

Tab D, No. 4(c)

Draft Framework Action:
Modification of the Vessel Position Data Collection
Program for the Gulf of Mexico Shrimp Fishery



Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

Outline



- Overview of Council Timeline To-Date
- Review P&N Statements
- Review Alternatives 2 and 3
- Tentative Timeline

Council Timeline To-Date



- Sept '20 Council mtg: received presentation from Science Center that 3G cellular coverage for cELBs discontinuing effective 1/1/21. New shrimp effort data collection methods are warranted.
- Nov/Dec '20 Council mtg: following a presentation from Dr. Benny Gallaway, motion for letter to Science Center supporting development, implementation, and funding of a P-Sea WindPlot Program (navigation software) that would acquire and transmit shrimp fishing effort.
 - Council conducted competitive RFP in 2021 for \$350,000 to test P-Sea WindPlot
 - Final results from LGL (Council-funded contractor) presented at April '23 Council mtg; recommendation from LGL to not further invest in P-Sea WindPlot as method to record shrimp vessel positions for calculating effort

Council Timeline To-Date



- April '21 Council mtg: motion directing staff to begin a Framework Action to set up reporting requirements for the expiring 3G cELB program to transition it to a new platform for effort reporting of the Gulf of Mexico federal shrimp fishery
- Oct '21 Council mtg: motion for NMFS to test a sample of approved cVMS units on federally permitted commercial shrimp vessels
 - 1st deployment in 2022, which tested Faria and NEMO alongside cELB units; 2nd deployment in 2023, which tested ZEN and NEMO (solar-powered) alongside cELB units; results presented at April '23 Council mtg

Council Timeline To-Date



- April '23 Council mtg: motion to bring back draft Shrimp FA after NMFS completes side by side testing of cELB units with a minimum of the following devices: NEMO (hard-wired to vessel), ZEN VMS, and Nautic Alert Insight X3
 - Results presented at Oct '23 Council mtg
 - Data provided on estimated effort (tow days) for Boat Command, NEMO, Tracker One, and Zen; Boat Command, NEMO, and ZEN produced similar results when they functioned appropriately

Purpose and Need Statements



- The purpose of this framework action is to transition from the expired 3G cellular electronic logbook program to a system that would maintain the Council's and NMFS' scientific ability to estimate and monitor fishing effort in the Gulf shrimp fishery while minimizing the economic burden on the industry to the maximum extent practicable.
- The need is to base conservation and management measures on the best scientific information available and to minimize bycatch to the extent practicable, as required by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), and minimize interactions with protected species as required by the ESA.

Action 1



- Modify the Method Used to Collect Vessel Position Data for the Gulf of Mexico Shrimp Fishery
- Note: The types of data and amount/timing of data collection would not vary between alternatives. Consistent with current requirements, the permitted vessels selected to participate must also provide the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS): the size and number of shrimp trawls deployed for each set, and the type of bycatch reduction device and turtle excluder device used in the nets. As set forth in Amendment 13 to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for the Shrimp Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico, U.S. Waters (Shrimp FMP; GMFMC 2005) and 50 C.F.R. § 622.51, compliance with these requirements and the requirement to submit vessel position data is required for permit renewal.

Action 1



- Alternative 1: No Action - Maintain the current method to collect vessel position data through the cellular electronic logbook (cELB) units supplied by NMFS. NMFS would collect the memory cards from the units via mail.
 - Is not a long-term solution. cELB devices fail over time; some memory cards have missing data and/or are not returned.

Action 1



- Alternative 2: Implement a vessel monitoring system (VMS) requirement for the Gulf of Mexico (Gulf) shrimp fishery that provides, at a minimum, archived position data compatible with the SEFSC's shrimp effort algorithm to a NMFS server. If selected by the Science and Research Director (SRD), the owner or operator of a vessel with a Gulf shrimp moratorium permit (SPGM) would be required to install a type-approved VMS unit (50 C.F.R. § 600.1501).

Action 1



- Alternative 3: Implement a cellular VMS (cVMS) requirement for the Gulf shrimp fishery that provides archived position data compatible with the SEFSC's shrimp effort algorithm. If selected by the SRD, the owner or operator of a vessel with a SPGM would be required to install a NMFS-approved cVMS that archives vessel position when on a shrimp fishing trip in the Gulf and automatically transmits those data via cellular service to a non-OLE NMFS server. NMFS-approved cVMS would be type-approved through a process external to 50 C.F.R. § 600.1501.
 - Industry does not want data sent to or stored with OLE. However, OLE will retain access to data with Alt 3.
 - NMFS has suggested Alt 3 may not be viable due to duplicative process.



Primary Differences Between Alts 2 and 3

	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
Allowed Data Transmission Type	Both cellular and satellite	Cellular only
Data Recipient	NMFS (NOAA OLE) server	Non-OLE NMFS server*
Initial VMS Device Reimbursement through Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission and NOAA OLE	Yes (up to \$950 if cellular and satellite are options)	No
Field Tests and At-sea Trials for VMS Devices	May be performed	Mandatory
Additional NMFS Costs from Not Utilizing 50 C.F.R. § 600.1501	No	Yes

➤ *OLE would be able to access these data.

Industry Costs



	Alternative 2	Alternative 3
Total Permitted Vessels (1,257 permits)	949 permitted vessels requiring a device (1,257 – 204 EAP - 104 satellite)	1,053 vessels requiring a device (1,257 – 204 EAP)
Initial Device Costs for Permit Holders	\$0 (eligible for nat'l VMS reimbursement)	\$199 to \$574 (ineligible for nat'l VMS reimbursement)
Recurring Annual Transmission Costs	\$99 to \$179 (cellular); \$360 to \$1,440 (satellite)*	\$99 to \$179 (cellular)
Discounted Net Present Value of Industry Costs**	\$1,673,576 to \$3,547,804 (949 cellular & 104 satellite); \$1,512,756 to \$2,398,127 (1,053 cellular)***	\$2,029,961 to \$2,586,978 (1,053 cellular)

- *An overestimate b/c current satellite VMS users are already paying some level of annual transmission costs.
- **Over a 10-year range and with a discount rate of 2%
- ***The 104 current satellite VMS users may be ineligible for reimbursement if they also get a cellular VMS.

Tentative Timeline and Next Steps



- Tentative timeline for Council:
 - If the Council selects a preferred at this meeting, staff will develop a YouTube video and an informational mailout to federal permit holders notifying them of this proposed regulatory change, prior to the April meeting.
 - Does the Council want staff to hold a virtual webinar for public feedback?
 - Council takes final action at its April meeting.

Questions?

