

GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

SHRIMP MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Perdido Beach Resort Orange Beach, Alabama

October 25, 2021

VOTING MEMBERS

- Leann Bosarge.....Mississippi
- Kevin Anson (designee for Scott Bannon).....Alabama
- Billy Broussard.....Louisiana
- Dave Donaldson.....GSMFC
- Jonathan Dugas.....Louisiana
- Dakus Geeslin (designee for Robin Riechers).....Texas
- Bob Gill.....Florida
- Chris Schieble (designee for Patrick Banks).....Louisiana
- Joe Spraggins.....Mississippi
- Andy Strelcheck.....NMFS

NON-VOTING MEMBERS

- Susan Boggs.....Alabama
- Dale Diaz.....Mississippi
- Phil Dyskow.....Florida
- Tom Frazer.....Florida
- Martha Guyas (designee for Jessica McCawley).....Florida
- LTJG Adam Peterson.....USCG
- Bob Shipp.....Alabama
- Greg Stunz.....Texas
- Troy Williamson.....Texas

STAFF

- Assane Diagne.....Economist
- Matt Freeman.....Economist
- John Froeschke.....Deputy Director
- Lisa Hollensead.....Fishery Biologist
- Ava Lasseter.....Anthropologist
- Mary Levy.....NOAA General Counsel
- Natasha Mendez-Ferrer.....Fishery Biologist
- Emily Muehlstein.....Public Information Officer
- Ryan Rindone.....Lead Fishery Biologist/SEDAR Liaison
- Bernadine Roy.....Office Manager
- Carrie Simmons.....Executive Director
- Carly Somerset.....Fisheries Outreach Specialist

OTHER PARTICIPANTS

- Tim Griner.....SAFMC

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PAGE 13: Motion to recommend that the council request that NMFS fully evaluate and consider, to the maximum extent possible, the draft approval specifications for reinstating the historical cELB program for the Gulf shrimp fishery in recognition of the legitimate distinctions between a scientific data collection-oriented program and an enforcement-oriented program (see Appendices D and E in the draft Framework Action). NMFS shall provide their evaluation at a future council meeting. The motion carried on page 15.

PAGE 15: Motion to recommend that the council request that NMFS arrange for the testing, as soon as possible, of a small sample of approved cellular VMS units programmed to ping every 10 minutes, on federally permitted commercial shrimp vessels operating in different regions of the Gulf of Mexico, to determine if the data generated is compatible with the current cELB algorithm. The testing protocol should be designed by NMFS, in consultation and cooperation with the Shrimp Data Collection Focus Group, VMS vendors, and the shrimp industry, to build industry support and buy-in. The motion carried on page 16.

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1 The Shrimp Management Committee of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery
2 Management Council convened on Monday morning, October 25, 2021,
3 and was called to order by Chairman Leann Bosarge.

4
5 **ADOPTION OF AGENDA**
6 **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
7 **ACTION GUIDE AND NEXT STEPS**
8

9 **CHAIRMAN LEANN BOSARGE:** I would like to call the Shrimp
10 Management Committee to order. Before we delve into the agenda,
11 since we did just repopulate our committees, let me refresh
12 everyone's memory on the membership for Shrimp. It's myself,
13 Ms. Bosarge, as Chair, and Mr. Banks and Mr. Schieble as Vice
14 Chair, Mr. Anson is in the room today, Mr. Broussard, Mr.
15 Donaldson, Mr. Dugas, Mr. Gill, Mr. Riechers, and I think we
16 have Mr. Geeslin with us today, Mr. Spraggins and Mr. Burris,
17 and we have Mr. Spraggins with us, and Mr. Strelcheck and Mr.
18 Hood, and we have Andy with us today. That is our new committee
19 membership.

20
21 The first thing is the agenda itself, which can be found under
22 Tab D, Number 1, and we have a pretty short agenda today, and so
23 maybe I can just possibly keep us on schedule. Were there any
24 additions or changes that anyone wanted to make to the agenda?
25 Seeing none, the agenda is adopted as presented. Next is
26 Approval of the August 2021 Minutes. That can be found under
27 Tab D, Number 2. Did anyone have any corrections to those? I
28 see Mr. Anson's hand up.

29
30 **MR. KEVIN ANSON:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Yes, I have three.
31 Page 11, line 10, change "quite" to "quit". Page 16, line 37,
32 add "one" before "more alternative", and then, page 17, line 30,
33 misspelling of "would".

34
35 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** Thank you, Mr. Anson. Anybody else have any
36 changes to the minutes? Seeing none, since we did have some
37 changes, let's go ahead and get a motion. Can I get a motion to
38 adopt the minutes with those changes?

39
40 **MR. DAVE DONALDSON:** So moved.

41
42 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** So moved by Mr. Donaldson.

43
44 **MR. BILLY BROUSSARD:** Second.

45
46 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** Seconded by Mr. Broussard. Is there any
47 opposition to that motion? Seeing none, the motion carries.
48 Next on the agenda is the Action Guide and Next Steps. That's

1 under Tab D, Number 3, and so I would like to turn it over to
2 Dr. Freeman to introduce that agenda item to us. I believe he's
3 on the webinar today.

4
5 **DR. MATT FREEMAN:** Yes, Ms. Bosarge. The first agenda item is
6 to discuss the shrimp focus group. The committee will be
7 presented with a summary of the shrimp focus group's meeting
8 from October 21, 2021.

9
10 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** Matt, we can't really hear you, and so what
11 we're going to do is take a five-minute break and see if we can
12 fix these technological issues, and so just bear with me, and I
13 will text you when it's time.

14
15 **DR. FREEMAN:** Okay.

16
17 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** Guys, you all are free for five minutes, and
18 so at 9:00. It's 8:55, and we'll come back at 9:00.

19
20 (Whereupon, a brief recess was taken.)

21
22 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** All right. I think we have Matt coming in
23 loud and clear now, and so, Dr. Freeman, we were on Number 3 on
24 the agenda, the Action Guide and Next Steps, and, before you get
25 started, I just have to commend staff. We had that shrimp focus
26 group meeting last Thursday, and we already have a meeting
27 summary for that, hot off the presses this morning, and so,
28 Matt, do you want to take us through the action guide and next
29 steps, real quick?

30
31 **DR. FREEMAN:** Certainly. For this agenda item, the committee
32 will be presented with a summary of the shrimp focus group's
33 meeting on October 21, 2021. The committee should ask questions
34 and discuss the advice of the shrimp focus group in the context
35 of the draft framework action, Agenda Item V, and direct staff
36 on next steps for the shrimp focus group.

37
38 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** All right. Thank you, Dr. Freeman. Do you
39 want to go ahead and dive right into the shrimp focus group
40 summary, which is the next item on the agenda?

41
42 **SHRIMP FOCUS GROUP SUMMARY**

43
44 **DR. FREEMAN:** Certainly. As a reminder for the committee, this
45 was from a motion at the August council meeting, and that motion
46 was to form a small working group of knowledgeable and involved
47 individuals, selected with agreement by the Science Center
48 Director, council Executive Director, and council and Shrimp

1 Committee chairs, to develop an agreed-upon structure and
2 direction for the shrimp data collection framework amendment.
3 This document shall be reviewed by the Shrimp AP prior to
4 consideration by the council.

5
6 In conversation with Dr. Porch, Dr. Simmons, Ms. Bosarge, Mr.
7 Diaz, Ms. Guyas, and Dr. Froeschke, a group of eleven members,
8 which were comprised of industry representation as well as
9 expertise from the Science Center in both data collection and
10 analysis process were convened. The charge for that group was
11 to provide advice to the council for the revised Gulf of Mexico
12 shrimp effort monitoring program via vessel position data
13 collection.

14
15 The group had six objectives that they focused on, and those
16 were developed in conjunction with Ms. Bosarge and council
17 staff. I would like to add that, in addition to the focus group
18 members, we supplemented the voting members with, quote,
19 unquote, support staff that involved OLE, SERO, and others who
20 would be available to answer pertinent questions from the focus
21 group members.

22
23 We had a variety of presentations, both by members of the focus
24 group and from the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, and,
25 as Ms. Bosarge mentioned, that meeting was just this past
26 Thursday, and it was a long meeting, and it was about nine-and-
27 a-half hours, and so what the committee has in front of it right
28 now is a draft focus group summary, and, following the council
29 meeting, we'll circulate it among focus group members and others
30 for a final version.

31
32 The focus group had two recommendations as a result of its
33 meeting. If we scroll down a bit, that's on page 10 of the
34 document. There were two recommendations from the focus group.
35 The first is that the shrimp data collection focus group
36 recommends that the council request that NMFS fully evaluate and
37 consider adopting, to the maximum extent possible, the draft
38 approval specifications for reinstating the historical cELB
39 program for the Gulf shrimp fishery, in recognition of the
40 legitimate distinctions between a scientific-data-collection-
41 oriented program and an enforcement-oriented program. Those are
42 contained within Appendices D and E in the draft framework
43 action. That recommendation passed six to two.

44
45 Some of the discussion was that Mr. Strelcheck requested that it
46 be noted that the dissenting votes were from NMFS personnel,
47 and, Ms. Bosarge, would you like for me to go ahead and go
48 through the second recommendation as well at this time?

1
2 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** Yes, sir, and I don't see any hands around
3 the table. Go ahead.
4

5 **DR. FREEMAN:** Certainly. The second recommendation is that the
6 shrimp data collection focus group recommends that the council
7 request that NMFS arrange for the testing, as soon as possible,
8 of a small sample of approved cellular VMS units programmed to
9 ping every ten minutes on federally-permitted commercial shrimp
10 vessels operating in different regions of the Gulf of Mexico to
11 determine if the data generated is compatible with the current
12 cELB algorithm. The testing protocol should be designed by
13 NMFS, in consultation and cooperation with the shrimp data
14 collection focus group, VMS vendors, and the shrimp industry, to
15 build industry support and buy-in. That recommendation passed
16 unanimously. Ms. Bosarge, I will stop at that point and see if
17 there are questions or discussion from the committee.
18

19 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** Thank you, Dr. Freeman. Is there any
20 questions or discussion from the Shrimp Committee? All right.
21 Well, while they're thinking about it, I just wanted to back up
22 for a second and maybe give the committee a little more color on
23 the meeting itself.
24

25 I was really impressed by what staff laid out for the meeting.
26 This group started at the very basic most barebones premise for
27 continuing to collect this data from the shrimp fishery, and
28 that was let's look at the boxes that are on the boats now and
29 see if there's any potential there to make those transmit again,
30 because the boxes are still functioning, but they just simply
31 don't transmit electronically, right, and so we went through
32 some of that, and there were some good headwinds pointed out
33 there, but I think there was some potential to look into that a
34 little further as well, although it did seem like it might be an
35 uphill battle.
36

37 The whole premise there is that those were boxes that NMFS
38 purchased and programmed the last time that we had a changeover
39 in the devices, and actually made them fit the need, the purpose
40 and need, for the shrimp fleet, and so NMFS did it in-house that
41 time.
42

43 We went through that, and the next thing that we went through
44 were options for where to send the data, and we need a server to
45 send it to, and so we went through the possibility of it going
46 to NOAA OLE, which goes through the CIO, the Chief Information
47 Officer, with NOAA, and then we went through the potential for
48 it to go to the old NESDIS server that used to be at Stennis,

1 that is now housed in Asheville, and that was also an option,
2 and we would need to do a little bit of backend work on it, for
3 security, but that was a potential option, and we went through
4 the possibility of the data being transmitted to Gulf States
5 before it goes to the Science Center, which is what we're doing
6 with our data right now, mailing the chips in by hand, and that
7 seemed to be a possibility as well.

8
9 There were a few open possibilities there, and then we got into
10 the whole discussion about, okay, and so, if we do need to
11 replace the boxes on the boat, if we can't use the ones that are
12 on there, what are the options there, and we went into the draft
13 specifications that I presented at the last meeting, which are
14 essentially draft tech specs for putting a box on there that
15 replicates what we have now, and it's very similar to that, and
16 we went through what I call the true-blue type-approved OLE VMS
17 as well.

18
19 It was a really -- It was a long meeting, as Matt said, and I
20 don't think we got out of there until 6:30 Matt's time, Dr.
21 Freeman's Florida time, and so it was a long day for NMFS
22 people, for sure, but it was productive, I think. It was
23 stressful. It was a tough meeting to have, and so kudos to Mr.
24 Gill for pushing that forward. I appreciate that.

25
26 As far as the recommendations that came out of the group, there
27 were those two recommendations. What I liked about the
28 recommendations that came out of the group is that they both
29 really focused on, to me, what is the most important piece of
30 this whole puzzle, and that's the science side. They really
31 focused on looking into this from a scientific perspective and
32 making sure that we get the strongest scientific data that we
33 can, to make sure this program flows seamlessly into the future.

34
35 I am not going to do it at this time, Dr. Freeman, but I will
36 probably make those two motions at some point, either in
37 committee or Full Council, and see if we can get some support
38 from the committee and the council to push those forward. They
39 don't actually add anything to the document, per se, but they
40 just simply say, hey, these are important things that we think
41 that we need to test and prove and make sure we have in place
42 before we implement anything in the fishery. Dr. Freeman, would
43 you like to move on? I don't see any hands around the table,
44 and so you can move on with the next agenda item, if you would
45 like. Hold on, Dr. Freeman. Mr. Anson has his hand up.

46
47 **MR. ANSON:** Just I guess I would like a little bit more
48 background, maybe, on the discussion that occurred to get the

1 two motions that we received. I mean, I am reading the text in
2 between the two motions in the draft report, and that they want
3 to still maintain the historical cELB program, but yet there was
4 some discussion that the industry is not in favor of the VMS,
5 the more traditional VMS, but yet they went and approved,
6 unanimously, a test pilot program for that, and so I'm just
7 wondering why there appears to be some opposition to it, but
8 yet, for a small pilot, there was unanimous approval for that.

9

10 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** I can --

11

12 **DR. FREEMAN:** I was just going to say that I can provide a
13 little context, and I'm sure Ms. Bosarge can add to that as
14 well. I think that some of the concern was wanting to ensure
15 that a cellular VMS unit collecting the vessel position data on
16 Gulf shrimp vessels would be compatible with the current shrimp
17 effort algorithm being used by NMFS. We did have a presentation
18 on Thursday, looking at VMS data from the South Atlantic rock
19 shrimp industry. However, one of the differences that was
20 pointed out was that the ping rate was different than what is
21 currently used for the Gulf shrimp industry, and so there were
22 some concerns.

23

24 NMFS seemed confident though that the algorithm could be tweaked
25 to accommodate that, but, again, the second recommendation, I
26 think, was, again, to get industry buy-in that, if cellular VMS
27 units were potentially to be used in the industry, then there
28 was sort of a follow-up, from start to finish, to ensure that it
29 would work for the industry.

30

31 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** Thank you, Dr. Freeman, and I will add a
32 little bit to that. Me, personally, when I sit around this
33 council table, although I obviously have a preference in this
34 document for which alternative I would like to see move forward
35 in the future, to me, part of my job as a council member is to
36 make sure that, regardless of the alternative that is moved
37 forward in my fishery, that we have taken the steps to make sure
38 that it's the best that it can be for my fishery, even if it's
39 not what I personally may want.

40

41 That second recommendation that you see, it came from this
42 discussion, and so we had a presentation where -- I've asked for
43 this for a while, and, if you remember, at a prior council
44 meeting, I said let's take some of that VMS data, and we have
45 VMS a lot in the boats already, right, and we even have it on a
46 few shrimp boats in the South Atlantic for rock shrimp, and I
47 said take some of that data and plug it into the shrimp
48 algorithm, and let's make sure that it's actually going to work

1 before we put a VMS requirement on our fleet, because this is
2 for scientific data, and we want to make sure that it actually
3 works in the scientific models and algorithms that we use for
4 the shrimp industry.

5
6 They pulled some of that data, that VMS data, and what they --
7 They did not actually plug it into the shrimp algorithm, because
8 what they found was that, when they tried to, was that the
9 algorithm is actually hard-coded for the ten-minute ping
10 intervals, and VMS, whether it's that rock shrimp VMS in the
11 South Atlantic or the VMS here, they're designed and type
12 approved to work on various ping intervals.

13
14 Those in the South Atlantic ping once an hour. However, even if
15 you program them for a ten-minute ping interval, type-approved
16 VMS also have additional pings that come in. They ping every
17 time the device powers-up and the device powers-down. If it's a
18 cellular device, every time it loses cellphone service, it will
19 ping, and it has the ability for law enforcement to remote in a
20 change to the ping rate, and usually they do that when you're
21 getting close to a closed area or something, and they want to
22 see where you're going a little more frequently.

23
24 It pings every time you cross specified boundaries, right, and
25 so like a state/federal boundary, possibly, or the South
26 Atlantic/Gulf boundary or sanctuary boundaries, places where
27 there is probably some rules on closed seasons or what you can
28 do in there, things like that, and so there's these additional
29 pings that come in.

30
31 We realize that that could very well cause an issue with the
32 shrimp algorithm that we have and actually being usable data,
33 right, and extrapolating these location pings into total effort
34 for the industry.

35
36 Knowing that, industry showed some leniency here, in my opinion,
37 and said, you know, although that's probably not the route we
38 want to go, and we don't want to use these OLE type-approved
39 VMS, we need to work this out, and we need to go test them and
40 make sure that, if that is the route the council goes, that we
41 don't implement these in the fleet and then realize that we've
42 got to go back and rewrite the shrimp algorithm and possibly
43 recalibration all of our historical data to match these new -- I
44 don't know if "methodology" is the right word, but changes in
45 the way we collect the data. That's where that came from.

46
47 Obviously, the recommendation that's before this one, that is
48 where we were showing our emphasis that we really wanted NMFS

1 and the Science Center to flesh out that last alternative and
2 see what can be done with that, and how would it be implemented,
3 and so we went both routes, and you're right. We had a
4 recommendation for both of those alternatives, 2 and 3, to make
5 sure that we get something scientifically that's robust for our
6 fishery. Does that answer your question?

7

8 **MR. ANSON:** Yes. Thank you.

9

10 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** Andy.

11

12 **MR. ANDY STRELCHECK:** Thanks, Leann. I was able to listen in to
13 maybe a third or a half of the focus group meeting, and I want
14 to thank Bob Gill for helping with the idea, and all the
15 participants, and I think it was a good discussion. It was a
16 difficult discussion, at times, for what I was able to listen
17 to.

18

19 A couple of comments on the motions. The second motion, I think
20 this is a really good idea, and I do note that the agency has
21 had some hesitancy, leading up to that motion, just simply
22 because of some of the resistance from industry to even move
23 forward with cellular VMS, but I think, from a proof of concept
24 and buy-in standpoint, it's a good thing to show how these units
25 would work on shrimp vessels and how that data gets imported
26 into the effort estimation system.

27

28 I still feel like we're at a little bit of a crossroads, because
29 the first motion, I think, is contrary to the second motion, in
30 that there's still optimism, interest, whatever you want to call
31 it, to modify the technical specifications, and I am certainly
32 not opposed to the agency looking at those, but the question is
33 would those modifications happen, and, if so, what does that
34 look like, and then what does that mean for the devices that
35 have to then go through certification in the future, right, and
36 so there's, to me, a lot more uncertainty with the first motion,
37 in terms of if that actually transpires and happens and changes
38 are made.

39

40 Keep in mind also that this is a national program for the
41 agency, and so we don't want to just tailor this to the shrimp
42 industry. The shrimp industry is out in front, for good reason,
43 talking about this, but we, obviously, run the VMS program
44 nationally, and so we want to, obviously, keep that in mind, and
45 so the bottom line is I do like that the motions moved forward,
46 and I think that it's a good place to land.

47

48 I guess my question really is, once this testing is completed,

1 and once the agency is able to come back and weigh-in on the
2 tech specs, where does that leave us, and what is the next step,
3 and I think that's really going to be critical to move that
4 forward as quickly as possible to give the council as much
5 certainty as possible, with regard to what those next steps look
6 like, and hopefully the buy-in that is needed for whatever
7 decision we reach. Thanks.

8
9 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** Thank you, Mr. Strelcheck. Any other
10 feedback from the committee? Mr. Anson.

11
12 **MR. ANSON:** Based on that comment, and then looking at the
13 second motion regarding this kind of pilot study, Andy, do you
14 have any idea as to how quickly the results from that pilot test
15 could occur?

16
17 **MR. STRELCHECK:** I don't, and I know John Walter is listening,
18 and I'm not sure if he could speak to that, and I know there was
19 a good discussion around the focus group and others
20 participating in helping with that design, and so how long does
21 that take, and we did have our Office of Law Enforcement
22 representative email some of the vendors for these VMS devices,
23 and got immediate support from one of the vendors during the
24 meeting to do this, and so I think there is certainly some
25 willingness and interest out there.

26
27 It will take a little bit of time to, obviously, get this on the
28 vessels and run it for thirty, sixty, or ninety days, and I will
29 note that we have tested these devices already on vessels, but
30 we just haven't done it on shrimp, and we haven't done it for
31 ten-minute intervals at this point.

32
33 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** Then the other piece of that testing, Kevin,
34 that I thought was vital was to actually try and test it in
35 areas that focus on the harvest of pink shrimp, white shrimp,
36 and brown shrimp, to hit all the three majors there, because we
37 did foresee possibly pink shrimp, specifically, being an issue,
38 simply because a lot of that fishery transpires in south
39 Florida, and, if you think about what we have in south Florida,
40 there's a whole lot of boundary lines, right, and the state/fed
41 boundaries kind of -- They get a little more squirrely down
42 there than they do in the rest of the Gulf, and then there's
43 sanctuary boundaries and HAPC boundaries, and so you're going to
44 get a lot of those extra pings, right, and that's going to tell
45 us really what impact that may have on that algorithm and is it
46 skewing things or one direction or another, and so that we
47 definitely important.

48

1 Then, as you know, white shrimp, that's a little bit more
2 shallow-water fishery, a lot of times, and so you may have some
3 boundary things there, state versus federal waters, depending on
4 where you're at, and so then the brown shrimp, and that's a lot
5 more Gulf-wide, and so you may not have issues there, but we
6 wanted to see all three, especially the hot spots that we could
7 think of that might be troubling, from a data perspective and
8 scientific perspective.

9
10 Anything else from the committee? Seeing none, Dr. Freeman, do
11 you want us to go ahead and make those motions here? I guess we
12 better do that and then -- In other words, repeat these motions
13 that came out of the focus group, and we'll go ahead and do
14 that, and, that way, you can really just focus on the document
15 when we get into the next agenda item, and we won't be moving
16 backwards, and so, if there was -- I heard some positive
17 comments from the NMFS side of the table over here on those two
18 recommendations that came out, and so I'm hoping this will be a
19 smooth process. Would anybody like to make that first motion
20 for that first recommendation in the focus group meeting
21 summary? If not, I will make it.

22
23 All right. I would like to make a motion, and you can just
24 **copy-and-paste that bold print, and then I will edit just a**
25 **little bit of it, to make a council motion and not a focus group**
26 **motion.**

27
28 **GENERAL JOE SPRAGGINS:** I will second that.

29
30 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** All right. That looks good, and, instead of
31 **saying "shrimp data collection focus group", let's just say "the**
32 **committee", because this is the Shrimp Committee.** Okay. That
33 will work too, short and sweet, and that is the motion that came
34 out of the focus group, and that's the first motion. We have a
35 second for the motion. Was there any discussion on the motion?
36 Mr. Strelcheck.

37
38 **MR. STRELCHECK:** Thanks, Leann. In the minutes from the focus
39 group, we noted that -- You might have seen that I asked that
40 the minutes reflect that two NOAA Fisheries employees voted
41 against this motion, and it was largely over kind of how the
42 motion was worded, and, rather than say "consider adopting", I'm
43 wondering if it would be better for this committee to ask that
44 NOAA Fisheries -- Request that we fully evaluate the technical
45 specifications and bring back recommendations or feedback to the
46 council at a subsequent meeting.

47
48 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** I think I'm okay with that. Let me see if I

1 can wordsmith it. I think we'll leave "evaluate and consider"
2 in there, but I think Andy has reservations with the word
3 "adopting", and so we can take the word "adopting" out, Andy,
4 and then, right there -- How did you want to word the bring back
5 part of this?
6

7 **MR. STRELCHECK:** My suggestion is just that we provide that
8 advice back to the council at a subsequent meeting, however we
9 want to work that in.

10
11 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** Okay, and so let's just add a sentence to
12 then end then. NMFS shall bring back --
13

14 **MR. STRELCHECK:** How about NMFS shall provide their evaluation
15 at a -- We could either say at the January council meeting or at
16 a subsequent council meeting.

17
18 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** Do you think you can do it by January?
19

20 **MR. STRELCHECK:** Let's put "future council meeting", and I will
21 talk to the team for what we can do by January.
22

23 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** Sounds good. I'm counting on January. Okay.
24 I think that's a good compromise. Mr. Gill.
25

26 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I am trying to understand
27 the first change that is being proposed here, and we're now
28 deleting "and consider adopting", and should we not also delete
29 "to the maximum extent possible", because they're going to
30 evaluate it, and so I'm not sure what that adds to the current
31 version, and so my suggestion is that we delete that as well.
32

33 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** Okay, and so I'm glad you brought this up,
34 because I didn't realize we had struck-through three words up
35 there.
36

37 **DR. FREEMAN:** Ms. Bosarge, I just wanted to check, and you
38 wanted "and consider" left, correct?
39

40 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** Yes, and that's what I was just about to say,
41 Matt. I think the only word that I was going to strike from the
42 top is "adopting", and I think "to the maximum extent possible"
43 -- It just gives more detail, and I kind of like it in there.
44

45 Go through all the different steps involved in implementing
46 this, and I think, when we get into the document, I will add
47 some more context to this as well, how I see this possibly
48 playing out, and I think that will help NMFS in their

1 evaluation, and so I would like to leave "to the maximum extent
2 possible" and only remove the word "adopting, which I think was
3 the main word that was really giving NMFS a little bit of
4 reservation there. Does the seconder agree with those changes?
5 All right. The seconder is good with it. Any other feedback on
6 the motion? **Seeing none, is there any opposition to the motion?**
7 **No opposition, and the motion carries.**

8
9 **Staff, if you will copy-and-paste the other recommendation from**
10 **the focus group on the board, and I will go ahead, for the sake**
11 **of time, and just make that motion, too.**

12
13 Okay, and so there's the motion. Again, this is the one that
14 talks about the more scientific testing aspect of the already
15 type-approved cellular VMS, OLE VMS, and do we have a second for
16 this motion? It's seconded by Mr. Gill. Is there discussion on
17 this motion? Seeing no discussion, is there any opposition?
18 Wait, we've got one discussion. Yes, Mr. Gill.

19
20 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Madam Chair, and so the "small sample" is
21 awfully vague, and I suspect some definition of that would be
22 better, if it's possible, and I guess I would throw that
23 question to Andy or the center, as to what are we talking about
24 with small sample.

25
26 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** I will let Andy get to that if he would like
27 to, and I think the important piece that may answer a little bit
28 of your question is the last sentence in there, where it says
29 the testing protocols should be designed by NMFS, in
30 consultation and cooperation with the shrimp data collection
31 focus group, which is the group that just met last Thursday, VMS
32 vendors, and the shrimp industry to build industry -- To
33 potentially build industry support and buy-in.

34
35 I think those sorts of questions are probably going to be
36 fleshed out when you have that group all on the line together,
37 with industry giving input on maybe where the important spots to
38 test are, like we talked about earlier, with the south Florida
39 type thing, and then, you know, what boats can you get to
40 cooperate, and NMFS does own a shrimp boat, and so that's a
41 potential option.

42
43 Then, obviously, we have a huge fleet of commercial trawlers out
44 there, and so I think those will probably be honed-in. We
45 didn't have the chance to really -- We were overbudget on time,
46 as usual, with Leann in the meeting, and we were running late,
47 and so we didn't have time to hash that out, but I do think that
48 we will as those people come together and try and flesh out that

1 scientific testing protocol. Andy, did you want to add anything
2 to that, or are you good?

3

4 **MR. STRELCHECK:** I'm good. Thanks.

5

6 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** All right. Is there any other discussion on
7 the motion? **Seeing none, is there any opposition to the motion?**
8 **No opposition, and the motion carries.** Dr. Freeman, do you want
9 to quickly take us into the next agenda item? I have a feeling
10 that it will be fairly quick. Mr. Chair, if that's what you
11 want to do, and just give me a thumbs-up.

12

13 **DR. FREEMAN:** Madam Chair, you will have to let me know if he
14 gave you a thumbs-up.

15

16 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** Matt, go ahead and take us through that next
17 updated draft framework action, Tab D, Number 5.

18

19 **DR. FREEMAN:** Certainly, and one thing, whether it's for the
20 Shrimp Committee or if you all would like to think about it
21 between now and Full Council, it would be helpful as well, for
22 staff, just to give us some direction on whether or not to
23 reconvene the focus group outside of that second motion that the
24 committee made, which we wouldn't necessarily be convening them,
25 and that would be, again, them working in conjunction with NMFS.

26

27 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** Got it.

28

29 **UPDATED FRAMEWORK ACTION: MODIFICATION OF THE VESSEL POSITION**
30 **DATA COLLECTION PROGRAM FOR THE GULF OF MEXICO SHRIMP FISHERY**

31

32 **DR. FREEMAN:** Okay. For the next agenda item, which is the
33 draft framework action, the committee will be presented with an
34 updated draft framework action to transition the Gulf shrimp
35 fishery from the expired 3G cELB to a new device collecting
36 vessel position data for the purpose of maintaining effort
37 estimation.

38

39 Staff will review draft alternatives, and the committee should
40 ask questions and provide staff with further direction for the
41 draft framework action, with consideration given to the shrimp
42 focus group's meeting summary. The Shrimp Advisory Panel will
43 review the draft framework action prior to the January 2022
44 council meeting.

45

46 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** All right, Dr. Freeman, if you want to go
47 ahead and take us through your presentation, pretty quickly.

48

1 **DR. FREEMAN:** Certainly, and so no presentation. I just have
2 the updated document. If we could go to the action, it's on
3 page 8 of the document, or page 14 of the PDF. I just wanted to
4 note that there were some minor modifications made to the
5 document from when the committee saw this in August, the first
6 simply being that we took the council's motions regarding the
7 wording of the draft alternatives and incorporated those, as
8 well as had that reflected in the discussion of the
9 alternatives.

10
11 Then the other modification that was made to the document
12 pertains to the appendices, and, there, we incorporated the
13 comparison table and the draft technical specs that Ms. Bosarge
14 presented on at the August council meeting, and so those are the
15 updates to the document itself, and I will stop there and see if
16 there's any questions.

17
18 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** All right. Any feedback or discussion from
19 the committee? All right. Well, I will try and give a little
20 context here that may help NMFS a little bit with that motion we
21 made a minute ago, and I'm really trying to flesh out how to
22 implement a potential Alternative 3, which replaces the devices
23 we have onboard the vessels now with something comparable to
24 what we have now, which are those draft technical specifications
25 that are in the appendix currently.

26
27 I am hoping that -- You know, there are a few unanswered
28 questions, and we need NMFS to flesh out that, okay, when we
29 present it to this committee, because it hasn't been presented
30 to the committee, where would you send the data, the NESDIS
31 server or possibly the Gulf States server, right, because that's
32 a big pushback for industry, is having our scientific data going
33 to OLE. We have some reservations about that.

34
35 If you flesh that piece out, then we need to flesh out this idea
36 of who will host the approval specifications for vendors to
37 apply, right, those technical specifications, and would that
38 actually be something that would be posted on the SERO website
39 or the Science Center website, and so some details there.

40
41 As far as the testing, because there will be some differences in
42 testing under each alternative, the true-blue VMS testing that
43 goes on is to make sure that, number one, it's a seaworthy
44 device, right, and that it will stand up to the elements on the
45 type of boat that it was designed for, and then, number two,
46 that it does transmit to NOAA OLE, that they're getting the
47 data.

1 We have some more, and I would call them scientific testing
2 protocols, that are listed in the specifications, type approval
3 specifications, for Alternative 3, because it is a scientific
4 program, and you need to make sure that the data that is being
5 produced by that device, number one, can be used by the
6 algorithm that it has to be plugged in, and, number two, that
7 it's producing accurate scientific advice, and so that involves
8 more of this idea of potentially putting a man on the boat that
9 is logging when you're towing and when you're not and then
10 making sure that matches up with the device, when the device
11 says you're towing and when you're not, right.

12
13 That is the scientific validity piece, and that's dumbing it
14 down, but so those types of things, and who would be in charge
15 of that testing, and OLE has an independent contractor that does
16 that for them, if we went this route, and do we use that same
17 contractor, or is that something that would be done on the
18 Coretta by NMFS, and the Coretta is the trawler that NMFS owns,
19 research vessel that NMFS owns.

20
21 Things like that need to be worked out and presented to the
22 council, and that hasn't been done yet, and then the last thing
23 that I would note, Dr. Freeman, which was something that I
24 thought was important that came out at the focus group, is, if
25 you scroll down to the next page, the very last paragraph, the
26 types of data and the amount and timing of data collection would
27 not vary between alternatives. Vessel position is reported
28 every ten minutes.

29
30 I think we probably, given what we learned in the focus group,
31 we need to revamp that paragraph a little bit, because there are
32 actually some differences between the alternatives, and they, at
33 this point, seem to significant in their impact and their
34 ramification, and so we probably need to note that that will be
35 the case for Alternative 3. However, Alternative 2 does collect
36 data more than just every ten minutes, and list those times that
37 it collects data in a variable ping and things of that nature.

38
39 Then the last thing that I will mention that I think would be
40 helpful as we are moving forward with this document, and
41 bringing it to the public, is, in the document right now, there
42 really is no difference in the alternatives brought forward,
43 unless you go to the appendix, and that Alternative 2 will most
44 likely -- The way it's always been handled is those VMS -- That
45 data goes to the CIO's office, which is essentially there is a
46 platform that law enforcement sits above with that information,
47 where they log-in and they actively monitor it, and so our data
48 is going to law enforcement and then to the Science Center,

1 whereas, with Alternative 3, we anticipate that it would go --
2 If you look at the specifications that were put in the appendix,
3 it does specify that it will not go to law enforcement.

4
5 It would go to an intermediate service, the NESDIS or Gulf
6 States or something like that, and then on to the Science Center
7 from there, and I think that's an important distinction to make
8 in the document for the public to understand the differences
9 between the two, and that's all I have to say there, to help
10 staff flesh out some of those alternatives. Yes, sir, Dr.
11 Froeschke.

12
13 **DR. JOHN FROESCHKE:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Just so I
14 understand, so we can revise the document, is it true, with
15 these cellular VMS units, that they will transmit when in range,
16 but they're not transmitting these VMS position locations every
17 ten minutes, for example, that OLE would be able to monitor the
18 position in their office in real-time?

19
20 Then my second question is that, if that's the case, where these
21 are being batch transmitted later, when you're in cellular
22 range, the concept of like increasing the ping rates when you're
23 near closed areas and things wouldn't be the same as it is with
24 reef fish, and so it's likely that it would probably stay on the
25 ten-minute interval. I am just trying to figure out how we can
26 modify the document.

27
28 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** So I will take a stab at it. I don't see any
29 federal law enforcement in the room, and so you're right. If
30 you're out of cellphone range, they're not going to transmit
31 until you get back within cellphone range. Now, however, when
32 they are in cellphone range, it would be more of a real-time
33 situation, right, and they're going to be transmitting, and so
34 it's going to depend on where you're at in the Gulf, as to
35 whether law enforcement is seeing it real-time or not. Mr.
36 Gill.

37
38 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I note that Alternative 2
39 makes a point of noting that the units are reimbursable by the
40 agency. It does mention any similar comment in Alternative 3.
41 Is that implying that Alternative 3 units are not reimbursable
42 by the agency?

43
44 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** To my knowledge, the VMS program, through law
45 enforcement, has a reimbursement process associated with it,
46 but, if this is not type approved as an OLE VMS, I don't think
47 there is a reimbursement. Is that correct, Andy?

48

1 **MR. STRELCHECK:** To be reimbursable, it has to be run through
2 the VMS program, and we reimburse for the purchase of the unit,
3 and not the installation or the service costs.

4
5 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** Mr. Gill.

6
7 **MR. GILL:** A follow-up. Thank you, Madam Chair. Is there any,
8 as there has been in the past, concern about the limitation of
9 those funds, that they might run out before Vessel X gets a unit
10 and applies for reimbursement?

11
12 **MR. STRELCHECK:** We questioned that before the SEFHIER
13 electronic reporting program as well, and we were able to
14 validate that sufficient funds exist, and that's something that
15 has been provided funding support. There's always kind of that
16 lingering question, in terms of how much funds are available at
17 any point in time, and certainly we can continue to confirm the
18 availability of funds and what programs are entering at what
19 timeframe, in order to ensure that there is sufficient funds,
20 but, to my knowledge, I am not aware of any programs that
21 haven't been able to be funded through the reimbursement.

22
23 **MR. GILL:** So, in looking at that fund, and all the current
24 applications and that potential ongoing, should Alternative 2,
25 for example, be selected in the shrimp industry, for whatever
26 level of disbursement we're talking about, the agency is
27 comfortable that funds are available, and so folks can be
28 assured that that's part of that program?

29
30 **MR. STRELCHECK:** Yes, and I'm happy to confirm that. I can't
31 say for certain right now, but we can double-check kind of what
32 the available funding looks like and that funding cycle for
33 adding funds to that program on an annual basis.

34
35 **MR. GILL:** Thank you. I think that's a necessary ingredient in
36 part of this discussion.

37
38 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** Ms. Levy.

39
40 **MS. MARA LEVY:** Thank you. Just a question about the discussion
41 about that little paragraph at the end about the data collection
42 being the same and the ten-minute interval, and I hear what
43 you're saying about knowing that the current VMS might ping
44 more, like when you turn it on or whatever, but I guess my
45 question is how do we know that Alternative 3 is actually going
46 to produce that, if we don't have the exact specifications down
47 already? I mean, unless part of the specifications say it will
48 only ping in ten-minute intervals, and there will be no extra

1 pings, I guess I'm wondering how we know at this point.

2
3 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** In the appendix of this document, you have
4 the technical specification, and that's the way I wrote them,
5 was that it will ping every ten minutes, and, if you look at the
6 technical specifications for that same section for an OLE-
7 approved VMS, you will see that there is actually a whole list
8 of about nine things, I think, that they ping for, versus if you
9 look at the tech specs that were written to mirror what we have
10 on the vessels now, and it will show you that it's every ten
11 minutes. It's in a different section, and I will try and get
12 you an exact page, if staff wants to pull it up, but that's how
13 they're written.

14
15 Mara, one thing that came out of that focus group meeting, as we
16 went through that first piece, where we were actually looking at
17 the boxes that were on the boat now, and we had a presentation
18 from former Science Center staff that was involved in
19 implementing those devices, and he said, you know, one of the
20 things that was important to us, as we figured out a path
21 forward for replacing the old LGL boxes with these new cellular
22 ones that would transmit automatically, is we realized that it
23 was very important to keep the data itself being collected the
24 same.

25
26 That is one important aspect of those draft technical
27 specifications for the boxes, that I wrote for the boxes that we
28 have on there now, is it does strive to do just that, to keep
29 the data itself the same. Mr. Gill.

30
31 **MR. GILL:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Another point for
32 clarification. On Appendix C, that list of the approved VMS
33 units for the Gulf of Mexico for-hire fisheries, and I presume
34 the intent of this is to demonstrate the breadth of available
35 units, and it's dated 21 July, and so there has been discussion,
36 I believe, at the focus group, that there is two approved
37 cellular units, and this lists one, and is that because of the
38 date of the list, and another one has been approved? Could we
39 get some clarification on that as well, please?

40
41 **DR. FREEMAN:** We can certainly update that list. Again, these
42 are simply there as an example of what's been approved for the
43 for-hire, and certainly there is not technical specifications
44 developed yet for the Gulf shrimp fishery, and so there hasn't
45 been anything, therefore, that's been approved for the shrimp
46 industry, and so this is just giving an idea of range for
47 another fishery in the Gulf, but we can certainly update that
48 and keep that updated, with the list, to reflect that there is

1 another cellular unit.

2

3 **MR. GILL:** Thank you.

4

5 **CHAIRMAN BOSARGE:** All right. I don't see any other feedback
6 from the other end of the table. Thanks, Dr. Freeman. Bob, it
7 seems like there was one more cellular unit that may have been
8 recently approved, and there may be an update to that list. I
9 thought the same thing as I read through it. All right. Any
10 other discussion or feedback for Dr. Freeman? Seeing none,
11 we're slightly overbudget, as usual, on time, but I don't think
12 there was any other business, and so, if there's no other
13 business to come before the committee, Mr. Chairman, that wraps
14 us up.

15

16 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on October 25, 2021.)

17

18

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