SUMMARY REPORT

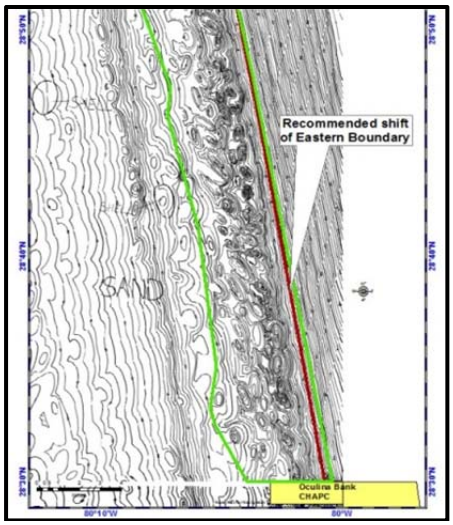
Deepwater Shrimp Advisory Panel Meeting
May 9th, 2013
N. Charleston, SC

The Deepwater Shrimp Advisory Panel (AP) met in North Charleston, SC on Thursday, May 9th, 2013 to discuss Coral Amendment 8. Measures in Coral Amendment 8 consider modifications to the Oculina Bank Habitat Area of Particular Concern (HAPC), transit through Oculina Bank HAPC, and modifications to Stetson-Miami Terrace Coral HAPC and Cape Lookout Coral HAPC. The AP was asked to review the completed Vessel Monitoring System data and provide further input to the Council before they consider preferred alternatives for Coral Amendment 8 at their next meeting. The AP received a presentation from Pat O'Shaughnessy with the National Marine Fisheries Service Office of Law Enforcement on Vessel Monitoring System unit functionality and geofencing capabilities.

Below is a summary of AP discussions, including motions developed during the meeting.

MOTION #1: DO NOT APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE JOINT AP MEETING IN OCTOBER 2012
APPROVED BY AP
The AP expressed concern that the meeting minutes from the joint Coral and Deepwater Shrimp AP meeting in Cape Canaveral, FL on October 18th, 2012 were partially compromised and the afternoon session of the joint AP meeting was not recorded and transcribed. Staff explained that this was a technical error. The AP discussed that without a complete record of the minutes, they could not approve the minutes.

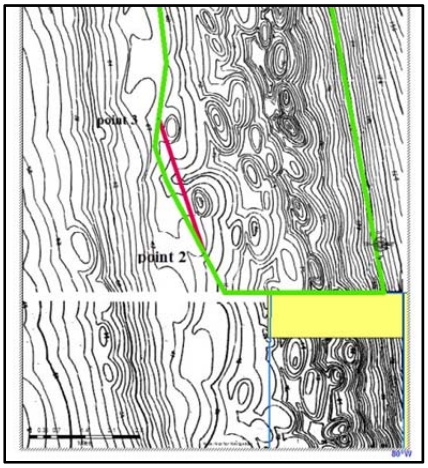
MOTION #2: RECOMMEND TWEAKING OF ACTION 1, SUB-ALTERNATIVE 2B TO MOVE THE EASTERN BOUNDARY OF THE HAPC WESTWARD TO EXCLUDE HISTORICAL TRAWLABLE AREA (LIST OF COORDINATES PROVIDED AT MEETING)
APPROVED BY AP
The AP revisited the recommendation developed during the joint Coral and Deepwater Shrimp AP meeting that would modify a northern extension of Oculina Bank HAPC following the 70 meter and 100 meter depth contour lines (Action 1, sub-alternative 2b). The AP revised their recommendation for a northern extension of Oculina Bank HAPC to further reduce fishery impacts along the southern half of the eastern boundary where traditional fishing activity occurs. The recommendation follows more closely the rock shrimp trawl track data and not a depth contour.



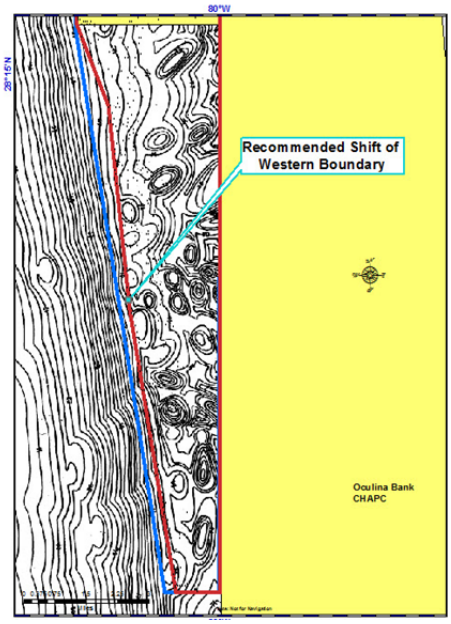
Area of proposed modification to points 16-25 of Action 1, Sub-Alternative 2b delineated by the following coordinates:

16) 29°43.497'N 80°14.801'W
17) 29°35.931'N 80°13.684'W
18) 29°30.262'N 80°12.648'W
19) 29°23.589'N 80°11.501'W
20) 29°17.566'N 80°10.115'W
21) 29°11.327'N 80°08.615'W
22) 28°53.306'N 80°04.814'W
23) 28°48.619'N 80°03.946'W
24) 28°46.014'N 80°03.475'W
25) 28°30.006'N 80°00.767'W

Following the AP meeting, an informal recommendation was developed and submitted from the AP Chair that would modify the southwestern boundary of the northern extension (identified in Sub-Alternative 2b). The AP Chair communicated that the modification along the southwest boundary would shave off a concentration of VMS points, and would exclude a productive rock shrimp location utilized in the past 2 years from a proposed HAPC extension.



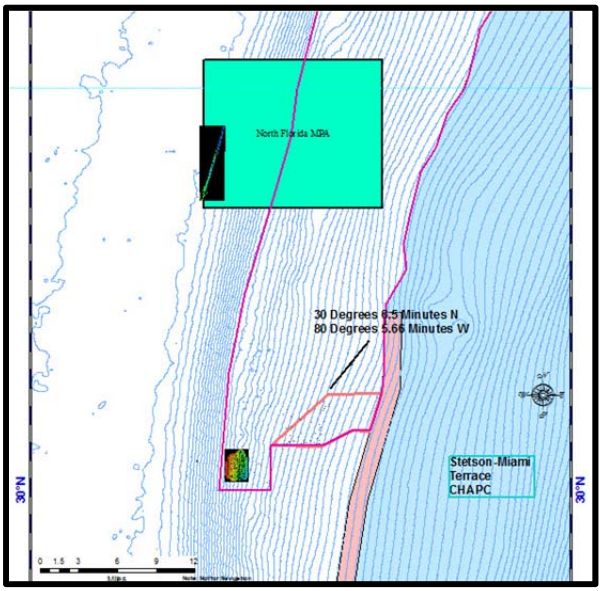
MOTION #3: THE DEEPWATER SHRIMP AP WILL PROVIDE A RECOMMENDATION FOR THE WESTERN EXTENSION OF OCULINA BANK HAPC IN APPROXIMATELY 5 BUSINESS DAYS
APPROVED BY AP
After a review of the more recent VMS data, the AP discussed that rock shrimp fishing activity occurred in more recent years (2012) within the proposed western extension of Oculina Bank HAPC. Previously, the AP did not provide a recommendation for Alternative 3, however taking the completed VMS analysis into consideration, the motion was developed to preserve rock shrimp fishing grounds in the proposed western extension.



Area of proposed modification delineated by the following coordinates:

1) 28°04.500'N 80°00.000'W
2) 28°04.505'N 80°00.926'W
3) 28°10.228'N 80°01.886'W
4) 28°14.352'N 80°02.331'W
5) 28°16.000'N 80°03.000'W
6) 28°30.000'N 80°03.000'W
7) 28°30.000'N 80°00.000'W

MOTION #4: FOR ACTION 2, REVISE ALTERNATIVE 3 TO STATE:
ALLOW FOR TRANSIT THROUGH THE OCULINA BANK HAPC WITH POSSESSION OF ROCK SHRIMP ON BOARD. WHEN TRANSITING THROUGH THE HAPC, VESSELS MUST MAINTAIN A MINIMUM SPEED OF NOT LESS THAN 5 KNOTS, DETERMINED BY A PING RATE ACCEPTABLE BY LAW ENFORCEMENT (I.E. 5 MINUTES), WITH GEAR APPROPRIATELY STOWED (STOWED IS DEFINED AS DOORS AND NETS OUT OF WATER)
APPROVED BY AP

The AP tweaked their preferred recommendation for a transit provision through Oculina Bank HAPC. Revisions to Alternative 3 were made during the meeting to reduce the minimum speed requirement to 5 knots and eliminate the call-in specification in the event of mechanical failure or emergency. The AP discussed removing the call-in specification as a result of guidance from Otha Easley with NOAA's Office of Law Enforcement because the practice of vessels communicating to the appropriate contact when necessary currently exists in the regulations and an additional requirement stipulating this provision is not necessary. The AP and the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement representative discussed that if a procedure already exists in the regulations for a call-in specification in the event of emergency, and law enforcement representatives continue to receive phone calls and respond accordingly, then the call-in specification clause should be removed from the alternative language.

MOTION #5: ACTION 3, ALTERNATIVE 3 IS A PREFERRED RECOMMENDATION. AS A FALL-BACK, ALTERNATIVE 2 IS A PREFERRED RECOMMENDATION WITH THE ADDITION OF A SHRIMP FISHERY ACCESS AREA WHERE THE VMS POINTS ARE CONCENTRATED IN THE PROPOSED EXTENSION (THIS WOULD BE A DRIFT AND HAUL-BACK ACCESS AREA). THE SFAA IS INDICATED BY THE FOLLOWING POINTS: 30°6.500'N 80° 5.660'W
The area rejoins the CHAPC boundary at 30°06.500'N 80°02.010'W
APPROVED BY AP
Regarding the AP's recommendation of Alternative 2 as a secondary preferred alternative, the AP developed the recommendation to include a shrimp fishery access area to provide vessels a buffer zone to be able to haul in gear and turn the vessel back around. The AP discussed that it can take vessels 2 miles or longer to drift, depending upon the speed of the Gulf Stream, to haul gear back in to the vessel.