
42 **MS. BOSARGE:** On that last motion, and I think we kind of talked  
43 about this, actually, around the table before we went out to  
44 those public hearings, and, at that point, and I even mentioned  
45 that there were some shrimpers from Florida that had called me  
46 and said, hey, can we not get a public hearing somewhere closer  
47 to the Tampa area or this or that.

1 Anyhow, at that point, it was too late to add another location.  
2 We couldn't get that on the schedule, but what we did with these  
3 public hearings, if you remember, is we doubled up and we did  
4 both Shrimp Amendment 17B and the coral scoping at the same  
5 time, and that's because we're under some budget constraints,  
6 that and time constraints.

7  
8 We had so many things that we were trying to send out to the  
9 public between meetings that we had to double up, or there was  
10 no way that we could get it all done, but I think, in the  
11 future, we're probably going to have more of that, where we're  
12 doubling up, because of budget constraints, to try and be  
13 efficient with our dollars.

14  
15 We're going to need to keep in mind that, if we do double up on  
16 things, for that reason, we still may have to add a few extra  
17 sites, and so we may scope or go out with two things at once,  
18 but like, in Louisiana, where maybe we would have only done two  
19 public hearings, we might need to do three or add an extra site  
20 that we wouldn't normally have gone to for one of those, to make  
21 sure we cover that whole area that we need to cover for the  
22 stakeholders. The same thing with Florida or any of the other  
23 states. I think that's something that we haven't done in a  
24 while, and we just need to be cognizant of it as we move  
25 forward.

26  
27 Then, while I have the mic, there was two motions they passed  
28 about analysis, some economic analysis, on closures. We talked  
29 about the first one, but, in the letter that you want us to  
30 write, do you want us to mention the other analysis that they  
31 requested too? Do you want us to request both analyses? They  
32 are kind of related to each other, and so I just didn't know.

33  
34 **DR. KILGOUR:** Staff is just looking for direction, and so, if  
35 that's what you would like included in the letter, than that's  
36 what will be included in the letter, I mean the committee.

37  
38 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Lucas.

39  
40 **DR. LUCAS:** I was just going to say that I am good with  
41 including both of those in the letter. I mean, I think they're  
42 pretty similar in nature.

43  
44 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thank you, Dr. Lucas. Mr. Perret, as the  
45 Chairman of the Shrimp AP, would you like to enlighten us on  
46 your take of the Shrimp AP meeting that was held?

47  
48 **MR. PERRET:** Thank you very much, Chairman Diaz. There were

1 several things. First, the AP appreciates the council following  
2 its advice on several things and following up with the motion  
3 you made and the letter you're going to write.

4  
5 Two or three things that I wanted to say though is there was  
6 some confusion by some of the AP members relative to how the  
7 dates of the Texas closure were established, and, Lance, correct  
8 me if I'm wrong, but, if I remember correctly, it has to do with  
9 Texas's monitoring program, and the closure is based on when  
10 peak immigration from inside waters go to offshore, and Texas  
11 gives a recommendation on that date. Then the council's closure  
12 goes with that, and so that was explained. That was one thing.

13  
14 The economic analysis, we discussed. The closure for other  
15 areas, in the original shrimp plan, there were some  
16 considerations for closures, and now remember that that was in  
17 the late 1970s, and the analysis was that there would not be any  
18 economic benefit and all that sort of stuff, and so that's why  
19 there were no closures proposed at that time, but that's been  
20 forty or fifty years ago, and things change. That's why some of  
21 the members were interested in possibly having or at least  
22 addressing the possibility of closures in other areas.

23  
24 I, being a former council member, was happy to point out that,  
25 in 17B, the council went along on Alternative 1, the aggregate  
26 MSY, and Alternative 2, aggregate OY, and then, on 3, the  
27 threshold on the number of permits. You all followed the AP's  
28 advice, as well as others, I am sure, but the AP members were  
29 happy to see that their input was addressed and you all followed  
30 along with that, and I'm sure Morgan will follow up and send us  
31 a report of what you're going to do tomorrow at the Full Council  
32 meeting, or today, with some of this material on shrimp.

33  
34 Then the last two alternatives in 17B, we went along with the  
35 council's recommendation, and so the AP and the council were  
36 together on all five of those recommendations.

37  
38 The AP wanted to acknowledge Dr. Nance's retirement, and the  
39 council and the AP will be presenting Dr. Nance with a plaque at  
40 his retirement ceremony on Friday in Galveston.

41  
42 Unfortunately, Dr. Hart, due to travel restraints, budgets and  
43 all that kind of stuff, was not able to be at the Shrimp  
44 Advisory Panel meeting, and there was all sorts of technology  
45 problems, as we so often have, and so, if it's at all possible  
46 in the future, for those types of meetings, if Dr. Hart or the  
47 appropriate person would be there to work with the AP, it would  
48 make it a lot easier and a lot better.

1  
2 I would be remiss if I didn't thank Morgan on behalf of the AP.  
3 She did an excellent job providing material and an explanation  
4 of the material when questions were asked, and so thank you,  
5 Morgan, for that.

6  
7 Just an observation I made this week when the Coral Committee  
8 and the Habitat Committee discussed the possibility of Amendment  
9 8, I think, but please have the representatives of the affected  
10 fisheries involved as early on as possible.

11  
12 I was amazed at the meeting we had with the Coral Technical  
13 Committee, the Coral AP, Shrimp AP, and I think we had some  
14 longliners there, but how much work we were able to get done by  
15 working together, and I think it solved a lot of problems for  
16 everybody, you people especially, in the long run, because I  
17 think we came out with a much better work product by having  
18 those groups work together rather than against each other. That  
19 is all I have at this time, unless there is any questions.

20  
21 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any questions for Mr. Perret? Dr. Lucas.

22  
23 **DR. LUCAS:** Thank you, Mr. Perret, for being here. I had a  
24 question in regards to some of the TEDs discussion you had for  
25 the skimmer trawls and the talk about how effort was calculated.  
26 Was there any concern among the group of how that was being  
27 determined?

28  
29 **MR. PERRET:** You and I must be thinking alike. I had a lot of  
30 concerns. The information that was provided was the number of  
31 skimmer trawls have increased tremendously. Well, of course  
32 it's increased tremendously, because there were none around X  
33 number of years ago.

34  
35 Like so many things we have to do with data-poor species, we  
36 had, I guess, a data-poor analysis, or the analysis of that was  
37 based on simply you started out with zero and then you went to  
38 whatever the numbers are now, and it was extrapolated, because -  
39 - Help me, Dr. Crabtree, if I misstate things now.

40  
41 So many turtles caught in skimmer trawls and so on, and then  
42 they extrapolate that out to the whole universe, and there was a  
43 lot of discussion and concern about that methodology, but  
44 obviously there is enough interaction with these sea turtles for  
45 the need for that.

46  
47 Again, I am not trying to pit one group in the industry against  
48 the other, and I still don't understand why the Biscayne Bay

1 skimmer nets were excluded. There is very few of them and all  
2 that kind of stuff, but, if there is interaction, there is  
3 interaction, and so that's the best I can do. Do you want to  
4 tell us why Biscayne Bay was excluded?  
5

6 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Crabtree.  
7

8 **DR. ROY CRABTREE:** They fish differently. It's a night fishery.  
9 They use lights, and they actually see the light reflecting off  
10 the skimmer trawl, or off the shrimp, and then they run up and  
11 grab them. They use very light nets. I think some of them are  
12 monofilament. We don't think we have a TED that would work in  
13 it. We also think, because of the way that they fish, that they  
14 probably don't pose a risk to sea turtles.  
15

16 **MR. PERRET:** Thank you, Roy. Camp, I can see those lights now  
17 in south Louisiana. Thank you, Kelly. That is basically how  
18 our discussion was.  
19

20 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any further questions for Mr. Perret? Thank  
21 you, Corky.  
22

23 **MR. PERRET:** Thank you, all, very much. Thank you, Roy.  
24

25 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** The next thing on the agenda is we're going to  
26 go over the public comments. Ms. Muehlstein.  
27

28 **FINAL ACTION ON SHRIMP AMENDMENT 17B**  
29 **PUBLIC COMMENTS**  
30

31 **MS. EMILY MUEHLSTEIN:** Thank you. We took this amendment out to  
32 public hearing in conjunction with our scoping workshops that we  
33 held on coral, and so, again, you will notice that sometimes  
34 when I report the number of attendees that were at each meeting,  
35 it might not be reflective of the number of people that had  
36 actually come so that they could comment on shrimp.  
37

38 We started in Brownsville, Texas, where six people attended that  
39 meeting and one person spoke. We simply heard at that meeting  
40 that the preferred alternatives in the document are exactly what  
41 the Shrimp Advisory Panel had recommended.  
42

43 Moving to Palacios, Texas, we had seven members of the public,  
44 and two of them spoke. The points they made were that, if the  
45 council selects to create a permit pool, the permits should be  
46 distributed to active shrimpers rather than to non-shrimpers or  
47 to permit dealers.  
48

1 The permit renewal process should be revised so that active  
2 shrimpers with ELB data and landings don't have to actually  
3 renew each year. It was also mentioned that permitted dealers  
4 should not be allowed to have permits on non-shrimping vessels  
5 and that the council should consider a use-it-or-lose-it clause  
6 that takes permits back if they're not used in a reasonable  
7 amount of time.

8  
9 At this meeting, the focus seemed to be on the idea that people  
10 were making money off of buying and selling permits and that  
11 there was dissatisfaction with that, as well as the fear that  
12 people were having permits that they were not using, this idea  
13 of inactive permits.

14  
15 Moving to Galveston, Texas, we had four members of the public  
16 attend, and zero of them spoke. In Key West, we had seven  
17 members of the public attend, and zero spoke.

18  
19 Then, in Houma, we had twenty-five members of the public that  
20 attended, and I'm not sure how many of them spoke, but I think  
21 it was quite a few. Four spoke. What they told us was that the  
22 council should consider increasing the number of permits to  
23 1,500. There was concern that this is the least number of  
24 licenses necessary to sustain the infrastructure of the  
25 industry.

26  
27 The council should host meetings in alternate locations in  
28 Louisiana, and that's the same as we heard from the AP. Folks  
29 that have lost their permits due to non-renewal should be able  
30 to get them back. There should be a permit pool that allows the  
31 next generation of fishermen to purchase permits, and brokers  
32 should not be allowed to own permits. Permits should be  
33 reserved for active fishermen only.

34  
35 Moving to Gulfport, Mississippi, we had fifteen members of the  
36 public attend, and four of them spoke. They said that it is a  
37 good idea to set a minimum number of permits and that the  
38 document is too technical and that the public fears there are  
39 extra changes that are included in the document that aren't  
40 actually being made clear.

41  
42 The meetings need to be publicized better, and the council needs  
43 to make a better effort to communicate to fishermen. Documents  
44 should be converted to Vietnamese, and translators should relay  
45 information to Vietnamese fishermen. The preferred alternatives  
46 in the document were also supported.

47  
48 We then went to Mobile, Alabama, where ten members of the public

1 attended, and two spoke. They mentioned that there is concern  
2 that permits will decline, despite the permit pool. This  
3 happened with the rock shrimp fishery on the east coast of  
4 Florida.

5  
6 Action 5, which considers transit provisions, was -- There was  
7 support for Alternative 3, that bag straps should be removed and  
8 the doors should be on the deck, to ensure that there is no way  
9 that a fishing violation could occur during transit.

10  
11 We went to Panama City, where we had one member of the public  
12 attend, and nobody spoke. We also hosted a webinar, where one  
13 member of the public attended, but did not submit comment.

14  
15 We also received written comments from five different members of  
16 the public, and I will go through those action-by-action.  
17 Action 1, which considers the aggregate maximum sustainable  
18 yield for the Gulf shrimp fishery, we heard support for  
19 Alternative 1, no action. The rationale provided is that it is  
20 not appropriate or necessary to set an aggregate MSY, because  
21 shrimp are an annual crop. If something must be done, then  
22 Alternative 2 would be preferred.

23  
24 In Action 2, which considers aggregate optimum yield for the  
25 fishery, there was support for Preferred Alternative 2. The  
26 aggregate optimum yield that would be established would have the  
27 least negative effects on the physical and biological  
28 environment. It would also keep effort below levels established  
29 in the bi-op that intended to minimize sea turtle bycatch.  
30 Support for Alternative 1, and, also, it was mentioned that it  
31 may allow for more permits in the fishing future and increased  
32 fishing effort would harm sea turtles and the ecosystem. The  
33 support for Alternative 1 was because shrimp is an annual crop  
34 and it is not necessary to set an aggregate. If something must  
35 be done, then Alternative 2 would be preferred.

36  
37 Moving to Action 3, which considers setting the minimum  
38 threshold number of Gulf vessel permits, we heard support for  
39 Alternative 2, which would set the lowest threshold number of  
40 permits and could reduce bycatch and adverse effects on the  
41 environment.

42  
43 We heard that the council shouldn't do anything that cuts back  
44 the chances of somebody getting a shrimp permit, and we also  
45 heard that the shrimp fleet has declined substantially since the  
46 permit moratorium was implemented. The council should add new  
47 alternatives that would set the minimum threshold number of  
48 permits at 1,350, which is the current number of valid permits

1 in the fishery, and that represents the minimum amount of  
2 participation needed to sustain infrastructure in the industry.  
3 If a new alternative is not created, then Alternative 5, Option  
4 a, would allow for the most permits under this action.

5  
6 Moving to Action 4, which considers the response when the  
7 threshold number of shrimp moratorium permits is reached,  
8 support for Alternative 1 was expressed. This would result in  
9 no new management measures when the threshold is met. All other  
10 alternatives would maintain participation in the industry, which  
11 harms turtles and the ecosystem. The creation of a permit pool  
12 may allow for increased effort, and the creation of a review  
13 panel may lead to increased effort as well.

14  
15 We also heard support for Alternative 2. While this does delay  
16 action on the issue, it is the best alternative available, and  
17 it requires the earliest action.

18  
19 Finally, Action 5, which considers transit provisions for shrimp  
20 vessels, we heard concern for Alternatives 2 and 3. The  
21 document states that Alternatives 2 and 3 would have positive  
22 environmental effects, by reducing emissions, as a result of  
23 shorter transit from fishing grounds to port. However, the  
24 ability to transit may incentivize fishermen and increase effort  
25 in the fishery. We also heard support for Alternative 2 in  
26 Action 5.

27  
28 Finally, we heard that the shrimp industry has enough regulation  
29 and the council should leave well enough alone, and that  
30 concludes my report.

31  
32 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thank you, Ms. Muehlstein. Any questions? Mr.  
33 Boyd.

34  
35 **MR. DOUG BOYD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not on the  
36 committee, but I was the council representative in Palacios,  
37 Texas, and I just wanted to reiterate what Emily said. There  
38 was one gentleman that spoke who is the owner or principal in a  
39 large fleet out of Palacios, and he was very concerned about the  
40 brokerage of licenses that has taken place.

41  
42 He said, and, Emily, I may get this wrong, but he said that  
43 they're even buying these licenses and, in order to keep them  
44 active, they are putting them on small inflatables in a  
45 warehouse someplace, just to keep them active, and so he really  
46 wanted to see the council do something about that. I don't know  
47 what we would do, but that was the information that he gave us,  
48 and I'm sure that Emily has his name, if anybody wants to get

1 ahold of him. Thank you.

2  
3 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thank you, Mr. Boyd. Any other comments or  
4 questions? Lieutenant Commander Danaher.

5  
6 **LCDR LEO DANAHER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am not on the  
7 committee, but I have had a little bit of comment on Action 5,  
8 and I'm just trying to get some clarity with regards to the last  
9 sentence of the first bullet. It says, however, the ability to  
10 transit may incentivize fishermen, and effort may increase. I  
11 think, just the way it's written in that bullet, it made me  
12 wonder whether or not that's a positive statement or a negative  
13 statement. I am just trying to get some clarity. Thank you.

14  
15 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** I'm sorry, but which comment are you referring  
16 to?

17  
18 **LCDR DANAHER:** Emily, on Action 5, in the first bullet, you've  
19 got the second sentence, that starts with "however". So, I  
20 mean, were the comments basically saying that they agree with  
21 the Alternatives 2 and 3 and that may --

22  
23 **MS. MUEHLSTEIN:** Actually, interestingly, we had a number of  
24 comments that were submitted online for this amendment that were  
25 from people that were outside of sort of the Gulf jurisdiction,  
26 and most of them sort of tended towards very strong protections  
27 on the habitat and also sea turtles, and so I think the intent  
28 of this comment was to state that they did not want to allow  
29 transit in any way, because they did not want to incentivize  
30 fishermen to fish more. They were afraid that there would be an  
31 effort increase if we eased the burden of those folks that are  
32 having difficulty because they have to transit right now.

33  
34 **LCDR DANAHER:** Understood. Thank you.

35  
36 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Ms. Levy.

37  
38 **MS. MARA LEVY:** Thank you. I also read it as maybe it's an  
39 effect that we need to address in the document, because I think  
40 the document said that there would be positive effects by  
41 reducing emissions, but what they're pointing out is that you  
42 didn't say anything about whether it had the possibility to  
43 increase effort as an effect. I think maybe that's something  
44 that staff needs to look at and decide whether that is  
45 reasonable to put into the document, in the effects analysis.

46  
47 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Ms. Bosarge.

48

1 **MS. BOSARGE:** This comment is about shrimp, but it almost kind  
2 of overlaps with the discussion that we were having under Data  
3 Collection with those permits, with the for-hire permits and the  
4 dually-permitted South Atlantic and Gulf boats.

5  
6 In the shrimp world, there is a lot of boats that are dually-  
7 permitted, because we shrimp in both the Gulf and in the South  
8 Atlantic, and what that doesn't say in there is that there are a  
9 lot of closed areas in the South Atlantic, a lot, and the South  
10 Atlantic, for the shrimp fleet, if you have a rock shrimp permit  
11 for the South Atlantic, you have to have a VMS on that shrimp  
12 boat.

13  
14 Essentially, what happens to the dually-permitted shrimp fleet  
15 is we have to carry an ELB, if we're randomly chosen through the  
16 Science Center, and we pay monthly for that, and I'm not  
17 opposing any of this. We understand it and we deal with it, and  
18 it's not a problem, but just to let you know what dually-  
19 permitted people in the Gulf have to do for shrimp.

20  
21 We have an ELB that we have to carry, and we pay monthly for it.  
22 For our South Atlantic rock shrimp permits, we have to have a  
23 VMS onboard our shrimp boats, and that thing is pinging, and we  
24 have to pay monthly for that. Then, per the Coast Guard, we  
25 have to have an AIS, and so we had to buy that too, and so we  
26 have three different devices on the same boat that all  
27 essentially want the same information, but in a different way.

28  
29 They want to know where you're at, when you're running, and  
30 where you're going. They're all transmitting location-type  
31 data, and so it's not just the for-hire fleet, and it is an  
32 issue that we have across many fleets, and it comes from both  
33 sides, the South Atlantic and the Gulf.

34  
35 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any further comments? Seeing none, next up on  
36 the agenda, Dr. Kilgour is going to walk us through Shrimp  
37 Amendment 17B. Dr. Kilgour.

38  
39 **REVIEW OF AMENDMENT**

40  
41 **DR. KILGOUR:** Hopefully this document looks more -- Hopefully  
42 it's clearer. I took the advice of Dr. Lucas for Action 3,  
43 which has been really fun to try and make clear, and I think it  
44 does read better, and so thank you, Dr. Lucas, for your  
45 suggestion.

46  
47 We also, on page 2 of the document, we added this text box to  
48 talk about what a valid or renewable permit is and what offshore

1 waters are, what active permitted vessels are, and what the  
2 predicted number of active, permitted vessels are, and so this  
3 was all in the document before it went out to public hearing, to  
4 try and help answer some of those questions before we even gave  
5 the presentation, and so I hope that this does a better job of  
6 addressing that very confusing terminology that we have in the  
7 document.

8  
9 If it's okay with the committee, I would like to just kind of go  
10 through the actions and alternatives. This is slated for final  
11 action today. The committee and the council has selected  
12 preferreds, and so is that all right with you, Mr. Chair?

13  
14 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Yes, ma'am. Proceed.

15  
16 **DR. KILGOUR:** The first action is the aggregate maximum  
17 sustainable yield for the Gulf of Mexico shrimp fishery.  
18 Alternative 1, no action, is do not establish an aggregate MSY.  
19 The council's current preferred alternative is Alternative 2,  
20 which establishes an aggregate MSY that is essentially equal to  
21 just over 112 million pounds of tails.

22  
23 We will move on to the next action, which is Action 2. The  
24 aggregate optimum yield for the Gulf shrimp fishery, Alternative  
25 1, the no action, is do not establish an aggregate OY. The  
26 council's current preferred alternative is Alternative 2. For  
27 the federal Gulf shrimp fishery, aggregate OY is just over  
28 eighty-five million pounds of tails, which is the aggregate MSY  
29 reduced for certain ecological, social, and economic factors.

30  
31 **MS. BOSARGE:** This may be a question for Dr. Crabtree, but when  
32 did the mail-out for this amendment, and we mailed it out to all  
33 the permit holders --

34  
35 **DR. KILGOUR:** No, we didn't do that. We did not mail this  
36 amendment out to all the permit holders.

37  
38 **MS. BOSARGE:** No, not the amendment, but we mailed them out  
39 something to tell them that we were working on this when we  
40 first started on it.

41  
42 **DR. KILGOUR:** For 17A, yes, we did.

43  
44 **MS. BOSARGE:** Okay. When they got that, and then again after  
45 these public hearings, one question that I got a couple of  
46 times, and I think we've had this conversation before, but I  
47 think, for anybody that may be in the audience or on the webinar  
48 listening, I think we need to clarify this and have some

1 discussion for them again, so they have a good understanding.

2  
3 They were really worried that this OY, that what we were doing  
4 was putting a quota on shrimp, and obviously that is not what we  
5 are doing, but I think that we owe it to our stakeholders to  
6 have that discussion of what this OY means and what it is, and,  
7 Morgan, you can do it or Dr. Crabtree or whoever, but I think we  
8 should do that for our fishermen.

9  
10 **DR. KILGOUR:** Sure. I guess I will take a stab at it. We do  
11 have, in the document, that this aggregate MSY and these  
12 aggregate OYs are not management benchmarks. We established  
13 those in Shrimp Amendment 15, where we have the SSB MSY and the  
14 FMSY, and so these Actions 1 2 are solely so that we could come  
15 up with some type of aggregate OY, so that we could determine  
16 what the minimum threshold of permits would be to sustain the  
17 fishery at that aggregate OY, and so that is true that these are  
18 not penalty values.

19  
20 These are values that we needed to ascertain before we could  
21 come up with that threshold permit number, and so you're right,  
22 and it is in the document. It's stated in the document that  
23 these aren't a new quota.

24  
25 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Crabtree.

26  
27 **DR. CRABTREE:** That is correct. Optimum yield is more of a  
28 long-term average yield that we are hoping that fishery will  
29 attain, but it recognizes that sometimes we'll be over and  
30 sometimes we will be under, and there are no accountability  
31 measures or triggers that would close the fishery down tied to  
32 this.

33  
34 **MS. BOSARGE:** Thank you. I appreciate it.

35  
36 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thank you, Ms. Bosarge. Dr. Kilgour.

37  
38 **DR. KILGOUR:** On to my favorite action, Action 3, which is the  
39 minimum threshold number of Gulf shrimp vessel permits. The  
40 essence of all of the alternatives is the same, but they have  
41 been slightly modified, hopefully to be more clear.

42  
43 The current Alternative 1 is no action, do not set a threshold  
44 number of valid or renewable permits. The council's current  
45 Preferred Alternative 2 is to set the minimum threshold number  
46 of valid or renewable Gulf shrimp permits to 1,072. This number  
47 is based on the predicted number of active vessels needed to  
48 attain aggregate OY in the offshore fishery. The aggregate OY

1 accounts for relatively high CPUE and landings, while reducing  
2 the risk of exceeding the sea turtle and juvenile red snapper  
3 bycatch.

4  
5 Alternative 3 is to set the minimum threshold number of valid or  
6 renewable Gulf shrimp vessel permits to 935. This number is  
7 based on the predicted number of active vessels needed to attain  
8 the level of landings observed in 2011, when effort was highest  
9 during the moratorium in the area monitored for red snapper  
10 juvenile mortality, but without reaching the bycatch reduction  
11 threshold and triggering closures.

12  
13 Alternative 4 is to set the minimum threshold number of valid or  
14 renewable Gulf shrimp vessel permits at 880. This number is  
15 based on the predicted number of active, permitted vessels  
16 needed to attain the level of landings observed in 2008, when  
17 CPUE in the offshore fishery was highest during the moratorium.

18  
19 Alternative 5 is to set a minimum threshold number of valid or  
20 renewable Gulf shrimp vessel permits at a number based on the  
21 predicted number of active, permitted vessels needed to attain  
22 the level of landings in a year with relatively high CPUE in the  
23 offshore fishery, but not substantially below the aggregate OY  
24 and with a level of effort that is close to the effort needed to  
25 achieve the aggregate OY. Option 5a is 1,131 permits, and  
26 Option 5b is 988 permits.

27  
28 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any discussion or questions? Dr. Kilgour.

29  
30 **DR. KILGOUR:** Okay. I guess we can move on to Action 4, which  
31 is the response when the minimum threshold number of shrimp  
32 moratorium permits is reached. Alternative 1 is no action.  
33 Nothing happens when that minimum threshold is reached.

34  
35 Alternative 2 is, if the number of valid or renewable shrimp  
36 moratorium permits reaches the threshold set in Action 3, any  
37 permits that are not renewed within one year of the expiration  
38 date on the permit will go into a Gulf Shrimp Vessel Permit  
39 Reserve Pool.

40  
41 Alternative 3 is, if the number of valid or renewable shrimp  
42 moratorium permits reaches the threshold set in Action 3, the  
43 council will form a review panel to review the threshold and  
44 determine if action is needed.

45  
46 The current preferred alternative is Alternative 4. When the  
47 number of valid or renewable shrimp moratorium permits reaches  
48 1,175, the council will form a review panel to review the

1 details of a permit pool and other options. The panel would  
2 consist of Shrimp AP members, Science and Statistical Committee  
3 members, and NMFS and council staff. If the number of permits  
4 reaches the threshold set in Action 3, any permits that are not  
5 renewed within one year of the expiration date on the permit  
6 will go into a Gulf Shrimp Vessel Permit Reserve Pool.

7  
8 On to Action 5, which is the transit provisions for shrimp  
9 vessels without a federal permit. Alternative 1 is no action.  
10 A person aboard a vessel to fish for shrimp or possess shrimp in  
11 Gulf federal waters, a federal vessel permit for Gulf shrimp  
12 must have been issued to the vessel and must be onboard.

13  
14 For the current preferred alternative, Alternative 2, a vessel  
15 possessing shrimp may transit Gulf federal waters without a  
16 federal vessel permit if fishing gear is appropriately stowed.  
17 Transit means non-stop progression through the area. Fishing  
18 gear appropriately stowed means trawl doors and nets must be out  
19 of the water and the bag straps must be removed from the net.

20  
21 Alternative 3 is a vessel possessing shrimp may transit Gulf  
22 federal waters without a federal vessel permit if fishing gear  
23 is appropriately stowed. Transit means non-stop progression  
24 through the area. Fishing gear appropriately stowed means a  
25 trawl net shall remain on deck, but trawl doors, if present,  
26 must be disconnected from the trawl gear and must be secured.

27  
28 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Lieutenant Commander Danaher.

29  
30 **LCDR DANAHER:** This is more of a comment on this one. This is -  
31 - I like the Preferred Alternative 2, and I know I'm not a  
32 voting member, but that is definitely enforceable, and it kind  
33 of reduces that paperwork aspect, or the permit aspect, of  
34 Alternative 1.

35  
36 With respect to Alternative 3, I know that there was some  
37 feedback collected from the different public hearings, and you  
38 just have to kind of be mindful of National Standard 10, safety  
39 of life at sea. I mean, we can't take it so far that we're now  
40 creating risks of search and rescue cases, and so, from an  
41 enforceability standpoint, I like where it is, and I hope it  
42 continues to go forward.

43  
44 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thank you, Lieutenant Commander. Dr. Lucas.

45  
46 **DR. LUCAS:** I was just going to give a thanks to Dr. Kilgour for  
47 -- I think the wording in Action 3 turned out much better. I  
48 think there is a lot less circling confusion, and so thank you

1 very much for working on that.

2  
3 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Ms. Gerhart, did you have -- You said you had  
4 some comments about the codified text, and would you like to go  
5 over those now?

6  
7 **CODIFIED TEXT**

8  
9 **MS. SUSAN GERHART:** We have the codified text in the briefing  
10 book, and I wanted to point out a couple of additions that we  
11 put into this rule. These are not things that have to do with  
12 the amendment itself, but they're technical corrections to the  
13 regulations that we wanted to include.

14  
15 The first one is on the bottom of page 2 of the codified text,  
16 if you want to take a look at that, but it's not necessary. The  
17 Tortugas shrimp area closed area, we were updating the  
18 coordinates for that area. We're not changing anything.  
19 Basically, these coordinates were put into place in -- I am  
20 trying to remember what year it was. It was a long time ago.  
21 It was 1981, and obviously technology has changed a lot, and so  
22 we can be a little bit more precise.

23  
24 These coordinates were actually looked at and ground-truthed by  
25 the FWC people, and they contacted us. We also found some  
26 discrepancy between their regulations and ours, and so we're  
27 just correcting all of that and updating that, so that it's a  
28 little bit more accurate.

29  
30 The table is in there, and we're just, again, being a little bit  
31 more accurate. Some of those numbers were a little bit off of  
32 the position, and so, for example, Coon Key Light wasn't exactly  
33 where we were saying it was, and so we're just updating that.

34  
35 The second thing is right below there. There's just a single  
36 sentence, and this has to do with live rock, and so not shrimp  
37 at all, but, again, this is a technical correction, and we're  
38 just putting it in this rule to correct something that was left  
39 out of the regulations during one of our reorganizations, and so  
40 that has to do with harvesting live wild rock and the  
41 prohibition on that, and so, again, these are just fixes, but,  
42 in case you saw those in there, I wanted to explain why they  
43 were there.

44  
45 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thank you, Ms. Gerhart. Ms. Bosarge.

46  
47 **MS. BOSARGE:** Will this lead to any changes on any of the maps  
48 that show us where areas are that are closed to us? Are there

1 going to be any changes? I am just wondering if we're going to  
2 need to update our maps on our computer plotters.

3  
4 **MS. GERHART:** That is possible. We will have our GIS people put  
5 the new maps together. Again, it's more of a precision. Back  
6 then, I think we were using Loran-C, and so we weren't quite as  
7 precise about where these locations were, and these are just  
8 more precise than they were.

9  
10 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Kilgour.

11  
12 **DR. KILGOUR:** I have spoken with the staff member on FWC about  
13 this a lot, and it's actually just a couple hundred feet is the  
14 difference between some of the points, and so it will change  
15 your maps by a couple hundred feet, maybe.

16  
17 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Okay. Ms. Guyas.

18  
19 **MS. MARTHA GUYAS:** Thanks. I'm not on your committee, but just  
20 to, I guess, further explain some of these changes, there were  
21 some conflicts in the rule, where there was like, for example, a  
22 marker where the GPS coordinate and the actual marker were not  
23 the same, and so it's fixing up those kinds of issues. It's  
24 really just like a housecleaning thing and not really making  
25 significant changes to like where these coordinates are. There  
26 was just discrepancies, and we're trying to fix those. We're  
27 doing that at the state level as well.

28  
29 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thank you, Ms. Guyas. Any other comments? Dr.  
30 Lucas.

31  
32 **DR. LUCAS:** I would make the motion here, as they bring it up on  
33 the board. Motion to approve Shrimp Amendment 17B and that it  
34 be forwarded to the Secretary of Commerce for review and  
35 implementation, and deem the codified text as necessary and  
36 appropriate, giving staff editorial license to make the  
37 necessary changes in the document. The Council Chair is given  
38 the authority to deem any changes to the codified text as  
39 necessary and appropriate.

40  
41 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** We have a motion. Do we have a second?

42  
43 **MR. ROBINSON:** Second.

44  
45 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Second by Mr. Robinson. Any discussion? **Is**  
46 **there any opposition to the motion? Seeing none, the motion**  
47 **carries.**

48

1 The last thing on the agenda is Other Business. Does anybody  
2 have any other business? Ms. Bosarge.

3  
4 **OTHER BUSINESS**  
5

6 **MS. BOSARGE:** I just have one question before we take final  
7 action at Full Council on this. Since I am from the shrimp  
8 industry, I like to ask this question before we take final  
9 action on some of these amendments and make sure that I am  
10 allowed to vote. I always get the same answer, but I still like  
11 to ask.

12  
13 This deals with permits, and so I definitely like to ask. I  
14 don't own any permits, and that usually gives the answer to the  
15 question right there, but my family does. I work for my family  
16 business, and I have no ownership in that business, but we do  
17 have five boats, my family business does, and they all have Gulf  
18 offshore permits on them, and so I just want to make sure, with  
19 Mara, that I am okay to vote on that at Full Council.

20  
21 **MS. LEVY:** A couple of things. I think the only thing that is  
22 imputed to you is a spouse or minor children, and so, if the  
23 permits aren't owned by them, I am not sure that's relevant.  
24 The other thing is that this amendment doesn't really do  
25 anything with respect to permits. It sets a threshold level,  
26 but nothing happens.

27  
28 Besides that, the general recusal standard is a 10 percent  
29 interest or ownership or whatever, but it's 10 percent, and five  
30 permits or ten permits don't even come close to that, even if  
31 they were imputed to you. I don't see any problem with you  
32 voting is the answer.

33  
34 **MS. BOSARGE:** Thank you, Mara. I appreciate it.

35  
36 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Okay. That concludes the work of the committee.  
37 I do want to just mention that, right now, there is no other  
38 immediate business to come before the Shrimp Committee, in the  
39 short term, and so, if any of the members of the committee have  
40 some action items they would like the committee to work on,  
41 please let me know. Before I turn it back over to Ms. Bosarge,  
42 I also want to thank Dr. Kilgour for her hard work. She has  
43 worked diligently to try to help this committee along, and so we  
44 really appreciate it. Thank you.

45  
46 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on April 5, 2017.)  
47

48 - - -