

GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE

The Battle House Renaissance

Mobile, Alabama

June 5, 2023

VOTING MEMBERS

Joe Spraggins.....	Mississippi
Kevin Anson (designee for Scott Bannon).....	Alabama
Susan Boggs.....	Alabama
Billy Broussard.....	Louisiana
Dale Diaz.....	Mississippi
Dave Donaldson.....	GSMFC
Jonathan Dugas.....	Louisiana
Phil Dyskow.....	Florida
Bob Shipp.....	Alabama

NON-VOTING MEMBERS

Tom Frazer.....	Florida
Jessica McCawley.....	Florida
Michael McDermott.....	Mississippi
Chris Schieble (designee for Patrick Banks).....	Louisiana
Andy Strelcheck.....	NMFS
Greg Stunz.....	Texas
Troy Williamson.....	Texas

STAFF

Assane Diagne.....	Economist
Matt Freeman.....	Economist
John Froeschke.....	Deputy Director
Beth Hager.....	Administrative Officer
Lisa Hollensead.....	Fishery Biologist
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

Chester Brewer.....	SAFMC
Clay Porch.....	SEFSC

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1 The Law Enforcement Committee of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery
2 Management Council convened at The Battle House Renaissance in
3 Mobile, Alabama on Monday morning, June 5, 2023, and was called
4 to order by Chairman Joe Spraggins.

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

10 **CHAIRMAN JOE SPRAGGINS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I would
11 like to call the Law Enforcement Committee to order and for
12 adoption of the agenda, and the committee members are myself and
13 Mr. Dyskow as Vice Chair, Bannon/Anson, Ms. Boggs, Broussard,
14 Diaz, Donaldson, Dugas, Nadeau, Riechers/Geeslin, and then
15 Shipp. I would like to have a motion for adoption of the agenda
16 for today.

17
18 **UNIDENTIFIED:** So moved.

19
20 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** We have a second. Any discussion? All in
21 favor. All right. Approval of the minutes for 2022, could I
22 get a motion for that?

23
24 **UNIDENTIFIED:** So moved.

25
26 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** And a second. Any discussion? All in
27 favor. All right. With that, I will turn it to Dr. Froeschke.

28
29 **LETC SUMMARY FROM OCTOBER 2022 MEETING**
30

31 **DR. JOHN FROESCHKE:** I have just a couple of things here, and we
32 have the Law Enforcement Technical Committee Meeting summary,
33 and I will go over a couple of things from that, and that's an
34 informational update only, and then we have Other Business, and
35 that should be a fairly quick update, on the summary that I will
36 focus on with the recommendations, and, if you're okay, will
37 just move directly into that.

38
39 Okay, and so the Joint Law Enforcement Committee/Law Enforcement
40 Technical Committee met on March 15, and the purpose of that was
41 to review and rank some of the Law Enforcement Officer of the
42 Year information, and they had a couple of recommendations
43 relevant to the Gulf Council, and so I will just highlight
44 those.

45
46 One of those was referring to the commercial trip limit for gray
47 triggerfish that was recently taken for final action by the

1 council, and they passed, by consensus, that the LETC feels that
2 trip limits set in numbers of fish are more enforceable than a
3 maximum weight, and so that refers to the commercial trip
4 limits, and there was some discussion about whether it should be
5 in pounds or numbers of fish for small trip limits, and, if you
6 recall, we've also had these similar discussions for commercial
7 greater amberjack, and so that might be of some value there as
8 well.

9
10 The other recommendation that they had was in regard to closed
11 seasons, and they provided a recommendation for recreational gag
12 that the in-season closures are more difficult for officers to
13 enforce than the fixed closed season. They had a few other
14 things relevant to the Law Enforcement Committee, but not
15 necessarily directly relevant to the council, and so those are
16 the recommendations for this body, and I will stop there for
17 questions.

18
19 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Are there any questions? Yes, sir,
20 Mr. Dyskow.

21
22 **MR. PHIL DYSKOW:** Thank you, General Spraggins. Dr. Froeschke,
23 could you repeat what you said about the law enforcement people
24 having difficulty with the enforcement of the gag grouper
25 closure?

26
27 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Well, the gist of the recommendation is that a
28 fixed season, meaning that, as part of it, that the season will
29 open on Date X and close on Date Y, is preferable to something
30 where they open it and then the season is just closed when the
31 ACT is met, or projected to be met, in this case.

32
33 **MR. DYSKOW:** As a follow-up to that, was there any discussion
34 about difficulty, or perceived difficulty, for enforcement if
35 the black grouper season was different from the gag grouper
36 season?

37
38 **DR. FROESCHKE:** I was not on the meeting, unfortunately, and so
39 I don't know. I can circle back and find out.

40
41 **MR. DYSKOW:** Thank you.

42
43 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Any other questions? All right. Is there
44 any Other Business? Go ahead, Ms. Boggs.

45
46 **MS. SUSAN BOGGS:** I have a question for Dr. Froeschke, and I
47 should know the answer, and I don't, and so I do apologize, and

1 so the commercial trip limit for the amberjack -- Currently,
2 it's in weight, and so is this something that this council would
3 have to amend, as far as how it's looked at for the commercial
4 fishermen, or is that just something that enforcement would have
5 to do internally?
6

7 **DR. FROESCHKE:** Well, the reason I brought that up is there's a
8 framework action that you will be reviewing at this meeting that
9 has options to consider either the current -- So it's currently
10 a thousand-pound trip limit, with a 250-pound step-down, and
11 some of the options that we've looked at in there, because of
12 the reductions that are going to be in place when Amendment 54
13 is put in, is it's going to be a big cut to the commercial ACL
14 and the recreational, and so there are options in there for a
15 seven-fish trip limit, and then a five-fish, and the average
16 weight, I believe, is about twenty-six pounds, something like
17 that, and so you could -- There approximate numerical estimates
18 in there as well.
19

20 **MS. BOGGS:** Thank you for the reminder.
21

22 **CHAIRMAN SPRAGGINS:** Okay. Any other questions? Is there any
23 other business for the Law Enforcement Committee? If not, I
24 would just like to take a moment to thank each and every one of
25 them, of our law enforcement, and I know, this last weekend,
26 couple of weekends, and the Memorial weekend, and I'm sure
27 there's a lot of them that worked very hard, and I know ours
28 did, and I appreciate every one of them for what they're doing,
29 and, with that, Mr. Chairman, I will turn it back over to you.
30

31 (Whereupon, the meeting adjourned on June 5, 2023.)
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