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April 20, 2026

Dr. Clay Porch
Director of Southeast Fisheries Science Center
National Marine Fisheries Service
75 Virginia Beach Dr.
Miami, Florida 33149
nmfs.sefsc.requests@noaa.gov

Mr. Andy Strelcheck
Regional Administrator
National Marine Fisheries Service
Southeast Regional Office
263 13th Ave. S.
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
andy.strelcheck@noaa.gov

Dear Dr. Porch and Mr. Strelcheck:

At its November 3-6, 2025, meeting, the Gulf Council (Council) requested that Council staff, with the assistance of NMFS staff, review and provide updated multidisciplinary analyses for the minimum threshold number of federal Gulf shrimp commercial permits from Shrimp Amendment 17B.¹ Subsequently, at its April 7-9, 2026, meeting, the Council directed Council staff to develop a document that updates status determination criteria and considers modifying the minimum threshold number of permits for the federal Gulf shrimping fleet. Therefore, we request these updated analyses to assist with development of this document.

Shrimp Amendment 17B established the minimum threshold number of valid or renewable Gulf shrimp vessel permits based on the predicted number of active permitted vessels needed to attain aggregate optimum yield (OY) in the offshore fishery. Aggregate OY accounts for relatively high catch per unit effort (CPUE) and landings while reducing the risk of exceeding sea turtle and juvenile red snapper bycatch. Multiple developments to the scientific methodologies and in the shrimp industry necessitate updated analyses. The terminal year of data for analyses for Shrimp Amendment 17B was 2014, so additional years of data are now available for consideration. Additionally, a new effort algorithm (Dettloff effort algorithm) is currently

¹ https://gulfcouncil-media.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/2025/03/Final-Shrimp-Amendment-17B_508Compliant.pdf

utilized by the Southeast Fisheries Science Center, which will affect CPUE estimates.

We would request these updated analyses by July 14, 2026, for review by the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee at its July meeting for further development of the Council document. Thank you for your consideration of these requests, and if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Matthew Freeman.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan Dugas", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mr. Jonathan Dugas
Council Chair

cc: Gulf Council
Council Staff
John Walter, Ph.D.
Frank Helies
Shrimp AP