

NWX-DOC CONFERENCING

**Moderator: Reggie Thompson
February 17, 2012
2:00 pm CT**

Coordinator: Welcome and thank you for standing by. At this time all participants are in a listen-only mode. After today's presentation we will conduct a question-and-answer session. To ask a question, please press star one. And today's conference is being recorded. If you have any objections, you may disconnect at this time.

Now I'd like to turn the meeting over to Delisse Ortiz. Ma'am you may begin.

Delisse Ortiz: Thanks Tim. Hi, everybody. First of all, I would just like to go around introducing who's on the call. Again, myself. Karyl Brewster-Geisz, Michael Clark, Sarah Laputz, Megan Walline, Loraine Hale, Simon Gulak, (Craig Cockerell), and I believe, did I miss anybody? I believe, oh Margo Schulze-Haugen, and I believe that is all the individuals, all the National Fisheries Service staff.

So the purpose of the meeting is to basically inform selected participants of the new terms and conditions of the terms and conditions of this years Shark Research Fishery Permit, there's been substantial changes and we'd just like to make sure that all the participants are crystal clear on what those changes entail.

Now the way that we're going to do the meeting is that the meeting is open to the public, however, only the selected individuals, the five selected individuals will be allowed to speak during the meeting and ask questions.

However, I do want to stress that, you know, if any member of the public that wasn't selected for the Shark Research Fishery has any comments or concerns, things they would like to say, then they are more than welcome to call the HMS Management Division at 301-427-8503.

It's important to know that the attendance to this meeting is mandatory for those who were selected and any failure to be present today or accept any of the terms and conditions that I will discuss today will result in the participant not being able to participate in the Shark Research Fishery.

And the way that I'll run it is just to make sure that I can get to everything is, I'll leave the questions to the end, and go through all of the terms and conditions regarding quotas, retention, trip limits, if you have a clarifying question you can do that about something that I'm saying at the time, but I prefer to go through everything because your questions might be based on something that I have yet to discuss.

So with that I'll begin with why we made the changes to the research permit. In part, it was because we've heard a lot of concerns from the fishermen and also our concerns about several aspects of the fishery. One has been sort of how to try and reduce discards.

Right now there can be anywhere from 150 to 400 hooks with a trip limit of 33 large coastal sharks or 33 sandbar and that can lead to a lot of discards that are unnecessary. It's a lot of waste.

So we want to address that, but we also wanted to try and to the extent possible increase or maintain current fishing practices so there wouldn't be any disruption in the way that the fishermen operate while participating in the shark research fishery.

And also because it is a research fishery and what we're trying to gather is biological and research and data on prohibited species such as sandbar, we also want to determine how effective fishermen could actually be at targeting sandbar. Well, targeting species of concern which include sandbar, while reducing any other possible by-catch of other shark species such as large coastal sharks.

And of course, it's a research fishery so we want to meet some of the research objectives, which you're all kind of familiar with. That can include collecting reproductive data, such as taking fin clips, tagging to get movement and depth information on habitat, and also very important is to maintain a time series of abundance basically where these sharks are and how many of them are out there within the Shark Bottom Longline Observer Program.

And so with that being said, I just want to go over the changes and so I've put them on a different section. And I want to start with the way that we set up the quota section. So in the past as you know there's been a trip limit. What we did this year is we took the sandbar research fishery quota, which is about 89 metric tons, and we split it equally among the five participants.

So each participant can land up to 31,000 pounds dressed weight of sandbar research fishery quota and 13,000 pounds dressed weight of non-sandbar large coastal shark (LCS) research fishery quota. That means that each individual is sort of has their own portion of both sandbar and non-sandbar large coastal shark quota for the entire year.

Now the way that it works is you'll go out, you'll make your trips, and once either quota is taken, the participant's ability to make another trip to collect samples will depend A, on how much of that quota is left and also the

funding and the observer availability, but it doesn't necessarily mean that you might not be able to go out, it will be basically evaluated on a case-by-case basis. So it could mean that you're done for that year but not necessarily. So just keep that in mind.

If you catch while you're out there any pelagic or small coastal shark, it will be counted against the appropriate commercial quota. So if you catch pelagic sharks, it will be counted against that quota. If you catch a bonnethead or a sharpnose it will be counted against the small coastal shark quota. But just keep in mind that any sandbar or non-sandbar large coastal shark, that is caught, will be counted against the research fishery quota for those two groups.

Now in terms of gear and trip restrictions. You'll be allowed to do only one longline set during each shark research fishery trip. You will only be able to have 150 or fewer hooks on board each vessel. Once a participant conducts a trip, that participant cannot go on another trip until the observer program has received a weighed-out form and verifies that there is still a portion of either quota provided to the participant left.

I know I've received a lot of questions on "Oh can you do back-to-back trips?" And again that will be dependent upon when we can have landings information, because what we don't want to run into is somebody going out, you know, say they catch, I don't know, 50% of their quota, we just want to make sure that they can go out and do another trip and we'll have enough quota to cover them.

Now I know I've been asked a lot of questions too about the total number of fishing trips authorized. Well, that will be limited by what our research needs are and also just the number of approved observers that will be available. You

know we are in difficult times with difficult sort of budgets to work with, and so that will be dependent upon how many observers are available to observe those trips.

Like previous years, the vessels participating in the shark research fishery will be assigned observers on a first-come, first-served basis. For the February-March through June trip plan, that so far includes one trip a month, but it could be changed if needed, so keep that in mind.

And then also keep in mind that vessels that are able to plan trips in advance will be given preference for scheduling trip dates. And you can start doing that, the minute that this call ends you can call (Lori) or (Simon) or Alyssa or (John) and say, "Hey, I want to go out, these are my preferred dates." And they can try and get you out as soon as next week. Okay?

Now in terms of retention restrictions. Okay. Basically the observer sort of has the first dibs on things. So whatever comes up, the observer must be allowed to tag or sample as needed any shark that is caught. So he/she gets to make the first call.

No prohibited shark species can be retained. That includes dusky sharks. All sharks except prohibited species that are caught and are brought to the vessel dead must be landed. Okay, and I want to stress that out. So whatever you catch, if it's dead, you have to land it and again if it's a sandbar or if it's a large coastal shark, it will go against your individual quotas. If it's any other, you know, species such as a pelagic or small coastal it will be counted against the appropriate commercial quota.

However, all sharks again except prohibited species that are caught and brought to the vessel alive, may be either landed or released alive. Okay, so if

it's dead, you have to keep it. If it's alive, you have two choices, You can either land it or you can release it.

And again, that depends also on the observer. If you catch something and the observer wants to tag it and release it, then so be it.

All sandbar or non-sandbar live coastal sharks caught that are retained, again, will be counted against your quota, okay. And I have just a few examples to provide some context in for some of the different situations you might run into. So for example, you're out there, you make a trip, you pull up 75 live and dead sandbar sharks. Can you keep them all? The answer is yes, you can keep them all unless the observer would like to tag some of those live ones, okay?

So again like I said the observer has the first dibs on, you know, what comes up alive.

Now let's say you pull up 50 dead hammerhead, bull, and bonnethead sharks. Can you keep them all? Keep in mind they're all dead. The answer is yes. You would need to keep all dead sharks in all categories, okay, and this is a way to reduce any discards.

That's why we put the 150 hooks, and allowing you to retain anything that you catch on those 150 hooks. Again, the only exception is you cannot keep any prohibited shark species.

Another question. Let's say you want to go longlining for bait before you go on your research trip. Can you? And the answer to that is you really only allowed to do one longline set per trip. Again, I'm going to repeat that, one

longline set per trip. If you want to longline for bait, you need to do it before you actually go out on the research trip.

And this one longline set for trip is basically because we want to encourage individuals to solely fish in the shark research fishery and put that effort in that research fishery set. We want to discourage individuals from saying, "Okay well, I didn't really catch my sharks in that research set so I'm going to do this other supposedly non-research set to try and catch more sharks." It's kind of disguising it as trying to do a set in another fishery that's not relevant.

And also I want you to keep in mind that it's a courtesy of the agency to allow individuals to fish other gears and longlines. And so I just wanted to stress that any targeting of sandbar with other gears would be a violation of the terms and conditions of this permit and could result in enforcement action. So again that's part of why the one longline set per trip.

Let's see. So in that example, let's see, "Can I fish other gear while longline set is in the water?" So you go out, you put your research set, longline set, the answer for that is yes. As long as you have fished one longline set. And it's not another longline set that you're trying to put.

So let's say you go out, you put your longline research set and then you go, "I want to do another longline set for tuna." You cannot do that. However, you want to catch, gillnet, I mean you want to catch blacktips on a gillnet or sorry, let me go back. You go out, you put a longline set, and while that's soaking you want to go on another, put another set like say, gillnet. Yes, you can do it.

Just keep in mind that whatever sharks are caught on that gillnet set, like say blacktips will be counted against your research individual quotas and not your commercial quota, okay.

Other question. “Can I do back-to-back trips?” And like I said before that will depend on how much quota you have left, and if we receive the weigh-out forms, either the observer has received those or we have, so again we need to have information on how much quota you have left before we make another trip, so keep that in mind.

And then the last question is, “Can I use sharks as bait in the shark research fishery?” And the question is no. Any sharks cannot be used as bait.

Now other conditions. This pertains to when the permit expires and not much has changed from previous years, so your permit will expire at the end of the year or when either portion of your sandbar or non-sandbar large coastal shark is filled.

Or unless otherwise specified, meaning if you meet the terms and conditions of your permit. The permit is only valid for the vessel, vessel owner, and terms and conditions on the permit. Remember you cannot transfer to another vessel or owner. If you fail to abide by these terms and conditions, including failure to carry an observer and failure to abide by the research objectives, that is grounds for permit revocation.

Now to arrange a placement, like I said, after this call you can feel free to call Lori Hale or (Simon) or Alyssa Mathers after the call but usually if you want to set up a trip you can do at least 48 hours prior to any trip in which you would like to participate.

And again, if you have any questions concerning regulations, I encourage the participants, the selected participants to call not the observer program but

actually call the HMS Management Division at our number, again 301-427-8503.

And now I'd like to open the session for questions. So Tim, we're ready.

Coordinator: All right. If you would like to ask a question, please press star one. You will be prompted to record your name. Please make sure your phone is unmuted and record your name slowly and clearly when prompted. One moment, please.

We do have a question from Joe Klosterman. Your line is open.

Joe Klosterman: Yeah, on the 150 or fewer hooks, no other hooks on the boat?

Delisse Ortiz: That's correct. No other hooks on the...

Joe Klosterman: So I can't have a hook to troll kingfish, I can't have a smaller hook that I use for bottom-fishing, I can't have any other hook on the boat than the 150 hooks that I'm allowed to set?

Delisse Ortiz: That's correct.

Joe Klosterman: That's, that's. How can you engage in any other, another fishery and not have any other hooks on the boat?

Delisse Ortiz: Well, what we're trying to do again is engage in other fisheries that are...

Joe Klosterman: Well, like sometimes I'll go and I'll troll kingfish or I'll troll mackerel while I'm looking for a shark set. So I wouldn't be allowed to do that?

Delisse Ortiz: If it would mean using longline.

Joe Klosterman: No, not longline, I'm talking about trolling.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: You can still, this is Karyl.

Joe Klosterman: Yeah.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: You can still troll, but you would need to, you know, set aside what hooks you're using for the longline and what hooks you're using to troll.

Joe Klosterman: Well, being as how we have an observer on the boat and we're only allowed to set 150 hooks, I don't see where the, what it should say is, you know, we only set 150 leaders per set and I mean, the observer keeps track of that, I mean they count them before they go out and they count them when they come back. Having extra gear on the boat, I don't see where that will affect the sets.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Keep in mind the observers are not enforcement.

Joe Klosterman: I understand that, but they're writing down the amount of hooks that you're putting in the water, I mean that's the important thing, is how many hooks go in the water.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: If you want to use some of your hooks to troll, you're allowed to do that. That means you would not be setting 150 in the research, you would be setting some other amount that's less than that.

Joe Klosterman: Yeah, I understand, but you don't have like - some of my gaff hooks have a shark hook on the hook for the point end of the hook. I mean, I wouldn't be

allowed to carry one extra hook to replace that hook with, I mean it doesn't really make a lot of sense. I mean, in keeping the fishery to what you want. I mean, I can understand having 150 leaders on the boat, you know 150 shark-hook leaders, but you should be able to have extra tackle.

Delisse Ortiz: That's something we can definitely, you know, consider for the future, but for now, you know, the change has been again to allow 150 hooks and retain everything that you catch on those 150 hooks.

Joe Klosterman: Yeah, that's, I'm going along with that, I see the logic in that. I don't see the logic in not having any other hooks than that 150 hooks on the boat. It's almost, I mean like I'd be going - I'd have to take 90% of the gear I got on the boat off, and just leave the shark hooks on.

I mean, I've got spoons, I've got you know individual hooks for bally rigs, I mean, I've got bottom-fishing hooks, I've got dolphin hooks, I've got all other kinds of hooks on the boat. I mean I'd have to take like almost all the gear off the boat except for the 150 shark-hook leaders, and then I'd be - the only thing I could do was set this 150 hooks. .

Delisse Ortiz: Yeah, I mean, I know that - you know, I'm listening to what you're saying and I know it's definitely something different and you have to adjust, but you know it's the only way that we can guarantee that, you know, individuals are out there are going to try and target sandbar.

At the same time trying to reduce any possible discards and keeping them, you know, keeping them sort of with the ability to go out, because if you look at the two quotas, the sandbar and the non-sandbar large coastal shark, I mean the non-sandbar large coastal shark is linked to the sandbar, so...

Joe Klosterman: Yeah, but that's not even open on the Atlantic until July 15, so that that's - but what I'm saying is 150 leaders, that makes sense, 150 shark drops, drop leaders, I mean that makes sense. But no other hooks other than that 150 hooks on the boat, that seems more than you need restrictive. And if somebody makes a set with more than 150 hooks, the observer would be there to see it, to witness it, and then they would get thrown out of the fishery.

Delisse Ortiz: Yeah but the observer is not there to enforce the rules, he's just there to observe.

Joe Klosterman: I understand he doesn't have to enforce it, but he reports it, and then it would be up to law enforcement to, you know, take the permit. I mean if somebody sets more than 150 hooks and they've cancelled the agreement, I can understand that. But not having, only having 150 hooks on the boat seems, you know, restrictive beyond what you're trying to accomplish.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: We will definitely take that into consideration, Joe. This is what we've done in other fisheries where we have limited the gears, limited the number of hooks on board because that's the only way really to enforce the issue.

Joe Klosterman: I understand, and I've heard horror stories about guys with swordfish boats that had a couple of J hooks on the boat for other, for dolphin and other stuff and got large fines. I mean, you know, it wasn't even - they weren't even using them for catching swordfish but just the hooks are, you know there are seven or eight hooks on a boat that they use for catching dolphin around the side of the boat, and they get fined for that.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Right. We're trying to avoid anything like that.

Joe Klosterman: I understand you're trying to avoid everything, it's just - I have to take a lot of gear off the boat just to, you know, comply.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: I understand.

Joe Klosterman: And then I wouldn't be able to troll for kingfish or mackerel while I was looking to make a shark set, and then sometimes I'd make a feeler set of 50 hooks to see if the sharks are there. You know, we wouldn't be able to do that, we'd have to set 150 hooks and then if we catch four or five sharks then we'd have to come in, unload the four or five sharks, then go back out and set another 150 hooks and look for the fish.

Delisse Ortiz: Unless you split the 150 hooks and you took, you know, 25 as feelers and then you use the other one.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: You can only do one longline.

Delisse Ortiz: Well, that's true, yeah. You have to do it before you go out.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: This is something we've heard from other people, Joe.

Joe Klosterman: Yeah.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: So we'll have to see how it goes.

Joe Klosterman: So I go out there looking for sandbars and don't bring any in?

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Yeah, if we're seeing that consistently then we will modify the permits to allow for the feeler sets.

Joe Klosterman: Okay. That seems reasonable. You know, I mean in the best-case scenario which has been happening in the last three years, I've gone out and set 150 hooks and had 50, 60 heads a set. So I'm - but there are times when I've went out there, thought I'd get them in a certain spot, didn't, moved a little bit to the north or south, found them and then caught them again, you know. But I was doing small sets looking for them after I didn't have a good set.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Right. As I said, if needed we can modify the permit to adjust for things like that.

Joe Klosterman: I think that would make it more efficient. I mean you know as in burning fuel and time for the - time you have to pay the observer and all that kind of thing.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: So we'll see what happens and then modify as we need to.

Joe Klosterman: I mean, there's no restriction on the amount of head or pounds you can bring in, it seems like, you know, the only 150 hooks and only one set, it seems like, you know, there might be a little, if there was a little more leeway in that, it would be more beneficial to the fishing.

Delisse Ortiz: All right.

Joe Klosterman: And still not break the actual 150-hook rule.

Delisse Ortiz: Thanks, Joe.

Joe Klosterman: Thank you.

Coordinator: Next question comes from (Charlie Locke).

(Charlie Locke): Can you guys hear me okay?

Delisse Ortiz: Yes.

(Charlie Locke): Okay. I think what's Joe's asking is common sense, you know, bring some common sense into this, the hooks on the boat. It would be like, and Lori will back this up with observer data from this fall, I went and made a set and then I caught 600 pounds of kingfish on my way in, and in other words it pays for my fuel to go out there and make a set.

And that's what he's saying, by limiting us to 150 hooks you've already scaled it so far back that we're taking a chance going fishing, and then now that we can't even target anything else hook-and-line-wise, you know, that's what he's saying is, you know, I can understand the 18 offset circle hooks, whatever gear you use, 700-pound leader, the 150 hooks, I have no problem with that either, like he's saying.

But like him I myself am going to have to literally take everything out of my console, even down to the littlest lively hook that catch live bait could be legal, if I have a bug reel and I've got a bug tied to it, and I've got a 150-hook set, what he's saying, because of the strictness of that, it's like it's not common sense. In other words, the shark leaders - I think that's what he's trying to get by on.

But I've got a couple other questions. The first one I'll ask is, is the shark for bait. Now I use spiny dog shark and smooth dog shark, and I catch them and I put them in the freezer. Spiny dog sharks are closed right now, but I always catch them and put a bunch of them up in the freezer at the fish house. And then the smooth dogs we catch year-round and I use those for bait. So are they considered shark bait, or are you talking about shark nose for bait?

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: You can't use shark as bait. That is against our regulations and has been for a very long time.

(Charlie Locke): Even spiny dog shark that's not regulated, and smooth dog if it was caught and landed and goes against the quota? You can't use that as bait, because that's the way I...

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Well spiny is not managed, I will not speak to spiny. Smooth at this point are not, if you are positive that enforcement is not going to think the smooth is some other kind of shark, then at this point that's fine, because we do not manage it.

(Charlie Locke): Okay, well, that's what I thought and I just wanted to be clear that you know since it's not a managed - I'd always landed it and it went against respective quota, but then I also used it for bait, because it's probably the best bait there is for shark.

Okay, another question. Like Joe said, the feeler set, I think that I tried to - I was telling you a little bit about it last night at the meeting, Karyl. Sometimes I wonder how - if you all really know how fishing takes place. You know we're fishing a species of shark that nobody fishes for. There's nobody out there looking for them, you can't call your buddy and say, hey where did you see them last, were they down in shore, were they offshore, and go and be - kind of be in the zone.

So like Joe I would make a four-hour set and haul it back, and sometimes they were in shore, offshore, east or west, and sometimes I would adjust for my overnight set. But not only that, up here I did that for prohibited species, mainly dusky sharks. I wanted to make sure there weren't a lot of dusky

sharks around, there was times I made a four-hour soak and I caught six dusky sharks and one sandbar, and I got up and I got out of there, I mean I ran like 20 miles north and re-set, because I didn't want, you know, the dusky catch.

So there was an avoidance practice not only for finding out where the sandbars were but also for me, in this area, to avoid prohibited species.

And so you're really disadvantaging the fisherman with this practice - what this, you know, when I read this, it's saying, we're trying to do this 150 hooks but we don't really want to hinder the normal operations that fishermen, you know how it takes place. To me that's completely hindering me being able to dial in on where I need to be, and also targeting the size shark that I want to catch.

You know, a lot of times we'll make a feeler set and there's a lot of juveniles. And the larger sharks are offshore and we'll adjust and move offshore for the overnight. And I just think that right there in itself is going to have major implications on, you know, being able to be selective, being able to get our gear with such few hooks in the right spot to make this work. I think that's going to be a problem, especially in this area.

One more thing I'll say. We're starting out with a brand-new year. Now I - it sounded like we were going to get one trip a month. So we've already lost January. So now we've got February here and it's almost over. So say this first, trip, say I call Lori and I want to do a trip. I've got to run about 25 miles where I'm fishing.

If I run all the way out there 25 miles and make a set, in the blind, which is basically what it's going to be, and I go back the next day and like Joe said the

fisher on the very last hook for my gear, they're offshore, they're inshore, and I've finally get an idea where they're at.

Well now I'm done, you know I'm done until I come in, I land, get my weigh-out report, and then I call in and maybe she'll give me another trip in a couple of days depending on weather, whether you'll get back out there and then those fish have moved on or they've changed, and it's totally different, you're blind again.

So what I'm asking is, especially for this first trip where your quota's so wide open and you're obviously not going to catch anywhere near your quota in one 150-hook set, is there some flexibility in saying, "Okay, Lori, I want to get fishing this week." And she says, "Okay, I'm going to give you January's trip and February's trip."

That way when I'm out there fishing, I've already got the, you know, I'm offshore, I've got the fuel in being out there, I'm hauling my gear and I'm saying, okay, there's some bigger sharks offshore, I'm going to re-set out here, I've already got the bait to make my other set for my next day's landing while I'm already out there.

Is there some kind of flexibility in that, because that, you know I'll go to Florida in March, in April March to mackerel fish, and she would usually give me my days to when I got back. In other words, I would lose those two days and I would get a couple of trips in a row to kind of make up for the days of the month that I missed.

And, you know, are we - I got a big, I'm rambling on here and I'll stop and let you all talk in a minute. We did not catch this quota for two years in a row, we have not caught it. And that was with nine vessels and a 33-head trip on this

hooking going on, you know. And here we're down to five boats, 150 hooks and not being able to fish, you know, like to fish.

I mean I'm talking about the common-sense kind of fishing. And a fisherman has to fish, catch fish, he has to learn where they're at, get - Joe will back me up on this, that's how you fish, that's what we call fishing because you've literally got to fish around till you find them.

I mean this is like a needle in a haystack. I mean that's just what I see this being, a needle in a haystack, you're really going to have to be lucky, and we're really going to have to get a lot of days to go to even get close to catching this quota. And I'll end with that and let you all respond.

Delisse Ortiz: Lori, did you want to respond to (Charlie)'s question on the trip schedule?

Lori Hale: I can. Yeah, in the past when we've missed the month, can you all hear me, just by the way?

Delisse Ortiz: Yes.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Yes.

Lori Hale: Okay. In the past when we've missed the month we have combined months. You know in the future to make up for missed time. So there's a precedent for that. I would, you know, default to HMS to make the final decision on that, but you know, Charlie is correct since we're starting in February we're one month behind on, you know, that split quota, we certainly have enough cushion there that we could say, for the first trip have, you know, a two-set or two trips back to back.

We would still need the weigh-out, you know, into the office between each trip, but logistically wise with the observer program we wouldn't have a problem providing the permits for that.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Thanks, Lori.

Delisse Ortiz: And then Charlie I think your question was regarding bait and I think Karyl responded, and I think your second was about the feeler sets, just like similar to what Joe had commented on and I believe again we're going to pay close attention to see how things operate in the beginning and then, you know, if it's not working we'll adjust and then we'll kind of look into seeing how it could be more efficient.

We'll still, you know, making it also cost-effective and, you know, adjust and issue new permits if needed.

(Charlie Locke): Okay.

Coordinator: We have no other questions in queue.

Delisse Ortiz: Somebody have a question?

Coordinator: (Charlie), your line is still open if you had another question.

(Charlie Locke): Well, let me - because I think this is going to be a major issue and I think Joe will probably get back on here and say something. But I think as of right now you really, you really have got to, you've got to realize that 150 hooks on the boat, that's fine but it's like - I've got an option to gillnet.

Now I don't have an option to gillnet sharks because there's some different closures up here and stuff I've looked into, you know, with harbor porpoises and this and that. I'm really up against a battle doing that, you know, I've talked to Karyl about doing feeler sets for sandbar with a gillnet but you're really likely to encounter more juvenile fish because they don't really - you can't catch those sharks in a net very effectively.

But this whole deal with making this work, you know, you've got to justify your fuel expenses. Joe's going to have to justify his fuel expense going out and making a set, running out there and sticking it out, plopping it out basically which is what we're going to be doing without any kind of knowledge about what's there.

You're going to have to supplement your fuel and your time and your expense somehow and down there basically all they have is hook-and-line fisheries, you know, he's either going to have to go bottom-fishing or he's going to have to go, you know, king mackerel fishing or whatever, and I think there needs to be some common-sense approach to that as far as this 150 hooks.

I mean it's obvious what a shark hook is and a shark leader, and it's obvious what another kind of hook and leader is, and I just really think you all need to think that over a little bit because that's going to really eliminate, if there is a chance of this 150 hooks working at all, you're going to have to supplement your time and effort on the water, you know, with something else beside just 150-hook set.

Delisse Ortiz: So okay, curiosity Charlie how would you address that. How would it be, like, cost-effective? Keeping in mind that we want to reduce any discards, we want to make sure that you know individuals don't go over their non-sandbar large coastal shark quota, and that fishermen are not going out and saying, "Oh

yeah I'm going to do a research set," sorry a non-research set, but really what they're trying to do is get more of their research quota.

(Charlie Locke): Well for one up here, you know, I'm talking about, I'm not talking about another longline set. For one, I can't, you know, somebody said something about "Well you'll have to go out before your trip and make a set, and see what's there." Well I can't do that here, I'm in a closed area, you know, I'm in a time closed area from January 1 to July 31, no bottom longline gear.

If I go out there and make a feeler set, I'm in violation. So there is no "go out before the trip and see what's there" deal for me. So what I'm trying to say is you can look at my landings history for the last two years in research fisheries, Lori will tell you this, there's not many trips that all I do is go set longline gear and come in.

I mean I'm usually fishing net, I'm doing something while I'm out there because, and especially now, because I cannot do a feeler set, therefore my day more than likely I'm going to run out and set some net and then go offshore and set a longline set and come back in and fish my gear inshore so I have a day's work.

In other words I didn't miss a whole day just to set that gear, and that's what Joe was trying to say. With this - we're not talking longline hooks, longline leaders or any of that. We're talking about hooks, period. When Karyl's saying, "Well if you're going to mackerel fish," the way I'm understanding Karyl, and you all are seeing this, and, is that if he wants to go king mackerel fishing, he's going to drag four hooks that he can only set 146 hooks on his longline gear, because the law says 150 hooks, period.

And what he's saying is have some common sense in that there's a big difference between a hook you're going to drag for mackerel and a hook you're going to bottom-fish with, and a longline hook and leader, and also the observer is on there. I know he's not enforcement, but he is writing everything down. And so there's really no room for error and there needs to be a little more common-sense approach to make this 150 hooks work.

If you don't do that, the 150 hooks is like I said it's a needle in a haystack, we're going to basically be going out there, taking a really big gamble at \$4 fuel to go try to catch something with no chance of doing anything else to supplement the sandbar set. And I'll end with that.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Thanks, (Charlie).

Delisse Ortiz: Any other questions?

Coordinator: Ah yes, Joe Klosterman. Let me open your line again.

Joe Klosterman: On the, addressing the catching the quota? It'd be, if we can say, you know, if we can do more than one set a month, when the fish are here, if we can go make a couple of 150-hook sets and catch five, six up to 8,000 pounds in a month, I don't see any reason why I couldn't catch my 30,000. The only reason I didn't catch my 30,000 this year was in December, I go deer hunting in November, and that was taking up that whole month.

So when I came back from deer hunting and was thinking about making shark trips, I ended up having to get ready for tile fishing, and it took so much time, it ended up taking me two weeks to get ready for tile fishing, I didn't have enough time left or the gear on the boat to shark fish. So if we have more

leeway on when we can make our trips, I don't see any reason why we can't produce our quota if we can target the fish when they're in our area.

Delisse Ortiz: So what I heard you say Joe is you want more leeway but you want at least a couple of sets each of 150 hooks, right?

Joe Klosterman: Well, yeah, what I'm saying is if you want us to you know produce some fish, we got to have leeway on how we set those 150 hooks and more than one trip a month, more than one set of 150 hooks. If you want us to produce our quota, I'm sure I could do it by June when, while the fish are here.

Now when it comes into the later end of the fall and stuff it's more hit or miss and that's when I just happen to, you know, make more feeler sets and look around for the fish. So if we could make, if we could get more trips when the fish are in our area, I don't see any reason why this couldn't work if it's really conducted like an IFQ fishery, where we could fish when we wanted to, when the fish were in our area.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: So you just - you want to fish when the sharks are there.

Joe Klosterman: Well that's we'd be able to produce our quota that way. Now if we just fish one set a month, like we were doing in the previous research fishery, or not one set a month or like (Charlie) was saying sometimes Lori would say you can bring in three quotas. So we just fished till we got the three quotas. Now most of the time I, you know, got the two or three quotas, the 66 head or the 99 head or whatever she allowed me to catch, easily produce that. But sometimes it took more than one set.

Lori Hale: I can comment, this is Lori, I can comment on that if you'd like.

Delisse Ortiz: Yeah, sure.

Lori Hale: You know I agree that was kind of our goal last year was to try to target the effort and the times when the fish were there, you know, and make it a little more, both good for the data and good for the fishermen, you know, to be able to focus your effort on the times when we knew we would catch, you know, at least 33 head and maybe reduce some of the effort in the months when you wouldn't necessarily be catching as many.

What happened was we had only two fishermen out of the ten that basically fished all year round, and two of those people are on the phone call today. And basically the other eight fishermen fished for let's say three to five months and then didn't do anything else.

So because we have fewer boats we do need to make sure we get our good temporal and spatial coverage in all of the areas and get enough data to be able to fulfill the research requirements of the fishery.

However, you know, depending again on what HMS says, if we see that there are months and especially over the first couple of months here of trying this out, then we're not catching anything, there's always the potential to increase the number of trips a month. So that's not - that can be adjusted as Karyl said.

And I had a - I just wanted you to define a feeler set for me, Joe, just so everybody's clear on what you mean by that.

Joe Klosterman: A feeler set is usually like 50 hooks and maybe you leave for an hour to three hours, it's basically just seeing if there's any fish in the area. That's what I call a feeler set.

Lori Hale: So it's not an overnight soak, and but you would set it with the same type of gear, you know, no different leaders or anything and same bait and everything, but you wouldn't leave it out more than an hour, you say?

Joe Klosterman: An hour would be the, at least an hour, it takes that long for your base of fish, it takes - in other words, most of the time you still have bait left after an hour. In other words, when you - to have a good set, you'd want to see most of your bait gone.

Lori Hale: You know something was eating it.

Joe Klosterman: Yeah, right so you know there's some kind of life in the area. So basically it's an hour to three hours is like a feeler set, which is just you know, it's just seeing if there's anything in the area and if you produce five or ten head of fish, you know, while on a short set, then you know there's fish in the area. You put that out and you don't catch anything, well then you know then you'd want to look for a different place.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: So when you look for a different place, you set another feeler set?

Joe Klosterman: It - well, we weren't restricted to the amount of hooks we set before. So if I set 150 hooks like okay, I go out in the daytime and I set a set and pull it up before dark, and I had my - I had a good return on the hooks I put out, then I'd go ahead and set the rest of it.

And then if I didn't catch anything on that, on the overnight set, then I'd go make another feeler set in a different area and look for it to produce, and then I'd make my 150-hook set that night in that area.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Right, but I'm asking if you put out your first feeler set and you don't catch anything.

Joe Klosterman: Then I would - it would depend on what time of day it was. If it was overnight, I don't like pulling gear at nighttime, it's just - it's dangerous and it's hard to stay on your gear. I'd rather pull during the daytime. So making a feeler set at nighttime, I don't usually do that. If I'm going out and I'm setting after dark, I put the whole thing out. And then if I don't catch anything on that set, then I start making feeler sets the next day.

Lori Hale: And Joe usually would the sharks be alive after that feeler set because it's such a short soak or...

Joe Klosterman: Definitely sandbars.

Lori Hale: Yeah, okay.

Joe Klosterman: If you catch sandbars they'd be alive. Now other species die a lot quicker on the line, say hammerheads and blacktips, they don't usually last over half an hour on the line.

Lori Hale: Okay, thanks.

Megan Walline: This is Megan Walline from GCF I was trying to call I was on another call, I'm sorry to interrupt.

Delisse Ortiz: Hi Megan, welcome back.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Do we have any other questions?

Coordinator: No other questions are in the queue at this time.

Delisse Ortiz: Okay. Well (Charlie) and Joe, I appreciate your concerns. And you know, we'll definitely take them into consideration. Joe, I did want to ask you one question. You said a feeler's about - you put 50 hooks, that's a reasonable amount, not like 25 hooks for a feeler set? Or it just depends?

Coordinator: You had a question?

Delisse Ortiz: Question for Joe Klosterman.

Coordinator: Joe if you would hit star one again, and (Charlie)'s back in the queue as well, too. Joe, star one once again please?

Joe is getting back on here, one moment.

Delisse Ortiz: Okay.

Coordinator: Go ahead, Joe.

Joe Klosterman: Yeah, sometimes we'd set 25 hooks, usually what we do is we try to spread them out a lot further than our normal set, you know, we usually get 50 to 75 hooks a mile on the gear and what we'll do is we'd, you know, a mile or two miles out with just 50 hooks. So try to cover an area with less hooks.

And sometimes I've put out 25 hooks. It just depends on what I - the amount of miles that I think I need to cover to research an area.

Delisse Ortiz: Okay, thank you.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: And then (Charlie) are you the same way when you set your feelers?

Coordinator: The question was directed to (Charlie), I'll open his line.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Thank you.

Coordinator: (Charlie), your line's open.

(Charlie Locke): Okay, my - well, my feeler set would be different, because I've got probably the littlest amount of gear that anybody's fishing, I've got about three miles and I would basically just set my whole three miles with usually about 300 hooks is about what I could get on it if I really crammed them in there. And I would give it about four hours, I always gave it four hours, whatever time I set it I gave it four hours and I hauled it.

And that was more or less if I set it inshore to offshore or east to west, where the fish were at, the size of the fish, the dusky sharks and this and that. And I'm not saying you need to set 300, but I think like Joe said, if we could at least have the ability to do a feeler set, without it counting against our one set, you know, even if you time it, if you say you give us 100 hooks for two hours, at least for me it would be a nice way to - it would be a way to fish.

Like I said, without just plopping it out there and hoping for the best. And so if that's what you all are asking for, you know, I'm like - I've got three miles, I would probably, whether you gave me 50 hooks or 100 hooks for a feeler set I would set all three miles and just spread them out to try to figure out where they were at, on which end.

And, but I think that would be for me and probably for Joe a critical factor in being able to be, you know, a little bit more selective and a little bit more dialed in on what we're fishing on by being able to at least make a feeler set of some sort.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Okay. Can we hear from (Robert) or (Mark) or (Luke).

Coordinator: And gentlemen again it's star one once you get into the question queue.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: I just want to hear if the other three have similar feeler sets or need feeler sets. Don't be shy.

Coordinator: Okay, and then (Luke) is in the queue now. (Luke), if your line is open. (Luke), your line is open, go ahead and unmute.

(Luke Hill): Yeah, I'm just here listening. I kind of agree with what they're talking about there on the feeler set.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: And do you have similar feeler sets that they describe, because it sounds like two different types/

(Luke Hill): I haven't did that in the past but you know like they say to try to hone in on the fish a little bit I think we may have to adjust our fishing practice a little bit.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Okay. Thank you.

Coordinator: And (Mark), I'll open your line.

(Mark Twinam): Yeah, I like the whole concept there because you know you don't have to throw any sandbars back, if you know, before if you had a low set you got it,

if you got a good set you couldn't have it, you could only have 33 so I like the concept. But you know we'll probably as we move forward want to change things a little bit.

I feel kind of the same way, you got it all in one set, if I got to run 50 miles right now, somebody tells me there's some sharks 50 miles away, that's a long run, if you don't hit them you'd like to at least make another set and you already had the observer on board. It only costs the observer another, you know, 24 hours, where if you have to come in and go out and make another set, you take and you're talking however much time going in, time going out, you know it's less efficient that way.

But sure I agree with the guy that spoke previously, I'm sure as we go forward we'll find a way to adjust to it. That's it.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz : Thanks (Mark).

Coordinator: And (Robert), I'll open your line.

(Robert Knapp): Yes, hi everybody.

Group: Hi (Robert).

(Robert Knapp): Let's see. Well, it's really going to be a challenge with 150 hooks. I think out of the gate we won't have a problem with 150 hooks this time of year. Once that water warms up, you can put a feeler set out probably in July, that bait's going to last about ten minutes anyway.

Once you start getting into summer down here in Florida in the hot water, at times it gets up to high 80s, it's going to be real hard to locate sharks even with 50 hooks and a feeler set.

I think we're going to have a problem catching sharks in the summer times on 150 hooks because like I said, it's not that always the sharks aren't there, it's amount of time that that bait can stay on the hook with whatever peckerfish, water temperature washes the bait out. So it's kind of going to be like hanging sheet rock with one arm in the summertime, I'll tell you that, with 150 hooks. You might want to increase the hooks in the summertime.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Okay.

(Robert Knapp): Just a little bit of my input. Lori, you'll know by the records of what was caught in what months and when it was the slow time. Of course we're going to need data in the months that the fishing is slow, I would think. So to get good data, we're going to have to have a lot of hooks during the slow time or it's not even going to make any sense to go.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Thank you.

Delisse Ortiz: Thanks.

(Robert Knapp): You're welcome.

Coordinator: And Joe had another question.

Joe Klosterman: I just want to address, I think like if we're allowed to make more than one set per trip, then that would allow for feeler sets and for low amount of return on the one set. If we could make more than one set, then you could make feeler

sets, and you could, you know, find the fish, and then still be able to make a set on the fish, if we're allowed to make more than one set a trip.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Okay.

Delisse Ortiz: So what you're saying, more than one set, you're saying going out, doing say a set of 50 hooks, just to kind of feel what's happening and then do the 150-hook set.

Joe Klosterman: Right, and then if you don't have any return, then if you have enough bait on the boat you could go, you know, to a different area and try it again, while you still had the observer with you. And most bait - most guys, you know, their boats will, you know, hold 4,000 pounds or something like that and I'm sure they'd like to target that many fish. And 4,000 pounds, that would leave you if you divide that into the 3,000, that gives you seven or eight trips.

Delisse Ortiz: Yep. Thanks, Joe.

Joe Klosterman: Okay.

Coordinator: No other questions are in the queue at this time.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Well I want to say that these are all great ideas. We'll definitely keep looking at them, both in terms of increasing the number of sets you could do or clarifying what a feeler set is, and if that's allowed, or something like that. But we don't right now you are still bound by the conditions that Delisse talked about in the beginning.

So I want to make sure that everybody is clear on that, but that doesn't mean we're not watching and looking and we can't make additions and changes as

we need to. But I don't think any of you want to wait another potential month for us to make those changes before getting to go. So are there any other questions? Or are people content and just want to get out and start fishing?

Coordinator: We do have some people that have queued up.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: All right.

Coordinator: All right. We have (Robert Knapp), your line is open again.

(Robert Knapp): Yes, hi Karyl.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Hi again.

(Robert Knapp): I'm just thinking I think that's a good idea that Joe suggested. I think possibly maybe if we're allowed to make more than one set, I think your 150-hook limit is probably going to solve a lot of the problems that you had last year. I think the most hooks I set last year were 400, I know there were boats that probably set the 500 limit, and they probably had a lot of mixing of different types of sharks.

When I went three months, 90% of the trips that I went on I really didn't have that much of a mixing, because I was in a research fishery that I was targeting sandbars, I wasn't trying to target other species. Even if I didn't catch the sandbars on the set, my boat was big enough to carry enough ice, bait, and fuel where I brought enough bait where I make three or four sets, even if I was only catching a half a dozen sharks a set, I would stay until I could locate them.

So I was probably on the average set in three to 350 in hooks, so now that you've backed it down to 150, it might be a good idea to allow more than one set, with 150 hooks, maybe as the season progresses possibly now we probably shouldn't have a problem. I might bite my tongue saying this.

With 150 hooks this time of year to locate them, especially Joe's probably 50, 60 miles away from me, so if he's fishing or I'm fishing, we do talk a little bit but we do have a little bit of help on that end, and we have amberjack fishermen here that sometimes they get harassed by the sandbars out in the deep water, so we have a little bit of input as far as what we're doing this time of year.

But like I said, in the summertime it's real hard to catch sandbars in Florida because the water's so hot the bait don't fish that long. So you're really, really handicapped fishing. It's like going deer hunting with a spear, that's what 150 hooks is like in the summertime here.

That's pretty much my input. What I'm really trying to say is maybe we should be allowed to make more than one set of 150 hooks. I don't think we're going to damage the quota with 150-hook sets whatsoever. Okay? Okay, thank you.

Lori Hale: Thanks.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz : Thanks.

Coordinator: Ah, (Charlie Locke). I'll open your line again.

(Charlie Locke): Okay guys, Well I had a thought while all this was going on, and maybe not everybody's going to qualify for this, but starting March 1, I get the

opportunity to have this wonderful two-way communicating VMS unit installed with my laptop, and so I mean now if we can you know, I think everybody's hitting the nail on the head here, we need the option of making multiple sets with this 150 hooks to make it efficient.

I think that you'll look at the observer data and see the guys that are potentially abusing the multiple sets. If seeing as we're not going to be under a limit, obviously if I go out there and make a feeler set, and catch 50 head, you know, then what I'm getting at is, you know, if it's - the data's there, you know, you can tell whether somebody, if you're thinking they're going to make 20 sets in a trip and catch 10,000 pounds in a trip, what I'm getting at, the data's going to be there for you to look at.

Another thing I'm thinking is with this VMS unit I'm going to have to have now with this two-way communicating and e-mails and everything else, why can't there be some more real-time communicating with possibly Lori or even HMS and say hey, we've made a feeler set, we're not, you know, we've only caught two fish or we're going to move to the - you know, is there an opportunity for possibly more real-time back and forth of adjusting our trips as we're fishing? That's my question.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: That's something we haven't thought about (Charlie). So it's a good idea, but I think we will think about and see if there's some way - touch base with the VMS to see if there's some way for that and touch base with the enforcement to see if they're okay with that type of idea.

(Charlie Locke): Okay.

Lori Hale: This is Lori, can I say something real quick to you. We actually have some funding that we're trying to implement something like this for our research

observations, like developing some sort of at-sea data-entry program where we would be reporting quota in quote, unquote real-time back to you.

The fishery council for management, so, something the observer program wants to do in the future and of course HMS would love to have real-time quota monitoring as well, I'm sure, but it's a little ways off in the future, just FYI. But eventually maybe in future months or in future years could definitely be integrated.

Delisse Ortiz: Thanks Lori.

(Charlie Locke): Am I still on?

Group: Yes.

(Charlie Locke): Okay. We're going to get on that subject, here's a question and hypothetically I don't think I'll be able to come close to this quota, maybe I can. But seeing as that it's 14 metric tons that's about 80% I see that you all are doing the 80% of the 89 metric tons, and you know we had talked about this before where everything is documented.

You're going to have next-day faxes of these weigh-outs. We haven't caught the quota in two years. Is there a reason why we're still going to be held to the 80% of this quota under a situational fishery like this?

Delisse Ortiz: I mean, yes (Charlie) because there's still the possibility especially now with the 150 hooks and the ability to retain everything there's still the possibility that we can go over, and so we wanted to build a buffer to make sure that you know we could meet the quota but not go over the quota.

(Charlie Locke): I see. I wasn't thinking about the no-retention limit, so I see what you're saying, okay. That was my question.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Okay.

Lori Hale: Could I bring up one point, just in case nobody's really thought about it, talked about the feeler sets. I wanted to remind everybody that your large coastal quota will shut down your sandbar quota. So for those of you who catch a lot of large coastal sharks that's something to consider as well. Just bring that back up to the full front of your mind.

So your large coastal quota within the research fishery is much smaller, so just keep that in mind when you're your know targeting the sandbars that, you know, there is a restriction there with your large coastal quota as well.

Delisse Ortiz: Thanks Lori for bringing that up.

Coordinator: We do have a couple of other people in the queue here, if you're ready?

Delisse Ortiz: Yes.

Coordinator: (Mark Twinam), your line's open.

(Mark Twinam): Yes. I just want to say as far as the hooks on board, you know, my boat right now you have probably 7 or 800 hooks, five, six, seven different varieties probably if you count every last one, ten different varieties, and you have to pull them on and off the boat to go shark fishing. I'm okay with that because that's how we can move forward right now.

But really what the guys are trying to say, the observer's on there, he's saying how many hooks you're putting out each night so that's the final word, if you're putting out 150 hooks or 160 hooks or 170 hooks he reports that and then you lose your permit to go shark fishing, that's the end of that story.

It just seems like an unnecessary burden for us to clean out every locker and tackle box on our boat to find every hook to be legal, unless that's maybe not your intention, because I didn't know at first if I have, say I want to bring 150 made-up hooks it's just natural to have a few spares, and I'd say, we're only making one set you don't need spare, I guess that makes sense.

But I had no idea you were talking about every other type of hook on the boat, and of course a lot of the hooks could be used for shark fishing, but you know they're not going to be because I'd like to try the shark observer thing next year too, so. That's all I have to say on that, thanks.

Delisse Ortiz: Thanks (Mark).

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Thanks, Mark.

Coordinator: Joe, I'll open your line again.

Joe Klosterman: Yeah. I would go on a shark trip next week if we could do something about this 150 hooks on the boat. It's just like (Mark) was just saying, if people that target more than just sharks, I mean it's like - it limits you only to shark fish, and to - I'm sure that I took every hook that I knew of off the boat, there'd still be a few laying around somewhere that I forgot about, that are you know in a nook and cranny, fell down in a crevice, or something like that.

And it's like everybody else was saying, I mean I've got hooks that's not even a quarter-inch in diameter or a quarter-inch jaw in the hook up to a number-three hook. I mean to take all those other hooks off the boat just for the 150-hook leader that we're allowed to set seems over-restrictive.

To accomplish the 150, it should say 150 shark leaders and you're saying that the observers aren't the enforcers, but they're writing down the data, they're counting the hooks, so you'll know after that trip if somebody sets more than 150 hooks.

I don't see where having another kind of hook on the boat would make somebody want to set more than the 150 hooks, it's prohibitive to what we're naturally doing and what the boat's set up for, for not - and it's over-enforcing the 150-hook requirement.

You know, 150 hooks is pretty restrictive, but not having any other hook than that 150 hooks on the boat, not a gaff hook, not a - I mean, like I said, I may have gaff hooks made out of shark hooks, with a wooden pole with a hook screwed to it, I mean we could be in violation for that.

Lori Hale: Joe, are you currently fishing for tilefish this time of year?

Joe Klosterman: It's shut off yesterday at midnight.

Lori Hale: Oh, did it, okay.

Joe Klosterman: We might get another season if the new law goes through we're supposed to get 500,000 pounds, we're restricted to 280, 282,000 this year, there was only 140,000 caught in January but for some reason they think it's all caught so we got shut off.

Lori Hale: Okay.

Joe Klosterman: But that 150 hooks that could really - somebody could get in trouble for just having a rod and reel on the boat with a hook on it, that you use for trolling along, just catching a bonito or something like that. Or you see a dolphin swim by, you throw a hook out to it, I mean that's - we do that all the time.

It's just - we're allowed to have dolphin, we're not setting a trolling line for dolphin but we've got a rod-and-reel with a hook on it and throw a bait on it, and you catch a dolphin, you know.

So I think that there'd be another way to address the 150 hooks other than only 150 hooks on the boat, on board. If we could come up with something like that I'd go fishing next week.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: I don't think we can work the permits through that fast

Joe Klosterman: Well, does it actually say that on the permit? 150 hooks on the boat?

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Yes it does.

Joe Klosterman: Okay, I was reading off the cover page.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: It says it on the permit. I don't think, I could be wrong, but I don't think enforcement would pick you up for having a hook on your gaff, but you are correct about the hook on the rod-and-reel. I would have to talk with enforcement and the Coast Guard to see whether or not they would be okay with a shark leader and understand what a shark leader is.

Joe Klosterman: Well I've never had them count - now I'm having to count the leaders on the boat but apparently when the swordfish boat got found with having J hooks on the boat and they're only allowed to have circle hooks, somebody went through and looked for all the - actually I guess they had like six or eight hooks laying on the front console. And when the law enforcement was on the boat they saw those hooks and then wrote them up for that.

So yeah, this getting the right description to get what we want, I don't know how to word that and shark leaders, actually what you want is 150 hooks fished. No more than 150 hooks fished.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Which means if enforcement boards your boat, they have to pull up the long line and count how many hooks you are...

Joe Klosterman: Yeah. But that's being - the observer's taking care of that, I mean even though he's not there to enforce, he's counting those hooks before and after, when they come in and when they come back, he counts the ones that are lost, I mean...

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: And I know the observers listen to the enforcement board, but the observer's not enforcement, and if enforcement feels they want to pull up the line to count it, that's what they would do.

Joe Klosterman: Yeah, I'm just trying to think in my mind how you could enforce that without taking every other hook off the boat.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Which is what I'm saying, I don't think we could do that by next week.

Joe Klosterman: Yeah.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: We can keep thinking about it and if you come up with ideas, let us know.

Lori Hale: Karyl I can also check, I know when they restricted the number of hooks in the re-fish in the Gulf, I'm not sure off the top of my head the exact wording, but it was something like that they had a restriction on the number of pieces of gear ready to be fished, like leaders put together with a hook attached on deck versus what was stowed say, a box of hooks, stowed below. Or an extra spool of mainline stowed below. Something like that.

So they made a distinguishing call between those two things. And what the observers were counting were what were ready to go to be fished on deck, so they could have, I think it was 750 on deck ready to go and no more than 1,000 total, so they had some to replace in that case because they didn't have a restriction on the number of sets.

I can look up the language of that and send it to you, maybe it's an idea in case.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: That'd be great Lori.

Lori Hale: Yeah, it's Gulf Council, so I can find that.

Joe Klosterman: This is Joe, am I still on?

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Yes.

Joe Klosterman: How was it worded on the 150 hooks, or the 500 hooks we're restricted to this year, did it say 500 hooks was all we're allowed to have on the boat? I mean it

didn't even concern me, because I never set more than 200 hooks ever, in my entire shark-fishing career.

Delisse Ortiz: It says 150 or fewer hooks are allowed on board each vessel.

Joe Klosterman: No I mean last year when it was restricted to 500.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: We had a number of issues with the way the permit was worded.

Lori Hale: I believe it said per set last year, if I remember correctly.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Yeah, and it said we had a lot of issues with the way that was worded.

Joe Klosterman: With the observers on board, I mean like you're saying they're not the enforcers, but it's documented what's set.

You know, there's paperwork that's written down, I mean it would - I know they're not supposed to be the tattle-tale or whatever you want to call the person that calls law enforcement or whatever, but I've always considered it being - it's documenting the set, and you know I'm sure at some time that's going to be used for some type - not just information but it could be used for enforcement.

I mean if it was a case that somebody got written up for having more than 150 hooks on the boat, I mean that would be a document that would back that up, other than the law enforcement being there to count each one of the hooks, and make that violation.

I think if we could come up with 150 hooks fished, 150 hooks on the line, or 150 leaders, you know, made-up leaders on the boat like Lori was saying or something that would be, that wouldn't put us in violation of just having another hook on the boat, but would address the 150 hook issue.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Understood, Joe.

Delisse Ortiz: Thanks, Joe.

Coordinator: (Charlie Locke), I'll open your line again.

(Charlie Locke): Okay, I think I really feel like the direction with everybody you know talking the direction that as fishermen we're trying to explain and you all are getting an idea that this is a common-sense thing with these hooks, and also the direction we're moving is possibly a multi-set fishery of only 150 hooks.

You know, and observer, he's not enforcement but he is used for enforcement, you know. We had issues up here in the past with observer data and it's used for enforcement. So he is technically not enforcement but it does, it is used. So if he's writing 150 hooks a set, you know, that's what they're going to use. If he writes 160, they're going to say, "Hey, you used 160 in violation and he loses his permit."

I mean the guys that this matters to like myself, we're not going to - the reason we're so concerned about this 150 hooks, period, and like Joe's saying every nook and cranny, is I told Lori last year, I'm tired of the gray area. And I'm not trying to get anybody in trouble but that is where I'm at with this. I don't want any more gray, I want crystal clear what I need to do to be legal and to operate in this fishery without getting, you know, in trouble.

But there's got to be common sense in it, and the common sense part, if we're going to go into multiple sets and this is going to be 150-hook fishery, which I think is, it can work if I'm allowed to maybe feeler sets and fish, you know I need to go fishing. I'm going to lose gear, I'm going to make a set, I'm going to have bite-off, I'm going to have to have the ability to crimp on four or five more hooks to make my 150-hook set again for that night.

And so there's got to be flexibility in here. Just like having my nets on my boat go into a closed area as long as it's wrapped and stowed with a tarp over it, I can transit closed areas with gillnet on board. There's got to be a provision and it's very easily worded in, to make it 150 hooks a set, you know, period.

It's documented like you said when we set the gear, we put hook timers on every third hook, you know he's counting hook timers. You can only put so many hooks out because you've only got so many, you know, it's very - you're not going to fudge on the amount of hooks you can set. When we're done that's the last hook, boom, we're done, we cut the line, put the buoy on it.

And so having these extra hooks on the boat, having to take all this other tackle out, killing the ability for other fisheries to happen while we're shark fishing, king mackerel per se, because of this hook limit, the common sense would say 150 hooks a set, you know.

That would, if you just change the wording, each vessel can only set 150 hooks or fewer instead of having on board, you're going to eliminate all this possibility of us getting in trouble with enforcement for some hook that's in a drawer that we don't know about, and also the ability to rebuild gear while

we're fishing to make multiple sets if that's the direction that you go with letting us have more than one set under the 150 hooks. I'll end with that thanks.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Thanks (Charlie Locke).

Delisse Ortiz: Thank you.

Coordinator: (Mark Twinam). I'll open your line.

(Mark Twinam): Yeah back on the hooks, I don't - we can go forward with it just like it is, but Lori had a good point there about the re-fish guys with 750 hooks they're allowed to put out, but they have gear on board that they can make up new hooks with.

So I don't know how that's worded, and I don't know what the difference between this year, 150 hooks, how it was worded last year with 500 hooks, because you know last year I never felt there was a threat if I had a couple extra hundred hooks on board, you know, then I could go out and make that new gear with and didn't worry about it.

You know, it's just since we're airing all the dirty laundry, you know, in the future, I know we can't use sharks for bait but sharks is the best bait and when we're catching these sharks, we cut the shark bellies off, why we couldn't use shark bellies for bait, so. We might as well get it all out there since we're all on the phone. So that's all I got, thanks.

Delisse Ortiz: Thank you, (Mark Twinam).

Coordinator: No one else is in queue at this time.

Delisse Ortiz: One last chance. Last chance for questions, concerns. Aside from the ones that we've gone through.

Coordinator: And again, questions are limited to the five people.

Delisse Ortiz: Correct.

Coordinator: So if you are not one of the five people allowed to ask questions please do not press star one. Joe is back in the queue. Joe, your line's open.

Joe Klosterman: Yeah, I think it'd be easier for you to just send a letter with the, you know, to be attached to the permits that we have. Just nullifying the, you know, just doing away with the one set and putting 150 shark leader set or 150 leaders fish - or 150 shark leaders made up, or 150 hooks.

How the wording, I think it'd be easy just to come up with like (Charlie Locke) was saying, you know, 150 leaders set and then, and just do away with the one-set limit and the vessel. You know, only 150 hooks on the vessel, if we just - 150 leaders, fishing leaders, or 150 hook leaders, we're shark fishing on the boat and do away with the only one set thing, that would remedy the whole thing if we had another paper to go along with what we already have.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Yeah, unfortunately Joe nothing is as easy as it seems. But yes, if we go through with the changes, it would end up being another piece of paper that you would staple on to that permit. They would amend it. So that's true, it would just be a piece of paper, it's the wording of the piece of paper that takes the time.

Joe Klosterman: Yeah, yeah, I understand you have to go through lawyers and all that kind of stuff to get the wording right. But we're only working with five, you know, five people here, so it's, you know, just getting the wording right is all you'd have to do and then just send everybody a copy of that.

And like I said, if we get these things straightened out I'd love to make a trip, you know, in the near future. But I wouldn't go right now with that 150 hooks on board thing, it'd take me days to take everything off and then when I'd stop shark fishing then I'd have to put everything back on again. It's a lot of work for one set. That's about all I have to say on that.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Thanks so I mean that's - I'm not promising we can even make those changes, but...

Joe Klosterman: Yeah, I understand that. I just - it just might change my thinking about how I was doing stuff. It seems there's a lot of where you're opening yourself up for problems that don't really exist.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Thanks.

Coordinator: (Charlie Locke), I'll open your line again.

(Charlie Locke): Yeah, one thing I was reading, and I was looking for while he was trying to get me keyed in, but I know that I read this permit and there is flexibility to adjust as we get into the fishery. And I just cannot find that piece of paper to save my life, but anyways, basically, it was a case-by-case - the condition was, it would be looked at it as a case-by-case thing.

And I was curious about that because I'm, you know, if you say okay, the guys in the Keys can have 500 hooks because they're not catching them, you

know, what my question is, is if you make an amendment to this, is it not going to be for the whole entire, all five fishermen.

And my question being is because this is data-sensitive, you know, this is what we're doing is research fishing and I still have questions about how we went from, you know, 12 miles and however many hooks and then now we went to 500 hooks and now we're going to 150 hooks.

And I'm not a scientist but just from being in school you have controls, we have no controls here, we're all over the place with our data, you know, we're all over the place, especially now. And you've got geographic areas where you say, he's allowed 500 hooks come June in the Keys, and I'm still limited to 150 hooks, your CPEs and all your data seems to be skewed.

In my opinion, I'm not a scientist, so I'm probably talking gibberish to you all, but that was my question. Is there flexibility in this where you all may let say guys in the Gulf that maybe I won't be able to do in the mid-Atlantic, or will you all make regulatory change in this, is it going to be for all five fishermen, that's my question. I'm done.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: It's a great question, (Charlie), I think it's something we would work with the science center. I believe the case-by-case in the permit was specific to, you still have sandbar quota left, but you've used all your non-sandbar large coastal.

(Charlie Locke): Okay.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: And the case-by-case basis would be maybe you're really, really good at catching only sandbar and there's still enough time the scientists don't

feel that you're at risk of forcing us to go over any other quota. That would be the case-by-case basis.

(Charlie Locke): Okay, I understand, all right.

Lori Hale: Also in the past we have had, you know, closed area additional quota for people fishing in the, say North Carolina, enclosed area that have been on a case-by-case basis, so you know, there's been that.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: I tend to agree with you (Charlie Locke) that there could be issues if we do 500 hooks for one fishermen and only 150 for somebody else. But I'm a manager not a scientist so I'll let Lori and all of them figure out if they can still use that data.

(Charlie Locke): Well I know in the past, you know, I got into this, I've only been in the last little spell here but I know in the past there was concerns that the quota got caught up too fast, too early, too quick and then now it's almost gotten to the point where we've got quota left the last two years, almost err too much on the side of caution.

And like (Robert Knapp) said, you know I'm very similar probably to everybody. I imagine these sandbars are the same wherever you fish, that there here like in September, I mean, my land, you can walk on them, and certain they're smaller fish but they're thick.

But you know being able to utilize this when we're here especially if we stick to 150 hooks a set and I have to come back in, unload and then return to set again without being able to stay on the fish, you know, without the ability to have a 150-hook feeler set, or 150-hook, whatever feeler set, you know I want

to, you know like anybody this has to be financially viable for me to be able to do it also.

I can't just go do it, as much as I want the research and to have a sandbar fishery open one day, I still have to make a profit. And so I would like to see, you know, where even like say right now we're starting almost the end of February, we're going to have some sharks here right now for the next couple of months.

And you know maybe even letting us fish, you know, half of our quota if they're here, and then maybe she can hold back and say, okay, because we know the summer months are coming, we're not going to catch something in June, July, and August here, I mean it's dead, you got to set, like (Robert Knapp) was saying, 500 hooks and you're going to catch 16 fish, I mean it's just not - they just not here, they're in Ocean City and further north in our area.

And so, you know, I'd like to see where we can utilize this quota, you know, maybe give the science center more flexibility in back-to-back trips, so we know the fish are there, we can stay on them even though we're having to come in and unload, it would still give me the ability if I unloaded, and I got my, you know, weigh-out form and fax it right in, then she could say at two o'clock in the afternoon, you know, you can make another set, I can boogie right back out there and stay on the fish.

And so I would like to see you all work with us a little bit on that so we can use this quota and catch it up, you know, so we're not stuck come fall with hurricanes bearing down on us and two- or three-week blows and hoping to get out and everybody sitting around with three-quarters of their quota left.

And so that's a concern I have like (Robert Knapp) and these other guys, when the fish are in our area, maybe work with us a little bit where we can utilize it, and at least get some of our quota knocked out, you know maybe earlier in the year, and then maybe slow up a little bit on the tail end, instead of saying, "Well, we're going to start out slow and then we're going to let you all go again if you're not catching," because I know that doesn't always work out.

And I just want you all to consider that, thank you.

Delisse Ortiz: Thanks, (Charlie Locke).

Coordinator: (Robert Knapp), I'll open your line again.

(Robert Knapp): Yes, a little bit comment on what (Charlie Locke) just said. What I'm thinking here is the reason that you went to 150 hooks because of possibly the non-sandbars went so far over in the research fishery, is that the reason Karyl?

Delisse Ortiz: No, basically, Karyl you can go ahead.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: She beat me to it.

Delisse Ortiz:: Sorry, no, one of the reasons we went to 150 hooks, we're trying to find ways to, you know, again be able to have fishermen target sandbar while reducing discards and one of the things that we've been hearing fishermen is like, well you know, 33 is not enough, this 33-trip limit.

So we said okay, we'll let's on average, you know, speaking with Lori, fishermen use about 150 hooks so we thought we'd start with 150 hooks and

be able for you guys to retain about three times the trip limit that you guys have. And start off with that.

While reducing discards but still again, keeping it so that fishermen could target sandbar.

(Robert Knapp): Right, right. Well I'm trying to think back to what I caught as far as non-sandbars that most times, I would say I caught less than 33 head of non-sandbar sharks on any of the research trips. Actually, with not being allowed to fish for sandbars anymore, you learn to stay away from them, believe it or not.

In other words you have to really re-learn how to shark fish, since it's illegal to catch sandbars anymore. And it took me quite a few years to figure out how to do that. So now there's a fine line where the mixing starts and where the sandbars end. And sometimes you got to actually run away in 60 feet, 70 feet of water from sandbars because you're trying to catch blacktips.

So, I think if you're really not trying to catch large coastals, non-sandbars, you won't catch them in most cases unless you push yourself too far in shore, and then an accident could occur.

So I think you got the talent on here now that won't be catching more than 33 head of non-sandbars on their trips, even if it was over 150 hooks, not that I'm trying to promote over 150 hooks, but there's a way if you know what you're doing in a shark fishery not to catch large coastal non-sandbars, that's kind of what the point I'm trying to make. It's just a little point.

You got rid of the 500 hooks, I know there was some boats fishing more than 10 miles with 500 hooks when this fishery started, and I could see how a lot of

non-sandbars could be caught that way, but if you get out in the deeper water, you'll get away from the blacktips, you may get a few bulls, you might get a hammerhead or two, but the 150 hooks will work but I think you really need more sets and I don't think really we should go over that large coastal quota if it's done right as far as staying away from them.

That's what it is, it's a research trip to catch sandbars, and that's pretty much how I conducted it when I did it last year, so okay, that's just a little input. Thank you.

Coordinator: No other questions or comments are in queue.

Delisse Ortiz: Okay. Well, we're coming close on the end of the meeting and I just want to address again, like Karyl mentioned that for now, you know, I mean we will look at these things but for now, to be in the shark fishery you must abide by the terms and conditions that are on your permit and that were discussed today.

You know, we will take what you said into consideration, I think there are a lot of good ideas and for one, I'd like to thank you guys for offering, you know, your information on the different scenarios and how you guys operate in different ways, I think that would help a lot.

But again, for now, you need to make yourself available for the observers and abide by the terms and conditions. And again, also stress to any other participants that are joining us that weren't selected that would want to provide their feedback, I encourage them to call HMS and with that, I will consider the meeting...

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Over.

Delisse Ortiz: Over. Unless somebody wants a last, last, last, last, last chance.

Lori Hale: Can I say something real quick, it's Lori.

Delisse Ortiz: Sure. Maybe, I don't know (laughs).

Lori Hale: I just, I wanted to thank everybody for weighing in and taking the opportunity to make your voices heard. It's important that you do that, and to encourage you to call the office whenever you get a chance either this afternoon or next week and let us know, when you want to schedule your trip.

And also to let you know that I will be out of the office for the next couple of months on maternity leave, but if you call my line or (Simon)'s line or Alyssa's line, they will all be happy to answer you questions and assign you an observer.

Karyl Brewster-Geisz: Perhaps you'd like to tell them what their lines are, Lori.

Lori Hale: Yes, (Simon)'s line is extension 236, and Alyssa's line is extension 226. And mine is 250, but they'll be checking messages on that line as well.

Delisse Ortiz: Thank you, Lori.

Lori Hale: Thank you.

Delisse Ortiz: And just in case you don't, you forgot the general number, that is 850-234-6541.

Lori Hale: Thanks.

Delisse Ortiz: All right, well again thanks everybody and, you know, again if you want to contact us again and talk about you know ways to move with the fishery and adjust it, I encourage you again to not call the Observer Program but call us for any suggestions or just you know, anything that may come up. Thank you.

Lori Hale: Thank you.

Delisse Ortiz: Bye everybody. Oh sorry, Tim?

Coordinator: That's okay. I thought you were done.

Delisse Ortiz: Yes.

Coordinator: Okay. Today's call has ended, please disconnect at this time.

Delisse Ortiz: Okay.

Karyl Breswter-Geisz: Bye. Bye, everybody.

END

List of Participants for the Captains Meeting of the 2012 Shark Research Fishery Meeting

February 17, 2012

3:00 to 5:00pm

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Delisse	Ortiz	Highly Migratory Species Management Division
Megan	Walline	National Marine Fisheries Service-General Counsel
Craig	Cockrell	Highly Migratory Species Management Division
Karyl	Brewster-Geisz	Highly Migratory Species Management Division
Lorraine	Hale	Southeast Fishery Science Center
Simon	Gulak	Southeast Fishery Science Center
John	Carlson	Southeast Fishery Science Center
Michael	Clark	Highly Migratory Species Management Division
Sarah	Laputz	Highly Migratory Species Management Division
Joshua	Bowlen	Congressman Walter Jones
Andrea	Dell'apa	East Carolina University
Guy	DuBeck	Highly Migratory Species Management Division
Tony	Geisman	Fisherman
Teagen	Gray	Nova Southeastern University
Dewey	Hemilright	Fisherman
Luke	Hill	Fisherman
Russell	Hudson	Directed Sustainable Fisheries Inc
Joseph	Klostermann	Shark research fishery permit holder
Robert	Knapp	Commercial shark fisherman
Charles Thomas	Locke	Commercial fisherman/ Shark Research Fishery
Kevin	McBride	McBride's Aquatics
Shara	Teter	Grad Student at Nova Southeast University
Mark	Twinam	Fisherman