

**Shrimp Committee Report  
April 3, 2019  
Leann Bosarge, Chair**

The Committee adopted the agenda and approved the minutes.

*Review of the Updated Stock Assessments*

Dr. Hart provided the committee with the updated stock assessments for pink, white, and brown shrimp. All stocks are healthy and are not overfished or undergoing overfishing. The Committee inquired about the downward trend in brown shrimp stock since 2010. Dr. Hart responded that they are working toward incorporating environmental parameters into future models and this may help to explain the observed changes in stock size over time. Dr. Hart also reviewed Catch per Unit Effort (CPUE) and noted that CPUE in 2017 was still high in all three stocks. Effort in the juvenile red snapper zone, 10-30 fathoms in statistical zones 10-21, was reduced by 67.03% from the baseline, slightly more than the 67% required reduction.

*Biological Review of the Texas Closure*

Dr. Masi reviewed the results from the Texas closure. For 2018 in Texas, inshore brown shrimp catch in May-August was below the historical average; 51% of the catch during those months occurred in May. Offshore brown shrimp catch in May through August in Texas was also below the historical average. Brown shrimp catch increased after the Texas closure, particularly in the larger sizes. Staff noted that the Shrimp Advisory Panel (AP) recommended to continue the Texas closure in 2019.

With no opposition, the Committee recommends, and I so move:

**To recommend to NMFS that federal waters be closed out to 200 miles to run concurrent with the date that the State of Texas recommends for the 2019 Texas shrimp closure in the Texas Territorial Sea.**

*Final Action: Shrimp Amendment 18: Evaluation of Shrimp Effort Threshold Reduction in the Area Monitored for Juvenile Red Snapper Bycatch*

Staff reviewed public comments on Shrimp Amendment 18. Staff then reviewed the Council's current preferred options and the Shrimp AP's motions on the two actions. The Committee requested an updated Purpose and Need, which incorporated the Shrimp AP's comment regarding optimal yield, be brought to the full Council.

With no opposition, the Committee recommends, and I so move:

**To recommend the Council approve the Shrimp Amendment 18: Evaluation of Shrimp Effort Threshold Reduction in the Area Monitored for Juvenile Red Snapper Bycatch, and that it be forwarded to the Secretary of Commerce for review**

**and implementation, and deem the codified text as necessary and appropriate, giving staff editorial license to make the necessary changes in the document. The Council Chair is given the authority to deem any changes to the codified text as necessary and appropriate.**

*Summary of the Shrimp Advisory Panel Meeting*

Staff reviewed the Shrimp Advisory Panel summary report. The AP discussed the updated stock assessments, renewal of federal Gulf of Mexico shrimp permits using the web-based system, and several items under 'Other Business.' The Committee then discussed how to respond to the AP's meeting motion regarding the two artificial reef zones being proposed in federal waters off the coast of Mississippi. One suggestion was to encourage the Army Corps of Engineers to present relevant permits to the Council. Another suggestions was to have the Army Corps of Engineers give a presentation to the Council which discusses the permit process. The Committee noted that there was a 30 day window for public comments last summer on the permit that the AP had discussed. Dr. Crabtree noted that the Army Corps has to make a determination on the impacts on federally managed species from proposed artificial reefs and that the Council has expertise which could be shared.

With no opposition, the Committee recommends, and I so move:

**To invite the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to an upcoming Council meeting to discuss the impacts and overlaps of the permits which come before the Corps for approval and management of fisheries in federal waters.**

*Unique Identifier and Related Issues in the Gulf Shrimp Fishery Data*

Dr. Travis provided a presentation regarding unique identifier and related issues in the Gulf shrimp fishery landings data. Dr. Travis discussed several issues, such as an inability to accurately identify vessels, dealers, and fishermen/businesses across states, as well as inaccurate or missing size data. These issues have had multiple implications, such as an inability to use recent years of landings data for the Amendment 18 analysis and annual economic reports, be responsive to the Council's request for an economic analysis of the Texas Closure, and reduced accuracy in the stock assessments. Suggestions to address these issues included requesting the Council to apply current federal dealer and electronic dealer reporting requirements to Gulf shrimp dealers, improved coordination between Fisheries Information Network (FIN) partners to improve data quality, and encourage FIN partners to move towards a data management system comparable to the Atlantic Coastal Cooperative Statistics Program (ACCSP).

Mr. Chair, this concludes my report.