

**ALWTRP Public Hearing**  
**Georgia Department of Natural Resources**  
**Brunswick, GA**  
**September 11, 2013**

**NMFS PRD Staff**—Barb Zoodsma and Jessica Powell

**Number in attendance:** 9

Including:

- David Hilton, contracted fishery liaison to SERO PRD
- Clay George, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Take Reduction Team State Representative

**Gear Marking**

One commenter was not opposed to the proposed gear marking. Another commenter mentioned it would be difficult to change out color schemes between inshore and offshore if they moved their gear. He proposed adding a green mark to the orange and blue mark when gear is fished in Federal waters and removing the green mark when the gear is fished in state waters. This was not opposed by other fishermen present.

**Weaklinks**

One commenter uses 5 hogrings as a weaklink. One commenter suggested existing weaklink requirements need to be enforced.

**Return Gear to Port when fishing in Federal Waters**

Three commenters were opposed to the proposal of returning gear to port. Ten to 12 blue crab fishermen fish up to seven miles offshore (particularly in wet years) from November to April and the requirement to return gear to port at the end of a fishing trip is unworkable. Georgia has a 200 pot/fishermen limit –SC does not. They fish 7-9 miles offshore of SC in cold winters. One fisherman off GA has fished up to 12 miles offshore during a cold winter. Crab prices are higher in winter, so closure would be a noticeable economic impact to those fishermen that fish for blue crab in Federal waters.

**Other**

Two commenters mentioned Canada has an entanglement problem that should be cleaned up and U.S. fishermen shouldn't be penalized for a problem that comes from outside the country.