

Shrimp Advisory Panel Summary

Webinar Meeting

March 29, 2022

8:30am – 5:00pm

The meeting of the Gulf of Mexico (Gulf) Fishery Management Council's (Council) Shrimp Advisory Panel (AP) was convened at 8:30 AM EDT on March 29, 2022. The agenda for this meeting was approved as modified: order of Agenda Items XIII and XIV switched; two items added under Other Business - Southern Shrimp Alliance Scholarship and Discussion of Offshore Wind (BOEM). The minutes from the December 8-9, 2021, meeting were approved as written.

Council Actions in Response to Motions from the December 2021 Shrimp AP Meeting, and January 2022 Council Meeting Motions.

Dr. Freeman presented the Council's actions in response to seven motions from the December 2021 Shrimp AP meeting and on three motions from the January 2022 Council meeting that pertained to the Gulf shrimp industry. Many of the AP's motions were addressed in letter from the Council to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) and to National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). An AP member commented that he was pleased with how responsive the Council has been lately to the AP's motions. An AP member requested that the list of Bureau of Ocean Energy Management Gulf of Mexico Task Force members be distributed.

Update on Council RFP to Address Expanded Sampling of the Fleet for Effort Monitoring in the Gulf Shrimp Industry

Dr. Simmons provided an update on the Council's Request for Proposals to Address Expanded Sampling of the Fleet for Effort Monitoring in the Gulf Shrimp Industry. The selected project has been approved by the Regional Grants Coordinator; final acceptance by the contractor is pending. The contractor, LGL Ecological Research Associates (LGL), will be requested to provide an update to the Council at its August 2022 meeting. An AP member asked when the results of the research study may be ready. Dr. Simmons replied that LGL will have until March 2023 to complete the project and that staff could work with them to provide other updates as requested and available prior to completion.

Update on Plan for Pilot Testing of VMS Units on Gulf Shrimp Vessels

Mr. Wallace (SEFSC) provided an update on the plan for pilot testing of cellular vessel monitoring system (VMS) units on Gulf shrimp vessels. Six commercial shrimp vessels volunteered to participate in the pilot test. Two are from Louisiana, and one is from North Carolina. The remaining vessels are in Fort Myers, Florida. The Woods Hole VMS units have shipped. For the Ferie Beede VMS units, one unit has been operating for one week already, and the other two units should begin operating in another week. Data should be coming back in the next few weeks.

Ms. Bosarge (Council member) asked about the vessel with a VMS unit already in operation and its potential shrimping area. Mr. Wallace responded that he believes the area to be in South Florida, but he can look into that. An AP member noted that there are different harvest seasons for various shrimp species and asked when results may be available to the Council to answer whether or not these units will meet the data needs for the shrimp industry and NMFS. Mr. Wallace responded that results should be evaluated by late June 2022. Another AP member stated that, for the white shrimp industry, testing would not be possible until the month of September. The sentiment was reinforced by several AP members that the NMFS testing of VMS units needs to be representative of all Gulf shrimp species and that it coincides with the seasons in which those species would be commercially harvested in the Gulf. Dr. Freeman noted that, tentatively, the Council would be receiving another update from Mr. Wallace at the June 2022 meeting. An AP member asked for more information on what is being tested on the vessels. Mr. Wallace replied that it was side-by-side testing of VMS and the ELB units.

An AP member asked if the Shrimp AP will also receive an update on the final results of the NMFS testing. Dr. Simmons asked where the data is being transmitted. Mr. Wallace stated that the data is going to OLE, and NMFS is accessing the data from OLE. Dr. Walter (SEFSC) stated that, for the June 2022 Council meeting, data would include the brown shrimp fishery and the tail end of the pink shrimp fishery but not the white shrimp fishery. He asked if the AP would be accepting of transit paths made by the RV Caretta to mimic commercial shrimp vessels. An AP member stated that he would prefer the Council wait to make decisions on the draft framework action until the Council funded proposal was completed.

NMFS' Evaluation of Draft Approval Specifications for Reinstating Historical cELB Program

Dr. Walter presented NMFS' review of draft type-approval specifications for reinstating the historical cellular electronic logbook (cELB) program for the Gulf shrimp fishery. As industry has voiced concerns about their scientific data being transmitted to the Office of Law Enforcement (OLE), Dr. Walter reviewed the logistics in either bringing a National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service (NESDIS) server online for data transmission or use of a Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission (GSMFC) Server. He noted that NMFS would need to pay NESDIS or GSMFC to set up a cloud server, and access would have to be established for OLE so that they could access data at any time. He added that the Southeast Regional Office (SERO) would be responsible for maintaining and revising regulations over time as technology changes.

Dr. Walter then presented information on scientific testing and vetting of vendors. For the current OLE VMS type approval process, Dr. Walter commented that NOAA OLE contracts with a global expert in Denmark, who performs VMS testing and provides recommendations, while the Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) maintains a website of approved vendors as well as any additional requirements for vendors which may apply to specific fisheries. As an alternative to the historic shrimp electronic logbook program being transitioned to and overseen by OLE, Dr. Walter provided details for an alternative scenario where the program would be housed and overseen by the SEFSC. Under such a scenario, the SEFSC, as opposed to OLE, would maintain

on its website the technical requirements for vendors wishing to provide a cellular electronic logbook, and the SEFSC would contract with a third-party vendor to carry out the testing of potential electronic logbooks for type approval. Dr. Walter stated this was seen as redundant and not an efficient use of taxpayer funds for one fishery.

Next, Dr. Walter discussed recommendations relative to implementation of the draft type-approval specifications for reinstituting the historical cellular electronic logbook program. Dr. Walter stated that the national VMS technical specifications should not be changed. Portions of the draft electronic logbook approval specifications are more stringent than what is required by the national VMS type-approval specifications. These more stringent requirements could be implemented by specifying them in the fishery management plan (FMP), to be required in addition to the national VMS type-approval requirements. Although specification of the more stringent requirements in the FMP allows for implementation of a portion of the draft cELB specifications, it does not address implementation of the portions of the draft cELB specifications which eliminate some of the OLE VMS type approval requirements. The FMP cannot remove requirements that have been specified in the national OLE VMS type approval specifications. Therefore, for full implementation of the draft cellular electronic logbook technical specifications, the alternative scenario, involving oversight and implementation of the draft cELB specifications via the SEFSC (slide 5) with data transmission through GSMFC or NESDIS, would apply.

Dr. Walter then presented a table summarizing additional requirements, over and above the national OLE VMS type approval requirements for vendors, which could be specified in the FMP. If the Council chooses to implement a VMS requirement for the Gulf shrimp fishery, it may also consider specifying these additional VMS requirements (slide 15 of the presentation) in the FMP. Dr. Walter stated that OLE would still have easy access to data, regardless of whether data are stored with a SEFSC server or an Office of Chief Information Officer server.

An AP member stated that additional funding would be needed annually and asked how much funding would be required. Dr. Walter responded that initial funds of roughly \$750,000 would be needed to set up a new routing system of data. He was unsure of the exact amount of additional funding required for annual support of the system, but guessed about \$250,000. An AP member also asked who the backup would be for VMS testing, if something happened to the global expert in Denmark. Dr. Walter explained that, given the use of VMS worldwide, the global expert company is located in Denmark and that the 'global expert' is not a single individual. An AP member asked if VMS testing has been done elsewhere in the United States. Dr. Walter stated that while VMS has been used for decades in the United States, the VMS technical specifications are relatively new. An AP member asked how much shrimpers would be paying for the program. Dr. Walter noted that the shrimpers would have to incur some costs such as installation and monthly cellular fees, and reimbursement for the purchase of a NMFS type-approved VMS unit is available. Another AP member clarified that the issue is not with OLE having access to the data, but rather the issue is with the data potentially going directly to OLE and then the SEFSC having to request it from OLE.

Ms. Bosarge asked for details on the \$750,000 expenditures. Dr. Walter responded that those monies may include development of a server, firewalls, employee time, and miscellaneous monies to GSMFC. Ms. Bosarge asked for more details to be obtained prior to the April Council meeting,

as it was her understanding that GSMFC and SEFSC were implementing these things regardless of shrimp data. An AP member noted that funding for a new data collection program is not in the proposed Omnibus and asked about the return rates for Secure Digital (SD) cards. Dr. Freeman responded that Dr. Lowther would be presenting on the return rates for SD cards during Shrimp Committee next week at the April 2022 Council meeting, and he shared information from Dr. Lowther's presentation that the return rate from the June, 1, 2021 mailout was 59% and commented that the percentage with usable data may be below the return rate.

Review of Draft Shrimp Framework Action

Dr. Freeman reviewed the Purpose and Need statements from the draft shrimp framework action, followed by the current alternatives. He discussed items from the January 2022 Council meeting that Council members had requested be included in the discussion of the alternatives, such as a 10-minute ping rate, minimum number of position fixes, mandatory at-sea testing, data being routed to SEFSC instead of OLE, and intermediary transmission avenues such as a GSMFC or NESDIS server. He commented that the Interdisciplinary Planning Team would be reviewing these requested items after the April Council meeting. An AP member agreed with the need for these items to be formally included in the draft framework action. Dr. Freeman stated that Council members also indicated, at the January 2022 Council meeting, an interest in waiting for the results of the NMFS research project and the Council funded project to make a final decision. He added that NMFS was tentatively scheduled to provide an update on its project at the June 2022 Council meeting.

An AP member emphasized the Council's interest in waiting for the completion of the NMFS project and the Council funded project. He commented that he would also like to wait for the results of those two studies, but noted that the P-Sea WindPlot results would not be until March 2023. He recommended that the Council wait to select a preferred alternative until final results are available and that the Shrimp AP would be able to recommend a preferred alternative prior to the Council taking final action as it would be difficult for the AP to make a recommendation until those results are available.

Motion: The Shrimp AP requests the Council to postpone selecting a Preferred Alternative in the Framework Action until after the Council and the Shrimp AP have received and considered definitive results from both the VMS testing program based on 30-day trips in the pink, white and brown shrimp fisheries, and from the LGL P-Sea WindPlot cellular transmission development project.

Motion carried unanimously.

Given the uncertainty of the timing of how the Council will proceed on the draft framework action and the perceived need for urgency by NMFS on selecting a new method¹, an AP member made the following motion:

¹ The Omnibus Appropriations bill enacted March 15, 2022 has an Explanatory Statement that "NMFS is further directed to submit a report to the Committees not more than 180 days after enactment of this Act outlining progress made to

Motion: If the Shrimp AP is unable to review the Framework Action again prior to the Council selecting a Preferred Alternative, then the Shrimp AP recommends, based on current available information, to the Council that it selects as its Preferred Alternative, Framework Action 1, Alternative 3, the purposes of which the AP continues to understand are to provide a clear alternative to the VMS system-based program set forth in Alternative 2 which would transmit data directly to OLE and, instead, to maintain a scientific shrimp fishing effort data collection program by replacing the current cELB system with a new ELB system that automatically transmits data generated through P-Sea WindPlot navigational software via cellular service through a non-OLE server to the Southeast Fisheries Science Center for analysis.

Motion carried unanimously.

Update on NMFS Shrimp Working Groups

Dr. Coggins (SEFSC) presented a progress report on the NMFS Shrimp Working Groups, similar to the 2021 report to the Shrimp AP. He reviewed the objectives of the SEAMAP Shrimp Indices Working Group, the key findings, and the Working Group members. Key findings included an overall agreement that the SEAMAP Groundfish Survey is representative of the shrimp fishery, as it reliably tracks changes in stock abundance at the population level. An AP member stated he is unsure if he completely agrees with that statement, as the areas towed for SEAMAP are not necessarily where the shrimp industry would tow. Dr. Coggins next reviewed the objectives of the Shrimp Catch Estimation Working Group, the key findings, recommendations, and the Working Group members. Key findings included a determination of port agent data collection to be duplicative of the mandatory state trip ticket data collection and a determination of trip tickets as the most complete source of landings data. Dr. Coggins then reviewed the objectives of the Shrimp Bycatch Estimation Working Group, the key findings, recommendations, and the Working Group members. Key findings included a determination that the quality of catch data for species like gray triggerfish may be insufficient to generate bycatch estimates, as observers are recording them as ‘finfish’ rather than by species.

Dr. Coggins reviewed the status of the Shrimp Effort Estimation Working Group. He noted that there is ongoing discussion of how changes to the way in which location and trip data are collected (for instance, VMS versus P-Sea WindPlot) may affect analysis of data. Lastly, Dr. Coggins reviewed the objectives of the Shrimp Life History and Environmental Data Working Group and its progress to-date. Progress included obtaining inshore survey and length composition data from multiple Gulf states.

An AP member questioned the use of a research vessel to estimate bycatch and expectation of that to be representative of the industry. Dr. Siegfried (SEFSC) responded that effort is an integral part

develop and implement the new ELB program.” <https://docs.house.gov/billsthisweek/20220307/BILLS-117RCP35-JES-DIVISION-B.pdf>

of bycatch calculation. She also stated they are aware observer coverage is better in recent years and are examining how to index that back in time for bycatch estimates.

An Update on the Development of Brown and White Shrimp Empirical Dynamic Models (EDM)

Dr. Michelle Masi (SERO) presented on the progress of developing brown and white shrimp empirical dynamic models (EDMs). She provided a timeline of the SEFSC's research since June 2019 into models for shrimp, beginning with a review of age-structured models. She stated that the SEAMAP Working Group from the NMFS Shrimp Working Groups, had determined SEAMAP to be a representative index of penaeid stock abundance. Dr. Masi then noted that penaeids are considered annual crops and that NMFS lacks age-structured data. In addition, data lags in NMFS receiving landings data proves problematic for timely stock status information. Dr. Masi reviewed how Shrimp Amendment 15 used stock synthesis models for developing annual status determination criteria (SDC) for penaeids. She noted that, if F_{MSY} is exceeded for 2 consecutive years, the Council should act, but due to the data lag, the Council is about 4 years out from taking action. Dr. Masi asked the Shrimp AP to consider if an age-structured model is needed to provide relative SDC.

Dr. Masi noted that EDMs are a more responsive model for short-lived penaeids because the models only require representative index data and because the EDM predictions respond implicitly to ecosystem drivers of shrimp abundance. Lastly, she reviewed next steps for EDMs, including a rigorous peer-review of EDMs when published in the literature and SSC review prior to the SEDAR Research Track in 2023.

An AP member disagreed with the statement that there is no recruitment or environmental signal. Dr. Masi commented that the shrimp stocks have been evaluated historically with a stock-synthesis model, and there is no Gulf-wide recruitment or environmental signal that has been found to be significant in the stock-synthesis model. However, if smaller spatial scales are analyzed, there is potential for correlation with a state-level recruitment or environmental signal.

Dr. Gloeckner (SEFSC) emphasized that states have to enter trip ticket data and then perform a quality control, which leads to the data lags described in the presentation.

An AP member stated that it seemed the model approach would be shifting from fishery-dependent to fishery-independent and then inquired how an EDM could be used for management advice. Dr. Walter responded that this is a presentation on the scientific merits as a predictive tool for an annual species.

Ms. Bosarge asked the AP to respond to the potential for data in statistical zones being pooled, for lack of data. An AP member commented that some of the zones east of Mobile Bay are not shrimped much at all, as much of the habitat is non-fishable area.

The AP inquired about potential involvement of SSC members in development of EDMs². Dr. Freeman stated that the SSC would receive an update on EDMs in fall 2022. Dr. Simmons responded that, if the AP was interested, a motion would be useful for involvement of SSC members prior to that final product which the SSC would formally review in fall 2022.

Motion: To convey to the SEFSC the support of the formal inclusion of appropriate SSC members, Council staff, and shrimp industry representatives in the development of the shrimp EDMs outside of formal SSC review and prior to the SEDAR research track.

Motion carried unanimously.

An Update on Gulf of Mexico Atlantis Ecosystem Model Development, And the Intention to Use the Peer-Reviewed Model for Shrimp Simulations and Strategic Management Advice

Dr. Masi first presented broadly on the differences and similarities across ecosystem models and their use in management. She explained why the Atlantis ecosystem model is well-suited for the Gulf of Mexico: well represents the Mississippi River, including water quality; well represents loop current, including the effect on larval dispersal; includes explicit biogenic habitat effects. She noted that the Gulf of Mexico Atlantis project is in Year 1 of a 3-year project. To-date, two internal review workshops have been completed, with two more to be held. Expert input has been used to direct model updates and improvements. In 2022, the project will undergo rigorous peer-review and include any necessary model improvements following the review. In 2023, the model will be run for Gulf penaeid shrimp simulations and to evaluate long-term biological, economic, and ecosystem-level tradeoffs.

Dr. Freeman inquired when the Shrimp AP may be updated next and if the annual March meeting for the Shrimp AP would be feasible for updates. Dr. Masi stated that she could come annually and provide updates. Dr. Walter provided information on how the Atlantis model may be used; he commented that strategic decisions could be made for ecosystem-based management. He noted how Gulf shrimp is managed, incorporating interactions with red snapper and with sea turtles. An AP member responded that he could see the model being used to evaluate the impacts of the Mississippi River Diversion Project.

2020 Gulf Shrimp Fishery Effort and Landings

Dr. Walter provided an initial overview that the 2020 Gulf shrimp effort and landings estimates are not yet available, but they will be provided as the BiOp requires them to be produced annually. He reviewed the challenges to producing these estimates, including declining chip return rates which may mean effort will be less representative of the fleet. He explained technical issues with the

² This discussion and subsequent motion occurred during Other Business, but was included here for continuity with the relevant Agenda Item.

existing code and reviewed data issues, which involves trip ticket data differing from port sampling data as they do not have depth data. He noted that the lack of depth zones and sparse area data from trip tickets affect effort and landings estimates. Given that NMFS must produce annual estimates of effort to meet BiOp requirements, the proposed solution includes an improved system of effort data collection and more efficient, robust, and automated code.

An AP member noted that the annual shrimp effort and landings estimates are used for multiple purposes, including the red snapper threshold and for spatial analyses such as with potential Aquaculture Opportunity Areas (AOAs).

2020 Royal Red Index

Dr. Coggins presented the royal red shrimp landings relative to the annual catch limit (ACL), with confidential data excluded and then with confidential data as a mean. He noted that the landings time series should not be interpreted as an index of abundance; he stated that other things could be influencing increases and decreases in landings.

Update on Number of Active Gulf Shrimp Permits, Economic Estimates, and Royal Red Landings

Dr. Travis stated that Gulf royal red shrimp landings at Atlantic ports have been less than 3,400 pounds in total from 2015-2017, with none from 2018-2019. He reviewed the nominal ex-vessel price, for both heads-on and heads-off, for 2015-2019 for Gulf landed royal red shrimp; he could only provide prices for 2015 and 2017 as the other three years had confidential data. Next, Dr. Travis reviewed imports from Argentina and stated that imports had tripled from 2015-2020; however, species are not identified in data. He stated that the vast majority are warm-water shrimp, which may compete with Gulf royal red. Beginning in July 2021, NMFS can now determine wild from farmed product. For July-December 2021, about 23.3% of the total pounds were farmed product. Farmed product would not be red shrimp and would not directly compete with Gulf royal red.

Dr. Freeman inquired if the imports were going to grocery stores or restaurants. Two AP members responded that restaurants seemed to be using red shrimp imports. An AP member asked which ports the imports may be coming into. Dr. Travis replied that he could look into that, but he would guess into Miami. An AP member noted that Argentina shrimp is a cold-water shrimp, so it wouldn't align with comparing them with Gulf royal red shrimp, which are warm-water shrimp. Dr. Travis commented that the AP member's comment was inconsistent with what he had been told, so he would have to explore it more.

Dr. Travis next reviewed the number of valid permits and the number of active permits for 2015-2019. He stated that both groups of permits have shown a slight decline over that timeframe³.

³ Number of valid permits from 2015-2019 are as follows: 1,471; 1,454, 1,442; 1,426; 1,418. Number of active permits from 2015-2019 are as follows: 1,060; 1,054; 1,073; 1,053; 1,008.

However, the number of active permits may be an underestimate, since data from the historical Gulf shrimp landings dataset were used, and not data from the annual landings form. Dr. Travis commented that the 2015-2019 estimates are based on SERO's current, official approach for counting valid permits in a year, where a permit is counted if valid for at least one day even if later terminated in that same year, as they could have legally fished under the permit. Dr. Travis asked the AP's view on what is needed for amendments and other purposes going forward. Dr. Freeman asked for clarification if this would come into play for development of Chapters 3 and 4 for the current draft shrimp framework action, and Dr. Travis responded in the affirmative. An AP member stated that he was comfortable with the approach Dr. Travis had presented.

Dr. Travis discussed the economic performance of the Gulf shrimp fishery from 2014-2019, with the note that this information would be incorporated into the current draft shrimp framework action. He noted that the 2015-2019 average may be more indicative of baseline data, as performance declined after 2014. He commented that, in 2014, shrimp price and fuel price were both high and had decreased following 2014. Dr. Travis stated that 2014 appears to be an outlier for the Gulf shrimp industry. Ms. Bosarge shared that, in 2014, oil prices were quite high but then tanked about halfway through the year.

An AP member asked where the numbers came from. Dr. Travis replied that the survey, The Annual Economic Survey of Federal Gulf Shrimp Permit Holders, is mailed out to Gulf commercial shrimpers, and that the number of observations is at the top of the draft economic results listed as Background Information.

Biological Review of the Texas Closure

Dr. Coggins presented an overview of the Texas closure. He noted that the Original Shrimp Fishery Management Plan was implemented in 1981 with one of the goals being to increase the yield and value of brown shrimp harvested from offshore Texas waters. He also noted that, historically, the closure has been from mid-May to mid-July; since 1990, the near-shore (less than 4 fathoms) area has also been closed in conjunction with the Texas closure.

Since the 1980s, there has been an overall decline in July for offshore Texas brown shrimp landings, which corresponds to the Texas Closure. Since the mid-1990s, August landings have been fairly stable, with the exception of 2019. For May-August 2021, offshore Texas brown shrimp catches are lowest in May and June, with the highest catches in August. The highest amounts of August catch are in the 41-50 and 51-67 counts, which suggests that the Texas Closure is successful in allowing for shrimp to grow to larger sizes. Dr. Coggins next reviewed the annual percentage of Texas total shrimp landings from 1981-2021 by region (upper, middle, and lower). As a relative ranking, the upper region had the highest annual percentage in 2021, followed by the lower region and then by the middle region. Compared with the previous year, this was a slight proportional increase for the upper and lower regions, and a slight proportional decrease for the middle region. Offshore Texas white shrimp catch for both July and August 2021 was highest in the 15-20 count.

To summarize, Dr. Coggins stated that both the offshore Texas brown shrimp catch and the inshore Texas brown shrimp catch for May-August are below the historical average. White shrimp catch off Texas in 2021 was also below average for both July and August, compared with previous years (1980-2020).

Dr. Coggins noted that the western Gulf of Mexico brown shrimp production forecast has been discontinued. Historically, the NOAA Fisheries Galveston Lab forecasted brown shrimp production in the western Gulf of Mexico (July-June). This is, in part, because sampling for the Galveston Bay Bait Index was disrupted by coronavirus.

Motion: To request NMFS to continue with the Texas Federal Closure in the coming year in conjunction with the state of Texas Closure in 2022.

Motion carried unanimously.

Update on Sea Turtle Take and TED Compliance

Ms. Lee provided an update on observed take of sea turtles in the Gulf shrimp industry. For the 2020-2021 timeframe, Ms. Lee reported that 43 sea turtles (loggerhead, Kemp's ridley, and green) were observed caught in otter trawls. Ms. Bosarge inquired if 2025 would be when the next BiOp would come out. Ms. Lee responded that 2026 is when the next take estimate would come out. Another AP member inquired about sea turtle nest numbers in Mexico. Ms. Lee said that 2021 numbers (17,671 nests) were slightly lower than in 2020 (18,068 nests).

Ms. Lee then shared information from the Office of Law Enforcement regarding TED compliance. For 2021, there were 106 TED incidents. 65 of those were closed with no violations documented. Of the remaining 41 incidents, 20 vessel operators were able to fix the issue on the spot.

Update on Publication of Gulf of Mexico Aquaculture Opportunity Areas' Notice of Intent

Dr. Freeman reviewed an update on the publication of the Gulf AOAs Notice of Intent (NOI). The NOI is anticipated to be published in late spring or summer of 2022 and will start the public scoping process for development of the programmatic environmental impact statement (EIS), which seeks to identify at least one AOA. Multiple opportunities for stakeholders to provide comment exist. Initially, that will be through written comment and virtual public scoping meetings. Once a draft programmatic EIS is developed and made available to the public, additional public comments will be solicited. Dr. Freeman noted that the AOA Atlas for the U.S. Gulf of Mexico has not identified the AOAs, but rather the results of the Atlas are potential options that may be considered in the programmatic EIS for siting AOAs. He added that Andrew Richard, Southeast Regional Aquaculture Coordinator, was available on the webinar for any questions from AP members.

Public Comment

No members of the public provided comment.

Other Business

Southern Shrimp Alliance Scholarship

Ms. Bosarge shared that the Southern Shrimp Alliance (SSA) has developed a scholarship program for students with ties to the Gulf and South Atlantic shrimp industry for college, and scholarships are \$1,000 individually.

Offshore Wind (BOEM)

Dr. Walter next discussed two of the requests from the Council to NMFS on inclusion of spatial analyses and economic data from the Gulf shrimp industry for consideration of offshore wind energy sites. He stated that NMFS is working with BOEM to prepare a similar process as was done with AOAs. He shared a website link for Fishing Footprints with an interactive map for the coast of New England and Mid-Atlantic which shows fishing revenue for 1996-2015.

An AP member inquired how many turbines might be expected in the Gulf. Another AP member replied, from the December 2021 Shrimp AP Meeting summary, that about 1,740 turbines would be needed across the Atlantic, Gulf, and Pacific.

An AP member shared that the SSA has provided written comments to BOEM on this topic numerous times.

NOAA TEDs

An AP member shared two websites for industry engagement meetings related to developing reduced bar spacing in TEDs, with the purpose of reducing juvenile sea turtle bycatch. She also provided fact sheets to those attending the meeting in-person.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:23 pm eastern time on March 29, 2022.

Meeting Participants

Members Present:

Corky Perret, Chair
Steve Bosarge, Vice-Chair
Thu Bui
Glenn Delaney
Gary Graham

Andrea Hance
Harris Lasseigne
Franklin Parker
Laura Picariello
John Williams

Council Staff:

Matt Freeman
Karen Hoak
Lisa Hollensead
Jessica Matos
Natasha Mendez-Ferrer
Camilla Shireman
Carrie Simmons

NMFS Staff:

Brett Alger
Michael Barnette
Adam Brame
Shannon Cass-Calay
Lew Coggins
David Gloeckner
Heather Glon
Frank Helies
Peter Hood
Kimberly Johnson

Christopher Liese
Jennifer Lee
Alan Lowther
Michelle Masi
Adam Pollack
James Primrose
Andrew Richard
Skyler Sagarese
Elizabeth Scott-Denton
Katie Siegfried
Rebecca Smith
Duane Smith
Michael Travis
Farron Wallace
John Walter
Jo Williams

Council Members:

Leann Bosarge (representative)
Bob Gill