

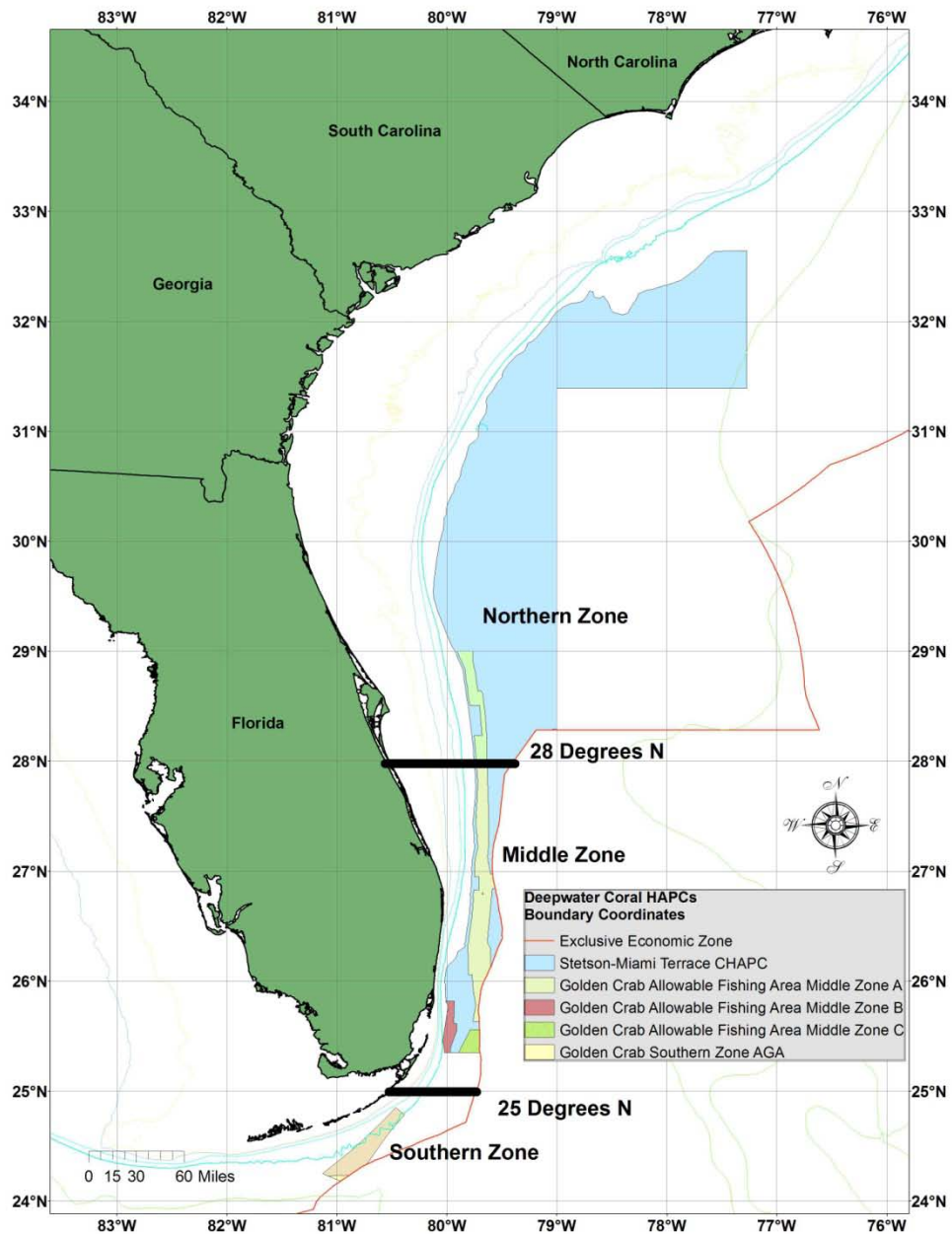
The South Atlantic Golden Crab Fishery

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Geographic Area Fished

- Northern, Middle, and Southern Zones located 12-200 miles offshore within the jurisdiction of the SAFMC
- 1000-2300 feet
- Gulf Stream, bad weather, sub-surface currents





Participation – Permits and Vessels

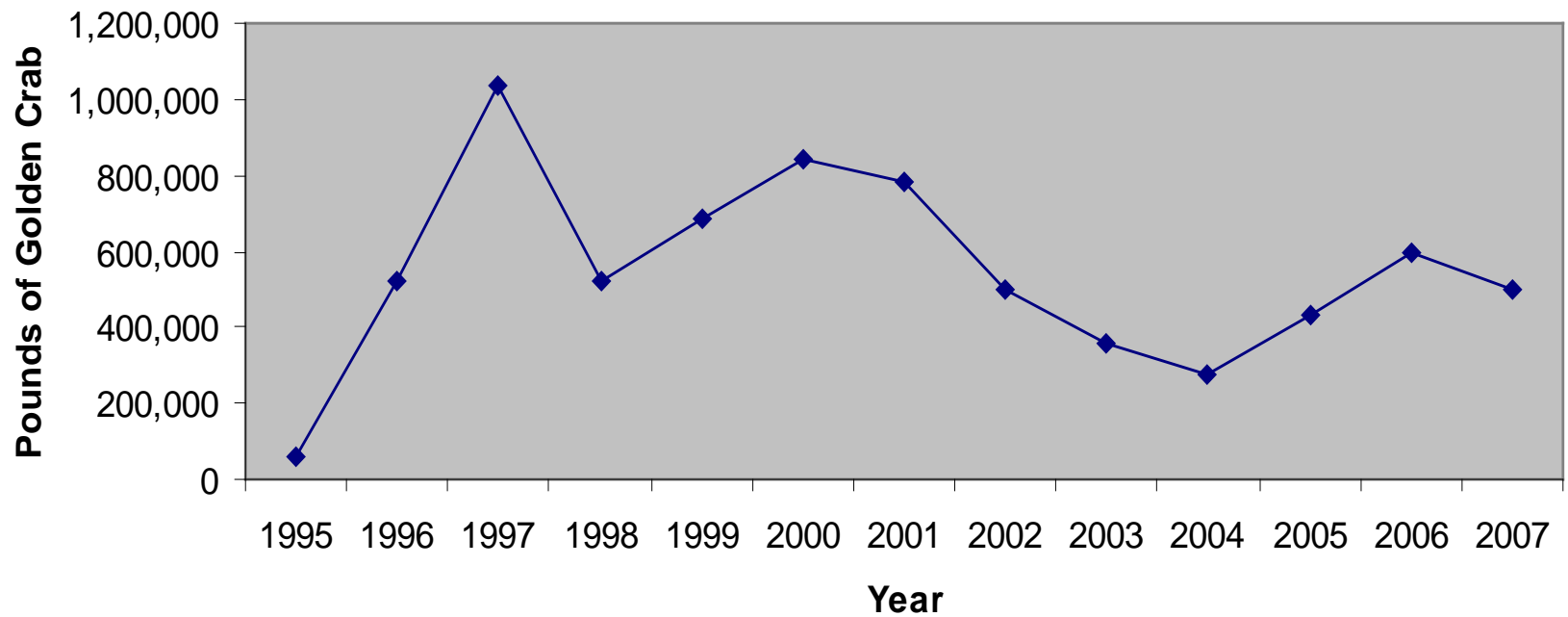
Year	Permit Holders	Vessels Making Landings
1998	29	14
1999	11	8
2000	10	10
2001	8	6
2002	12	7
2003	14	6
2004	12	5
2005	11	5
2006	12	6
2007	11	6

Participation by Zone

Year	Northern	Middle	Southern
1998	0	7	7
1999	confidential	6	confidential
2000	0	4	6
2001	confidential	4	confidential
2002	confidential	5	confidential
2003	confidential	5	confidential
2004	0	confidential	confidential
2005	0	5	0
2006	confidential	4	confidential
2007	confidential	5	confidential

Landings

Golden Crab Landings









Reasons why landings are not a good indicator of stock size

- Participation low (fishery is technically difficult and dangerous, alternative opportunities, low prices, periodically limited market, deaths and retirement)
- Boats participating not designed for fishery – under-equipped, difficult to make a profit
- Crab market is underutilized - locally sold only, unknown species (substitute for “name” crabs), small volume compared to AK, time and skill of shipping, uncertainty and delays in payment

Underutilized Market – Key Reason

- Regulations require that crabs are landed alive
- Golden crab live in 42 degree waters
- With ice, 30% die in 72 hours (based on research in Canada)
- With ice, 20% alive after 6 days
- Quick landings and local sales necessary



Implementation of Recirculating Refrigerated Seawater System (RRSS)

- Implementation of Recirculating Refrigerated Seawater Systems (RRSS) result in a 3% mortality over 10 days
- 2-3 most active golden crab vessels have or are implementing RRSS
- Live crabs can now be delivered anywhere in the world
- US and overseas demand for RRSS golden crabs is intense, prices are high (current RRSS prices 50% above iced and rising)



Reasons why golden crab is not at risk of being overfished

- Parent stock is located in protected or un-fished areas
 - Coral Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (C-HAPCs)
 - Bahamian waters
 - Northern Zone: it may not be economically feasible to fish this area
 - Fishing effort is limited (difficulty of the fishery, small number of permits, probability of a LAP)



Other factors to consider

- Stock assessments are outdated and based on small geographic areas
 - Based on the small geographic area being fished in 1990
 - NMFS recommended an MSY of 1.5 to 2.5 million lbs
- No decrease in crab size or catch per unit effort for decades
- We would like at least 2.5 million lb MSY but believe the fishery can handle a 5 million lb ACL

Our Commitment

- We are committed to developing a thriving model fishery and being good stewards of the resource.



Interest in LAP Management

- From the late 1970s-late 1990s, at least 50 vessels (some 180 ft in length) have tried crab fishing (some from other regions of the U.S.)
 - Traps and line lost
 - Gear conflicts among fishermen
 - Survivor ethic
- Impact on local fishermen was so severe that a 35 square mile sanctuary was established wherein only boats 65 feet or less in length could fish

Interest in LAP Management

We anticipate a re-enactment of this occurrence

- As demand for golden crab increases and prices rise
- As ACLs are implemented nationwide and crabbers from elsewhere buy in and lease

1) We want protection for fishermen and corals through LAP management

- Prevents race to fish and overfishing
- Helps prevent participants unfamiliar with benthic habitat or uncaring about corals from entering

Interest in LAP Management

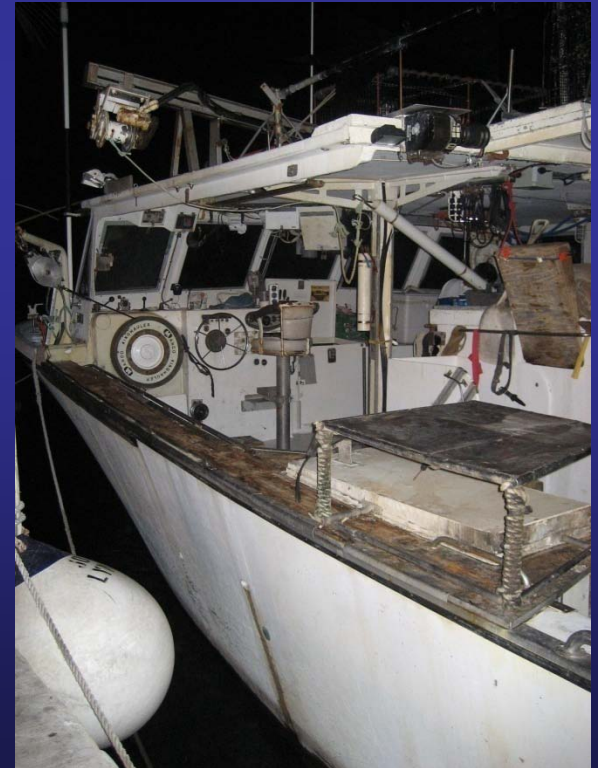
- 2) A LAP program can be designed to efficiently provide the desired flexibility and control. Such a program could go a long way toward resolving the paradox that currently two zones are virtually unfished even though there are ample crabs in those areas.
- 11 permits in the South Atlantic Golden Crab Fishery
 - Each permit is specific to one of three zones, northern, middle, or southern, except that a middle or southern permit may be transformed into a northern permit. However, this process is not reversible; the permit remains a northern one regardless of the wisdom of making the change.
 - Several fishermen own more than one permit, but are only able to fish one zone at a time if they own a single vessel, which is the case with all of us. The fact that permits can be leased, a somewhat cumbersome process which is not designed for frequent changes in participants, still does not allow fishing two zones at once. This is because only one permit may be assigned to a vessel at any given time.
 - Buying an additional boat is not a cost-efficient option.

Interest in LAP Management

- 3) We would like the flexibility a LAP program offers so that boat repairs and illness do not interrupt our ability to make a living.
- 4) We feel we can be better stewards of the resource by selling pounds under a LAP on a temporary basis instead of selling our entire permit in perpetuity to someone whose landings are relatively unlimited and may not care about the resource and habitat.

Interest in LAP Management

5) Establishment of a LAP could be coupled with increased affordable monitoring via paper trails, electronic logbook, etc. and result in overall improved enforcement of the fishery to ensure control over potential illegal fishing.



Summary

- Low participation and level of landings
- The fishery has the potential to expand and greatly increase profitability and is moving in that direction right now
- Interest in LAPs is fueled by a desire to be good stewards, protect the sustainability of the golden crab fishery, and increase operational flexibility
- Active fishermen prefer 5 million lb ACL and would like to see that analyzed in the amendment