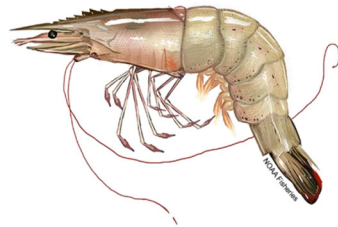
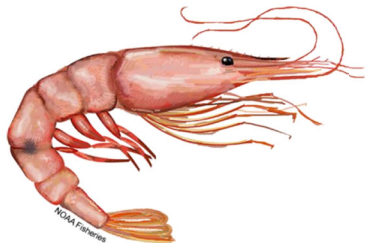




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Review of the Minimum Threshold Number of Federal Gulf Shrimp Permits

July 2026
Gulf Council SSC



Outline

- Background/History
- Trend in Active Permits
- Available Data for Consideration
- Path Forward
- Potential Methods for Calculating New Threshold

Background - Gulf Shrimp Amendment 17B

- Defined the aggregate MSY (112,531,374 lb tail weight) and OY (85,761,596 lb tail weight) of the shrimp fishery
- Set the minimum number of commercial vessel moratorium permits in the fishery at 1,072
- Mandated that, when the permit threshold limit is reached, any permits not renewed within one year of expiration be converted to a reserve pool permit and held by NMFS for possible reissuance to prevent an indefinite decline in the total number of moratorium shrimp permits
- The Council will form a panel to review details of the reserve pool when the number of moratorium permits declines to 1,175
- Currently, there are 1,185 valid and renewable shrimp moratorium permits as of July 10, 2026
(<https://appsportal.fisheries.noaa.gov/FOIA-Southeast>)

Background - Permit Threshold

- The current threshold applies to both valid and renewable permits
- The threshold is based on the predicted number of **active** permitted vessels needed to attain aggregate OY in the offshore fishery under average shrimp abundance
- A vessel is considered to be active in a given year if it harvested at least one pound of shrimp from Gulf offshore waters
- Based on the termination rate at that time (2017/2018), the fishery was predicted to reach the threshold in 24 years

Background - Factors Considered in Current Threshold

- The aggregate OY established in Amendment 17B considers the following factors
 - Landings
 - CPUE
 - Sea turtle bycatch effort threshold (= to 2009 level in inshore and offshore waters)
 - Target effort level for juvenile red snapper bycatch (= to 67% less than 2001-2003 levels in statistical zones 10-21, 10-30 fathoms)
- Aggregate OY accounts for relatively high CPUE and landings, while reducing the risk of exceeding sea turtle and juvenile red snapper bycatch.
- A working group was convened to recommend aggregate reference points based on the history of the fishery and felt that a complicated socio-bio-economic model would require explicit weighting of criteria, which would be subjective.
- The working group concluded that the predicted effort and associated landings in 2009 best balanced the factors described above.



What has changed since the threshold was initially determined?

- New initiatives and information
 - NMFS National Seafood Strategy
 - EOs: Seafood Competitiveness, Deregulation
 - Shrimp Futures
 - Updated target level for red snapper bycatch
 - Shrimp effort logbook transition
 - New shrimp biological opinion as of April 26, 2021
 - New assessments for shrimp
- Economic conditions have worsened; shrimp prices have continued to fall, accelerating loss in moratorium permits

Available Data - Active Vessels

Table 1.1.1. Number of valid or renewable federal Gulf commercial shrimp vessel permits as of December 31 each year since implementation of the moratorium. Valid permits are those that were fishable at least one day each year.

Year	Number of Valid or Renewable Permits Each Year*	Number of Permits Lost from the Fishery Compared with the Previous Year	Number of Active Vessels**	% of Active Permits*
2008	1,933	N/A		
2009	1,907	26		
2010	1,723	184		
2011	1,632	91		
2012	1,582	50		
2013	1,534	48		
2014	1,501	33		
2015	1,471	30		
2016	1,454	17	1093	75%
2017	1,442	12	1104	77%
2018	1,426	16	1079	76%
2019	1,418	8	1041	73%
2020	1,400	18	995	71%
2021	1,384	16	980	71%
2022	1,360	24	949	70%
2023	1,335	25	807	60%
2024	1,287	48	691***	54%***

Source: NMFS Southeast Regional Office (SERO) Permits Database; NMFS SEFSC, Trip Ticket Landings, Accessed September 29, 2025.



Available Data - Active Vessels

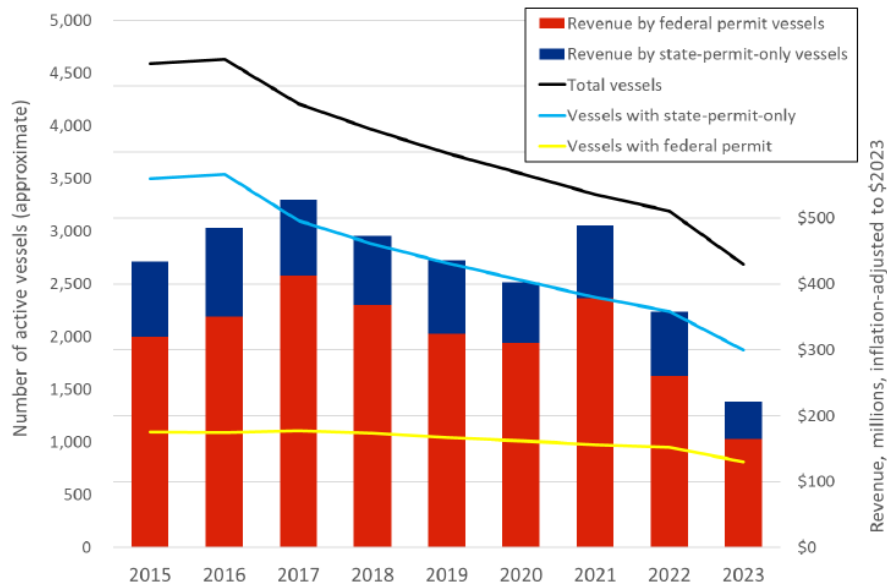
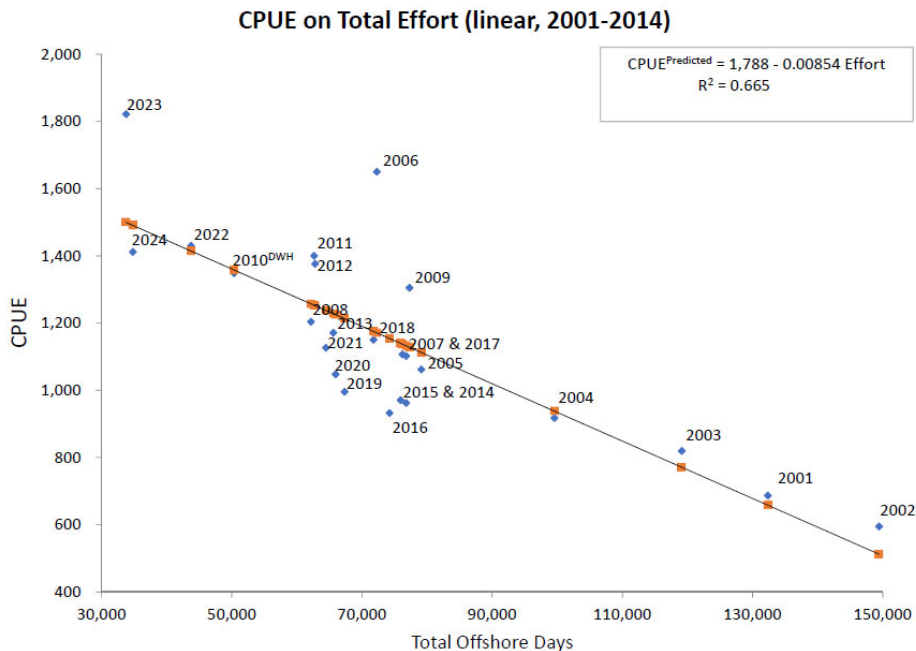


Figure 3: Number of active vessels and total revenue in the Gulf shrimp fishery for federally-permitted and state-permit-only vessels (2015-2023)

Liese, Christopher, Meaghan Emory, Kelsi Furman, Carissa Gervasi, Matthew McPherson, Sarah Shoffler, and John Walter. 2026. Snapshot: Economics of the Gulf of America Federal Shrimp Fishery. NOAA Technical Memorandum NMFS-SEFSC-795, 15 p.

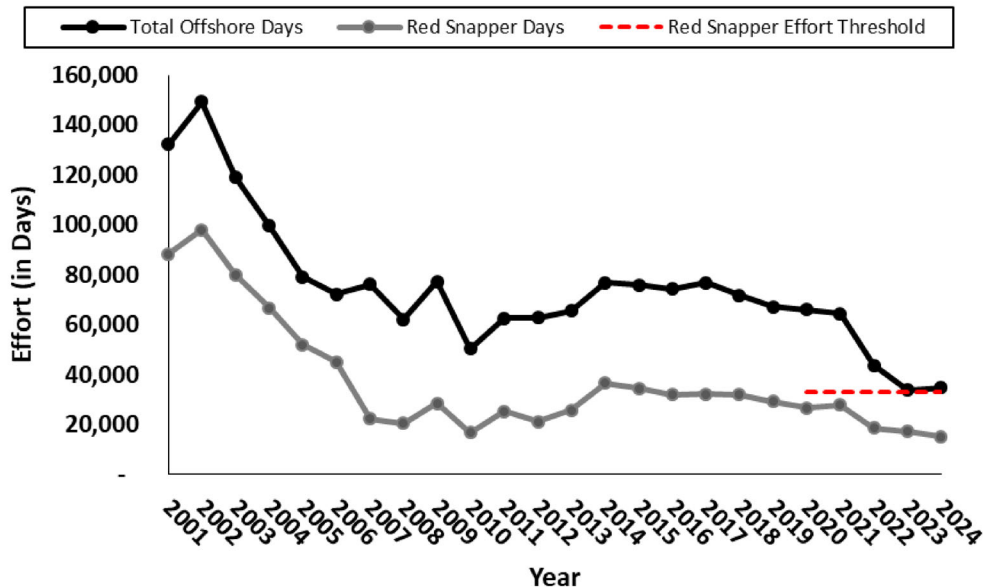
Available Data - CPUE



Available Data - Shrimping Effort



dp



Available Data - Sea Turtle Bycatch Estimates

Year	Type	KEMPS STANDARD	LEATHERBACK STANDARD M	LOGGERHEAD STANDARD M	GREEN STANDARD	UNKNOWN STANDARD
2016	Mortality	38 (6 - 206)	4 (1 - 18)	7 (2 - 29)	50 (18 - 127)	26 (7 - 70)
2017	Mortality	85 (15 - 395)	8 (1 - 33)	15 (4 - 55)	51 (19 - 119)	28 (8 - 72)
2018	Mortality	75 (12 - 359)	7 (2 - 28)	13 (3 - 53)	48 (17 - 127)	26 (8 - 69)
2019	Mortality	136 (19 - 809)	7 (1 - 25)	12 (2 - 47)	45 (16 - 113)	25 (8 - 64)
2020	Mortality	127 (23 - 610)	7 (1 - 28)	12 (3 - 41)	47 (16 - 117)	25 (8 - 68)
All Years	Mortality (All Years)	461 (75 - 2379)	33 (6 - 132)	59 (14 - 225)	241 (86 - 603)	130 (39 - 343)

Southeast Fisheries Science Center / Reference Document MMTD-2025-10

Estimates of 2016-2020 sea turtle bycatch and mortality in the Gulf of America and South Atlantic shrimp otter trawl fisheries

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Available Economic Results (data through 2023)

- Low shrimp prices; declining trend for 40+ years; driven by global market.
- No or minimal profit (fleet average) for 20+ years
- Capital cost not covered, hence:
- Minimal new investment; fleet aging (mean age 34 years); vessels dropping out.
- No new entrants or investment without profits

HENCE: Threshold is hypothetical. Actual participation is lower and driven by economics. Without successful intervention, status quo trajectory is downward.

Potential Options for Addressing Threshold

1. Status Quo
 - a. Convene review panel when number of valid and renewable permits reaches 1,175 (currently at 1,185 permits)
 - b. NMFS will set aside expired permits when the number of valid and renewable permits reaches 1,072 based on the recommendations of the panel
1. Utilize similar methodology while re-evaluating 2009 as proxy
 - a. Pick a year that best balances CPUE, landings, sea turtle bycatch and red snapper effort
1. Potential methodologies to use in calculating an updated threshold and determine if permits have dropped below that threshold
 - As of 2024, there were 691 active shrimp permits (Amendment 19)
 - Reconsider managing to aggregate OY? Define a proxy?
 - Modify threshold based on 2021 BiOp sea turtle take estimates, updated target effort for red snapper, maintaining high CPUE, and new OY estimates
 - Other options?



Questions?



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