



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA 22201
703.842.0740 • 703.842.0741 (fax) • www.asmfmc.org

MEMORANDUM

December 18, 2014

To: Northern Shrimp Section
From: Kelly Whitmore, Technical Committee Chair
RE: 2015 Winter Research Samples

The ASMFC Northern Shrimp Technical Committee (TC) held a conference call with northern shrimp industry members on December 16, 2014 to clarify recommendations for obtaining winter research samples from the trap fishery. The ASMFC Northern Shrimp Section (Section) requested this review to determine how the TC's recommendations for obtaining trap-caught samples in the November 12, 2014 memorandum compare with options suggested during the Section's December 16, 2014 conference call.

Since the TC's Nov. 12 memorandum, our discussions with industry have improved strategies for obtaining trap samples. The TC originally proposed only one trapper because of constraints due to funding and the need to span the geographic range using the trawl vessels. The proposal for 5 trappers fishing 10 traps each over a greater geographic area would be scientifically more robust than the original proposal for a single trapper fishing a large number of traps in one region. Additionally, this would likely represent less trap catch overall, as the TC's original proposal assumed one trapper fishing more than 50 total traps.

Our revised trap sampling recommendation is:

- 5 trap vessels x 5 sampling dates x 2 samples per day = 50 samples total (25 for the TC and 25 for UMaine)

Whereby:

- 5 trap vessels fish a maximum of 10 traps each across as great a geographic range as possible
- Two 2-kg samples are taken per trip per vessel for a total of five trips (vs. 6 2-kg samples per trip for trawlers). The frequency of trips necessary to keep traps baited and active (3-4 day soak time preferable) means it is likely that not all trips will be sampled. The TC will work with captains on which trips to obtain samples from, i.e. every other trip/week, etc.
- Trapping begins mid-January and extends through March for a total maximum season length of about 10 weeks.
- A 100-lb per week landing limit is implemented.
- Samples are kept on ice and delivered to ME DMR staff within 24 hours at an agreed upon location or frozen if delivery must be delayed.

M14-115

Factors in support of the revised recommendations include:

- In 2013 some trapping areas had very little to no catch. Additional participants and locations would ensure samples are obtained under current limited stock conditions.
- A more comprehensive sampling design is gained by the increased number of participants across a broader geographic area.
- Trap participation will not limit samples obtained from the trawl fishery, as trappers are not seeking additional compensation beyond retaining catch in excess of the sampling requirement, up to the landing limit of 100 lbs per week (as compared to trawlers receiving \$500 per trip, per Dec. 16 Section motion).
- Implementation of a weekly trip limit will ensure trapping effort has minimal impact to the stock and on the total RSA. The maximum assumed trap catch is: 100 lbs/week x 5 trappers x 10 weeks = 5,000 lbs (2.3 mt). This represents 9% of the 25 mt RSA.