

Shrimp Task Force Meeting

RC 020

January 20, 2015 7:00 pm

Wrangell Fire Hall

ADF&G Staff: Jeff Regnart, Scott Walker, Scott Forbes, Lowell Fair, Forrest Bowers, Quinn Smith, Scott Kelley, Dan Gray, Tom Kowalske, Justin Breese, Troy Thynes

PUBLIC: Brennon Eagle, Shrimp Task Force Chair; Kathy Hansen, SEAFA; Roger Mikekelsen, Otto Florschutz, Wayne Easterly, Paul McIntyre, Sylvia Etefagh, John Verhey, Jim Smith, Megan O'Neil, PVOA; Jerry Dahl, Chris Guggenbickler, Allen Reeves,

Brennon Eagle, chair of the Pot Shrimp task force meeting called the meeting to order.

The Dept provided 4 handouts prior to the meeting and were brought to the attention of the participants:

- Preliminary Results of 2014 Pre-season Pot Shrimp Surveys
- Participation, harvest and economic value of fishery
- 2015 Annual Management Report for Southeast Alaska and Yakutat Shrimp Fisheries; and later in the meeting another handout
- Districts 101-103 Pot Shrimp Fishery Tables

Troy Thynes reviewed the District 7 experimental fishery. 3 years is too little data to make a full blown commitment to this management. Using inseason data, the fishery had received more time but in District 6 the season was closed early because the in season data showed reduced abundance. It appeared to work both ways over the three years. Scott Kelley pointed out that for this shrimp season just 2 week prior the Dept finally had the pieces in place to allow the logbook data/catch size information be entered in the area office that it is turned into. Alan Reeves spoke to the need to get size data also from the tail boats as it is

an important factor in trying to protect the smaller shrimp. These boats will tend to fish on smaller shrimp and there is more tail meat in a pound of tails.

Quinn Smith described the District 11 spawner-index experimental fishery in Seymour Canal. Dept received some funds from the legislature due to industry efforts for this experiment. This also entailed a lot of lab work to determine more of the life history of the shrimp in Southeast. The Canadian spawner-index assumed at the time of development that shrimp had a four year lifespan and spawned once. The preliminary lab work shows that the shrimp in SE have the ability to spawn more than once. Lab work also supports the findings of studies in Prince William Sound which estimates the spot shrimp life span to be up to 8 years. The managers believe that Seymour Canal was too small of an area with too short of a season to be a candidate for a spawner-index management. Canada looks at their fishery on a weekly basis and in Seymour due to the length of the fishery managers had to evaluate on a daily basis. Quinn answered the question asked that the post-season survey showed the same amount of female as there were in the fishery when it closed.

The economics of the shrimp fishery were discussed. While the normal method of looking at the value of a fishery is by looking at the ex-vessel value of the fishery based on fish ticket data in the shrimp fishery since the majority of the catch is harvested by catcher/processors and catcher/sellers this doesn't show the complete picture of the value of this fishery to the fishermen. Industry estimates this fishery is probably closer to a \$5-7 million fishery to the fishermen not the \$2 million valuation by CFEC ex-vessel. The department stands by the CFEC calculation of fishery value because we have no other information to base the value estimates on.

A broad ranging discussion occurred among the participants. Brennon provided a handout with some ideas for a way to move forward toward a more robust management fishery. Industry would like to see a more robust in-season management – District 6 & 7 experimental management appears to be moving in the correct direction, can this be moved to other districts, what would be needed, discussion about the voluntary logbook, mandatory logbook, short discussion

about several of the proposals. The Wednesday reporting day was brought up and how this year's start date created a situation where the first call in period was problematic. After discussion Director Regnart stated that he thought we could work together and draft something for the Board that would recognize the desire for a more robust management regime using in season data and indicators when the department was comfortable with the in-season data as being the best data available to adjust the GHL (both up and down). GHL adjustments would remain within the GHR..

There was agreement that the industry would develop a conceptual plan that would require reporting from catcher-processors the size data of the shrimp harvested and the department would develop regulatory language to be submitted to the Board that would reflect that conceptual plan. The department would also develop language to increase the flexibility in reporting periods and when reporting is required. The department and industry agreed to meet again on Thursday and the department would present draft regulatory language to the group.