



Reducing Juvenile Sea Turtle Bycatch: Developing Reduced Bar Spacing in TEDs

Shrimp Fishery Engagement Fact Sheet

Selected in the 2019 Open Ocean Restoration Plan, the **Reducing Juvenile Sea Turtle Bycatch through Development of Reduced Bar Spacing in Turtle Excluder Devices** project started in 2021.

Project Objectives

- Develop and evaluate reduced bar spacing Turtle Excluder Devices (TEDs) designed to exclude small sea turtles in the shrimp otter trawl fishery.
- Test and certify small bar spacing TED prototypes through the NOAA Fisheries small turtle testing protocol.
- Conduct independent and dependent bycatch reduction and target-catch retention testing.
- Determine bycatch reduction rates and corresponding restoration potential for sea turtles for each TED prototype produced.

Project Components and Timing

2021:

- Stakeholder Working Group established and held first meeting

2022:

- Industry Outreach meetings to introduce project
- Stakeholder Working Group meetings
- TED concept testing

2023:

- TED concept testing
- Industry Outreach Meetings to discuss results of the project
- Stakeholder Working Group meeting

2024:

- Project completion

Industry Outreach Meetings

Initial meetings in 2022 will inform industry members about how, when, and where the key project components will take place, and how they can get engaged. The project team is combining efforts with the **Southern Shrimp Alliance (SSA)** and will be presenting at the following, and future town hall meetings.

- February 22, 2022 Virtual presentation at the SSA meeting in Brownsville, TX
- February 23, 2022 Virtual presentation at the SSA meeting in Palacios, TX
- March 3, 2022 Virtual presentation at the SSA meeting in Port Arthur, TX

More virtual meetings hosted by NOAA will be scheduled in March or April of 2022. Final meetings in 2023 will discuss project results and potential future industry involvement.

Stakeholder Working Group

A Stakeholder Working Group was convened to allow the project team to engage with industry representatives to keep them informed of project progress. The working group is comprised of representatives from each Gulf state. Members will also provide valuable input and technical knowledge about TED design concepts to be tested.

Example TED Designs Considered For Testing

In the photos below are two examples of TED design concepts that will likely be tested. Prototypes will be tested in years two and three of this project.



NOAA Fisheries Service Gear Monitoring Team staff member, Peter Nguyen, displays a fixed angle TED design. This design is likely to be tested with a 45° angle in conjunction with other modifications, such as reduced bar spacing of 2.5". Photo credit: NOAA

Eric and Kevin Drury of the F/V Drury Boys from Venice, LA display a "Broom Handle" TED modification frequently used by fishermen along the northern Gulf of Mexico. The modification, which incorporates a wooden dowel ahead of a flapless TED opening, is likely to be tested in conjunction with other modifications, such as reduced bar spacing of 2.5". Photo credit: NOAA



For more information, visit the Open Ocean Restoration Area page at gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov/restoration-areas/open-ocean, or scan the code.

