



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

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

Northern Shrimp Section Meeting Summary

Portsmouth, NH
October 2, 2013

Section Members: Terry Stockwell (chair, ME), Walter Kumiega (ME), Steve Train (ME), Dennis Abbott (NH), Ritchie White (NH), Doug Grout (NH), Bill Adler (MA), Mike Armstrong (MA), Kelly Whitmore (TC chair), Gary Libby (AP chair)

ASMFC Staff: Marin Hawk, Toni Kerns

Public: Maggie Hunter (ME DMR), Maggie Raymond (Associated Fisheries of Maine), Cheri Patterson (NH FG), Peter Kendall (AP member), Mark Bennett (AP member), Mike Danforth, Chris Vonderweidt (ME DMR), Carla Guenther

The Northern Shrimp Section (Section) met at the Urban Forestry Center in Portsmouth, NH on October 2, 2013. The Section discussed next steps for Northern Shrimp management and *Section 1.3.5.2* of Amendment 2 to the Interstate Fisheries Management Plan (FMP). Below is a summary of their discussions:

Next Steps for Northern Shrimp Management

The Section has been discussing limited entry in the Northern shrimp fishery for a number of years. In the past, New Hampshire has not had a licensing system for Northern shrimp so implementing limited entry was not a possibility for all three states. However, beginning January 1, 2014, New Hampshire will have Northern shrimp licenses. This makes limited entry a potential management alternative for Northern Shrimp.

There are several issues with limited entry that the Section discussed:

- A majority of vessels (and licenses) fishing for Northern shrimp are based in Maine. Given that limited entry would cut individuals out (in order to reduce effort), Maine would have the challenging task of deciding which individuals to eliminate and which to allow into the fishery. While the other states may not have as large of an issue with this as their contribution to the fishery is smaller, the Section agreed that a common eligibility criteria should be determined for all three states.
- Eliminating just inactive permit holders will most likely not be sufficient to restore and sustain the fishery. The scoping document for limited entry outlined in Addendum I to Amendment 2 to the FMP included a control date (June 7, 2011). The intention of the control date was to notify the public that new entrants to the fishery may be treated differently than those in the fishery prior to the control date. However, given the number of vessels which the fishery can accommodate, individuals who were in the fishery before

the control date may also be affected. The Section discussed different ways to treat those individuals if eliminating the new entrants and inactive permit holders was not sufficient to limit effort in the fishery.

The Section also discussed allocating the quota by state as another management option, leaving it in the hands of the individual states to decide how to deal with their own quota (limited entry, etc). The Section concurred, due to the following reasons, that this alternative did not appear to be a feasible option:

- It is unknown how states would prevent fishermen from other states coming into their waters and harvesting the shrimp there? State quotas would create an additional level of complexity because of this possibility.
- Some fishermen hold licenses in more than one state. This creates the problem of how those individuals would be treated if state allocations were pursued.

The Section decided that further investigations and analysis are needed before any action is taken on limited entry. As such, they tasked the Northern Shrimp Plan Development Team (PDT) with the following:

- Given that the fishery was sustainable when landings were between three thousand and four thousand metric tons, the Section would like the PDT to determine how many vessels can fish in the fishery with that level of landings. This analysis will investigate the trap and trawl fisheries separately, with a percentage of the landings (based on historical landings) attributed to the trap fishery, and the remainder attributed to the trawl fishery.

Staff advised that the requested analysis would not be completed until sometime in early 2014 after the upcoming stock assessment and specifications setting process. The Section will then schedule a number of work sessions to address other variables such as boat size, area fished, and level of experience. The Section agreed that this process will not be complete by the next fishing season.

Section 1.3.5.2 of the FMP

Section 1.3.5.2 incorrectly implies that Northern shrimp trap fishermen fish on hard bottom: “Most trap fishermen fish in and around hard bottom coves and holes where mobile gear can’t reach”. Since most fishermen fish on soft bottom and the above statement has implications for Northern shrimp marketing and conservation, the Section agreed that in a future addendum the sentence will be removed from the FMP.