

MEMORANDUM



To: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commissioners
From: Jessica McCawley, Director, Marine Fisheries Management
Date: June 20, 2018
Subject: Draft Rule - Live Food Shrimp

Purpose:

Obtain approval for a draft rule modifying statewide shrimp regulations in 68B-31.009, Florida Administrative Code (FAC), to clarify regulation of the commercial food shrimp fishery that maintains shrimp alive prior to sale.

Summary:

Florida's shrimp fishery is one of the oldest and most valuable commercial fisheries in the state. The Commission's current shrimp regulations are a historical conglomerate of rules with different origins. These regulations are complex, partly because of the unique regionality of the shrimp fishery. This rulemaking is the first step in a long-term effort to streamline and modernize these rules.

The commercial shrimp fishery harvests shrimp for both bait and food. Historically, bait shrimp have been maintained and sold alive while food shrimp were traditionally sold dead and were required to be iced after harvest to maintain proper seafood safety. Similar to the demand for live spiny lobster that emerged in recent years, a global demand for live food shrimp has developed. There are currently no regulations in the Commission's shrimp rules that address maintaining food shrimp alive to the market. Based on the increased demand for live product, the industry has requested modifications to the shrimp regulations that would address the live product and provide for live transit of food shrimp.

In order to allow harvesters to participate in the evolving market for live food shrimp, staff recommends establishing regulations that specifically address and allow this practice statewide. These rule amendments will clarify that transportation of live food shrimp is not required to comply with the current icing requirement in 68E-27.022(5), FAC.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends approving the proposed draft rules for 68B-31.009, FAC, to provide for transport and sale of live food shrimp, including establishing live well requirements for vessels and vehicles as detailed in the draft rule language provided. If approved, staff also recommends returning for a final public hearing at the September 2018 Commission meeting.

Staff Contact and/or Presenter:

Melissa Recks, Division of Marine Fisheries Management