Shrimp Advisory Panel Summary
Gulf Council Office
Webinar
October 15, 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 October 15, 2026. The agenda for this meeting was approved. The meeting summary from March 9, 2026, was approved as written.

Council Actions in Response to Motions from the March 2026 Shrimp AP Meeting

Council staff presented on the Council's actions in response to the motions from the March 2026 Shrimp AP meeting. He also summarized additional motions from Council meetings in 2026 that pertain to the federal Gulf shrimp industry. He provided status updates of the recent cellular electronic logbook framework action, for which NMFS is working on the proposed rule, and of Shrimp Amendment 19, for which the final rule is under review.

An AP member inquired if there was a response to the letter related to priorities for utilizing the FY26 $850,000 for electronic logbook development and implementation. Mr. Lowther (SEFSC) stated that there was not an update prepared for the Early Adopter Program, as it was not on the agenda, but an update could be prepared for the next AP meeting. Another AP member asked that there be an agency update on the FY26 $600,000 appropriation for the Section 609 program at the next AP meeting. An AP member noted that the scheduled meeting of the workgroup on shrimp industry interactions with protected resources conflicted with the December 1-2, 2026, meeting of the Shrimp Futures Program. She also asked that the AP be notified via email of future working group dates. Dr. Simmons responded that, in deciding on the December dates for the workgroup, NMFS had informed the Council that the workgroup was a priority. An AP member asked who made the decision that the workgroup was a priority over the Shrimp Futures Program meeting. Dr. Simmons responded that the Council had received that direction from the SERO Regional Administrator and from the Council's liaison to the Science Center. Mr. Schieble (Council rep) noted that the Shrimp Futures Program meeting was originally scheduled for other dates, but due to scheduling conflicts, the meeting had been rescheduled for December 1-2, 2026[1].

> **Motion: To recommend to the Council that the meeting of the workgroup on shrimp industry interactions with protected resources scheduled for December 1-2, 2026, be rescheduled as it conflicts with the Shrimp Futures meeting hosted by the Science Center, which is a higher priority for the industry.**
>
> *Motion carried unanimously.*

[1] The meeting of the Workgroup to address interactions with protected resources has been rescheduled to January 11-12, 2027, as requested by the Shrimp AP.

2024 Gulf Shrimp Fishery Effort Estimation

Mr. Lowther presented on the Gulf shrimp fishery effort estimates for 2024. He noted a decrease in shrimping effort, from 2023 to 2024, in statistical zones 10-21 for depths of 10-30 fathoms, which is monitored for juvenile red snapper interactions. He added that overall landings were down as well in 2024, compared to 2023. An AP member noted that, because additional Secure Digital cards containing 2023 effort were received after the last presentation to the AP, the effort estimates for 2023 were different in this presentation. She inquired why the most recent shrimp effort estimates for 2023 had decreased and asked if there were any other factors causing revisions to the historical effort data. She also stated that the shading in the effort graph for 2023 looks sparse compared to the graph for 2024, even though the effort values changed only slightly. Mr. Lowther responded that he views the shading issue to be a product of different colors being used in the two graphs. Another AP member noted that, while the monitoring of shrimp effort in statistical zones 10-21, 10-30 fathoms is specifically for juvenile red snapper bycatch, shrimp effort estimates across the Gulf are used for a variety of purposes, including shrimp stock assessments, deconflicting offshore aquaculture and wind energy and marine sanctuary boundaries, and assessing protected resources interactions. He urged NMFS to move forward as quickly as possible with the Early Adopter Program.

Status of Updated Analyses on Minimum Threshold Number of Federal Gulf Shrimp Permits

Council staff noted that this was addressed under Agenda Item IV and wanted to emphasize that this would not be an action in Shrimp Amendment 20.

Draft Shrimp Amendment 20

Council staff reviewed the Purpose and Need statements. AP members stated that the Purpose and Need statements should be rephrased to provide clarity and understanding to casual readers of the amendment.

> **Motion: To revise the purpose and need section of Amendment 20 so that the "Purpose for Action" reads as follows:**
> **The purpose of this amendment is to adjust stock status determination criteria to be consistent with the new population metrics for Gulf penaeid shrimp.**
>
> *Motion carried unanimously.*
>
> **Motion: To revise the need section of Amendment 20 so that the "Need for Action" reads as follows:**
> **The need for this action is to have biological reference points, based on the best available science, that can be used for determining status of the Gulf shrimp penaeid stocks.**
>
> *Motion carried unanimously.*

Council staff then reviewed the actions and alternatives. An AP member inquired as to the definition of maximum sustainable yield (MSY) and inquired as to the highest landings of brown shrimp and when they occurred. Council staff referenced the MSY definition from Section 1.1 of Shrimp Amendment 20 that "The Nation Standard 1 Guidelines explain that the Magnuson-Stevens Act establishes MSY as the basis for fishery management and defines MSY as the largest long-term average catch that can be taken from a stock under prevailing conditions." In comparison with the MSY values of 215,070,000 pounds (lb) of tails for brown shrimp and 87,800,000 lb of tails for white shrimp, Council staff reviewed historical landings, noting that the highest landings for brown shrimp occurred in 1990 with 105,912,096 lb of tails and the highest landings for white shrimp occurred in 2006 with 85,096,181 lb of tails. An AP member inquired why the highest landings for pink shrimp could not be used as the MSY value. Council staff first referenced the March 2026 AP meeting summary[2], where this question was previously raised, and the response given then. Another AP member commented that, with longer living species, one might want to select the third highest landings, but penaeid shrimp are an annual crop. The AP member added that the two years of higher levels of harvest did not crash the stock. Council staff then referenced the definition of MSY as the largest long-term average catch that can be taken from a stock under prevailing conditions. He noted that, even in early years of pink shrimp landings, those high landings only occurred for one year and not as back-to-back years, and he added that the environmental conditions in the 1960s may not be the same as they are now. Council staff also noted that the SSC recommends the MSY values, and while the Council could consider lower MSY, the AP would have to recommend that the SSC reconsider the MSY value for pink shrimp if the AP wants a higher value considered. The AP then considered a motion using the highest landings of pink shrimp, from 1964, as the MSY proxy.

> **Motion: To recommend that the Council add an additional alternative in Action 1 and make it the preferred, which reads as follows:**
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> **Alternative 3: Revise the MSY values for the penaeid shrimp stocks based on the results of the Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review (SEDAR) 87 stock assessments and recommendations of the Gulf Council's (Council) Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) as follows:**
> **• Brown shrimp: MSY is 215,070,000 lb of tails**
> **• White shrimp: MSY is 87,800,000 lb of tails**
> **• Pink shrimp: MSY proxy is 20,986,099 lb of tails.**
>
> *Motion carried unanimously.*

An AP member stated that the exception in the Magnuson-Stevens Act for setting annual catch limits and accountability measures for species with a life cycle of approximately 1 year does not apply if a stock has an overfishing status, so setting the values in Action 2 has serious implications for the shrimp industry. He asked what was meant by 'stock' in Action 2's discussion of Table 2.2.1, such that a percentage of the 'stock' could be harvested annually. Council staff responded that it referred to standing biomass. The AP member inquired how the methodologies for Alternatives 1 and 2 differed so much that they resulted in such a lower overfishing threshold for brown shrimp with Alternative 2. Another AP member questioned that

[2] https://gulf-council-media.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/2026/03/Shrimp-AP-Summary-March_2026_final.pdf

the value from the Stock Synthesis model in Shrimp Amendment 15 said that 99% of the brown shrimp stock could be harvested. Council staff stated that a Stock Synthesis model was used in Alternative 1 and that Stock Synthesis is used for age-structured models, which penaeid shrimp clearly are not. Monthly fishing mortalities were used for years and then summed. As a result, Alternative 1's values are not comparable to Alternative 2's values, and Alternative 1's values are likely incorrect. AP members then inquired what the standing biomass values were for the penaeid shrimp stocks. Another AP member commented that he did not understand how there was any scientific capability of knowing what the standing stock is each year and, therefore, base a decision on what the overfishing rate is for penaeid shrimp. Council staff explained that there is an associated fishing mortality rate with harvesting the MSY from Action 1, but that the fishing mortality rate cannot be measured with a stock assessment, which is why, for annual monitoring purposes, the overfishing limits in lb of tails are provided in parentheses for the penaeid shrimp stocks in Alternative 2. If landings associated with the MSY had not been exceeded, then one would determine that the maximum fishing mortality threshold had not be exceeded either.

Motion: To recommend that the Council adopt Action 2, Alternative 2 as the preferred alternative, contingent upon the rationale provided in Amendment 20 is clarified sufficiently to support the Alternative 2.

Motion carried with one in opposition.

An AP member emphasized that the National Standard 1 Guidelines allow the minimum stock size threshold to be set a level below B_{MSY} but no lower than $0.50*B_{MSY}$ to allow for environmentally driven fluctuations in stock size, and he sees $0.50*B_{MSY}$ as applicable to the population dynamics of penaeid shrimp, which are a highly resilient stock. He noted that Alternative 3 has the lowest probability of an overfished status.

Motion: To recommend that the Council adopt Action 3, Alternative 3 as the preferred alternative.

Motion carried unanimously.

An AP member noted that an Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC) is required for managed species and that the SSC correctly stated that it was appropriate to set the ABC equal to this MSY value because penaeid shrimp are a highly resilient annual crop with rapid population growth and rebounding ability, making a reduction of the ABC below MSY unnecessary. Another AP inquired what had changed since Shrimp Amendment 15 so that an ABC was now required.

Motion: To recommend that the Council adopt Action 4, Alternative 2 as the preferred alternative.

Motion carried with one in opposition.

An AP member suggested staff put definition text boxes similar to those in Shrimp Amendment 15's Introduction into the document to inform the reasoning and goal of the Council considering

and setting biological reference points and status determination criteria for annual species such as penaeid shrimp.

Discussion of Draft Review Panel for Federal Gulf Shrimp Permit Pool

Council staff provided context for the review panel from Action 4 in Shrimp Amendment 17B. An AP member noted there is a moratorium on federal Gulf shrimp permits, but the Council set a threshold for establishing a permit pool to provide a way for participants to enter the shrimp industry. Council staff asked for two volunteers to add to the draft membership list, which the Council would review at its October meeting. He also reviewed the draft charge of the review panel. He noted that the Council had explored an action in Shrimp Amendment 17B on the issuance and maintenance of reserved Gulf shrimp vessel permits but had deferred work until the threshold of 1,175 valid or renewable permits was reached, as the Council recognized that Gulf shrimp industry conditions would likely change by the time that the threshold was reached and that industry conditions at that point in the future should be considered.

Two Shrimp AP members volunteered for the Council's consideration of membership on the review panel: Justin Versaggi and Chris Londrie.

Public Comment

Tricia Kimball (shrimping family; Port Arthur Area Shrimping Association) stated that the shrimp industry is on life support. The agency's priorities are in the wrong place by having the Shrimp Futures Program meeting at the same time as the meeting of the Workgroup on Shrimp Industry Interactions with Protected Resources. She stated that the number of federal Gulf shrimp permits did not need to fall below 1,072. She stated that there should be a minimum commodity price for domestic shrimp, which may be something for the U.S. Department of Agriculture to address.

Rachel Hisler (commercial fishing family; Double Bayou, Texas) stated that their family business has moved solely into reef fishing, as they could no longer afford to be active in the shrimping industry due to the cost of production inputs. She expressed concerns about the magnitude of unhealthy shrimp imports.

Kyle Kimball (shrimper; President of Port Arthur Area Shrimping Association) commented that white shrimp landings are up this year because people can't afford fuel to go into deeper waters. He said he did not understand how catch limits are set for shrimp that have a one-year lifespan. He stated the prices for domestic shrimp are far below prices for imported shrimp, and that's causing shrimpers to go out of business.

Other Business

No Other Business.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:17 pm eastern time on October 15, 2026.

Meeting Participants

Members Present:
Kristen Baumer
Leann Bosarge, Chair
Steve Bosarge, Vice Chair
Glenn Delaney
Haley Gambill
Gary Graham
Chris Londrie
Laura Picariello
Justin Versaggi

Council Staff:
Alyssa Clift
Matt Freeman
John Froeschke
Lisa Hollensead
Jessica Matos
Bernie Roy
Carrie Simmons
Anabelle Suitor
Verena Wang

NMFS Staff:
David Gloeckner
Frank Helies
Kimberley Johnson
Alan Lowther
Michelle Masi
Rebecca Smith
Jessica Stephen
Mick Walsh

Council Members:
Chris Schieble