



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Southeast Regional Office
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505
(727) 824-5305; FAX (727) 824-5308
<http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov>

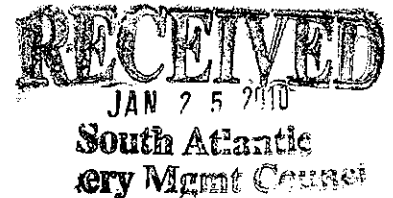
F/SER24:SB

Mr. Robert Mahood
South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
One Southpark Circle
Suite 306
Charleston, South Carolina 29407-4699

BoS

Dear Mr. Mahood:

JAN 15 2010



NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service requests the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council review the enclosed Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) application at the March 2010 meeting. The EFP proposal was submitted by the Gulf and South Atlantic Fisheries Foundation, Inc. (Foundation). The described research is part of two Cooperative Agreements (No. NA08NMF4330406 and No. NA09NMF4540135) awarded to the Foundation by NOAA Fisheries Service. The research is intended to involve commercial fishermen in the collection of fundamental fisheries information. Resource collection efforts support the development and evaluation of fisheries management and regulatory options. The EFP, if approved by both the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Councils, would allow Foundation observers aboard commercial shrimp vessels to retain as many as 500 specimens of federally-managed finfishes outside of the allowable harvest. Retention may be needed for extended onboard examination, later shoreside analyses or identification, or as documentation of quality assurance in the data collection process.

The goal of the research is to provide additional information on the catch, bycatch, discards, and the ability to reduce such bycatch and discards in the southeastern shrimp fishery. This information would improve catch and effort data in the shrimp fishery, as well as improve information used in stock assessments for a wide variety of federally-managed finfish that are important to both recreational and commercial fishing interests.

Sincerely,

Roy E. Crabtree, Ph.D.
Regional Administrator

Enclosure



Gulf & South Atlantic Fisheries Foundation, Inc.

January 12, 2010

Dr. Roy E. Crabtree
Regional Administrator
National Marine Fisheries Service
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, FL 33701

RE: Request for Exempted Fishing Permit

Dear Dr. Crabtree:

The Foundation has been awarded funds under Awards # NA08NMF4330406 and #NA09NMF4540135 to conduct research that require the collection of characterization data in the Federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic. (Proposals are attached outlining the details of this research.) To allow adequate time for the fishery observer to collect, enumerate, weigh, and identify all samples/species brought aboard a cooperating fishing vessel, the Foundation is requesting an Exempted Fishing Permit from the National Marine Fisheries Service to allow retention of Federally managed species under the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's jurisdictions. The number of specimens that may be acquired on any given trip is highly variable, and specifying the number of individuals that will be retained is difficult. However, we anticipate approximately 500 sublegal and/or legal fish could be retained throughout the course of these studies, for continued onboard examination or returned to shore for lab analysis. No species retained for scientific purposes will be sold commercially.

The Foundation's current Awards are scheduled to end on July 31, 2010, however, one-year no cost extensions are also anticipated. Five hundred at-sea days have been anticipated for this study. Current Foundation contracted observers, Regional Coordinators and authorized personnel include: Frank Helies, Gary Graham, Lindsey Parker, Daniel Parshley, Robert Timmeney, David Mann and Mark Bane. Additional observers may be contracted during the course of this project.

Please note that contracted personnel who have undergone sea turtle training may handle threatened and endangered sea turtles that are encountered during normal fishing operations.

Dr. Roy Crabtree
January 12, 2010
Page Two

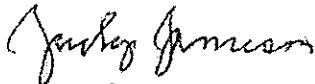
National Marine Fisheries Service funded research grants (correspondence attached) and as such, are authorized to handle sea turtles encountered during the course of Foundation studies.

A list of vessels available to cooperate in this research will be submitted to the National Marine Fisheries Service as they are identified. Of the vessels identified, a sub-sample will be selected to participate in this project. Additional vessels may be identified throughout the course of the project and will be submitted to NMFS for approval.

Results of tests conducted will be provided in the final reports for the Awards issued.

Thank you for your assistance. Should you need any further information, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Regards,



Judy Jamison
Executive Director

Attachments: Research Proposals (#NA08NMF4330406 and #NA09NMF4540135)
October 22, 2009 Correspondence from Dr. Crabtree (Turtle Handling
Authorization)

Cc: Board of Trustees
Dr. Steve Branstetter (w/attachments)

Revised

MARFIN PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Title: Development and Assessment of Bycatch Reduction Devices within the Southeastern Shrimp Trawl Fishery

Project Status/Duration: July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009 New Cont'd Project Period: 12 Months

Name, Address, and Telephone Number of Applicant:
Gulf & South Atlantic Fisheries Foundation, Inc.
Lincoln Center, Suite 740
5401 W. Kennedy Blvd.
Tampa, FL 33609-2447
(813) 286-8390

Principle Investigator(s) and Brief Statement of Qualifications:

Ms. Judy Jamison; Over 27 years administrative and grants management experience.
Dr. Michael Jepson; Over 20 years experience in social impact assessment and grants management.

Project Objectives:

(1) Solicit and test new and/or promising BRDs that show potential for reducing the quantity of bycatch incidentally harvested during shrimp trawling efforts; (2) Quantify the bycatch reduced by new and/or promising experimental BRDs within the EEZ of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic; (3) Calculate reduction rates achieved for each BRD tested to include total shrimp, finfish, and total bycatch, and estimate red snapper fishing mortality (F); and (4) Increase the shrimp industry's participation in BRD research and development to enhance awareness and involvement in fisheries management.

Specific Priority(ies) in Solicitation to Which Project Reponds:

1. Bycatch, a. Shrimp Trawl Fisheries, (2) Identification, development, and evaluation of gear, non-gear, and tactical fishing options to reduce bycatch.

Summary of Work:

The object of this project is to field test 3 new or promising bycatch reduction devices (BRDs) for certification following the NMFS BRD Certification Testing Protocol for the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic. Devices will be field tested aboard commercial fishing vessels with onboard observers collecting data outlined within the Testing Protocols. Collected data will be analyzed to identify the reduction in fishing mortality achieved by BRDs. To increase industry's involvement in the process of BRD research and development, the Foundation will solicit industry designed BRDs, contribute funds for industry BRD development, and reimburse the travel of industry members to Panama City to observe underwater hydrodynamic performance tests of fishing gear.

Project Funding:	Federal	\$289,659
	<u>Non-Federal</u>	<u>\$ 0</u>
	Total	\$289,659

COOPERATIVE RESEARCH PROJECT SUMMARY

Project Title: Continuation of a Project to Augment the Data Collection of an Electronic Logbook System Used Within the Gulf of Mexico Shrimp Fishery

Project Status/Duration: June 1, 2009 – May 31, 2010 New Cont'd **Project Period:** 12 Months

Name, Address, and Telephone Number of Applicant:

Gulf & South Atlantic Fisheries Foundation, Inc.
Lincoln Center, Suite 740
5401 W. Kennedy Blvd.
Tampa, FL 33609-2447
(813) 286-8390

Principal Investigator(s) and Brief Statement of Qualifications:

Ms. Judy Jamison; Over 28 years administrative and grants management experience.
Dr. Michael Jepson; Over 21 years experience in social impact assessment and grants management.

Project Objectives:

(1) Complement the current ELB study with onboard observers to collect data on fishing effort, red snapper bycatch, and shrimp landings within the Gulf of Mexico; (2) Analyze all observer collected data to further ensure that ELB landings estimates are accurate and defensible; and (3) Determine the spatiotemporal abundance of juvenile red snapper, compute a total mortality (Z) estimate for shrimp-trawl red snapper bycatch, and conduct a formal cohort analysis (VPA) on all observer collected red snapper data; 4) Provide improved data collection on the extent of bycatch of small coastal sharks in the Gulf shrimp fishery.

Specific Priority(ies) in Solicitation to Which Project Responds:

1. Finfish, a. Characterize the total catch (from all fleets affecting the stocks), including catch composition and disposition of catch. (2) Investigations are needed to determine more efficient methods to record effort accurately on a real-time basis during fishing operations; (4) Projects are needed to utilize fully scientific observers on-board vessels as a means of collecting detailed catch, effort and disposition data.

4. Commercial Shrimp Harvest, Quantification of Effort: Research is needed to improve shrimp effort data.

Summary of Work:

The dynamics of the red snapper fishery are complex and various user groups are thought to impact the stock. As such, disagreement has existed regarding the mortality, age composition, and monthly distribution of juvenile trawl-caught red snapper. Furthermore, recent assessments of blacknose shark suggest significant mortality from bycatch in the Gulf shrimp fishery. To alleviate this confusion, the Foundation proposes the continuation of a program to augment a currently funded ELB project with fishery observers. The current program (funded through Coop. Agree. No. NA05NMF4540044) has expended its compliment of sea-days. To allow for the continued gathering of observer collected data aboard vessels that have an ELB, additional at-sea days are necessary. As before, fishery observers will be placed aboard shrimp trawl vessels that have been randomly selected and have an ELB installed. Observers will collect data on total penaeid shrimp and red snapper catch and small coastal shark (i.e., no sub-samples will be taken). Data collected during this project will be used to update the formal cohort analysis (VPA) and compute mortality estimates for all Foundation collected red snapper bycatch data (both past and present). Results will be used to validate ELB landings estimates by region (statistical zone), quantify red snapper and small coastal shark bycatch rates, and to assist fisheries managers in the assessment of the both stocks.

Project Funding:	Federal	\$384,150
	<u>Non-Federal</u>	<u>\$ 0</u>
	Total	\$384,150