




**UNITED STATE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
National Marine Fisheries Service  
Southeast Fisheries Science Center  
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January 24, 2017

**MEMORANDUM TO:** Dale Diaz, Chair Shrimp Committee,  
Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council

**FROM:** Bonnie Ponwith, Ph.D.   
Science Director

**SUBJECT:** 2015 Revised Gulf of Mexico commercial shrimp effort estimates

Gulf of Mexico commercial shrimp fishing effort in the 10-30 fathom depth zone of statistical areas 10-21 has been determined to be directly correlated with juvenile red snapper bycatch mortality. To address this bycatch mortality issue the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (GMFMC) Joint Reef Fish Amendment 27/Shrimp Amendment 14 of their respective management plans established an initial target reduction goal for juvenile red snapper mortality of 74% below the benchmark years of 2001-2003. This target was changed to 67% beginning in 2011. The shrimp management plan requires an annual report to the Council showing the current shrimp fishing effort compared to the benchmark years of 2001-2003, in the 10-30 fathom depth zone of statistical areas 10-21.

Last October, we submitted a report to the GMFMC that showed the 2015 estimated shrimp fishing effort in the 10-30 fathom depth zone of statistical areas 10-21 to be 23,443 days fished, a reduction of 71.7% from the baseline effort period. However, an unexpected and large influx of 2015 commercial landings from the State of Florida was added to the system in late 2016, requiring us to recalculate the shrimp effort. The revised estimate of 2015 fishing effort equals 25,430 days fished - a reduction of 69.3% from the baseline effort period. This updated effort estimate is 1,987 days higher than the original estimate presented to the Council in October 2016. However, the revised effort estimate provides a reduction in effort for 2015 that is still greater than the required threshold level (see attached table).

cc: Doug Gregory  
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