

Summary Report
Shrimp Advisory Panel Meeting
Wednesday January 18, 2023, 1:00 pm- 3:00 pm (via webinar)

The South Atlantic Council's Shrimp Advisory Panel met via webinar on January 18, 2023.

AP members were made aware of a written comment that had been made online prior to the meeting.

Laurilee Thompson, Chair of the Shrimp Committee made opening remarks on issues the AP would be addressing.

1. Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Restoration Blueprint

Beth Dieveney, NOAA, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary made a presentation to the Panel on the FKNMS Restoration Blueprint and the proposed rule supporting it. Gulf Shrimp AP members were invited to the webinar and provided comments during the public comment period. Additional staff from FKNMS and other NOAA offices attended to answer question including Joanne Delaney and Steve Werndli, FKNMS staff; Danielle Schwarzman, chief economist, with NMS headquarters; and Amy Freitag a spatial ecologist with NOAA National Center for Coastal Ocean Science.

Panel members provided the following comments and recommendations for Council consideration in preparing a Council comment on the FKNMS Blueprint.

- Do not impose regulations that may not be needed which interrupt commercial and recreational fisheries.
- Concern traditional fisheries would not be allowed in the boundary expansion.
- Concern that temporary regulations and emergency regulations and adaptive management would override traditional fishing.
- Concern on how additional no-take areas will be enforced since the sanctuary program has no law enforcement officers, and rely on state, the Coast Guard, and federal NMFS agents to enforce this myriad group of enforcement actions.
- Gulf Shrimp AP opposed the use of the emergency rule for two reasons, that an emergency has not actually been defined and the potential exists to be enacted for not just six months, but an additional six months.
- Concern over fisheries data used to evaluate traditional fishing.
- Concern over knowing what the socioeconomic impacts would be not knowing what the emergency could be.

2. Increasing Frequency of Rocket Launches and Temporary Closures

During the December 2022 Council meeting Council member Laurilee Thompson noted that the rocket launches from Cape Canaveral which have been increasing in frequency are expected to continue and expand significantly in 2023 and beyond. In order to ensure public safety, temporary Safety Zones have been established to limit all vessel access during splash down and recovery efforts which affects local fishery operations. In addition, she indicated

some shrimp fishermen have encountered space debris during trawling off the Canaveral area.

Panel members provided the following comments, observations, and recommendations for Council consideration on the issue.

- We see a lot of the launches off of the Georgia coast, especially at night and it's going to only get worse.
- Concern over the debris that is coming into the ocean, safety and how will affect fishing.
- Uncertainty in what the future will bring, and whether there's going to be regulations on when and where you can fish in those areas with high activity.
- This is something that it's impacting our rock shrimpers, and there is two issues with space debris raining out of the sky at an ever-increasing rate, and the location where we fish, which is basically inshore and offshore of the Oculina Reef.
- Concern over space debris also falling down into the HAPC, considering the draconian measures implemented to protect the coral from fishing impacts.
- There is no accountability, at all, for space debris that is falling into essential fish habitat and pictures were provided and displayed of very large piece of space debris caught by fishing vessels.
- Concern over development of the Camden Spaceport and potential spatial conflicts between the shrimp industry if and when Camden Spaceport opens.
- When they have closures, that's absolutely going to impact those on the south side of Jekyll Island and off of Cumberland.
- Good that prior to opening up the spaceport in Georgia, they're bringing fishermen into this conversation.
- Seems like an afterthought off Florida, and concerned since the Coast Guard will be enforcing these areas with up to a \$250,000 fine and up to six months in prison, for a violation of the safety zones.
- Concern over hydrazine, toxic oils and toxic substances being released during these recovery procedures and the impact debris rolling over the bottom has on essential fish habitat or coral bottom,
- Concern that when working straight off the Cape Canaveral, we're going to have to move twenty miles one way or the other, to get on the other side of the safety zones and then you can't drag back through there.
- Fishermen have caught tons of debris in the past and have lost rigs on obstructions.
- There is a need to understand all the impacts in terms of lost fishing time, debris, and toxic substances and quantify those impacts by launch/recovery and what is actually being released, or discharged.

Shrimp AP Members attending:

Gary Exley

Bryan Fluech