

SEA HARVEST NEWS

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Notice of Intension to Distribute Antidumping Duties (Byrd Amendment Funds)

The Customs and Border Protection Agency, Department of Homeland Security, has published a notice of intention to distribute assessed antidumping or countervailing duties for fiscal year 2005. The announcement along with a list of potentially eligible producers and instructions to file written certification to claim a distribution can be found in the Federal Register, volume 70, No. 140, Wednesday, June 1, 2005, pp 31565-32218. The Federal Register can be found on the internet at:

www.gpoaccess.gov/fr. The actual notice is titled "Distribution of Continued Dumping and Subsidy Offset to Affected Domestic Producers."

There is no official application form but a form has been developed by the Southern Shrimp Alliance. A copy of the form can be obtained from the website:

www.alabamaseafood.org. Applications are due by August 1, 2005.

Texas License Limitation

New laws in Texas place a moratorium on Gulf shrimp boat licenses and oyster boat licenses. After August 31, 2005, a Texas commercial Gulf shrimp boat license may not be purchased unless the vessel was previously licensed. A license is needed to trawl for shrimp in Texas territorial (outside) waters. If you land shrimp in Texas, you will need the license even if the shrimp were caught elsewhere.

Similarly, after August 31, 2005, new oyster boat licenses will only be sold to previously licensed boats.

Change in Vermillion Snapper (Beeliner) Regulations

Effective July 8, 2005, the minimum size for vermillion snapper was increased to 11 inches. Also, no more than 10 vermillion snapper may be kept. Vermillion snapper along with gray triggerfish, almaco, jack, and tile fishes previously had an aggregate limit of 20 fish. Under the new rule, vermillion snapper can be no more than 10 of the fish in the 20 fish limit.

Red Snapper Management and Bycatch Reduction

The shrimp industry will face several challenges in the coming months in regards to red snapper management and bycatch reduction. The challenges arise from three separate but related actions already underway. First, the Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) has filed a petition with NOAA Fisheries requesting that emergency action be taken to reduce the bycatch of juvenile red snapper in the Gulf shrimp fishery. Second, the CCA has filed a suit in federal court to challenge Amendment 22, to the Reef Fish Management Plan. The suit contends that Amendment 22 does not prevent over fishing and does not minimize bycatch to the extent practical for red snapper. Third, the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council will begin reviewing the most recent red snapper stock assessment at their next meeting in August.

A summary of the stock assessment suggests that the red snapper stock could be rebuilt to the target level through various combinations of reduced bycatch and reduced harvest in the directed fisheries (commercial and recreational).

For example, a quota of two million pounds (currently 9.12 million pounds) and a 40 percent bycatch reduction would meet the target figure. On the other hand, a quota of nine million pounds and a bycatch reduction of 70 percent would also meet the target.

Much of the debate over the issues will

revolve around the quality of the computer models that provide these assessments and the extent to which red snapper bycatch has been reduced by very recent changes in the number of shrimp vessels actually fishing in the Gulf of Mexico.

Ecosystem Management

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold a series of public workshops to provide information about, and seek input on, ecosystem objectives for fisheries management.

The Report of the United States Commission on Ocean Policy, as well as other public agencies and international advisory groups, have called for greater emphasis on ecosystem principles to be used in formulating fishery management approaches, and this emphasis is likely to be considered when mandates under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (M-SFCMA) are reconsidered by Congress. The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) is one of four Councils participating in a pilot project to develop an ecosystem approach to fisheries management (the four Councils in the pilot project are New England, Mid-Atlantic, South Atlantic, and Gulf of Mexico).

The public workshops will be conducted by an independent facilitator, who will report the results to the Council at its September 2005 meeting in New Orleans. The workshops will be held beginning at 7:00 p.m. and concluding no later than 9:00 p.m. at the following local locations and dates:

Monday, July 25, 2005

Mississippi Department of Marine
Resources

1141 Bayview Drive
Biloxi, Mississippi 39530
228-374-5000

< *Continued on back panel* >

Tuesday, July 26, 2005

Orange Beach Community Center
4849 Wilson Boulevard
Orange Beach, Alabama 36561
251-981-6028