



Advisory Announcement
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SECTION 11-A SPOT SHRIMP FISHERIES UPDATE

The commercial, personal use, and sport spot shrimp fisheries will remain closed. The most recent survey results continue to indicate the overall health of the Section 11-A spot shrimp population is declining, with little sign of recruitment and no indication of a surplus to provide for sustainable fisheries. The fisheries will remain closed until the population has been observed to recover to sufficient levels to sustain fisheries. The 11-A spot shrimp stock status is summarized below.

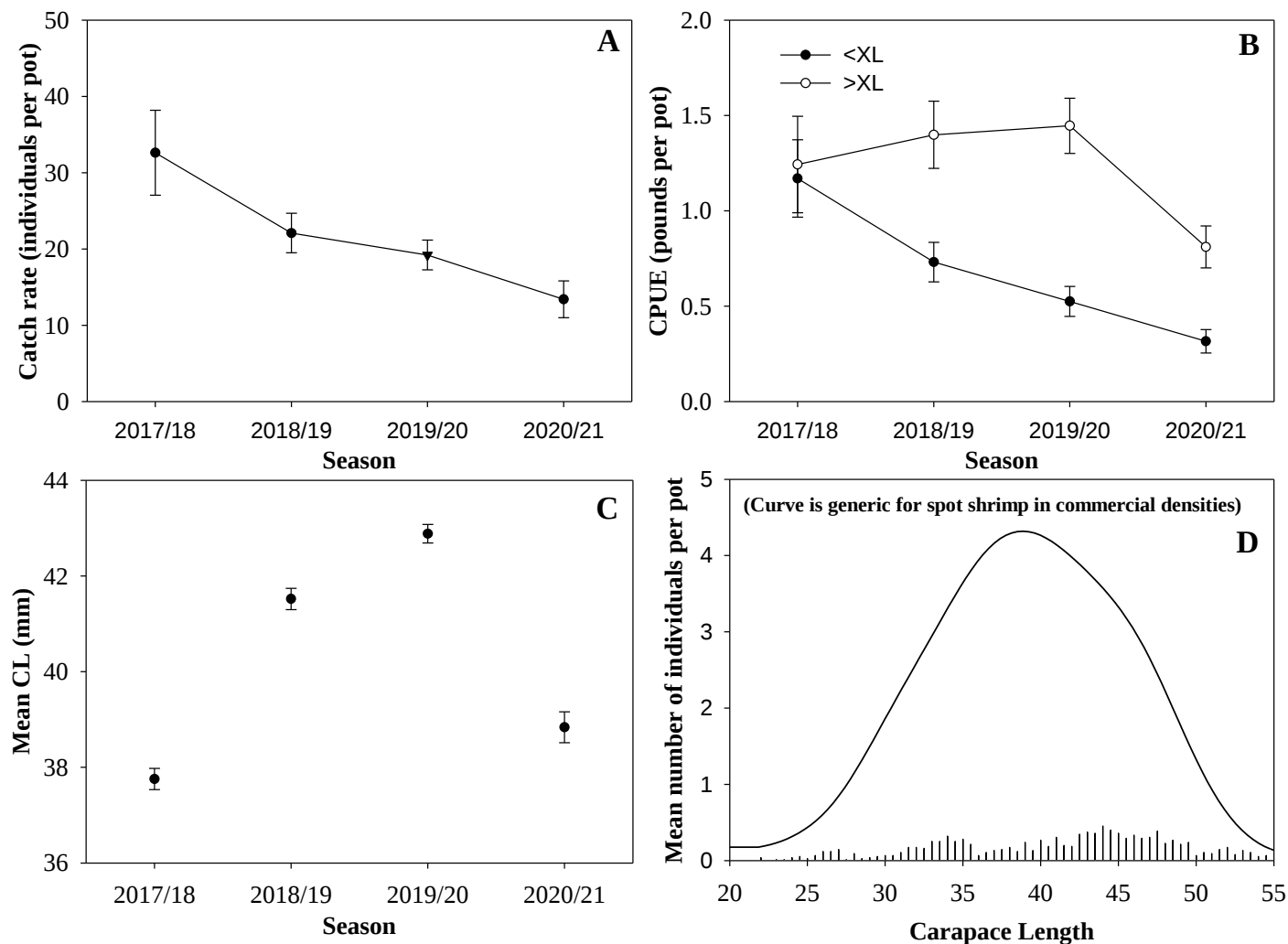
Section 11-A Background

Section 11-A, the waters of northern Stephens Passage, Favorite and Saginaw Channels near Juneau, was closed to the commercial, personal use, and sport harvest of spot shrimp in 2013. Commercial harvest and effort data indicated a strong drop in catch per unit effort (CPUE), in pounds of shrimp per pot, for several seasons leading up to the closure. Sportfish creel data is available for the area from the years 2003–2006, and during these years the estimated personal use/sport spot shrimp harvest comprised 60% of the total spot shrimp harvest. Section 11-A was initially closed to all spot shrimp fisheries for 3 years, and in 2016, the closure was extended another 3 years based on continued poor commercial spot shrimp harvests in nearby open areas (northern District 12).

The department began systematic shrimp surveys of Section 11-A in early 2018 with set locations selected within areas described by local shrimp fishermen as having a high potential for catching shrimp. Over the course of the past four winter surveys, some of the initial set locations have been discontinued and others added with the goal of establishing productive locations to be utilized each season.

Winter 2020/21 Survey Results

The Section 11-A 2020/21 winter survey was conducted December 14–18, 2020. Survey results indicate a continued decline of the spot shrimp population with the overall catch rate in numbers of spot shrimp per pot declining since the survey began in the winter of 2017/18. The mean number of spot shrimp per pot in 2020/21 declined 30% from the previous survey (Figure A). Separating the catch into large and small size components, the CPUE of large class spot shrimp (greater than 40.5 mm carapace length) declined 44% from the previous survey (Figure B) and the CPUE of small class spot shrimp (40 mm and smaller carapace length) declined 40%. While the small class spot shrimp catch rate and CPUE have been declining at a similar rate overall, the large class CPUE increased in the 2018/19 and 2019/20 surveys, before declining in the 2020/21 survey. This indicates the individuals present were growing larger each year without being replaced by small size shrimp growing into the larger size class. The decline in large class spot shrimp CPUE seen in the 2020/21 survey is likely due to increased mortality of this ageing cohort. Mean carapace length values show a similar trend with the strong increase seen in the 2018/19 and 2019/20 surveys as the existing shrimp grew larger, and a large decline in 2020/21 due to the loss of large individuals without being replaced (Figure C). An examination of carapace length frequency shows all size classes at severely low abundance compared with a general curve of a healthy shrimp population, with no perceptible recruitment (Figure D).



Advisory Announcement web site: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>.

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