

Shrimp Advisory Panel Summary
Gulf Council Office
Webinar
March 9, 2026

The meeting of the Gulf of America (Gulf) Fishery Management Council's (Council) Shrimp Advisory Panel (AP) was convened via webinar at 9:00 AM EST on March 9, 2026. The agenda for this meeting was approved, with the addition of Discussion of Funding for the Section 609 Sea Turtle Program under Other Business. The meeting summary and minutes from March 4, 2025, were approved as written.

Council Actions in Response to Motions from the March 2025 Shrimp AP Meeting

Council staff presented on the Council's actions in response to the motions from the March 2025 Shrimp AP meeting. He also summarized additional motions from Council meetings in 2025 that pertain to the federal Gulf shrimp industry. An AP member inquired as to the status of Shrimp Amendment 19 and asked what would happen to the current federal Gulf shrimp permit moratorium if it is not implemented by October 26, 2026. Council staff added that Shrimp Amendment 19 should be transmitted from the Council office to SERO in the next week. NOAA General Counsel stated that the federal Gulf shrimp permit would no longer be a limited access permit and that the fishery would become open access. An AP member requested another status update of the amendment at the April 2026 Council meeting.

Snapshot of Shrimp Stock Assessment and SSC Recommendations

Council staff reviewed the Magnuson-Stevens Act requirements for annual species and provided an overview of the SSC's recommendations for the brown, white, and pink shrimp stock assessments (SEDAR 87 2025). Science Center shrimp stock assessment personnel nor Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) representatives were not available to answer Shrimp AP member questions during the meeting as Council staff typically present stock assessment results and SSC recommendations at AP meetings. An AP member inquired why the third highest catch of pink shrimp was recommended by the SSC for establishing maximum sustainable yield (MSY), instead of the highest catch. Council staff responded that there were two points of rationale – (1) a peer-reviewed article in the journal Fisheries Research on setting catch limits in data-limited fisheries, (2) South Atlantic Council has used this approach after a technical review of potential data-limited methods. Although not discussed at this meeting, the SSC did consider other methods including the use of the ABC control. However, this method would have likely produced lower catch advice than the recommended approach and the SSC thought the ABC control rule was unnecessarily conservative for pink shrimp and recommended the ABC be based on the third highest catch, which occurred in 1996. Another Council staff noted that a status of overfishing would be dependent on the MSY values being exceeded for two consecutive years, which has not occurred. An AP member inquired when the first and second highest landings had occurred; another AP member inquired what the average pink shrimp landings had been the past 5 years. Council staff responded that the highest landings of pink shrimp occurred in 1964 and the second highest landings occurred in 1960. The recent three-year average landings (2002 – 2022) of pink shrimp is

8.55 million pounds of tails, or 42% of the third highest catch of pink shrimp. Next, an AP member questioned the SSC's recommendation to set the MSST for brown and white shrimp at 100% of the biomass at MSY. He also inquired if the SSC considered non-stationarity in the modeling. Council staff noted that MSY, by definition, is a long-term metric, so it is considered stationary or static. However, when new assessments are conducted, MSY values can be updated. An AP member asked why the in-shore Louisiana trawl survey for white shrimp was not broken into seasons rather than an annual value. An AP member inquired when the stock management values recommended by the SSC may come before the AP again. Council staff responded that the AP will likely see these recommendations again in a draft document.

Update on Gulf and Import Shrimp Prices

Dr. Liese (SEFSC staff) presented an overview of price data for both Gulf of America and imported shrimp. He noted that imported shrimp categories for frozen peeled, frozen breaded, and frozen other prep is not differentiated by size, so an aggregate price is provided. He added that prices for imported shrimp (warm-water shell-on frozen) have continued to decrease in the past decade; he stressed that tariffs are not included in these prices. Preliminary prices for Gulf shrimp in 2025 show an increase over 2024, which had increased over 2023 – although all of these are well below historical highs. He noted that pink shrimp landings, averaged over time, peak at larger size categories.

An AP member inquired if the presentation slide on the difference between mean Gulf shrimp price and mean import price could be expanded in the future by considering wild-caught Gulf shrimp against wild-caught imported shrimp, since wild-caught imported shrimp carry a premium over farm raised imported shrimp. Dr. Liese responded that it may be possible to further examine this for future presentations. Another AP member stated that oil prices have jumped in the past week, which is a primary expense for commercial vessels; he stated that more shrimp vessels may remain at the docks as a result. An AP member asked what is being done with this price data to assist the industry. Dr. Liese responded that the price data, through 2023, is going into a federal report, which should be released next week. He added that the NMFS Shrimp Futures Project is also looking at industry solutions. Another AP member pointed out that ample data had been collected and published on the state of the shrimp industry and that moving forward the agency's focus would hopefully be on actionable solutions and industry enhancing programs to ensure the Southeast shrimp industry remains viable, rather than focusing on additional data collection to characterize how dire the situation may be.

2024 Gulf Shrimp Fishery Landings

Dr. Lowther (SEFSC) noted that a substantial decrease in brown shrimp landings in 2024, compared with 2023. Both white and pink shrimp landings have decreased slightly from 2023 to 2024. Pink shrimp are the dominant landings in statistical zones 1-9. Brown shrimp are the dominant landings in statistical zones 18-21. White shrimp are the dominant landings in statistical zones 10-12 and 13-17. An AP member asked for clarification that these graphs represent where the shrimp are landed, not where the shrimp are harvested. Mr. Dettloff (SEFSC) responded that the graphs represent where the shrimp are harvested, not landed. An AP member noted that the trends of brown and white shrimp from 2016-2018 in statistical zones 13-17 seemed to be a mirror

image. Dr. Lowther responded that species identification between brown and white shrimp in 2018 might have been a problem, but he was uncertain. He highlighted that inshore white shrimp harvest exceeds offshore white shrimp harvest in statistical zones 13-17. Offshore harvest of shrimp exceeds inshore harvest of shrimp in statistical zones 1-9 and 18-21.

An AP member stated there seems to be a contributing factor for brown shrimp that does not exist for white or pink shrimp, when noticing larger spikes (in 2018) or dips (2024) for brown shrimp. Another AP member commented that effort is dramatically down in Texas lately, where brown shrimp is primarily harvested. He stated that effort in Louisiana is higher, where white shrimp is primarily harvested. An AP member commented that imports may compete more with Gulf offshore landings, and white shrimp tend to be harvested inshore, whereas brown shrimp tend to be harvested offshore. Another AP noted that the number of Texas state shrimp permits has been declining over time, which would potentially correspond to a reduction in effort and landings.

Review of the 2025 Texas Closure

Dr. Lowther presented on the 2025 Texas Closure. He noted that white shrimp in the larger size categories were predominately landed in July and August 2025, while brown shrimp in the middle size categories were predominately landed in August 2025. Of the three regions, Upper Texas continues to have the largest share of landings in May through August from 2016 through 2025. Offshore brown shrimp landings declined in August 2025, compared to August 2024, and remained about the same in July 2025 as in July 2024. An AP member requested that future presentations show the percentage of total landings that are in larger size categories pre- and post-Texas Closure. Council staff asked for clarification that the prices in the presentation are specific to Texas. Dr. Lowther responded that those prices are from trip tickets and specific to Texas. Council staff requested that the trend of prices pre- and post-Texas Closure over the past few years be provided in future presentations. An AP member stated that he was in support of the Texas Closure, as shrimpers need to harvest larger shrimp to remain competitive. Another AP member asked for input from fellow AP members on the closure possibly being extended farther east in federal waters. An AP member stated that, as a Texas shrimper who has seen the benefits of the Texas Closure, he would be in favor of that but anticipated a lot of resistance from shrimpers in other states.

Motion: To recommend that the Council request NMFS to continue the federal Texas Closure in conjunction with the state of Texas closure in 2026.

Motion carried unanimously.

Review of 2024 Royal Red Landings

Dr. Lowther stated that royal red shrimp landings for 2024 could not be provided, as data confidentiality must be maintained (as is the case when the number of vessels or dealers is less than three). He stated that landings did not exceed the ACL.

Review of Congressional Funding of Data Collection

Dr. Gloeckner (SEFSC) presented on the expenditures/spend plans for FY23-26 on the cellular electronic logbook (cELB) program in the federal Gulf shrimp fishery. Council staff stated that the Early Adopter Program covers 2 years of cellular data transmission when devices are installed; he noted that devices installed in 2023 would be past that 2-year coverage and inquired who was paying those transmission fees. Dr. Lowther stated that transmission costs are continuing to be paid through the Early Adopter Program, no matter the year of installation. An AP member noted a motion from the Shrimp AP¹ and from the Council² in 2024 and asked if they were reflected in the expenditures/spend plans presented. An AP member inquired if the SEFSC had set up sufficient capacity for their cloud-based server to receive data from the full complement of vessels anticipated to be outfitted with a cELB device through the Early Adopter Program. Dr. Gloeckner responded that cloud storage is sufficient for current data transmission (from approximately 120 vessels), but additional storage would be needed as more devices are installed and additional data (from over 800 vessels) are transmitted.

Motion: The Shrimp AP recommends that the Council request NMFS to adopt the following priorities for utilizing the FY26 \$850,000 appropriation for ELB development and implementation:

- 1) Sufficient funding to ensure the SEFSC server has sufficient capacity to receive and store shrimp fishery vessel position data.**
- 2) Develop a statistically robust design for distributing units to a representative portion of the fleet that would be comparable to the last 10 years.**
- 3) Cover the cost of providing units and cellular service to those shrimp vessels, pursuant to the Early Adopter Program.**

Motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment

Mr. Blake Price (Southern Shrimp Alliance Director) commented on how foreign countries exporting shrimp to the United States must harvest shrimp under conditions that minimize the impact on sea turtles under Section 609 (Public Law 101-162). He stressed the need for effective enforcement of this program.

Other Business

Discussion of Funding for the Section 609 Sea Turtle Program

¹ Shrimp AP motion can be found in the meeting summary: https://gulf-council-media.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/2025/02/Shrimp-AP-Summary-March_2024_final.pdf

² The Council Motions Report can be found here: https://gulf-council-media.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/2025/02/GMFMC-Motions-Report_Apr2024-FINAL.pdf

An AP member agreed with the public comment received and noted the need for NMFS to enforce Section 609. Council staff inquired who this request should be addressed. The AP member recommended that the request be made to the Assistant Administrator of Fisheries and that SERO and the SEFSC be carbon copied.

Motion: To recommend that the Council request that NMFS fully utilize the FY26 \$600,000 appropriation for implementation and enforcement of the Section 609 program to ensure foreign fisheries are maintaining the same standard for sea turtle conservation as our domestic fisheries are required to uphold. To recommend that the Council request that NMFS provide a presentation, at a future Shrimp AP meeting, on how the FY2026 \$600,000 will be spent to carry out the implementation and enforcement of the Section 609 TED program.

Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:45 pm eastern time on March 9, 2026.

Meeting Participants

Members Present:

Kristen Baumer
Leann Bosarge, Chair
Steve Bosarge, Vice Chair
Glenn Delaney
Haley Gambill
Gary Graham
Chris Londrie
Laura Picariello
Bob Zales

Council Staff:

Matt Freeman
John Froeschke
Lisa Hollensead
Jessica Matos
Bernie Roy
Carrie Simmons
Verena Wang

NMFS Staff:

Kyle Dettloff
David Gloeckner
Frank Helies
Kimberley Johnson

Matthew Johnson
Todd Kellison
Mara Levy
Christopher Liese
Alan Lowther
Richard Malinowski
Felix Martin
Michelle Masi
Adam Pollack
David Records
Rebecca Smith
Brendan Turley

Council Members:

Chris Schieble

Other Attendees:

Marla Cooper
Julie Falgout
Lissa Lyncker
Benedict Posadas
Blake Price
Rena Schaaak
Jody Shirley
Megan Westmeyer