Eighth Coast Guard District

Mexican Lancha Threat Overview and Impact Analysis Model Results

27 January 2015
The Mexican (MEX) Lancha Threat

- **Problem Set**
  - MEX lanchas are known to operate north of the U.S./MEX Maritime Boundary Line (MBL) on a regular basis.
  - There is no legitimate reason for a MEX lancha to operate north of the MBL.
  - Activity consists primarily of illegal fishing in U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).
MEX Lancha Overview

• Lancha Characteristics
  – 20-30 ft long with single 75-200 horsepower outboard motor
  – Fiberglass and wood hulls
  – Typical crew consists of 2-4 persons
  – Lanchas utilize gill net, long-line and hand-line gear to catch targeted species
Incursions in the U.S. EEZ

• **Targeted Species**
  – MEX lanchas engaged in illegal fishing typically target red snapper and shark

• **Unattended Fishing Gear**
  – To ensure maximum catch, long line and gill net gear are typically deployed and left unattended for 5 – 6 hours
  – Lanchas are known to abandon their gear due to law enforcement presence or inclement weather
  – Gill nets are an extremely indiscriminate means of fishing and, when abandoned, continue to kill large volumes of marine life
MEX Lancha Detections/Seizures (FY08-FY14)
MEX Lancha Incursions

- **U.S. Fishery Impact Estimate (Average CY2013-14)**
  - Estimated 1,138 lancha incursions/year
  - Typical catch for one lancha is 800 – 1,500 lbs/trip
  - Larger lanchas are known to catch upwards of 3,000 lbs/trip
  - 1,525,715 lbs of red snapper poached from U.S. waters by MEX lanchas over the past 2 years
  - 30-31 MAR: 7 lanchas sighted, 5 seized containing 2,589 red snapper; new 24-hour record
Simulation

Likelihood of Discovery

Number of Incursions

Biomass Impact

Illicit Economic Gains

Arrival Rate as Control Knob
### MEX Lancha Incursions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parameters</th>
<th>CY 2013 Average</th>
<th>CY 2014 Average</th>
<th>Two Year Average (CY13-14)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>95% CI Lower Bound (lbs)</td>
<td>769,696</td>
<td>762,562</td>
<td>766,129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Red Snapper Impacted (lbs)</td>
<td>777,117</td>
<td>765,746</td>
<td>771,432</td>
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<tr>
<td>95% CI Upper Bound (lbs)</td>
<td>784,538</td>
<td>768,930</td>
<td>776,734</td>
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<tr>
<td>Red snapper seized by lanchas (lbs)</td>
<td>768,676</td>
<td>757,039</td>
<td>762,857</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other catch seized by lanchas (lbs)</td>
<td>439,957</td>
<td>444,753</td>
<td>442,355</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average number of lancha sightings/detections</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>175</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of lanchas compelled South</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of lancha seizures/interdictions</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average number of undetected lanchas</td>
<td>1016</td>
<td>995</td>
<td>1006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red snapper seized by Law Enforcement (lbs)</td>
<td>8441</td>
<td>8708</td>
<td>8574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other catch seized by Law Enforcement (lbs)</td>
<td>7545</td>
<td>7077</td>
<td>7311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Incursions</td>
<td>1.133</td>
<td>1.143</td>
<td>1.138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Standard Deviation Incursions</td>
<td>38.26200728</td>
<td>38.70211124</td>
<td>38.48205926</td>
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<tr>
<td>Std Deviations Snapper</td>
<td>37.861.96</td>
<td>36.324.89</td>
<td>37.093.43</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coast Guard Detection Percentage</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>15%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Current Lancha Disposition Policy

• **Standard Course of Action**
  - Lancha, catch and gear are seized
  - Crew is transferred to CBP for deportation to Mexico
  - Lanchas are destroyed

2,589 red snapper in one day
TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT AND THE U.S. COAST GUARD ARE CURRENTLY INVESTIGATING MULTIPLE CASES INVOLVING ILLEGAL FISHING ACTIVITIES ALONG THE TEXAS/MEXICO BORDER. THESE ACTIVITIES INCLUDE ILLEGAL LONG LINING, GILL NETTING, CRABBING, HOOP NETTING, SHRIMPING, ETC. THE GULF OF MEXICO, RIO GRANDE RIVER, FALCON LAKE, AND AMISTAD LAKE ARE INCLUDED IN THE AFFECTED AREAS. THESE ACTS OF ILLEGAL AND UNREPORTED FISHING ADVERSELY AFFECT BOTH THE RECREATIONAL AND COMMERCIAL FISHING INDUSTRIES. ANY INFORMATION RELATED TO SUCH ILLEGAL FISHING ACTIVITIES SHOULD BE REPORTED TO THE TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE DEPARTMENT OR THE U.S. COAST GUARD.

Photos provided by photographer Erich Schlegel, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and the U.S. Coast Guard.