



David E. Pierce, PhD.
Director

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Division of Marine Fisheries

251 Causeway Street, Suite 400

Boston, Massachusetts 02114

(617) 626-1520

fax (617) 626-1509



Charles D. Baker
Governor

Karyn E. Polito
Lieutenant Governor

Matthew A. Beaton
Secretary

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December 22, 2017

Marine Fisheries Advisory

Request for Participant: 2018 Northern Shrimp RSA/Cooperative Winter Sampling Program - Massachusetts

Introduction

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) and the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (MA DMF) are seeking one Massachusetts (MA) trawl vessel/captain to collect northern shrimp samples in 2018 in accordance with the details below, fishing one trip per week for up to ten consecutive weeks. The participant will work with MA DMF staff to provide fresh shrimp samples from the vessel to the MA DMF Gloucester office each week. The participant will be allowed to land and sell up to 800 pounds of shrimp per trip. There shall be no other compensation.

Purpose

The purpose of the project is to collect northern shrimp samples during the winter period when shrimp are in inshore waters, to gather data on the size, sex, and developmental stages of the shrimp to reflect information that would have been collected from commercial fishery samples.

Location

One MA participant will be selected to fish for shrimp on traditional grounds in the general vicinity of Cape Ann, Ipswich Bay, and/or Scantum Basin; fishing locations within the region shall be chosen by the captain.

Schedule

The MA participant will make their first fishing trip during the week of January 7-13, 2018, and then fish once a week, ending by March 17, 2018, for a total of up to ten trips. The participant shall notify the MA DMF coordinator when a trip is expected to take place in order to prepare for sample analysis.

Vessel and Gear

The participant must have historic northern shrimp fishing experience in the region, documented shrimp landings between 2000 and the ASMFC control date of June 7, 2011, a current US Coast Guard Fishing Vessel Safety Decal, and a current MA DMF commercial saltwater fishing permit with northern shrimp endorsement. The gear must be typical, legal (for northern shrimp) trawl gear with a standard Nordmore grate, a compound grate, or a standard Nordmore with a size-sorting grate (double grate system). The captain must be willing to take an observer.

Sample & Data Collection

During each trip, the participant should attempt to fish in locations in which he/she would normally fish for shrimp. The participant shall collect one 2-kg sample (about 4.5 lbs each) from every tow. Additional biological samples (~2-kg per trip) may occasionally be required throughout the sampling period. Samples of shrimp should be gathered randomly from the catch of each tow. Samples shall be bagged and labeled with date and tow number. Sample labels and bags will be supplied by the MA DMF coordinator. All other shrimp catch may be kept or sold up to a limit of 800 lbs per day.

For each tow, the participant shall record the date, tow number (1, 2, 3 etc.), GPS (latitude/longitude) coordinates of the tow, tow start/end time, tow depth range (fathoms), and estimated pounds of shrimp caught. Data sheets will be supplied by the MA DMF coordinator. All data (e.g. including but not limited to fishing locations, catch, sample analyses, etc.) collected under this RSA/cooperative sampling program will be made public, and will not be confidential.

Sample and Data Delivery

Fresh chilled samples (frozen if not delivered immediately) and data sheets shall be delivered to the MA DMF Gloucester office at a mutually agreed upon time, prior to the next fishing trip.

Vessel Selection & Authorization

The selected vessel and captain will be operating under a MA DMF Letter of Authorization (LOA) for research issued by the MA DMF Director. Data from all shrimp tows must be reported. Any violations of the LOA terms and conditions will result in an immediate revocation of the LOA.

To qualify, applicants must supply the information listed below. Applicants must have documented shrimp landings for at least two years between 2000 and 2011 (but see exception below); MA DMF staff will confirm landings history from our fisheries statistics database. Preference will be given to applicants using a compound or size-sorting grate (double grate system). Applications will be reviewed by MA DMF and MA Environmental Police; marine resource violation(s) will disqualify applicants.

TO APPLY

To apply, interested captains must send a **letter** or **E-mail** with a brief description of the information bulleted below, to:

Kelly Whitmore, Marine Fisheries Biologist
MA Division of Marine Fisheries
30 Emerson Ave., Gloucester, MA 01930

Or, E-mail: kelly.whitmore@state.ma.us

ATTN: Shrimp Winter Sampling Program

INCLUDE A DESCRIPTION OF YOUR:

- **Experience fishing for northern shrimp, and any other fishing experience;** MA DMF will confirm your shrimp landings history from 2000-2011 catch reports. If you've fished for shrimp during this period but landings were reported by someone else, please provide details of the years, vessel name, and license holder(s) who reported.
- **Vessel, gear types, and grate type. Include date of your USCG safety decal, and willingness to have an observer on-board.**

- **General location(s) where you intend to fish.**
- **Understanding of the project's purpose, and plan for avoiding fixed gear.**
- **Who your buyer will be.**

DEADLINE

Letter or E-mail of interest/experience must be received by **5 pm, Fri. December 29, 2017.**