



# **Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission**

## **NEWS RELEASE**

*Vision: Sustainably Managing Atlantic Coastal Fisheries*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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### **Moratorium on Northern Shrimp Commercial Fishing Maintained for 2017 Season**

Portsmouth, NH – In response to the depleted condition of the northern shrimp resource, the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission’s Northern Shrimp Section extended the moratorium on commercial fishing for the 2017 fishing season. The Section also approved a 53 metric ton (mt) research set aside (RSA) to allow for the continued collection of much needed biological data.

The 2016 Stock Status Report for Gulf of Maine (GOM) Northern Shrimp indicates abundance and biomass indices for 2012–2016 are the lowest on record of the thirty-three year time series. Recruitment indices for the 2010–2015 year classes are also poor and include the three smallest year classes on record. As a result, the 2012–2016 indices of harvestable biomass are the lowest on record. Current harvestable biomass is almost entirely composed of the 2013 year class.

“By increasing the 2017 RSA, which is above last year’s 22 mt quota and that recommended by the Technical Committee for 2017 (13.6 mt), the Section sought to strike a balance between providing limited fishing opportunities to the industry while collecting valuable data to allow for the continued monitoring of the northern shrimp resource,” stated Section Chair Dennis Abbott of New Hampshire.

Recruitment of northern shrimp is related to both spawning biomass and ocean temperatures, with higher spawning biomass and colder temperatures producing stronger recruitment. Ocean temperatures in western GOM shrimp habitat have increased over the past decade and reached unprecedented highs within the past several years. This suggests an increasingly inhospitable environment for northern shrimp and the need for strong conservation efforts to help restore and maintain a fishable stock. The Northern Shrimp Technical Committee considers the stock to be in poor condition with limited prospects for the near future. The 2016 Stock Status Report is available at <http://www.asmfc.org/uploads/file/5823782c2016NorthernShrimpAssessment.pdf>.

To maintain the time series of data collected from northern shrimp commercial fishery catches, a cooperative winter sampling program was approved with a 53 mt RSA quota. This program allows for the continued collection of biological data (e.g. size composition, egg hatch timing) from GOM northern shrimp fishery catches in the absence of a directed fishery. The RSA will include the participation of 10

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The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission was formed by the 15 Atlantic coastal states in 1942 for the promotion and protection of coastal fishery resources. The Commission serves as a deliberative body of the Atlantic coastal states, coordinating the conservation and management of nearshore fishery resources, including marine, shell and anadromous species.

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trawlers (8 Maine trawlers, 1 Massachusetts trawler, and 1 New Hampshire trawler) and 5 trap fishermen, fishing for 8 weeks from mid-January to mid-March. The trawlers will have a maximum trip limit of 1,200 pounds per trip, with 1 trip per week, while the trappers will have a maximum possession limit of 500 pounds per week, with a 40 trap limit per vessel. Preference will be given to individuals in the lottery who use double size sorting grates and have a history in the fishery prior to the June 7, 2011 control date.

For more information, please contact Max Appelman, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at [mappelman@asmfc.org](mailto:mappelman@asmfc.org) or 703.842.0740.

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## Northern Shrimp Section Motions

### Main Motion

**Move to implement a commercial fishing season for 2017 with the following specifications and conditions:**

- 200mt quota for 2017
- 30 participants = 14,686 lbs total allowable catch per vessel
- January test tows prior to fishing – compensation 1000 lbs per day
- Staggered 6 week season based on egg hatch and to avoid fishing on males.
- Limited fishing days per week
- Mandatory daily reporting using swipe card system
- Mandatory daily log book with trip level data as requested by the TC
- No peddling – must be sold to dealers with swipe card designation
- Participants to be selected by lottery. Applicants with enforcement violations will not be considered.
- No financial compensation from ASMFC or State of Maine

Motion made by Mr. Stockwell and seconded by Mr. White. Motion substituted.

### Motion to Substitute

**Move to substitute to maintain a harvest moratorium through 2017.**

Motion made by Mr. Grout and seconded by Mr. Armstrong. Motion carries.

### Main Motion as Substituted

**Move to maintain a harvest moratorium through 2017.**

Motion made by Mr. Grout and seconded by Mr. Armstrong. Motion carries.

**Move to approve a Research Set-Aside (RSA) for 2017 with a cap at 53 metric tons. The RSA would have 8 trawlers fishing from Maine and one trawler fishing from Massachusetts and one trawler fishing from New Hampshire for 8 weeks and 1200 lbs per trip, Mid-January to mid-March 1 trip per week, and 5 trappers fishing 8 weeks at 500 lbs per week. 40 traps per vessel limit. Preference will be given to individuals in the lottery with double grates and having history prior to the June 7, 2011 control date.**

Motion made by Mr. Stockwell and seconded by Mr. Adler. Motion carries unanimously.