SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL SHRIMP COMMITTEE

Doubletree Grand Key Resort Key West, Florida

June 8, 2015

SUMMARY MINUTES

Shrimp Committee Members:

Charlie Phillips, Chair Dr. Jack McGovern Jessica McCawley

Council Members:

Ben Hartig Robert Beal Zack Brown Mark Brown Jack Cox

Council Staff:

Bob Mahood Kim Iverson Roger Pugliese Dr. Kari MacLauchlin Dr. Brian Cheuvront Mike Collins

Observers/Participants:

Dr. George Sedberry Rick DeVictor Dr. Bonnie Ponwith Capt. David Dipre Mike Merrifield

Additional Observers Attached

Mel Bell Dr. Wilson Laney

Dr. Michelle Duval Anna Beckwith Chester Brewer Chris Conklin Doug Haymans

Gregg Waugh Amber Von Harten Dr. Mike Errigo Chip Collier John Carmichael Julie O'Dell

Dr. Marcel Reichert Monica Smit-Brunello Erika Burgess Lt. Charlotte Delorey The Shrimp Committee of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council convened in the Tortuga Ballroom, Doubletree Grand Key Resort, June 8, 2015, and was called to order at 3:15 o'clock p.m. by Chairman Charlie Phillips.

MR. PHILLIPS: We would like to call the Shrimp Committee to order. The first order of business is approval of the September 2012 Shrimp Committee Minutes. Are there any changes or additions? Is there any opposition to the minutes? Seeing none; the minutes are approved. Is there any objection to the approval of the agenda? Seeing none; the agenda is approved.

MR. COLLIER: In April we had a Shrimp and Deepwater Shrimp AP Meeting. Mike Merrifield is here to give the report.

MR. MERRIFIELD: April 16th we convened both the Shrimp and the Deepwater Shrimp APs. The first item of business was a review of the Shrimp Biological Opinion. Jennifer Lee of NMFS Protected Resources gave that presentation. Afterwards there was a little bit of discussion about that; but overall there was a great satisfaction with the way that turned out.

The industry was very pleased with the outcome. There has been a lot of effort on the part of the industry and the TED Gear Management Teams and enforcement to outreach to try to bring that into compliance. I think that turned out very well. There has been a lot of move in the industry as far as TEDs are concerned towards even further compliance or further assisting take reductions by narrowing the spaces between the bars, which will help with the bycatch as well.

The next item on the agenda was the SEDAR Shrimp Procedural Workshop. That was presented by Julia Byrd, SEDAR staff. The main points of that were for a shrimp stock assessment and bycatch estimation for management of species. The main things that came out of that was that there is a lot of data discrepancies in the way data is being collected in the trip ticket systems between the states and even within the states themselves.

There is a lot of misunderstanding from the industry standpoint as to how important some of that data is and how important it is that there be a little more clarification of how that data is collected. We recommended that there be some type of an outreach program that would help train people that are putting trip tickets into the system, so they understand the level of detail that is really needed in order to extract data out of those systems in a more meaningful way to kind of get an idea what kind of production.

It would have certainly helped in some of the analysis that we've done for Coral Amendment 8 and things like that. And also bycatch estimation is going to become very important with that as well. Some of the attributes that we had problems with were like days fished. When we have multiple species and multiple-targeted species in a trip, you have only one place to put that in, so you can't split that up. We ran into that problem where we were talking about rock shrimp and red shrimp in the same trip. It just gives you one number to go for the entire trip, so you can't really discern what kind of effort was put onto rock shrimp versus red shrimp.

The next item that we talked about was the evaluation of the OECA. We basically got an update on where that is and some of the VMS concerns that might be delaying the implementation of that. OECA's recommendation was that there be no changes to the OECA. I think that was a lot to go on there. There is still an interest from the shrimp industry to, at some point, open up some of the offshore area of not maybe the OECA but also of the Oculina Coral HAPC itself, because a good one-third to one-half of the old HAPC is actually just sand-rolled-down bottom that had been traditionally rock shrimp area before. It looks as though OECA is going forward as it is at this point.

The next item that we discussed was the Coral Amendment 8 and the status on that. That is where we got into the delays were due to some of the VMS issues. That is where I put the trip ticket information together and gave that information to Chip. Chip did a great job of trying to put that data together.

There are some convoluted things to it to try to figure out; but all in all, what you could see over the two years is that there has been very similar production in that area on the eastern edge of the northern expansion of the OHAPC. What is kind of interesting between 2013 and 2014 is the concentration actually kind of switched.

Where we had more concentration in 2013 on the inshore side, more production on the inshore side than on the offshore side; in 2014 we actually saw a reverse of that where there was more production on the offshore side. I did have a question about the VMS data. Did that cover all of 2014, do you know? Yes, it was all of 2014.

MR. COLLIER: It was all of 2014.

MR. MERRIFIELD: Okay, because there were mismatches on number of trips. Basically the trip ticket data that I had showed that there were 11 trips offshore in 2013/2014 inshore. In 2014 it went to 9 trips offshore and just 8 trips inshore. I guess the effort is certainly down a little bit in the 2014; but the production actually stayed about the same in the offshore side.

There were less trips but the production stayed – in terms of the value stayed the same on the offshore side in both years. The point for the industry is that as we're being pushed into smaller and smaller areas, the productive areas become more and more important to the industry. The area south of the box is still non-productive.

There is still no life form on the bottom south of the Oculina HAPC at this point in time, so all the production has all moved north. These are the two areas. Really the only two areas where all the activity has been is inshore and offshore of this new expansion area that is coming into place. The concern from the industry is that it is hard to put a value on half a mile inshore or offshore of this border, but there is a great value there as we get pushed into smaller and smaller areas to maintain that area to keep the fishery alive.

As far as where the effort takes place, it is purely economic driven. To prove a point, this is an area that has been accessed for 60-plus years. There is no new bottom. There is nobody that is out there exploring to find new bottom. Whatever has been there in the last 60 years is the same bottom they've been doing all along. It is all just repeat. The vessels generally need about \$2,000 to \$2,500 a day to make it economically feasible to drag in an area.

If they are not doing that, they are moving on to another area. I think it is hard to extrapolate this data; but if you just took basic three-hour drags, three drags a night times the number of days fished and extrapolated that data; you can come out with right around that \$2,500 a night figure. That area is productive enough that it is worth working for them.

That is why they are very interested in trying to keep that area open. There were 11 vessels in 2013 and 9 in 2014 that accessed that area. Basically there is still a lot of interest in trying to get access to just inside that eastern border of that northern expansion. That sits right on that hundred meter line, basically between 90 and 100 meters. The border now exists at 100 meters.

There are some areas probably where you can't move in any closer because there are structures in place; but there are areas where there is some space there to move in as close as 90 meters. Are there any questions about that information?

MS. McCAWLEY: My question is actually about another part of the report that you didn't talk about. I saw that the AP had expressed concerns about the whiting fishery, having noticeable declines. Can you talk about that a little bit more?

MR. MERRIFIELD: In the white shrimp fishery there is generally a pretty decent bycatch of whiting that is brought in by the shrimp fishery. We haven't seen that in the last two, three years. There is a lot of speculation as to some of the beach renourishment that is going on or the spoils that are being created by the deepening of some of the ports. We really don't know, but there certainly have been some changes since that has taken place; but the whiting has definitely dropped off.

MR. PHILLIPS: Is there any more discussion?

MR. BOWEN: Again, I'm not on your committee; thanks for recognizing me. Can you clarify – and maybe I just missed it – you said they need about \$2.500 a day to make it profitable, for lack of a better term, to stay in the fishery, or was that \$2.500 a drag with three drags per day?

MR. MERRIFIELD: No, they are looking to get about \$2,500 a night to survive; that is three drags.

MR. BOWEN: How many trips did you say was in 2014, deep-water trips?

MR. MERRIFIELD: On 2014, I had 281 days – I'm sorry, 261 days at sea; that would be –

MR. BOWEN: They're gone 12 to 14 days at a time, correct?

MR. MERRIFIELD: Yes.

MR. BOWEN: The reason you know this to be exact is why?

MR. MERRIFIELD: On the value for the trip, you're saying?

MR. BOWEN: No, their number of trips and how long they're gone. How do you know that to be accurate?

MR. MERRIFIELD: From the trip ticket system I have the number of days that they fished; and what I'm doing is extrapolating off of three drags a night, three hours per drag.

MR. BOWEN: From the ping system on the VMS?

MR. MERRIFIELD: No, this is from trip ticket data. This was voluntarily provided to me by fishermen. I probably don't have everything, but I probably have better than 95 percent.

MS. McCAWLEY: Also another thing that it looked like the AP talked about was the opposition to the proposed sanctuary; can you talk about that a little bit?

MR. MERRIFIELD: Right; and that was my last topic to bring up. Well, actually I have a TED compliance to talk about at that meeting as well. But on the sanctuary there was a motion made by the AP to oppose the Eubalaena Oculina National Sanctuary Nomination. We were kind of in between nominations at that point in time, so we weren't sure how to do that.

But it has been resubmitted so there is an active nomination at this time that changed from basically Fort Pierce, Florida, to Jacksonville to Palm Bay north to Jacksonville. Our reasoning, we just felt like the South Atlantic Council does enough regulation and protection of those species, and that we could just foresee that this could possibly cause some problems down the road because the goals of the sanctuary would supersede. We just came out and decided that we as an AP would come out against that nomination.

MR. COLLIER: One of the big reasons for that opposition is there is a statement in some of the marine sanctuary language that says you can't have any bottom disturbing within the sanctuary. An interpretation of that could be a shrimp trawl would be potentially considered a bottom-disturbing device.

MR. CONKLIN: I was at the AP meeting and there was something I thought of in between then and now, and it was just a question. When you guys go over a line into the HAPC, what kind of ticket do you get? Has anyone ever gotten one; and how much does that cost? If someone was going to drag in there a little bit or something, tell me how much it is going to cost them.

MR. MERRIFIELD: It's been a while since we've had instances; but I can remember when a boat would come to the dock and their hatches would be sealed so their catch would be confiscated first and foremost; and then they would go through the penalty process. I'm not really sure what that is, but just losing the entire catch was pretty substantial.

MR. CONKLIN: The area that is up for proposal, the small half-mile area; no one is going to drag over the line right now, and they wouldn't do it after they went through if it did. I'm just trying to think if you guys have been dragging there for 60 years and you have had very few incidents, and how many people really didn't want to get their catch confiscated, and you have a VMS to prove whether you were in there or not; why should we be taking this away?

MR. MERRIFIELD: It is this new area, the new northern expansion. There has definitely been a lot of overlap between where the fishery operates and this new border. It basically would be taken away because as the ping rate increases to once every five minutes versus once an hour; it is definitely going to be – and plus the enforcement of the existing area even at once an hour has been phenomenal.

MR. BROWN: Mike, you mentioned something about the slime area to the south or something; is that something that is continually encroaching?

MR. MERRIFIELD: The last word I heard was that the brown algae that was down there is not there anymore, but there is not any life on the bottom. I don't know if that is due to the coldwater upwellings or oxygen problems or out of some of the Okeechobee releases. I am not really sure what is causing it. The algae, I have been told, is gone.

MR. PHILLIPS: Do we have any more discussion?

MR. HARTIG: Mark, the interesting thing about that area is it is not just the shrimping. They are not even getting any bycatch there. That is the scariest part of this whole thing. The other thing, if you look at the area where we're fishing, effort has declined in the area where we fish, which is close to where they shrimp.

Even the fish in that area have declined substantially. Whatever is going on there, whatever change has occurred is impacting a whole suite of species there. It is just interesting to put the shrimp, the fish, and everything else and a condition change in that area together; but whatever it is, something is reacting to cause those changes.

MR. MERRIFIELD: The rock shrimp literally has been all pushed to the north into one small area both onshore and offshore of the Oculina. That is really I think in the last two years the only place that rock shrimp has been caught.

MS. BECKWITH: I'm not on your committee, but can you guys remind me how much buffer is this going to leave between the pinnacles and where the shrimpers would be utilizing if this extra piece was given back?

MR. MERRIFIELD: It varies. There are spots where it is very close, and we would probably have to make some adjustments there to move it out; but there are some areas where the pinnacles don't exist and come into probably about 90 meters without existence of a structure.

MS. BECKWITH: Can I get Roger to also clarify that; because I remember us having a very specific discussion about how much buffer and boundary and one of the reasons why we originally didn't move forth with this the last time we discussed this was out of concern for that lack of buffer between the pinnacles and the boundary.

MR. PUGLIESE: I think the original recommendation that had come from the Coral AP was really to build a buffer, and it was at the 100 meters. That was kind of the agreed-upon discussion. There have been two progressions closer, so it is a lot closer to 90 meters and to the base of the pinnacles. I think something else that needs to be on the record, and maybe you can clarify this, but there had been discussions about as they closer to that type of an area, the technique of fishing, whether you are actually swinging in and having the gear go inside and outside to be able to bring the shrimp out or to be able to get to the base of the pinnacle specifically was commented and provided by industry in terms of the way they operate.

It really does bring it right up, the closer you get to it, right to literally the base; in some areas right to the base of the pinnacles in some areas. Some areas it is a little further off. Everybody I guess needs to really think about what that area we're talking is about a 50 to 100 meter wide area, and it is literally or a half a mile – excuse me; it is a little bit larger.

It is literally an area that has, I think 60 total hours of points, and most of those are one or two points within an entire tow timeframe. We're talking about either the end or the beginning of a tow in some of those areas. It is bringing it very close to the area. I think a true buffer was when the Coral AP was really trying to collaborate and work on a true 100 meter line. That has been brought in very close to that.

MR. PHILLIPS: Roger, I know they were talking about the 100 meter line, but how far between 90 and 100 meters would it be? I know it is going to vary. Is it going to be a quarter of a mile, is it going to be a half mile? Mike has got one other thing while Roger is looking that up.

MR. MERRIFIELD: The last item on our agenda at the meeting was the TED compliance meeting that was held in Biloxi, Mississippi, which was a great meeting where industry, regulators, and law enforcement got together and really discussed a lot of the issues that are taking place.

I thought it was a fantastic meeting, and it really pointed out some of the great things that the TED Gear Management Group is doing by going out and helping people understand how to keep their TEDs in compliance and how to improve that compliance rating. I really encouraged everybody at that meeting to have that gear management group to their docks, because that is what they are there for is to come in and train not just fishermen but also law enforcement, and get them at your dock to go over everybody's gear. They'll go through any boat that you want to put in front of them. That meeting was great in terms of getting everybody together in one room. That was our meeting.

MR. PHILLIPS: Okay, is there anything else?

MR. BELL: Just to the last note that was on this document, it is talking about the mandatory Coast Guard safety inspections this fall. That is still going into effect, so anybody that is commercial fishing vessel operating in federal waters, well, what used to be a courtesy inspection is now a mandatory inspection and that is across all fisheries. We knew that was coming, and it has been coming for a while, but that is going to have an actual impact on folks operating in terms of expense and all; just something to keep in mind. It looks like it is going to happen.

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes, and it is an expense, because I just paid \$1,300 to have a life raft recertified. Yes, but it is good and it needs to be done, and it is good the Coast Guard is working with fishermen and stuff and making sure that we're right when we leave the dock. Is there anything else?

MR. PUGLIESE: Now, you've got to remember what I'm looking at is the generated bathymetry, so we do not have the full mapping on there; but if you go to the generated

bathymetries, the arcs of the pinnacles; in some cases it is less than 0.1 mile. The width of the area we're talking about is about 0.49, 0.48 miles.

That is the distance between there. You had a 0.1 or right up against the base of at least the curvature of the pinnacle areas. It is in some cases literally moving it to the base. If you look at what areas have been mapped relative to those, those are usually underestimates of the pinnacle distributions in those areas.

MR. PHILLIPS: Any other discussion?

MS. McCAWLEY: Well, based on what we were talking about earlier today and looking at those maps; it looks to me like what we're talking about is like a 40-mile area across this eastern boundary of the northern extension. I think I would really like to continue to look at it even if it is not a possibility to get that entire area open but maybe some pieces of that area.

I would make a motion to direct staff to begin development of an amendment to change the eastern boundary line of the northern extension. I will be making a similar motion during the Golden Crab Committee to do the same thing for golden crab.

MR. PHILLIPS: Okay, we have a motion.

MR. WAUGH: Just a clarification on the intent here; this would then go into the hopper when we start looking at priorities for 2016; is that correct?

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes.

MR. WAUGH: One other clarification. The golden crab fishery has an established set of allowable fishing areas. If we're trying to treat the two industries similarly; is it also your intent that then we would look at defining allowable fishing areas for the rock shrimp fishery?

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes, I think we're trying to look at fisheries evenly and treat them evenly, so we've got some common protocol and approaches.

MS. McCAWLEY: I know we don't have a second yet, but I know we're already discussing it. But, yes, that would be my intent is that for golden crab we would look at creating another access area added to this allowable fishing area for golden crab. That would be looking at something for both.

MR. PHILLIPS: I think I saw Mel second; and then we'll go to Doug.

MR. HAYMANS: I am not on your committee, but I don't think it is an amendment to Coral 8, correct? Coral 8 is moving forward and hopefully will be finalized. This is a new amendment, correct?

MR. PHILLIPS: We stand corrected. Any other discussion? Mel seconded.

MR. HARTIG: The intent of this is to put both golden crab – we're not too golden crab yet; but when we get to golden crab, it is to take golden crab and rock shrimp, combine it into one

amendment to look at allowable fishing areas; to reevaluate in golden crab; and to set some for rock shrimp; is that –

MR. PHILLIPS: Yes, I think that is where we are looking at going. We know that golden crab is looking at areas. We know the rock shrimp guys would like to have these areas. It would probably make more sense to put it all under one amendment.

MR. HAYMANS: I don't know that I get that from this, because this motion is specifically to look at the northern extension and not areas for shrimp. I only read this as looking at the northern extension eastern boundary. I would think if that is what you're interested in, you would make this more broad.

MS. McCAWLEY: Well, right now what we've been discussing is that particular boundary. I'm interested in looking at adding that to available area that they could rock shrimp.

MR. PHILLIPS: We can wordsmith this, and obviously we can't really make an amendment for golden crab, but maybe we'll just want to call it fishery management – Jessica.

MS. McCAWLEY: Why does it say Coral FMP? I would argue that we're in the wrong committee to make a motion like that.

MR. PHILLIPS: Okay, have we got it wordsmithed, Jessica?

MS. McCAWLEY: Yes, would you like me to read it again? I move to create an amendment – sorry.

MR. WAUGH: Roger just corrected me. It does need to be coral, because these are Coral HAPCs, and in the coral amendment that is where we define the allowable fishing areas for golden crab. We would do that in an amendment to the coral plan. We would develop allowable fishing areas for rock shrimp and we would look to modify that eastern boundary of the northern extension for rock shrimp.

MR. PHILLIPS: Okay, Jessica, we'll read it again.

MS. McCAWLEY: Okay, I think we're missing a word. I think we're missing the word "develop an amendment" at the beginning, if you could add that in. Okay are we good?

MR. WAUGH: Sorry, just one other point of clarification. This is the Shrimp Committee. You are making this as a recommendation because of your interest in the rock shrimp. It doesn't necessarily have to come from the Coral Committee. This will go before the council and then everybody would vote on it there.

MS. McCAWLEY: Okay. I move to develop an amendment to the Coral FMP to change the eastern boundary of the northern extension and to develop allowable fishing areas for rock shrimp.

MR. PHILLIPS: Mel, is the new wording fine with you?

MR. BELL: That is fine with me.

MR. PHILLIPS: All right any other discussion? **Any opposition to the motion? There is no opposition; the motion passes.** Is there any other business to come before the Shrimp Committee? With that, Mr. Chairman, I adjourn the Shrimp Committee.

(Whereupon, the meeting was adjourned at 3:50 o'clock p.m., June 8, 2015.)

Signature

Date

Transcribed By: Graham Transcriptions, Inc. July 2015

SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL 2015 COMMITTEES (continued)

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(Continued)

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South Atlantic Fishery Management Council -**June 2015 Council Meeting**

Key West, FL

Date: Monday, June 8, 2015 **Committee:** *Shrimp*

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Adam Bailey	On File	Commercial 🗆	NGO 🗆
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		For-hire	Describe



South Atlantic Fishery Management Council – June 2015 Council Meeting

Key West, FL

Date: Monday, June 8, 2015 Committee: Shrimp

PLEASE SIGN IN -

In order to have a record of your attendance at each meeting and your name included in the minutes, we ask that you sign this sheet for the meeting shown above.

Name: Kelli DiDonell	Mailing Address/E-mail: (Check box if information is on file)	How do you participate Atlantic fis (Check all that	in South heries?		
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perinnell		Recreational 📋	Govt. 🕅		
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Buisd	On File	Commercial	NGO 🗌		
Bradford Whipple		Recreational 🔲	Govt. 🗌		
Whipple		Charter/ 🛛 For-hire	Other Describe		
	On File	Commercial 🔲	NGO 🖾		
Chris Horton		Recreational 🗖	Govt. 🗆		
Horton	Chris@sportsmanslink.org	Charter/ 🛛 For-hire	Other Describe		
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FRANK HELIES		Charter/ □ For-hire	Other Describe		
Joe Klostermann	On File	Commercial 🔲	NGO 🗖		
was hostermann		Recreational 🔲	Govt. 🗆		
		Charter/ 🗆 For-hire	Other Describe		
Holly Binns	On File	Commercial	NGO 📮		
110.9 6		Recreational 🔲	Govt. 🗖		
		Charter/ 🗌 For-hire	Other Describe		

Karla	Jennifer	Steve	Scott	bob	Helen T	Julie	Mark	Tony	roy	stephen	Steve	Bill	Lora (Joey	David	First Name	Registrants	540	Scheduled Duration (minutes)	8:30 AM EDT	Scheduled Start Time (Jun 8, 2015	Scheduled Start Date	SAFMC Council Meeting - Day 1 of 5 (Monday)	Webinar Name	General Information	Jun 17, 2015 9:39 AM EDT	Generated	Registration Report	
Gore	Lee	amick	Baker	cardin	Takade-Heumacher	Neer	Carter	Lamberte	crabtree	holiman	amick	MacLauchlin	Clarke	Ballenger	Wyanski	Last Name			Clicked Registration Link		Opened Invitation		Registered	119-747-595	Webinar ID				GoToWebinar	
karla.g	Jennife	stevea	bakers	finchas	htakad	julie.ne	mcarte	tony.la	roy.cra	stephe	stevea	billmac	lclarke	ballenç	wyans	Email		63		56		33								

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Michelle Rusty	NICK	Nikhil	mary	Andrew	scott	Anik	Nicolas	Michael	Susan	Karen		Ш	Julia	Jessica	KAri
Duval Hudson	FARMER	Mehta	vara	Herndon	sandorf	Clemens	Alvarado	Travis	Shipman	Raine	F	O	Byrd	Stephen	MAcLAuchlin
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