



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: 2020 Golden Tilefish Surveying

Proposal Submission Deadline: 7/31/2019

Available Funds: To be determined
Term of Contract: 1 year: August 2019 – August 2020
Point of Contact: Dr. Christopher Moore, Executive Director
Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council
800 North State Street, Suite 201
Dover, DE 19901
Email: cmoore@mafmc.org
Phone: (302) 526-5255

Purpose

This contract is to conduct the first year of a long-term tilefish survey. A successful project would develop and implement a golden tilefish survey to create an index of abundance, collect life history data, and observe habitat preference for determination criteria of overfishing limits and acceptable biological catches.

Given the extensive experience and knowledge and survey platform, this survey will be a collaborative industry, science, and management approach. Each interested party must address the qualifications listed below indicating how they meet the industry qualifications and include a proposed budget necessary to complete the work as developed by Council and Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) staff. See the “Proposal Format/Qualifications” section below for more information on the proposal requirements.

Background

As reported in the 2018 Mid-Atlantic golden tilefish data update, the golden tilefish stock is not overfished, and overfishing is not occurring. Currently, there are no fishery independent surveys available for this stock, so indications of population abundance changes are identified only through commercial catch per unit effort. Tilefish habitat preference offshore within burrows makes the stock difficult to sample through the current fishery independent trawl surveys. In addition, according to dealer reported data, approximately 90% of tilefish are landed using bottom longline gear, and thus, an associated fishery independent survey should utilize the same gear. A scientifically based fishery independent bottom longline survey is therefore warranted.

Scope of Work

The industry representative, in coordination with Council staff, contractors, and partners with the National Marine Fisheries Service, will join a “Tilefish Survey Team” in late 2019 to conduct the survey in spring/summer 2020. The goal is to develop an ongoing index of abundance from waters off New York to the Virginia/North Carolina line. Frequency of future surveys will occur biennially and target only golden tilefish per the recommendations made during the review of the Council funded pilot tilefish study conducted in 2017-2018.



Industry Qualifications

1. Success with commercial bottom longline harvest of golden tilefish.
2. Demonstrated record of successful relationships with research partners, such as the Council, National Marine Fisheries Service, or fishing businesses or organizations.
3. Ability to supply all gear and crew for approximately 2 weeks of fishing operations.
4. Ability to accommodate two additional researchers and any additional sampling gear and equipment during the entire survey operation.
5. Ability to travel from waters off New York to North Carolina while sampling from 60-110 stations at 150 hooks per station.

Proposal Format/Qualifications

Respondents should provide a 1 to 2-page document articulating how they meet the industry qualifications. Additionally, respondents must include descriptions of their vessel, crew, involvement in the Council process, experience within the golden tilefish fishery, a detailed budget, and the names and contacts for three references.

Proposal Submission

Interested parties must submit a proposal by 11:59 p.m. EST, July 31, 2019. The proposal may be mailed or emailed to the Council’s point of contact identified above.

Timeline

The Council anticipates that the selection of a successful respondent and execution of contract will proceed according to the following approximate schedule:

7/31/2019	Deadline for proposal submission
8/31/2019	Contract notification
Fall 2019	Initial meeting
Spring/Summer 2020	Conduct survey

Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on vessel/crew qualifications, prior experience, references, and proposed budget. The Council may, at its discretion, request additional information from any respondents as deemed necessary, or negotiate modifications to an accepted proposal.

Disclaimer

1. Proposals and their accompanying documentation will not be returned.
2. Respondents must disclose conflicts of interest and/or pending civil/criminal legal actions.
3. The Council reserves the right to accept or reject any or all applications received, negotiate with all qualified applicants, cancel or modify the industry request in part or in its entirety, or change the application guidelines, when it is in its best interests.