



GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Gulf of Mexico commercial shrimp season for both state and federal waters off the coast of Texas to close

Gulf Coast, Texas – May 11, 2006 – The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in cooperation with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) will close the shrimp fishery in both state and federal waters off the coast of Texas. This closure is based on action taken by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) at its January 2006 meeting and is an annual regulatory process based on a review of the past year's benefits/impacts analysis conducted by the NMFS. This year's closure is effective Monday, May 15 beginning 30 minutes after sunset. It will reopen some time in July. A specific date has yet to be announced.

Larry McKinney, Ph.D., and TPWD coastal fisheries division director, said the closure allows the smaller shrimp to grow to a larger more valuable size before being harvested.

"The goal is to achieve optimum benefits for the shrimping industry while providing proper management to protect the shrimp," McKinney said.

The management objectives of the Texas closure are to increase the yield of brown shrimp and eliminate the waste of the resource caused by the discarding of undersized shrimp caught during a period in their life cycle when growth is rapid. Shrimp usually reach about 3 1/2 inches before beginning migration back to the Gulf of Mexico.

"The closure has been going on since 1981, and it was actually the shrimp industry that instigated it.," said Wilma Anderson, Executive Director of the Texas Shrimp Association, and a member of the Council's Shrimp Advisory Panel.

Anderson said that the Texas shrimp industry is geared toward a value added product. "The closure is simply more economically feasible to the industry," she said.

Texas Shrimp Closure:

- Closed from the coast line to 200-miles off Texas
- Closure for 2006, approximately May 15 until approximately July 15. Actual duration depends on sampling done by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Protects migrating juvenile shrimp which results in larger shrimp
- Larger shrimp result in increased revenues to the shrimping industry

The Texas closure applies to Gulf waters from the coast out to nine nautical miles, while the federal closure affects waters out to 200 nautical miles.



The Texas Shrimp closure extends from the coastline to 200 miles off Texas.

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council is one of eight regional fishery management councils established by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976. The Council prepares fishery management plans designed to manage fishery resources in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the U.S. Gulf of Mexico.

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