



SCeMFIS Allocates Funding for Seven Research Projects Impacting Fisheries Management

May 9, 2017, D'Iberville, MS - The Industry Advisory Board (IAB) of the Science Center for Marine Fisheries (SCeMFIS) has allocated \$196,142 in funding for seven research projects during the Spring IAB Meeting held April 24-25, 2018 in D'Iberville, Mississippi.

Greg DiDomenico, SCeMFIS Vice Chair noted, “ It was a productive meeting for our members and guests, including a local fishermen Ryan Bradley, Director of the Mississippi Commercial Fisheries United. SCeMFIS continues to meet the needs of the fishing industry and is thriving under the collaborative efforts of our partners.”

SCeMFIS is sponsored by the Industry/University Cooperative Research Program (I/UCRC) of the National Science Foundation. The I/UCRC programs bring participants from industry, government, and other organizations in need of science-based solutions into contact with academic scientists capable of providing that expertise.

The SCeMFIS Industry Advisory Board is composed of members from the shellfish and commercial finfish industries and agencies. The organizational structure provided by the Center permits members to control the science agenda in exchange for financial support under the sponsorship of the National Science Foundation. Industry and agency partners include Atlantic Capes Fisheries Incorporated, Bumble Bee Seafoods Incorporated, Garden State Seafood Association, Intershell Seafood Corporation, LaMonica Fine Foods Incorporated, Lund's Fisheries Incorporated, National Fisheries Institute Clam Committee, National Fisheries Institute Scientific Monitoring Committee, National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA/NMFS) Northeast Fisheries Science Center, Omega Protein, Seafreeze Limited, Sea Watch International, Surfside Products, and The Town Dock.

Funded projects from the Spring 2018 IAB Meeting are as follows:

- Evaluation of Alternative Approaches to Risk-Based Catch Advice. P.I. Steve Cadrin, UMass –Dartmouth; Eric Powell, USM-GCRL
Industry Liaison: Eleanor Bochenek, National Fisheries Institute – Scientific Monitoring Committee
- Analysis of Dredge Efficiency for Ocean Quahog and Surfclam Commercial/Survey Dredges. P.I. Eric Powell, USM-GCRL; Roger Mann, VIMS
Industry Liaison: Tom Dameron, Surfside Products
- Evaluation of Sampling Adequacy for Gulf of Mexico Commercial Menhaden. P.I. Geneviève Nesslage, UMCES-CBL; Robert Leaf, USM
Industry Liaison: Ben Landry, Omega Protein
- Workshop of Management Strategy Evaluation and Statutory Objectives for Marine Mammals. P.I. Paula Moreno, USM-GCRL
Industry Liaisons: Greg DiDomenico, Garden State Seafood Association, and Eleanor Bochenek, National Fisheries Institute – Scientific Monitoring Committee
- Management Strategy Evaluation of Fishery Management for U.S. Marine Mammal Conservation. P.I. Paula Moreno, USM-GCRL
Industry Liaison Greg DiDomenico, Garden State Seafood Association and Eleanor Bochenek, National Fisheries Institute – Scientific Monitoring Committee
- Characterization of the Chub Mackerel Fishery in the Mid-Atlantic for 2018. P.I. Robert Leaf, USM-GCRL
Industry Liaisons: Megan Lapp, Seafreeze Ltd., and Jeff Kaelin, Lund’s Fisheries Inc.
- Design of a Cooperative Winter Pelagic Survey for Atlantic Menhaden in the Mid-Atlantic (Supplement to Existing Project). P.I. Geneviève Nesslage, UMCES-CBL
Industry Liaison: Jeff Kaelin, Lund’s Fisheries, Inc.

For a list of the SCoMFiS research projects already underway, please click the following link, <http://scemfis.org/research.html>. The Industry Advisory Board will review each of its funded projects at its next meeting to be held early November 2018 in Rhode Island.

About SCeMFiS

The SCeMFiS mission utilizes academic and fisheries resources to address urgent scientific problems limiting sustainable fisheries. SCeMFiS develops methods, analytical and survey tools, datasets, and analytical approaches to improve sustainability of fisheries and reduce uncertainty in biomass estimates. SCeMFiS university partners, University of Southern Mississippi (USM), Gulf Coast Research Laboratory (GCRL)(lead institution), and Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS), College of William and Mary, are the academic sites. Collaborating scientists who provide specific expertise in finfish, shellfish, and marine mammal research, come from a wide range of academic institutions including Cornell University, Rutgers University, University of Massachusetts-Dartmouth, University of Maryland Center for Environmental Science, and University of Washington.

The need for the diverse services that SCeMFiS can provide to industry continues to grow, which has prompted a steady increase in the number of fishing industry partners. These services include immediate access to science expertise for stock assessment issues, rapid response to research priorities, representation on stock assessment working groups. Targeted research leading to improvements in data collection, survey design, analytical tools, assessment models, and other needs to reduce uncertainty in stock status and improve reference point goals.

What is the importance of SCeMFiS? Economics. The fishing industry needs urgent answers to maintain the livelihood of many port towns along the coast. However, Tom Murray, emeritus professor of the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, writes that this importance goes much further. He states, "Commercial fishery product landings begin the product development, processing and distribution changes which create additional economic value and impacts beyond the initial landed value and economic impact." In other words, the fishing industry is the catalyst to generate economic value not only in fishing ports but throughout a range of economic sectors including transportation, food services, and supporting manufacturing and financial services. Science in support of sustainable fisheries is a critical component underpinning this economic engine.

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