

Comments on Call for Bids NS17-1 by Greg Organ on behalf of N-ENS Snow Crab Assoc.

I reviewed the information on the study being conducted on the Grand Banks, sadly it only studies catch rates of adult male crab and not the effect on Snow Crab recruitment, as in our own population the developing crab are likely much more vulnerable than the strong adults that enter the crab traps, the study does mention the possibility of movement of crab population, crab fishing area 22 in Sydney Bight is very small compared to most crab zones in eastern Canada and small movements could send crab to area 19 to the north and area 23 to the south of area 22, there are DFO published reports on snow crab movement in our area and the fact that area 22 is dependent on immigration of crab from adjoining areas therefore it is possible that seismic activity may disrupt this immigration. The area 22 landings averaged 1231 tonnes from 1999 to 2004 dropping to 562 in 2005 when the seismic was conducted, in 2006 landings of 486 tonnes were almost impossible for the fleet to achieve, in 2007 and 2008 Tac's of 244 tonnes in each year ,the lowest in history for this area were not even landed, this low point in the history of the area 22 fishery followed the 2005 Hunt seismic activity, there were other factors at play here but it is evident that the seismic program did cause part of this dismal period in the area 22 fishery when DFO science even went as far as recommending closure in 2006.

Other Major issues for seismic in Sydney Bight

- Sydney Bight is a unique inshore multi species fishing area ,oil and gas exploration is not being pursued in any other inshore areas on the scotia shelf
- Cabot Strait hosts the largest migration of wildlife in the world including several species of concern such as but not limited to Right whales ,Blue fin tuna, cod, hake, herring ,mackerel
- Cabot Strait is home to some of the harshest environmental conditions in Atlantic Canada with severe weather, tides and pack ice which would threaten oil rigs and personal working on them and make any attempt to rescue workers and cleaning a spill very difficult.

Thanks Greg Organ

Pres N-ENS Snow Crab Association