

Southeastern Fisheries Association, Inc.

Proudly serving the Commercial Fishing Industry for over 50 years!



Hotlines Online Edition



October 2002

TRAWLGATE

Credit is due to NMFS for quickly recognizing and correcting the errors made in their stock assessment on New England groundfish. The fishing industry in the Northeast may have been managed using the wrong data for many years because the net being used to determine fish abundance, was rigged incorrectly and missed as much as 50% of the fish on the grounds. Picture a trawl with one part of the net on the bottom and the other half of the net off the bottom as much as 5 1/2 feet. Of course the technical explanation of the test net is more fully described by NMFS, but the bottom line is the draconian measures proposed in New England, because of an environmental cult's lawsuit in federal court, should not be necessary. This will be a wonderful Christmas present to the fishing families in that area.

It's amazing this admitted error by NMFS is receiving little, if any, exposure in the environmental press or in newspapers outside the geographical

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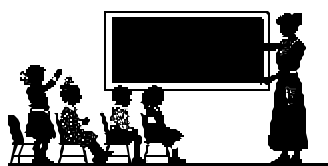
SFA is a non-profit association founded in 1952, charged with maintaining a viable seafood industry in the Southeast.

Robert P. Jones, Editor

location of where the errors occurred. Had the error been on the part of the industry, the cults would be screaming for immediate closure of all fishing areas, filing more lawsuits and possibly burning a picture of a commercial fisherman in effigy at their headquarters. This is just another example why NMFS should be talking with the commercial fishing industry and working toward joint projects to learn more about the fish. In the southeast, we have zero communication with the NMFS office but changes may occur when a permanent regional person is selected.

CENTER FOR SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES TEACHING MODULE

The Center for Sustainable Fisheries (CSF)



which is part of the Rosentiel School of Marine and Atmospheric Science (RSMAS) at the University of Miami, has posted a Teaching Module on their website very critical toward commercial fishing while ignoring the impact of recreational fishing. The module is under review and hopefully the leadership at RSMAS will offer all interested parties an opportunity to comment and work with the scientists on the finished module before it is distributed to

school children. Dean Otis Brown has kept an open line of communication and is amenable to review information that will make the module something everyone can be proud of.

SFA OPEN BOARD MEETING SCHEDULED FOR DECEMBER 12 - 13.

With so many important issues boiling over, SFA will hold an Open Board of Directors meeting on Friday, December 12 from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM at the Marriott Airport Hotel in Tampa. All issues confronting the commercial fishing industry will be on the agenda for discussion and updates. On Saturday morning December 13, DACS will conduct another Buyer/Seller seminar & bring some major buyers and sellers together to discuss the market outlook for seafood. Registration materials are enclosed in this newsletter.

FDA & USDC INSPECTORS MAY BE CROSS-DEPUTIZED

Senator Fritz Hollings has introduced legislation to cross-deputize FDA & USDC inspectors. There are so many aspects to this proposal that much more exchange of views should occur before final action. NFI opposes this and the National Academy of Science has recommended against combining agencies who do marketing of com-

(Continued on page 2)

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(Continued from page 1)

modities with agencies involved solely with food safety programs. (NFI *Insider*)

EFFORTS TO BAN COMMERCIAL FISHING IN SMZ'S

In the most recent Gulf Council meeting, an effort was made by Vernon Minton and Bobbi Walker of Alabama to ban commercial bandit rig fishing in areas historically fished. Thousands of artificial reefs, both permitted and those built under the cover of darkness, have been placed on the floor of the Gulf of Mexico and anti-commercial fishing advocates feel this area is now their private domain. They want to greatly expand the areas where no more than 3 hooks on a line can be used. Charterboat owner Bob Zales is pushing for SMZ's in Florida but many Florida charterboat owners do not agree with what Zales is doing. This political power play aimed at the ban-

dit rig commercial fishermen, shows commercial gear is the target be it longlines or bandit rigs. Many of the bandit rig fishermen were outspoken in support of banning longlines and are now feeling the heavy boot of those they sided with

against the longliners. In this case, the longliners are not siding with Minton, Fensom or Walker. Instead the longliners have turned the other cheek to help save the bandit rig fishermen. The longline leaders were never against bandit rig fishermen but some of the more visible bandit rig fishermen used their influence to harm the longliners. That is now water over the dam, more or less.

This SMZ "issue that will never die" is scheduled for "Discussion" again from 8:30 AM to 9:30 AM on Wednesday, November 13, during the Gulf Council meeting at the Westin Beach Resort in Key Largo.

Shrimp discussions will follow the SMZ proposals to set aside huge areas for sport fishing. The shrimp discussions will concern mandatory use of "ankle bracelets" or Vessel Monitoring System as NMFS likes to call them as well as mandatory observers. SFA does not oppose the voluntary use of

VMS, particularly for joint research with credible state or federal agencies and does not object to VMS being placed on vessels violating the closed Tortugas Nursery area. When NMFS shrimp permits go into effect in December, expect

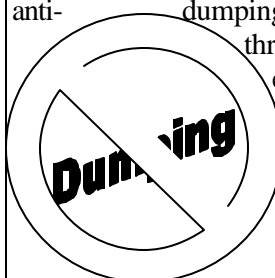
much more mandatory record-keeping from every shrimp vessel shrimping in the federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico. In the near future, if shrimpers fail to meet all required reporting, shrimping permits will be pulled. Count on it.

ILLEGAL SALE OF SEAFOOD STILL RAMPANT IN FLORIDA

No new arrests have been made, or at least publicized, in the war against the illegal sale of seafood by improperly licensed fishermen. These illegal sales go on unabated every day. The major newspapers and TV stations seem to shy away from this aspect of recreational fishing in Florida. Maybe they feel illegal sales are not a problem or maybe they just don't want to print anything negative about it. This illegal activity will be one of the major items of discussion at the upcoming Open Board Meeting on December 12 in Tampa. SFA knows how very difficult it is to police the entire coast of Florida, because there are literally thousands of places a sportfishing boat can make port. However, more time must be spent on this illegal activity. If there are not enough law enforcement officers to stop the illegal sales, SFA pledges to work with FWC to lobby the Legislature for enough officers to form a special unit for such purposes.

SHRIMP ANTIDUMPING PETITION EFFORT CONTINUES

More and more shrimpers are joining the campaign to initiate an antidumping petition against several Asian countries supplying shrimp to the US market. There has been wide support for the anti-dumping petition throughout the eight states of the Gulf and South Atlantic region.



(Continued on page 3)

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(Continued from page 2)

**A SPECIAL & HEARTFELT
CONGRATULATIONS TO SOME
GOOD FOLKS —**

**NORTH CAROLINA
FISHERIES ASSOCIATION
TURNS 50 YEARS OLD.**

Congratulations to the members of the North Carolina Fisheries Association for holding it together during the past 50 years. To stand the test of time when such monumental changes have taken place in the fishing world is a tribute to the leadership and tenacity of the NCFA members who fight to preserve their industry and their culture. Being blessed to have a tough and smart leader like Jerry Schill for the past few decades has made the difference on many issues. Young Jerry is a man of the highest integrity and personal honesty. When he speaks on behalf of the membership, people know he is speaking from his heart on behalf of families that he knows and loves. Jerry is an excellent example of talking the talk and walking the walk. NCFA is very fortunate to have Jerry and Pam in their corner.

When it is all said and done, family and friends are where our personal worlds revolve. If you are one of the lucky ones, like Jerry and Pam, the extended family includes all those wonderful people who belong to the NCFA. Those who belong to an association are the “givers.” Those who do not the “takers.” Over time when you reach the point that you feel comfortable working for the “takers” as well as the “givers”, you have truly arrived in association work. Association men and women get their reward from helping others.

**.....service to humanity is the
best work of life.**

- excerpted from the U.S. Jaycee Creed

Again, congratulations to NCFA for 50 years of service to the domestic commercial fishing industry. May you make ten times 50. God Bless.

**US SENATOR SUSAN COLLINS
INTRODUCES PRECEDENT
SETTING LEGISLATION**

U.S. Sen. Susan Collins (R-ME) introduced the *Fisheries Management Fairness Act*, legislation to prevent restrictive groundfishing regulations in Amendment 13 from being implemented for two years — enough time to allow the Northeast Fishery Science Center and the National Marine Fishery Center to determine the reliability of the data on which to base future fisheries management regulations. Amendment 13 to the Northeast Multi-species Fishery Management Plan will govern the rebuilding of over-fished stocks. The same type of legislation should be filed concerning shrimp and grouper to keep the managers who want to stop these fisheries from using poor data to accomplish their goals. There is no commercial fishery even in danger of collapsing in the southeast but the anti-commercial fishing crowd continues to reduce and stop our ability to product food. (NFI Insider)

**USDA Issues
Guidelines for
Interim Voluntary
Country of
Origin Labeling**

USDA released its voluntary country of origin labeling guide-

lines this week. The guidelines exempt cooked, canned, and "restructured fish products" from the labeling requirements. USDA says these voluntary guidelines will likely be the basis for the mandatory labeling requirements in 2004. The voluntary guidelines and related questions and answers can be found at <http://www.ams.usda.gov/COOL>. (NFI Insider)

**KERRY/SNOWE FLOAT FISH
PACKAGE**

US Senators Kerry (D-MA) and Snowe (R-ME) are circulating the "Fisheries Improvement Act," a package of fisheries-related legislation including: Individual Fishing Quota provisions, capacity reduction, cooperative enforcement and management, science improvement/outreach, and certain regional concerns. As the IFQ provisions do not provide for primary processor participation in IFQ programs, NFI is opposed to the legislation. It is unlikely the legislation will move forward at this time. (NFI Insider)

Check us out on the web
www.southeasternfish.org

**Part of the Education
Process of the PUBLIC:**

On your next order for business checks from your bank have printed just above the signature line **"Commercial Fishing makes this payment possible "**

We invite anyone receiving this newsletter, who is not already a member of SFA to join us and become an activist for your business. We are here to respond to your business needs in the state capital and around the Southeast Region. We can help you only if we know you and correspond with you regularly.....We would look forward to serving you and your company!

Welcome to SFA New Members: SFA is proud to welcome the following new members into its growing family of successful seafood companies. We encourage each member to support one another for the overall good of maintaining an economic and cultural presence for commercial fishing in America as well as providing marine protein to the people.

Full Corporate Member:

Phoenix Trading Corp./DBA/United Fisheries, Ira Pfeffer, Riviera Beach, FL

Retail Market/Restaurant Member:

John W. Smith Seafood, John W. Smith, North Fort Myers, FL

Friends of Fisherman:

William Sandman/ Past President, Tampa, FL
Leo Cooper/ Past President, Marathon, FL.

Boat Owner:

Miss Sylvia, Inc. M/V West Wind III, Dan Richert, Owner, Tampa, FL

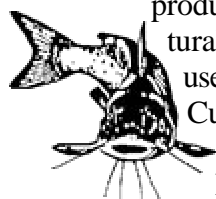
Seafood Restaurant Alliance:

Goatfeathers Restaurant & Seafood Market, Santa Rosa Beach, FL, Pat Miller

Captain Anderson's Restaurant & Water Front Market, Panama City Beach, FL , Patronis Brothers, Inc.

Southern Pride Attends Cuban Food, Agribiz Exhibition

Southern Pride Catfish participated in the U.S. Food & Agribusiness Exhibition held Sept. 26-30 in Havana, Cuba, meeting with the Minister of Fisheries and with Alimport, the primary purchaser of food



products and agricultural products for use by the citizens of Cuba. Said NFI member Randy Rhodes, Vice President of Sales and Marketing, "As an Alabama company with deep roots in the catfish industry, we are very excited to be one of the few U.S. companies taking part in

this historic event. With product trade channels opening up to Cuba, we are optimistic about future export possibilities."

Editors note: Were any US domestic shrimp producing companies invited to attend? If not, Why Not?

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