



**NOAA**  
**FISHERIES**

# Sea Turtle Updates for the Shrimp Advisory Panel (AP)

Shrimp AP Meeting  
March 4, 2025

Southeast Regional Office (SERO)  
Protected Resources Division (PRD)

# Presentation Overview

- 2024 Updates Requested by Shrimp AP
  - Sea Turtle Takes Observed In Shrimp Trawls\*
  - NOAA Fisheries Office of Law Enforcement TED Regulatory Compliance Data\*\*
  - NOAA Fisheries Gear Monitoring Team Evaluations Summary\*\*\*
- Additional Quick Updates
  - Sea Turtle Status and Trends
  - Green Sea Turtle Proposed Critical Habitat
  - Monitoring of the April 2021 Biological Opinion
- References for additional Information

*Data and assistance provided by \*Carolyn Sramek, Office of Law Enforcement; \*\*Jason Letort, Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC), Pascagoula Laboratory; \*\*\*Judy Gocke and Gary Decossas, SEFSC Galveston Laboratory.*



# Observed Sea Turtle Shrimp Trawl Captures

- In 2024, NOAA Fisheries, Galveston Shrimp Observer Program observed only 6 sea turtles captured in shrimp otter trawls.
  - 1 green sea turtle (fresh dead) in a try net inshore LA
  - 1 green sea turtle (fresh dead) in standard net offshore LA (no TED)
  - 1 Kemp's ridley (Alive/conscious) in a try net offshore LA
  - 1 Kemp's ridley (Alive/conscious) in a try net nearshore MS
  - 1 loggerhead (Alive /conscious) in a try offshore NC
- Total observed shrimp effort :
  - Gulf: 1,051 observed sea days of 40,000 industry sea days (estimate based on recent historical data as 2024 effort is not yet available); ~2-3% coverage rate
  - South Atlantic Region: 98 observed seadays; 12,000 industry sea days (estimate); ~ 1%

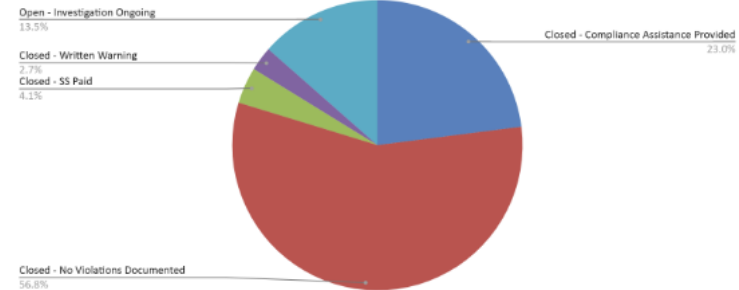


# NOAA Fisheries, Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) 2024 Regulatory Compliance Data

- 74 TED-related incidents in 2024: 52 were OLE initiated investigations and 22 were referrals from partner agencies
- OLE closed 42 of the 74 incidents with no TED violations documented. Of the remaining:
  - 17 incidents closed with compliance assistance of Fix Final status.
  - 3 summary settlement offer penalties issued.
    - Ranged from \$300-\$2000.
    - Involved TED bar spacing and/or flap length violations, BRDs being sewn shut or with weight added, bar spacing or flap length/ double cover violations.
  - 2 written warnings were issued for various TED/BRD violations.
  - 3 incidents were transferred to another agency.
  - 10 remain open.

Incident Status	COUNTUNIQUE of Incident Number
Closed - Compliance Assistance Provided	17
Closed - No Violations Documented	42
Closed - SS Paid	3
Closed - Written Warning	2
Open - Investigation Ongoing	10
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>74</b>

Status of 2024 TED incidents



# NOAA Fisheries Gear Monitoring Team (GMT) 2024 TED Evaluations Summary

- 134 TEDs inspected:
  - Number down from previous years (e.g., 388 last year) due to the state of the industry.
  - The low market prices of shrimp and high fuel cost along with imported shrimp has led to many boats not fishing.
  - Many of the boats the GMT attempted to check declined their offer because they were not fishing this year.
- Violations observed did not differ substantially from those documented in 2023.  
Common violations observed:
  - Bent bars causing bar spacing to exceed 4" max – most common violation
  - Double Cover overlap exceeding 15"
  - Holes and tears in flaps (shark interactions) – fishermen tend to let the flaps get overly worn before changing them out.
  - TEDs with angles exceeding 55 degrees (n=2)

# 2024 GMT Recommendations For the Fleet

- Fleet is experiencing a lot of holes and tears to TEDs and nets from shark interactions. Any patches or repairs to holes in TED flaps should be followed by a compliance check by the crew to ensure that TEDs maintain compliance.
- Check TED angles for compliance. Remember to use the non-magnetic side of the angle meter for an accurate angle reading.
- Routinely check TED grids for bent bars and that bar spacing does not exceed 4"
- If the crew is not sure how to check their TEDs for compliance, GMT is available to train captains and crew on how to check their TEDs for compliance.
  - Call Jason Letort (228) 355-8667 or email [ted.info@noaa.gov](mailto:ted.info@noaa.gov) for specific locations and times. Contacting them will ensure you are on their schedule.



# Chauvin Shrimp Deflector Installation

- Involves the use of a PVC pipe encased in a mesh bag, which is then attached across the leading edge of the TED opening after removing the TED flaps.
- Fishermen in the Northern Gulf employ this method to reduce finfish bycatch.
- When the PVC is not encased in a mesh bag and is instead directly attached to the leading edge, it restricts the TED opening.



# 2024 Chauvin Shrimp Deflector Use

- In 2024, the GMT encountered numerous Chauvin Shrimp Deflector TEDs throughout the northern Gulf Shrimp fleet that were installed incorrectly, i.e., the PVC is not encased in a mesh bag and is instead directly attached to the leading edge, thereby restricting the opening.
- On August 15, 2024, and again February 6, 2025, SERO distributed a [Fisheries Bulletin](#) providing information to address the issues this TED modification.
  - Available [online](#) in English, Vietnamese, & Spanish.
  - Also distributed in person during dock visits.
- Fishermen utilizing this allowable modification are encouraged to carefully review regulations concerning the Chauvin Shrimp Deflector and to reach out to the GMT with any questions regarding this modification.

## More Info:

Scan the code with your smart phone camera:



## Thông tin thêm:

Quét mã bằng camera điện thoại thông minh:



# Sea Turtle Status and Trends

- Sea turtle nesting trends vary by species and location, but overall show improving nesting trends, except for leatherbacks.

Sea Turtle Species	Status	Trend
Green NA DPS	Threatened	Stable
Hawksbill	Endangered	Mixed
Kemp's ridley	Endangered	Stable
Leatherback	Endangered	Decreasing
Loggerhead Northwest Atlantic DPS	Threatened	Stable



# Green Sea Turtle Critical Habitat Rulemaking

- In July 2023, NOAA Fisheries and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) proposed to designate marine critical habitat (NOAA Fisheries) and terrestrial critical habitat (USFWS) for endangered and threatened green sea turtles off several U.S. coastlines under separate final rules ([88 FR 46572](#) and [88 FR 46376](#)).
- Through the public comment period and informational meetings, NOAA Fisheries and USFWS received more than 700 comments including additional information.
- No information available on the timing of final rules.
- Conducting Section 7 [conferences](#) when requested by any action agency.

# Reminder/Update on Sea Turtle Monitoring Per the April 2021 Shrimp Biological Opinion

- SERO must ensure that future fisheries effort monitoring is conducted at equivalent (or greater) levels as conducted over the past 10 years.
- SERO has no information at this time to suggest that sea turtle takes have been exceeded.
- Per a condition of the 2021 Opinion Incidental Take Statement, the SEFSC must provide updated bycatch estimates for sea turtles to SERO within 5 years of issuance of the Opinion, using the same Bayesian model approach employed last time, for monitoring authorized incidental take and impacts
- Work on updated estimates (2016-2020) underway; anticipate may have completed by June.

# Where Can I Get More Information?

- Information posted on our website:
  - [2021 Shrimp Biological Opinion](#)
  - [Sea Turtle Species Profiles](#)
    - Species Overview, Conservation and Management, Science, and Resources
  - [ESA Section 7 Consultation Species Frameworks](#)
    - Guidance on evaluating effects from federal actions for each listed species
- Sea turtle restoration projects (select sea turtle in drop-down menu) are [here](#).
- Information you want to share? Questions? Other Needs?
  - Reach out to me and I'll listen, help, or connect you to a Protected Resources specialist who can! [Jennifer.Lee@noaa.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Lee@noaa.gov)

