

1 GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

2  
3 SHRIMP MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

4  
5 Astor Crowne Plaza New Orleans, Louisiana

6  
7 January 30, 2017

8  
9 **VOTING MEMBERS**

- 10 Dale Diaz.....Mississippi
- 11 Kevin Anson (designee for Chris Blankenship).....Alabama
- 12 Roy Crabtree.....NMFS, SERO, St. Petersburg, Florida
- 13 Pamela Dana.....Florida
- 14 John Greene.....Alabama
- 15 Kelly Lucas (designee for Jamie Miller).....Mississippi
- 16 Lance Robinson (designee for Robin Riechers).....Texas
- 17 John Sanchez.....Florida

18  
19 **NON-VOTING MEMBERS**

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

30  
31 **STAFF**

- 32 Steven Atran.....Senior Fishery Biologist
- 33 Matt Freeman.....Economist
- 34 Douglas Gregory.....Executive Director
- 35 Morgan Kilgour.....Fishery Biologist
- 36 Ava Lasseter.....Anthropologist
- 37 Mara Levy.....NMFS
- 38 Emily Muehlstein.....Public Information Officer
- 39 Ryan Rindone.....Fishery Biologist/SEDAR Liaison
- 40 Bernadine Roy.....Office Manager
- 41 Charlotte Schiaffo.....Research and Human Resource Librarian
- 42 Carrie Simmons.....Deputy Director

43  
44 **OTHER PARTICIPANTS**

- 45 Eric Brazer.....GMRFSA
- 46 J.P. Brooker.....Ocean Conservancy
- 47 Mark Brown.....SAFMC
- 48 Tony Bruce.....Zachary, LA

1 Gary Bryant.....Gulf Shores, AL  
2 Richard Fischer.....LA  
3 Traci Floyd.....MS DMR  
4 Sue Gerhart.....NMFS  
5 Scott Hickman.....Galveston, TX  
6 Joe Jewell.....MS DMR  
7 Bill Kelly.....FKCFA  
8 Jason Klosterman.....Destin, FL  
9 Bonnie Ponwith.....SEFSC  
10  
11 - - -  
12

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 Public Hearing Draft Shrimp Amendment 17B.....6  
12  
13 Other Business.....25  
14     Update on Shrimp Effort Estimates.....25  
15     Discussion of TED Requirements for Skimmer Trawl Vessels...26  
16     Discussion of Climate Strategies.....28  
17  
18 Adjournment.....31  
19  
20                     - - -  
21

TABLE OF MOTIONS

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23

PAGE 6: Motion in Action 1 to make Alternative 2 the preferred alternative. [The motion carried on page 7.](#)

PAGE 8: Motion in Action 2 that the preferred alternative be Alternative 2. [The motion carried on page 8.](#)

PAGE 14: Motion in Action 3 that the preferred alternative be Alternative 2. [The motion carried on page 14.](#)

PAGE 19: Motion in Action 4 that the preferred alternative be Alternative 4, changing the number of shrimp moratorium permits from 1,300 to 1,175. [The motion carried on page 20.](#)

PAGE 24: Motion in Action 5 that the preferred alternative be Alternative 2. [The motion carried on page 24.](#)

PAGE 25: Motion that Shrimp Amendment 17B be sent out for public hearings. [The motion carried on page 25.](#)

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1 The Shrimp Management Committee of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery  
2 Management Council convened at the Astor Crowne Plaza, New  
3 Orleans, Louisiana, Monday afternoon, January 30, 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:** The first order of business, I would like  
11 to review who is on the Shrimp Committee. I am the Chair, Mr.  
12 Fischer or Mr. Banks would be Vice Chair, Mr. Anson, Dr.  
13 Crabtree, Dr. Dana, Johnny Greene, Dr. Lucas, Mr. Robinson, and  
14 Mr. Sanchez.

15  
16 The first order of business is Adoption of the Agenda. Does  
17 anybody have any other business or amendments to the agenda?  
18 Dr. Ponwith.

19  
20 **DR. BONNIE PONWITH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would  
21 appreciate if we could add, as Other Business, an update on the  
22 shrimp effort estimates that were presented last fall.

23  
24 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thank you, Dr. Ponwith. That's under Other  
25 Business. Also, under Other Business, I would like to add  
26 another item for discussion, to discuss the new TED requirements  
27 for shrimp skimmer vessels, under Other Business. Does anybody  
28 else have other business? Ms. Bosarge.

29  
30 **MS. LEANN BOSARGE:** I was reading the Gulf of Mexico Regional  
31 Action Plan to Implement NOAA Fisheries Climate Science  
32 Strategy, over my Christmas holidays. It was thrilling.  
33 Anyway, I found something in there that just kind of piqued my  
34 interest and made me think about shrimp as being something  
35 proactive to be thinking about and watching for in the future  
36 and see if we see any changes. You already have two things  
37 under Other Business though, and so if we don't get to this, we  
38 can talk about it any time. It's not pressing.

39  
40 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thank you, Ms. Bosarge. The next item on the  
41 agenda is Approval of the Minutes. Does anybody have any edits  
42 for the minutes? Is there any opposition to approving the  
43 minutes? The minutes are approved.

44  
45 Action Guide and Next Steps is the next item. Today, we're  
46 going to go through the document for Shrimp Amendment 17B, with  
47 an eye on getting it ready for public hearings, possibly, after  
48 this meeting, if the group decides to do that.

1  
2 As we go through the document, if possible, we should pick  
3 preferreds, and so be thinking about that as we go through and  
4 we talk about the action items in the document. With that, I'm  
5 going to turn it over to Dr. Kilgour, and she is going to take  
6 us through Draft Shrimp Amendment 17B.

7  
8 **PUBLIC HEARING DRAFT SHRIMP AMENDMENT 17B**  
9

10 **DR. MORGAN KILGOUR:** We are at the public hearing draft of  
11 Shrimp Amendment 17B. Again, to review the purpose and need for  
12 the action, the purpose is to define optimum yield, determine  
13 the appropriate number of permits to achieve optimum yield on a  
14 continuing basis, consider measures to maintain the appropriate  
15 number of permits for the federal Gulf shrimp fishery without  
16 increasing bycatch, and to develop provisions for non-federally-  
17 permitted shrimping vessels to transit through federal waters  
18 while not actively shrimping.

19  
20 The needs for this action are to ascertain the appropriate  
21 metrics to manage the shrimp fishery, maintain increases in  
22 catch efficiency without substantially reducing landings,  
23 promote economic efficiency and stability in the fishery,  
24 provide flexibility for state-registered shrimp vessels, and  
25 protect federally-managed Gulf shrimp stocks.

26  
27 The very first action is establishing an aggregate MSY for the  
28 Gulf of Mexico shrimp fishery. The Alternative 1 is no action,  
29 do not establish an aggregate MSY for the federal shrimp  
30 fishery. Alternative 2 is to establish an aggregate MSY using  
31 the method developed by the Shrimp Effort Working Group for  
32 federal commercial Gulf shrimp fishery. Aggregate MSY would be  
33 equal to just over 112-million pounds of tails. I would be  
34 happy to answer any questions about this action.

35  
36 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any questions for Dr. Kilgour related to Action  
37 1? Dr. Crabtree.

38  
39 **DR. ROY CRABTREE:** Do you want to go through or do you want us  
40 to go ahead and talk preferreds now?

41  
42 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** No, I would entertain discussing preferreds now.

43  
44 **DR. CRABTREE:** It seems to me that, in this case, we have a new  
45 aggregate MSY that came out of our Shrimp Effort Working Group,  
46 and I think that's the best science we have for that. **I would**  
47 **make a motion to establish Action 1, Alternative 2, as our**  
48 **preferred alternative.**

1  
2 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** We have a motion by Dr. Crabtree. Is there a  
3 second to the motion? It's seconded by Mr. Sanchez. The motion  
4 is, in Action 1, to make Alternative 2 the preferred  
5 alternative. Is there any discussion on the motion? Mr.  
6 Fischer.

7  
8 **MR. MYRON FISCHER:** Yes, Mr. Chairman. We will support the  
9 motion, but we always have to mention that it's an annual crop.  
10 Shrimp is an annual crop, and it's dependent on temperature and  
11 salinity and the biomass coming out of the estuarine areas. I  
12 am not saying it's an artificial number. I know it's what the  
13 shrimp workgroup came up with. However, we want it to be on the  
14 record that it's still an annual crop.

15  
16 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any other discussion? **Seeing none, is there any**  
17 **opposition to the motion? Seeing no opposition, the motion**  
18 **carries.** Dr. Kilgour.

19  
20 **DR. KILGOUR:** On to Action 2, which would establish an aggregate  
21 OY for the Gulf shrimp fishery. The no action would be to not  
22 establish an aggregate OY for federal commercial Gulf shrimp.  
23 Alternative 2 is, for the federal shrimp fishery, aggregate OY  
24 is equal to just under eighty-six million pounds of tails, which  
25 is the aggregate MSY reduced for certain ecological, social, and  
26 economic factors.

27  
28 In the discussion, it goes on to describe that the MSY/OY  
29 Working Group that met in 2016 looked at the different  
30 thresholds that were already placed on the shrimp fishery, and  
31 so they looked at a year that had high CPUE and high landings  
32 and that didn't reach the juvenile red snapper bycatch threshold  
33 or the sea turtle bycatch effort threshold, and so that ended up  
34 being the year 2009, I believe, and that's what that predicted  
35 landings would have been, was an aggregate OY of just under  
36 eighty-six million pounds of tails.

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

39  
40 **DR. CRABTREE:** When the working group looked at this, were the  
41 main drivers staying below the red snapper effort levels and the  
42 turtle effort levels? Was there an economic piece of this as  
43 well?

44  
45 **DR. KILGOUR:** Yes, and it was those levels needed to be -- The  
46 effort levels needed to be below those thresholds, but it also  
47 had a relatively high CPUE and high landings. All of this is, I  
48 think, covered in Appendix 2. It's an analysis that Mike Travis

1 did, and I might have my appendix number incorrect, but it's at  
2 the back of the document. We have gone over this in previous  
3 meetings, and so I can refresh your memory, if I get to that  
4 page fast enough, because it's been a while since we've looked  
5 at this.

6  
7 **DR. CRABTREE:** So they looked at landings, CPUE, the sea turtle  
8 bycatch threshold, and the red snapper bycatch threshold and  
9 somehow integrated all of those together, I take it.

10  
11 **DR. KILGOUR:** Correct.

12  
13 **DR. CRABTREE:** I will go ahead and make a motion here, because  
14 it does seem to me that Alternative 2 is the number that we have  
15 that is based on the science that we have. **I will move that, in**  
16 **Action 2, our preferred alternative be Alternative 2.**

17  
18 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** We have a motion by Dr. Crabtree. Is there a  
19 second? It's seconded by Mr. Sanchez. The motion is that, in  
20 Action 2, the preferred alternative be Alternative 2. Any  
21 discussion on the motion? Mr. Fischer.

22  
23 **MR. FISCHER:** Just to make certain that the OY is going to be  
24 based on the figures from the workgroup that had to do with both  
25 the turtle bycatch and red snapper effort within the ten to  
26 thirty-fathom zones and those were incorporated and those were  
27 2009 numbers? Thank you. Mr. Chairman, it's still an annual  
28 crop, and the ones you don't catch die.

29  
30 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thank you, Mr. Fischer. Any further discussion?  
31 **Seeing no further discussion, is there any opposition to the**  
32 **motion? Seeing no opposition, the motion carries.** Dr. Kilgour.

33  
34 **DR. KILGOUR:** Thank you. Just to be perfectly clear, all of  
35 that is in a table in Appendix B on page 97, and it was based on  
36 the year 2009, but I just want everyone to be able to go to that  
37 page if they wanted to.

38  
39 Action 3 would be the minimum threshold number of Gulf shrimp  
40 vessel permits. This is a number where, if the shrimp fishery  
41 reaches this threshold number, and that's for what is monitored,  
42 and what is monitored is the number of valid and renewable  
43 permits.

44  
45 When that number of valid and renewable permits reaches one of  
46 the values established in one of these alternatives, the council  
47 will do something, and that is established in the next action,  
48 but this is establishing that threshold.



1  
2 Alternative 1 is no action, which does not establish a  
3 threshold. Alternative 2 would set the threshold number of  
4 valid or renewable Gulf shrimp vessel permits equal to the  
5 predicted number of active permitted vessels (those with  
6 landings from offshore waters) needed to attain aggregate OY in  
7 the offshore fishery. The aggregate OY accounts for relatively  
8 high CPUE and landings, while reducing the risk of exceeding sea  
9 turtle and juvenile red snapper bycatch. This would be 1,072  
10 permits, and this is the AP-preferred alternative.

11  
12 Alternative 3 would set a threshold number of valid or renewable  
13 Gulf shrimp vessel permits equal to the predicted number of  
14 active permitted vessels (those with landings from offshore  
15 waters) during 2011, when effort was highest during the  
16 moratorium in the area monitored for red snapper juvenile  
17 mortality, but without reaching the bycatch reduction threshold  
18 and triggering closures, and that is 935 permits.

19  
20 Alternative 4 would set a threshold number of valid or renewable  
21 Gulf shrimp vessel permits equal to the predicted number of  
22 active permitted vessels (those with landings from offshore  
23 waters) during 2008, when CPUE in the offshore fishery was  
24 highest during the moratorium, and that is 880 permits.

25  
26 Alternative 5 would set a threshold number of valid or renewable  
27 Gulf shrimp vessel permits equal to the predicted number of  
28 active permitted vessels (those with landings from offshore  
29 waters) in a year with relatively high CPUE in the offshore  
30 fishery without substantially reduced landings, and with effort  
31 that is close to the effort needed to achieve OY. Option 5a  
32 would be the year 2007, which is 1,131 permits. Option 5b would  
33 be 2012, which would be 988 permits.

34  
35 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Lucas.

36  
37 **DR. KELLY LUCAS:** Morgan, I think we've covered this before, but  
38 I always seem to -- Active permitted vessels, and then you have  
39 it in parentheses "those with landings from offshore waters",  
40 does not necessarily equate to all federally-permitted vessels  
41 or it is the same as all federally-permitted vessels?

42  
43 **DR. KILGOUR:** No, it's not the same as all federally-permitted  
44 vessels. That number of active permitted vessels is the number  
45 of vessels that is predicted to have had landings from that  
46 year, but when that number of 1,072 is reached -- What is being  
47 monitored is the number of valid or renewable permits. When  
48 valid or renewable permits actually reaches 1,072, that's when

1 the threshold would be triggered.

2  
3 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Just to clarify something in my mind, because I  
4 think you're saying valid and renewable in each one of these  
5 alternatives, but valid and renewable basically equates to  
6 active and inactive, right?

7  
8 **DR. KILGOUR:** Yes.

9  
10 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Okay. Any other questions for Dr. Kilgour? Ms.  
11 Gerhart.

12  
13 **MS. SUE GERHART:** I didn't quite see the answer to your last  
14 question, but valid and renewable are all the permits that could  
15 go out and fish, and so the valid are those that have not  
16 expired and the renewable are those that have expired, but have  
17 a year still -- They are within the year to renew. "Active" is  
18 defined differently. Active are vessels with actual landings,  
19 and so it's a different thing. Not all permits are active.

20  
21 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Fischer.

22  
23 **MR. FISCHER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have always, since  
24 the inception of the document, struggled with these numbers,  
25 because we deal in number of permits being valid permits and  
26 then we suddenly switch to those active permits with landings,  
27 and we have always had boats sitting idle.

28  
29 We've always had some boats at the dock not fishing in certain  
30 years, for whatever reasons, and so it's difficult to come up  
31 with a number, because we know it's active permits that are  
32 going to be involved in the biological opinion. It's active  
33 permits that is going to be exercising effort within ten to  
34 thirty fathoms with red snapper, and it's active permits that is  
35 going to affect CPUE, but we can't vote in just those active  
36 permits, because there is going to come a time when some boats  
37 are tied to the dock.

38  
39 We have been, historically, running 30 or 35 percent of the  
40 boats tied to the dock. I am not saying that's the level we  
41 should bump this up to, but we know that it's going to be higher  
42 than the active permits that can prosecute the industry in a  
43 given year, and so how do we settle in on an empirical number  
44 for the document? Mr. Chairman, you have a job.

45  
46 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Kilgour.

47  
48 **DR. KILGOUR:** I just wanted to reiterate that this isn't an

1 active reduction of the shrimp fleet, and so this is all through  
2 passive reduction of the fleet, and some heartening news is  
3 that, in the past two years, it seems that there's been about  
4 ten to fifteen permits that have not been renewed, and so we're  
5 seeing a slowing of the non-renewable permits. This is just a  
6 threshold number where, if the number of permits reaches this  
7 level, then the council may do something.

8  
9 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Anson.

10  
11 **MR. KEVIN ANSON:** I had a question, and Myron hit on it, and I  
12 was wondering if, Sue, you had a number handy as to, in recent  
13 years, what is the percent of permits that are tied up to the  
14 dock and don't have any landings, versus those that are eligible  
15 and renewable and valid?

16  
17 **MS. GERHART:** We do have that in a table, on page 20 of the  
18 document, for each year, up to 2014. We don't have 2015 data in  
19 there, but, again, it's been decreasing over time. The last  
20 year that we have, it was about 26 percent.

21  
22 **MR. ANSON:** Thank you.

23  
24 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Ms. Gerhart.

25  
26 **MS. GERHART:** Thank you. I wanted to point out something else  
27 as well, that these numbers are number of offshore vessels.  
28 They are not just federally-permitted vessels. We are not able  
29 to distinguish fishing in the EEZ versus fishing offshore,  
30 outside of the COLREGS line, and so some of these are state-  
31 permitted vessels as well, and so there is at least some amount  
32 of buffer included in the numbers that we have there for those  
33 vessels that aren't permitted anyway, but are adding to those  
34 active number of vessels. We don't know how many those are, but  
35 it is an overestimate of the number.

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

38  
39 **DR. LUCAS:** Morgan, I'm going to ask something, and this is just  
40 talking, to see if something adds more clarity, because, when we  
41 send this off, we keep getting wrapped around active and then  
42 set at valid and renewable. If there was a way to just clean up  
43 the alternatives, in terms of just listing what the numbers are  
44 and then maybe providing the rationale below or something.

45  
46 It's like the rationale is in the alternative with it, and it  
47 helps explain the rationale, but I think, when people call me to  
48 ask me questions, like I got twisted, they keep getting twisted

1 between valid and renewable and then the showing of the active  
2 permits, knowing that what Myron said was, at any given time,  
3 you are going to have less active, and you have less people  
4 fishing than you actually have permits for. I don't know if  
5 that helps it or whatever, but I was wondering if there was a  
6 way to make it cleaner, if you thought of any way.

7  
8 **DR. KILGOUR:** Yes, and I think I've been discussing that perhaps  
9 we need to have an additional note that says what that number  
10 actually means. That 1,072 will be the number of valid and  
11 renewable permits. When the number of valid and renewable  
12 permits reaches 1,072, that's when the threshold is hit, and so  
13 perhaps I have a note at the bottom of this that explains what  
14 that 1,072 is really -- It's not the predicted number of active  
15 vessels. It's when the valid and renewable permits reaches  
16 1,072, the threshold has been hit.

17  
18 I can add a clarifying statement below, I think, that would be  
19 helpful, but I think the IPT has struggled with the wording of  
20 these alternatives, because we want to be very clear where this  
21 number came from, but it's not clear what that number means,  
22 what is being monitored, the number of active permits or the  
23 number of valid or renewable permits, and what is monitored is  
24 the number of valid and renewable permits, and so I can add a  
25 clarifying statement if you think that will be helpful, and I  
26 will make sure that that's clarified at the public hearings as  
27 well.

28  
29 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Crabtree.

30  
31 **DR. CRABTREE:** I think some of what you're seeing, over time, is  
32 we lose permits every year because folks don't renew their  
33 permits, but I think a high fraction of those are vessels that  
34 aren't active and aren't fishing.

35  
36 We do get, periodically, an active fisherman, who, for whatever  
37 reason, fails to renew their permit and they lose it, and those  
38 guys generally buy another permit pretty quickly, but there are  
39 permits that go away in this fishery and you never hear anything  
40 about it, and I think those are permits where people just aren't  
41 really in the fishery anymore. My guess is, over time, you're  
42 going to see the fraction of latent permits, inactive permits,  
43 continue to decrease a little bit.

44  
45 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Fischer.

46  
47 **MR. FISCHER:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. My comment may be the same  
48 that Kelly just brought up, but I think, especially just prior

1 to this action item is refresh everyone what we've just been  
2 talking about. What is an active permit and what is a valid  
3 permit, to see what the differences are, because we start the  
4 motion out talking about valid permits, but we end the motion --  
5 The last sentence talks about active permits.

6  
7 For when the public comments on it, it's confusing for us, and  
8 it can be very confusing for someone who doesn't attend these  
9 meetings, and so I think we need to define those, and I forgot  
10 my other point, Dale, but you can come back to me later.

11  
12 **DR. KILGOUR:** That will definitely be done in the public  
13 hearings. I will make sure of it.

14  
15 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Fischer.

16  
17 **MR. FISCHER:** Thank you. In a sense, if it's 1,072, some could  
18 deem it as that's the ceiling, the maximum amount of permits,  
19 but, when you get into the next action item, actually it could  
20 be the floor, where you never go under that amount, where,  
21 anytime you have an open permit, one that becomes available --  
22 In a sense, it's not the ceiling. It's the floor that you won't  
23 go below.

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

26  
27 **DR. CRABTREE:** That's exactly what it is, and we may never get  
28 there if everyone starts renewing their permits. I think, under  
29 most of these schemes, we're a decade to get there, at the  
30 current rate of attrition, but my guess is, as inactive vessels  
31 exit the fishery, you will see fewer and fewer lost every year.  
32 We may never get to this.

33  
34 What this is, it's this is the number of permits that we think  
35 we need in the fishery to be fishing to catch the optimum yield.  
36 It doesn't mean that we will ever get to it though. We could  
37 always have more permits than that, because, like we've talked  
38 about, this is not any kind of active permit reduction. The  
39 only reason the number of permits is going down is because  
40 fishermen don't renew them or don't transfer them and allow that  
41 to happen.

42  
43 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Fischer, to your earlier comment, if you  
44 would like to add a new alternative to the document, that could  
45 still be done.

46  
47 **MR. FISCHER:** Mr. Chairman, I've added quite a few alternatives  
48 that seem to have been put in the back, in the discount rack at

1 the end of the document. They've been removed, because mine had  
2 to do with 1,400 or 1,600 permits, escalating the amount of  
3 permits. I know we're not going there.

4  
5 I think a realistic number -- I am just trying to -- I am  
6 struggling with the empirical number of valid permits versus  
7 active permits, and we switch it around within the same  
8 alternative, and what number are we seeking? Obviously we're  
9 seeking active permits, but then we're, in turn, stating that  
10 this will be the most we have, or we won't go below that, but,  
11 if you have inactive boats, the amount of boats actually  
12 fishing, that are active, would be far less, as history has  
13 shown.

14  
15 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Crabtree.

16  
17 **DR. CRABTREE:** I don't view this as the number we're seeking.  
18 This is the number we don't want to let it go below, but it  
19 doesn't mean that we're trying to get to it. At any rate, it  
20 does seem, to me, that there is logic behind Alternative 2. It  
21 corresponds with optimum yield, and it was the AP preferred. **To**  
22 **try and get this going, I will make a motion that, in Action 3,**  
23 **that our preferred alternative be Alternative 2.**

24  
25 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** It's seconded by Mr. Fischer. We have a motion  
26 that, in Action 3, the preferred alternative be Alternative 2.  
27 Is there any discussion on the motion? Ms. Levy.

28  
29 **MS. MARA LEVY:** Just to make sure that I understand -- I think I  
30 understand, but I want to make sure that I do, because we're  
31 talking a lot about valid and renewable versus active. The way  
32 I am reading this is that we are looking at -- The threshold  
33 would be set at 1,072 valid or renewable permits. That's what  
34 we're looking for, and that that equates to the number of active  
35 permitted vessels needed to attain OY in the offshore fishery,  
36 right? Am I reading that correctly?

37  
38 **DR. KILGOUR:** That is correct.

39  
40 **MS. LEVY:** Okay. Thank you.

41  
42 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any discussion on the motion on the board?  
43 **Seeing no discussion, is there any opposition to the motion on**  
44 **the board? Seeing no opposition, the motion carries.** Dr.  
45 Kilgour.

46  
47 **DR. KILGOUR:** Moving on to Action 4, which is what happens when  
48 this threshold is met. This is the response. Alternative 1 is

1 nothing happens. No action will be triggered when the threshold  
2 number of valid or renewable shrimp moratorium permits is  
3 reached.

4  
5 Alternative 2 is, if the number of valid or renewable shrimp  
6 moratorium permits reaches the threshold set in Action 3, any  
7 permits that are not renewed within one year of the expiration  
8 date on the permit will go into a Gulf shrimp vessel permit  
9 reserve pool.

10  
11 Alternative 3 is, if the number of valid or renewable shrimp  
12 moratorium permits reaches the threshold set in Action 3, the  
13 council will form a review panel to review the threshold and  
14 determine if action is needed.

15  
16 Alternative 4 is, when the number of valid or renewable shrimp  
17 moratorium permits reaches 1,300, the council will form a review  
18 panel to review the details of a permit pool and other options.  
19 If the number of permits reaches the threshold set in Action 3,  
20 any permits that are not renewed within one year of the  
21 expiration date on the permit will go into a Gulf shrimp vessel  
22 permit reserve pool. The panel would consist of Shrimp AP  
23 members, Science and Statistical Committee members, NMFS and  
24 council staff. Alternative 4 was the AP preferred alternative.

25  
26 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any questions for Dr. Kilgour on Action 4? Dr.  
27 Crabtree.

28  
29 **DR. CRABTREE:** Just to make sure that I understand Alternative  
30 4, so we would have the threshold that was -- How many permits  
31 did we choose? Was it 1,072? If we drop below 1,300, and so  
32 well before we get to that, we would then have a review panel to  
33 figure out what, if anything, we need to do, but we wouldn't  
34 actually do anything beyond that until we got to -- We would set  
35 the permit pool up at that point, I guess, but nothing would  
36 actually happen until we got to the 1,072 threshold, and is that  
37 correct?

38  
39 **DR. KILGOUR:** Yes, that's correct.

40  
41 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Just for everyone's information, we are  
42 currently at 1,441 permits, and so the 1,300 is about halfway  
43 between there and 1,072. Dr. Lucas.

44  
45 **DR. LUCAS:** Was there a reason for choosing 1,300? According to  
46 Morgan, we were only losing -- We had slowed down to losing  
47 roughly ten a year. If we pick 1,300, and there is a -- I mean,  
48 that's a long time. Do we want it to be that extreme in

1 between?

2  
3 **DR. KILGOUR:** This, from my recollection, was added at the  
4 advice of the Shrimp AP. They wanted a number that was in  
5 between what those threshold numbers were that would be  
6 proactive in setting up this permit pool, so that it was already  
7 in place. If there were any requirements for the permit, that  
8 they already be set up, so that it could start immediately.  
9 That is what the rationale was for having this number in  
10 between.

11  
12 Now, should you want to change that number to something else,  
13 that is the council's decision, but that was the rationale, was  
14 something in between what is currently valid and renewable and  
15 the threshold, so that it was all ready to go.

16  
17 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Ms. Bosarge.

18  
19 **MS. BOSARGE:** I think what was really important to the AP was  
20 that they would get a chance to be part of the dialogue on the  
21 requirements of this permit pool as we got closer to reaching  
22 that threshold and possibly establishing that permit pool.

23  
24 I think what you have to understand, when you look at the 1,300  
25 number, is what the document itself looked like at the time that  
26 they chose that 1,300, that we had some alternatives in the  
27 document at that point that had some much higher levels of  
28 permits, and so that 1,300 was kind of like a middle ground,  
29 when you looked at all those different levels.

30  
31 To me, in my mind, and I am speaking on my own behalf and I  
32 don't want to speak on behalf of the AP here, but, to me, what  
33 was important was that they would get a chance to look at it and  
34 give input as we started to get close to that threshold.

35  
36 Now that we are seeing a trend of like fifteen or sixteen  
37 permits per year falling off, based on what you all just chose  
38 as your preferred, that 1,072, if these people meet at the 1,300  
39 level, they will be meeting approximately fifteen years before  
40 they are predicted to actually hit the threshold.

41  
42 In hindsight, things have changed a little bit. We can see some  
43 different trends now of the slowing of the pace of these permits  
44 falling off.

45  
46 There is another Shrimp AP meeting that's going to happen before  
47 our next council meeting. Maybe they can give us some --  
48 Obviously we probably still need to pick a preferred, but that



1 may give them an opportunity to give us some more feedback,  
2 something that may be more workable, if their goal is to truly  
3 have a chance to look at it maybe a year or two in advance of  
4 when we predict that threshold to be met.

5  
6 I have a feeling that maybe what they were getting at, and now  
7 that we have new numbers in front of us, this 1,300 looks a  
8 little crazy, but maybe we can get some more input from them and  
9 somehow word that alternative so that it meets the crux of their  
10 goal, because I am thinking, when they see that it's fifteen  
11 years out from the threshold, that's probably not what they were  
12 really wanting, but I don't want to speak for them. They can  
13 tell us that at their next meeting.

14  
15 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Lucas.

16  
17 **DR. LUCAS:** I mean, I like Alternative 4. I like that it's the  
18 AP preferred, and I understand what they were trying to do, but  
19 I have a hard time kind of just picking it as the preferred,  
20 knowing, like you said, that you're talking a fifteen to thirty-  
21 year review before it occurs.

22  
23 I don't know, and I guess we can change it and then see if they  
24 like the change in the number or something, but I just have a  
25 problem picking that number, knowing how extreme that is above  
26 the other preferred.

27  
28 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Anson.

29  
30 **MR. ANSON:** Let Mara go first.

31  
32 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Ms. Levy.

33  
34 **MS. LEVY:** Thank you. I just wanted to suggest that -- I mean,  
35 you don't have to do this, but you can always put a new  
36 alternative in there. If you think there is a better number in  
37 which to start the review panel -- If 1,100 seems more  
38 reasonable, you can make a new alternative and pick it as your  
39 preferred and still ask the AP what they think. I just don't  
40 want you to feel like you're constrained to the 1,300 number.  
41 You can craft your own alternative and pick it and then see what  
42 folks think about it.

43  
44 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Also, we do have a moratorium that's in place  
45 that is set up for another ten years, and so, in ten years, this  
46 moratorium will have come about also. Mr. Anson.

47  
48 **MR. ANSON:** I apologize for this next question that I'm going to

1 ask, but I want to try to go back and revisit Action 3, because  
2 there were some comments made relative to the description of the  
3 permits or the number of the permits that we were trying to  
4 agree upon or vote on.

5  
6 I heard, in one regard, that it was the number of active  
7 permits, and active permits were those that had landings. Then  
8 Mara followed up and said she wanted the understanding that it  
9 meant both active and the renewable non-fished, is what I  
10 thought I heard her say, and everyone said yes.

11  
12 In my mind, that includes those that are fishing and not  
13 fishing, and so the 1,072 then, when you're talking about some  
14 percentage of that, would actually be active. Again, I'm hung  
15 up on there is still a reference to the active permits in that,  
16 and so I'm sorry if I keep bringing up something that's old  
17 news, but --

18  
19 **DR. KILGOUR:** Okay, and so the number of predicted active  
20 permitted vessels is what is used to come up with this number  
21 for the alternatives, and so that number of active, but what is  
22 monitored is the number of valid and renewable permits.

23  
24 Once that number of valid and renewable permits reaches that  
25 1,072, that is when that that minimum threshold is hit. The way  
26 that the wording is, it's set the threshold number of valid or  
27 renewable Gulf shrimp vessel permits equal to the number of  
28 predicted, active, permitted vessels, and so we're using that  
29 predicted number of active vessels to set the threshold of valid  
30 and renewable permits.

31  
32 **MR. ANSON:** Okay.

33  
34 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Crabtree.

35  
36 **DR. CRABTREE:** Coming back to what Mara said, it seems to me  
37 that we could choose Alternative 3 as our preferred.  
38 Alternative 4, I see the logic behind it, but the numbers don't  
39 work out, because the way I'm looking at it, at the current  
40 attrition rate, we would hit the threshold in twenty-seven  
41 years, but we would hit that 1,300 number in about ten years.

42  
43 We don't need seventeen years for this panel to meet and figure  
44 out what to do, and so, if we're losing about fifteen permits a  
45 year, if you figure we need a few years to figure out and review  
46 and do things, which isn't unreasonable, that's about forty-five  
47 or fifty permits. If you're at 1,072, it seems, to me, that  
48 when you ought to start reviewing this would be more at like

1 1,150 or 1,175 permits.

2  
3 It does seem, to me, if you want to go with Alternative 4, you  
4 ought to put something in there that is a lower permit number,  
5 given the information we have. Otherwise, it seems, to me, that  
6 you can go with Alternative 3, because we are a long way from  
7 having this become a problem that we need to deal with.

8  
9 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Sanchez.

10  
11 **MR. JOHN SANCHEZ:** I would make a motion that we make, in this  
12 action, Alternative 3 the preferred.

13  
14 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Is there a second? It's seconded by Dr.  
15 Crabtree. Any discussion on the motion? Dr. Crabtree.

16  
17 **DR. CRABTREE:** Given the timeline we're talking about, I think  
18 that's reasonable. Then we can get public comment and  
19 everyone's input on it. Then, if we want to do something that  
20 kind of splits the difference, I think we could do it at that  
21 point, but, given that we're twenty-plus years away from hitting  
22 this, this seems reasonable to me.

23  
24 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Fischer.

25  
26 **MR. FISCHER:** I don't think this is something we can support,  
27 because we're saying that, when the number of permits reaches  
28 the threshold, we are going to form a panel to review the  
29 threshold. I think we have to set a number above the threshold  
30 and not equal to, and so I don't think that we could support  
31 this. We need them to meet prior to reaching the threshold.

32  
33 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any further discussion on the motion? Dr.  
34 Crabtree.

35  
36 **DR. CRABTREE:** Here's the way I am looking at it. We are  
37 committing ourselves now that we're going to do this when we hit  
38 the threshold. It seems to me though that you can review this  
39 at any time between now and then, if you so choose, and you can  
40 convene a panel to do something at any time you want, and so I  
41 think you're committing that, when you hit this, you're going to  
42 do it, but I don't think that it precludes you from deciding,  
43 before you get there, let's go ahead and take a look at this,  
44 because we're getting close. That's the way I'm reading it. I  
45 probably won't be here in twenty-seven years.

46  
47 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Fischer.

48

1 **MR. FISCHER:** I told Patrick that I will still be here in  
2 twenty-seven years. I think I will make a substitute motion  
3 that Alternative 4 be our preferred. Instead of 1,300, we use  
4 the figure that Dr. Crabtree threw out a second ago of 1,175  
5 permits. That way, we have the committee meeting prior to us  
6 reaching the threshold.  
7  
8 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** All right. We have a substitute motion by Mr.  
9 Fischer. Is there a second to the substitute motion?  
10  
11 **DR. CRABTREE:** Myron, are you modifying Alternative 4 to change  
12 the 1,300 to 1,175, or are you adding a new alternative that has  
13 a different number?  
14  
15 **MR. FISCHER:** No, I stated that it would be Alternative 4 with  
16 1,175. That was my comment, or my motion.  
17  
18 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Ms. Levy, does it have to be two motions, one to  
19 change the language and one to make it the preferred?  
20  
21 **MS. LEVY:** I don't think it needs to be two motions, but if it  
22 could say, in Action 4, to change 1,300 to 1,175 and make it the  
23 preferred, meaning let's make it clear in the motion that we're  
24 changing 1,300 to 1,175.  
25  
26 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Fischer, is that your motion?  
27  
28 **MR. FISCHER:** Yes, Mr. Chairman. If it survives legal scrutiny,  
29 that is it.  
30  
31 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** We still do not have a second for the motion on  
32 the board. Is there a second to Mr. Fischer's motion? It's  
33 seconded by Dr. Lucas. Any discussion on the motion on the  
34 board? Dr. Crabtree.  
35  
36 **DR. CRABTREE:** That seems pretty reasonable to me, Myron, and so  
37 I will support you on it.  
38  
39 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** All right. We have a motion on the board. I'm  
40 going to read it, and then we're going to vote on it. The  
41 motion is, in Action 4, that the preferred alternative be  
42 Alternative 4, changing the number of shrimp moratorium permits  
43 from 1,300 to 1,175. **Is there anybody opposed to the motion?**  
44 **Seeing none, the motion carries.** Dr. Kilgour.  
45  
46 **DR. KILGOUR:** The last action is Action 5, the transit  
47 provisions for shrimp vessels without a federal permit. If you  
48 recall, this was brought to the council's attention in August of

1 2015, that some vessels would like to be able to transit through  
2 federal waters, but they don't have a federal shrimp permit, and  
3 so, therefore, they cannot with shrimp onboard.

4  
5 No action would be, for a person aboard a vessel to fish for  
6 shrimp or possess shrimp in Gulf federal waters, a federal  
7 vessel permit for Gulf shrimp must have been issued to the  
8 vessel and must be onboard.

9  
10 Alternative 2 is vessel possessing shrimp may transit Gulf  
11 federal waters without a federal vessel permit if fishing gear  
12 is appropriately stowed. Transit means non-stop progression  
13 through the area. Fishing gear appropriately stowed means trawl  
14 doors and nets must be out of the water and the bag straps must  
15 be removed from the net.

16  
17 Alternative 3 is a vessel possessing shrimp may transit Gulf  
18 federal waters without a federal vessel permit if fishing gear  
19 is appropriately stowed. Transit means non-stop progression  
20 through the area. Fishing gear appropriately stowed means a  
21 trawl net shall remain on deck, but trawl doors, if present,  
22 must be disconnected from the trawl gear and must be secured.

23  
24 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any questions on Action 5 for Dr. Kilgour? Mr.  
25 Anson.

26  
27 **MR. ANSON:** I wonder, Dr. Kilgour, could you kind of relay the  
28 feeling or sentiments that the AP had offered for them to choose  
29 Alternative 2 versus Alternative 3? Specifically, I guess, I'm  
30 looking at the requirements, or the lack of the requirement, in  
31 Alternative 2 compared to Alternative 3, mentioning the stowage  
32 of the net and the trawl doors and why those were not chosen, I  
33 guess, or not selected in that alternative.

34  
35 **DR. KILGOUR:** I should note that, since the AP has seen this  
36 document, Alternative 2 has changed slightly, but the discussion  
37 and the intent of the AP was clear, which is why I kept the AP  
38 preferred under Alternative 2.

39  
40 The bag straps are basically the cod-end of the net that are  
41 easily identified as either being intact or not, and I believe  
42 that it doesn't take more than ten or fifteen minutes to weave  
43 it through the net, to get the bag straps in.

44  
45 The trawl doors are considerably more cumbersome to put on the  
46 net correctly and take off the net, and so I think the committee  
47 had offered a safety-at-sea concern for having to remove those  
48 trawl doors from the net to be able to transit through federal

1 waters. Both put the shrimp net in an easily-identifiable,  
2 unfishable state, but one is easily done and the other one is  
3 very cumbersome for the fishermen.

4

5 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Anson.

6

7 **MR. ANSON:** Maybe Mr. Diaz can comment on this one. If the  
8 intent is to transit, maybe fishing activity has ceased on that  
9 trip and they're just going back to port, or maybe they're going  
10 to go fish in another part of state waters, but if it is a trip  
11 that has ended, is it the typical practice or common practice  
12 to, and, Leann, you can answer this too, but to bring in and  
13 stow the trawl doors during transit on those return trips, or is  
14 it common to leave them out on the outriggers?

15

16 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** I would say it depends on what they're planning  
17 on doing. Under Alternative 2, they do not have to put the  
18 trawl doors on the deck. It just says the nets and the trawl  
19 doors have to be out of the water, and so they could have them  
20 on the outrigger and then the nets could be pulled up on the  
21 rigging with the bag straps removed and they have met the  
22 requirement.

23

24 Under Alternative 3, which more leads to your question, they  
25 would have to actually deck the doors and put them all the deck.  
26 All the rigging would be on the deck, and then they would have  
27 to undo the trawl from the doors, and so it's a lot more  
28 cumbersome.

29

30 Alternative 3 would not be something that would be very easy for  
31 people to do, especially if they were just transiting through  
32 federal waters for a short distance and intend on fishing again  
33 in another area, and so it would be a lot more cumbersome. Did  
34 I answer your question, Mr. Anson?

35

36 **MR. ANSON:** You did. Thank you.

37

38 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Ms. Bosarge.

39

40 **MS. BOSARGE:** I agree with what Dale said, but I had a question.  
41 At our last meeting, I remember that Mr. Blankenship had put  
42 forth I guess it would be an additional alternative which said  
43 that the trawl doors -- You deck your doors, but you don't have  
44 to disconnect your gear, your nets, from your doors, but I don't  
45 remember where that discussion ended. Does anybody remember?  
46 Did we decide not to put that in the document or yes?

47

48 **DR. KILGOUR:** I remember. Actually, that was what the

1 alternative had originally said, and it was modified at the last  
2 council meeting. It was brought to say what Alternative 2 said,  
3 and so, instead of adding an additional alternative, Alternative  
4 2, the wording was changed to read as it reads now, and so it  
5 previously had that the doors were on the deck, but they didn't  
6 have to be removed from the net. Instead, it was now the doors  
7 don't have to be on the deck, but the bag straps have to be  
8 removed, and so that's what happened with this.

9  
10 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any other comments? This is the last action  
11 that we have not picked a preferred for. Dr. Lucas.

12  
13 **DR. LUCAS:** Morgan, just clarification. Now, why did that  
14 happen? At whose request was the language changed? I am  
15 confused.

16  
17 **DR. KILGOUR:** I couldn't tell you the committee member. We  
18 could go back through the minutes if you would like, but it was  
19 changed so that there was this easier requirement of the bag  
20 straps being removed, but the doors didn't have to be on the  
21 deck. I think there was concern about bringing the doors all  
22 the way onto the deck. I think safety-at-sea was brought up as  
23 being an issue, and so the bag straps being removed was  
24 something that sits in an easily-identifiable, unfishable state  
25 and doesn't put the crew's safety at risk in big seas.

26  
27 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Crabtree.

28  
29 **DR. CRABTREE:** I went through a transit provision in the South  
30 Atlantic recently, and we put doors on the deck and all of that  
31 in it, and we ended up having to change it, because of safety-  
32 at-sea issues. If you're out there and it's rough, trying to  
33 get the doors down onto the deck and all of that is dangerous  
34 and not something you want to force people to do, and so I think  
35 we have a pretty good compromise here with Alternative 2.

36  
37 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Lieutenant Commander Danaher.

38  
39 **LCDR LEO DANAHER:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I just was going back to  
40 that previous council meeting, where we did discuss this, and,  
41 from an enforceability standpoint, we're not trying to create  
42 more undue risk out there on the high seas.

43  
44 If the gear is appropriately stowed for what you would consider  
45 stowage for transit, and there are some measures that have been  
46 put in place, via Alternative 2, for making sure that they  
47 couldn't stop and take advantage of the federal waterways, I  
48 think you're going to be fine. Alternative 2 essentially also

1 meets the language that is very similar to transiting through  
2 prohibited areas.

3

4 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Dr. Crabtree.

5

6 **DR. CRABTREE:** Based on that and the rest of the discussion, I  
7 will go ahead and make a motion that, in Action 5, that we  
8 choose Alternative 2 as our preferred alternative.

9

10 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** It's seconded by Mr. Fischer. Any discussion on  
11 the motion? The motion is, in Action 5, that the preferred  
12 alternative be Alternative 2. Any further discussion? **Seeing**  
13 **none, is there any opposition to the motion? Seeing none, the**  
14 **motion carries.** Dr. Kilgour.

15

16 **DR. KILGOUR:** That is it for me, other than to let the committee  
17 know that we have scheduled public hearings for this, and so I  
18 would, I guess, need the committee's approval to go out to  
19 public hearings. The places that we have scheduled those  
20 hearings are on the action guide, but it's Brownsville,  
21 Galveston, and Palacios, Texas; Houma, Louisiana;  
22 D'Iberville/Biloxi in Mississippi; Mobile; Madeira Beach, Panama  
23 City, Key West, Florida; and a webinar.

24

25 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** If you all approve to send this out to public  
26 hearing, those will be held in conjunction with the coral  
27 document from the last committee meeting. Ms. Bosarge.

28

29 **MS. BOSARGE:** I am good with those meeting locations, but I just  
30 wanted to make one comment that I think, typically, if this was  
31 a purely shrimp public hearing that was going on, the Florida  
32 locations probably would have been a little different, but I  
33 think that those locations are probably spot-on for coral, to  
34 get a lot of feedback from some different fishermen that are  
35 going to have some interactions with these coral HAPC areas, and  
36 I have talked to some of the shrimpers in Florida, and they are  
37 going to try and participate via the webinar or drive over,  
38 possibly, to that Madeira Beach. It will be a couple-hour ride  
39 for them, but they're going to try, but, in the spirit of  
40 camaraderie, we're going to try and make it work.

41

42 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thank you, Ms. Bosarge. Mr. Fischer.

43

44 **MR. FISCHER:** Mr. Chairman, I would rather wait until Full  
45 Council when we approve this, but I will do some consultation,  
46 and I think we may need another location in the Abbeville area.  
47 Houma is central. I want to get some quick feelers out and see  
48 if just one meeting -- We do lead the country in shrimp



1 production.

2  
3 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Okay. So you would be okay if we approve it to  
4 go out to public hearing, but you reserve the right to add some  
5 locations?  
6

7 **MR. FISCHER:** Until Thursday.

8  
9 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Until Thursday. Okay. I would entertain a  
10 motion, if anybody feels comfortable sending this out to public  
11 hearings. Dr. Lucas.

12  
13 **DR. LUCAS:** I will make the motion that we send this out to  
14 public hearings.

15  
16 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Okay. It's seconded by Dr. Dana. Any  
17 discussion on the motion? **Any opposition to the motion? The**  
18 **motion carries.** I believe that concludes Agenda Item Number IV,  
19 and so we will move to Other Business. Dr. Ponwith, are you  
20 ready to discuss the 2015 revised shrimp effort numbers?  
21

22 **OTHER BUSINESS**  
23 **UPDATE ON SHRIMP EFFORT ESTIMATES**

24  
25 **DR. PONWITH:** Yes, I am. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Back in  
26 October, the Southeast Fisheries Science Center presented the  
27 council with the annual report on the effort estimates for 2015.  
28 The goal is, each year, to determine whether the shrimp fishing  
29 effort for that year was suitably reduced from a benchmark  
30 beginning in 2011. That benchmark was set in 2011 to be a 67  
31 percent reduction from a historic level of effort in the shrimp  
32 fishery in the ten to thirty-fathom depth zone of Statistical  
33 Areas 10 through 21.

34  
35 In the report that we provided to the council, we determined  
36 that, yes, in fact we had met that threshold and exceeded that  
37 threshold. The reduction was a 71.7 percent reduction, which is  
38 good. That's on the correct side of the threshold that we  
39 wanted to be. However, in December of 2016, it came to our  
40 attention that there were data that should have been included in  
41 that analysis from the State of Florida that were missing from  
42 that original analysis.

43  
44 We incorporated the Florida numbers in and revised the estimates  
45 of effort and discovered that we're still on the correct side of  
46 the threshold, but we're quite a bit closer to that threshold  
47 than we were. The October estimates were a 71.7 percent  
48 reduction. The new adjusted effort estimates are a reduction of

1 69.3. Again, we're closer to that threshold of 67 percent, but  
2 we're still on the correct side of that.

3  
4 Because of this change in effort, we had to begin the stock  
5 assessment over again. That work is underway, and we should be  
6 completing those analyses soon, and that's my report, Mr.  
7 Chairman.

8  
9 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any questions? Mr. Anson.

10  
11 **MR. ANSON:** Which stock assessment is that, Bonnie?

12  
13 **DR. PONWITH:** That is the assessment that we do for the shrimp  
14 stocks in the Gulf of Mexico.

15  
16 **DISCUSSION OF TED REQUIREMENTS FOR SKIMMER TRAWL VESSELS**

17  
18 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Seeing no further questions, I am going to move  
19 on to the next Other Business item. I attended a public hearing  
20 in early January that the NOAA staff did related to the new TED  
21 requirements for skimmer trawls, and I do have to say, Dr.  
22 Crabtree, that the NOAA staff did a very good job doing the  
23 presentation.

24  
25 They handled the public hearings very well, very professionally,  
26 but there was one thing that came up at the public hearing that  
27 I wasn't aware of, and I wanted to talk about it a little bit  
28 today. I am going to give a little bit of background and then I  
29 will talk about what the issue is.

30  
31 The new regulation intent is that all skimmer nets, pusher-head  
32 nets, and wing nets use TEDs, and so that is kind of where the  
33 regulations are leading. They are proposed regulations at this  
34 time. However, for vessels not using TEDs, it is proposed that  
35 a revised tow time definition to specify that the entire net,  
36 including the frame, be removed from the water at the end of the  
37 tow.

38  
39 Ultimately, where they're going, is they want all of these type  
40 of boats to have TEDs, but I think there might be an issue  
41 because of this new definition that they're talking about for  
42 tow times, and there is going to have to be a phase-in period.  
43 There is going to be a period where this is phased in, because  
44 there probably won't be enough commercially-available TEDs to  
45 where the entire fleet can implement this at one time.

46  
47 National Marine Fisheries Service is going to have to come up  
48 with some method to phase in where a group starts and then, at a

1 later date, another group starts, until we get the entire fleet  
2 fishing. Correct me if I'm wrong on that, Dr. Crabtree or  
3 anybody else, if that's where this may be a problem.

4  
5 Whenever these skimmer frames are used now, whenever they let  
6 the skimmer frames down to the position where they are going to  
7 pull them, they are locked in by cables. All of this stuff is  
8 secure and tight, and, generally, when they're pushing, they are  
9 making some headway, and that keeps this gear stable.

10  
11 The new definition says that, at the end of every tow, they've  
12 got to raise the frame and everything out of the water. Now, I  
13 understand the rationale for it. Their rationale is that there  
14 could be some turtles near the very entrance to the net that  
15 couldn't be seen by the fishermen, and so that's the rationale  
16 for it, and I understand that.

17  
18 Whenever you make the fishermen lift these frames up out of the  
19 water, this gear is going to be unstable, and I have called a  
20 couple of fishermen to ask them about this, and they did say,  
21 during rough weather, this could be a problem, where the gear is  
22 jerking around, because the cables aren't tight. They're not  
23 intended to be up. They're intended to be down when they're  
24 using them, unless they bring them all the way up and lock them  
25 in, but, still, they would be pulling them up and down, creating  
26 this situation.

27  
28 Anyway, that is my big concern, is that these vessels that are  
29 in this interim timeframe that might not be the ones that have  
30 to kickoff using a TED on day one, they might have some safety-  
31 at-sea concerns, and so I wanted to at least get that on the  
32 record and bring that up.

33  
34 They did not say, during the public hearing, if there was any --  
35 They did talk about shrimp loss from using the TEDs, and there  
36 was a percentage shrimp loss that they said that they had  
37 calculated, but they really didn't talk about if there was  
38 shrimp loss related to making them lift the frames, because,  
39 skimmer trawls right now, they push 100 percent of the time.

40  
41 Once they put them down, they push. They just lift the tails  
42 while they're pushing and drop them back down. Now we're going  
43 to make them stop. They're going to have to lift the frames out  
44 of the water while the nets aren't fishing, and so that time is  
45 going to be time when they're going to have shrimp loss, and so  
46 I just don't know if those things were brought up.

47  
48 The biggest thing that I had the concern with is the safety-at-

1 sea concern. I do understand the concern for not being able to  
2 see turtles near the entrance of the net, and I did ask both  
3 fishermen that I talked to if they had any other solutions that  
4 they could offer that might be something that we could put  
5 forward on their behalf, and neither one of them had any good  
6 solutions to offer in place of the alternate tow times. Dr.  
7 Crabtree.

8  
9 **DR. CRABTREE:** There were a number of issues that came up, but  
10 this is one that I am aware of and have discussed with folks,  
11 and, based on what I have heard, it probably would significantly  
12 alter how they fish, and so we are, based on public comment, we  
13 are looking at that as something that we may need to modify.

14  
15 I also agree with you that the issue of implementation and how  
16 long will it take to get TEDs and some sort of phasing approach  
17 to it is something we're going to look at, because it is -- If  
18 the rule goes forward as proposed, it is a significant number of  
19 TEDs, and we would be looking at a considerable amount of time  
20 to get all of the shrimpers onboard, but I am aware of the tow  
21 time issue. I appreciate you bringing it to our attention.

22  
23 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thank you, Dr. Crabtree. That's all I had on  
24 that issue. I don't see any other comments related to that.  
25 The last thing on Other Business is Ms. Bosarge had asked about  
26 talking about climate strategies. Ms. Bosarge.

#### 27 28 **DISCUSSION OF CLIMATE STRATEGIES**

29  
30 **MS. BOSARGE:** Bear with me, because I like to write things down  
31 before I tell it to you all, and I left my document at home  
32 where I wrote it all down, and so this is kind of off-the-cuff.

33  
34 Over Christmas, for some unapparent reason, I decided that I  
35 wanted to read the Gulf of Mexico Regional Action Plan to  
36 Implement the NOAA Fisheries Climate Science Strategy. I will  
37 be honest that I only made it through about the first ten or  
38 fifteen pages, but I have two screaming children.

39  
40 I found some really interesting things that they are not  
41 problems now, and so that's just like a woman, to be worrying  
42 about something that's not a problem now, but I like to think of  
43 it as being proactive in our management and trying to be  
44 forward-thinking.

45  
46 This document really goes through a lot of the science of what  
47 we're seeing now on different coastlines and in the Gulf and  
48 what we can expect to see, for example, from the Loop Current,

1 that the Loop Current is expected and forecast to weaken  
2 sometime this century. Well, that's a big gap, but sometime  
3 this century, and what they say is going to happen -- That's not  
4 unheard of. We go through these phases.

5  
6 When it weakens, according to the document, and we're going to  
7 bring this all back to shrimp in just a second, but the vertical  
8 mixing of the deeper ocean water with the surface water, you're  
9 not going to get that strong mixing, and so, essentially, the  
10 water on the bottom of the ocean is going to be colder than it  
11 normally would have, because the warmer water from the top is  
12 not mixing down with it, and the water on the surface is going  
13 to be hotter than what it typically would be.

14  
15 That is one thing that we expect, and then we're already seeing  
16 the ocean and coastal acidification, and I was reading this, and  
17 you know that I'm passionate about shrimp, and I think shrimp  
18 are going to survive this just fine. Their nature is very  
19 adaptive, and it's going to be okay, but it was something that I  
20 just wanted to throw out there as food for thought, because all  
21 of our states do lots of sampling when it comes to shrimp.

22  
23 We take samples to see when we're going to open the season, and  
24 one of the things that the document said, specifically with  
25 shrimp, is that the ocean acidification, the coastal  
26 acidification, has been shown to delay juvenile development in  
27 boreal shrimp, and so it's not our penaeid shrimp, but there is  
28 some documentation there that it does affect the stage of  
29 development, the timing of development, and so I just kind of  
30 wanted to throw that out there as we're taking these samples  
31 year after year after year.

32  
33 If we start to see that -- You know, we always open the season  
34 right around that first week in June, and, year after year, our  
35 counts are getting smaller and smaller and smaller, and so we're  
36 out there harvesting probably not what is ideal for the  
37 fishermen, as far as an economic driver, and let's think about  
38 why are they getting smaller.

39  
40 Could it be that their life cycle is changing a little bit and,  
41 although that's historically when we have always opened the  
42 season, and God love us fishermen. We love a good schedule like  
43 that and rooted in tradition, but we may have to look at those  
44 things and maybe wiggle and adapt just a little bit as we start  
45 to see changes, and so that's my ten-cents for the day.  
46 Hopefully you take something from it, and maybe we can collect a  
47 little more data and look at those long-term trends and think  
48 about it going forward.

1  
2 Maybe it will never happen, but just what I saw this year on the  
3 east coast in shrimp, because we shrimp in the entire Gulf of  
4 Mexico, from the Texas/Mexico line all the way to Key West, and  
5 we make the corner there and we start heading north, and we  
6 shrimp in the South Atlantic, all the way to North Carolina, our  
7 boats do, and so we cover a lot of ground.

8  
9 They had one heck of a year over there so far, in the South  
10 Atlantic, up there in the Carolinas. That type of year that  
11 they've had this year, we haven't seen in quite some time.  
12 That's a long trip for us, a long trip. You're talking about  
13 two weeks just of running, because we are slow. We're slow.  
14 It's not a boat that's built for speed.

15  
16 For us to make that kind of trip, to go there, it's got to be a  
17 good season. One great season does not a trend set, but, as  
18 we're thinking about all of this and watching it, if we start to  
19 see that, year after year, that further north in the Atlantic we  
20 are starting to see really great shrimp seasons be the norm,  
21 that could be a sign that we're starting to see some changes.

22  
23 We have already seen that with two-thirds of the marine species  
24 in the Northeast have shifted or extended their range, as a  
25 result of the ocean warming. That was in an article that Doug  
26 Gregory sent to us, and so I just want us to be proactive and be  
27 thinking about it, and so, if there's anything you can do to  
28 help that data collection and be thinking about it and make sure  
29 that our shrimp management is adaptive and reactive to what we  
30 see, that would be wonderful. That's all I have for the day.

31  
32 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I believe that  
33 concludes everything for the Shrimp Management Committee. I'm  
34 sorry. Mr. Swindell.

35  
36 **MR. ED SWINDELL:** Madam Chair, you said that they exceeded --  
37 They extended the shrimp season?

38  
39 **MS. BOSARGE:** No, they just had a really good season. Shrimp  
40 season, sometimes we have good seasons and sometimes we have  
41 bad. It's very dependent on the environment. Over there, and  
42 Mr. Mark Brown may be able to speak to this, but they had one  
43 heck of a year this year over off of the Carolinas. They had a  
44 really great season. Like I said, one year does not a trend  
45 make, but it's something to keep in mind and look at.

46  
47 **MR. MARK BROWN:** South Carolina DNR has extended the season  
48 because it's been so good.

1  
2 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Mr. Swindell.  
3  
4 **MR. SWINDELL:** I have listened to the shrimp issue that you've  
5 been talking about, and particularly the MSY/OY stuff. I have  
6 listened to Myron, and I have listened to Dr. Lyle St. Amant,  
7 who some of you have known for years, and he always said that  
8 you can't catch all the shrimp, that the shrimp season is always  
9 going to have shrimp, and I am just wondering how accurate is  
10 the MSY or the OY for you to even pay attention to.

11  
12 It doesn't make good sense, to me, and I don't know what the SSC  
13 has looked at and whether they agree that an MSY or OY is really  
14 realistic, but I just -- As long as the shrimp can work with it,  
15 it's fine, and I understand that -- I don't know that we're  
16 going to catch it anyway, because of the moratorium that you  
17 have on the vessels, dealing with the red snapper and the  
18 turtles and everything else. I don't know that it will ever get  
19 close to the MSY or the OY. Thank you. I am just concerned  
20 about it.

21  
22 **CHAIRMAN DIAZ:** Any other questions or comments? Seeing none,  
23 we are adjourned.

24  
25 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on January 30, 2017.)

26  
27 - - -