



Gulf Fishery News

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January–February, 2006

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The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council *Protecting our marine resources*

Red Snapper IFQ Ballot Q&A

Final ballots for the red snapper Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) program were mailed to qualified permit holders in mid-January.

Qualified fishermen are being asked to decide whether the proposed IFQ plan amendment is acceptable for submittal to the Secretary of Commerce for review.

For answers to common questions related to the second and final referendum on the commercial red snapper IFQ, read on.

Who is eligible to vote in the second referendum?

(A) A person who, according to NOAA Fisheries' permits records, has continuously held a Gulf of Mexico red snapper endorsement/Class 1 license from September 1, 1996, through January 6, 2006; or

(B) in the case of a Class 1 license that has been transferred through sale since September 1, 1996, the person that,

according to NOAA Fisheries' permits records, holds such Class 1 license as of January 6, 2006; or

(C) in the case of a Class 1 license that has been transferred through lease since September 1, 1996, both the final lessor and final lessee as of January 6, 2006, as determined by NOAA Fisheries' permits records; or

(D) a vessel captain who harvested red snapper under a red snapper endorsement in each red snapper commercial fishing season between January 1, 1993 and September 1, 1996.

How will votes be weighted?

Section 407(c)(2) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act requires NOAA Fisheries develop a formula to weight votes based on the proportional harvest under each eligible endorsement and by each eligible captain

See IFQ, page 9

Ad Hoc Grouper IFQ AP to Meet

The first meeting of the Ad Hoc Grouper IFQ Advisory Panel (AHGIFQAP) is scheduled for February 22 - 23, 2006 at the Embassy Suites Hotel Tampa Airport/Westshore, 555 North Westshore Boulevard, in Tampa, Florida.

The Council, which has begun deliberations on a Dedicated Access Privilege System (DAP) for the commercial grouper fishery, appointed the AP last November.

The panel, comprised of commercial grouper fishermen and others knowledgeable about DAP systems, will develop, for Council discussion and consideration, some broad general recommendations on the scope and the general configuration of such a program. For more information call 813-348-1630 or send an email request to gulfcouncil@gulfcouncil.org.

Grouper Allocation Amendment Discussed

The Gulf Council, during its January meeting, took the first step toward establishing a grouper allocation among the recreational and commercial fishing sectors. In a motion approved by consensus, the Council requested that staff conduct an allocation analysis for both individual grouper species and grouper species aggregations. The Council also moved to convene the Socioeconomic Panel (SEP) to recommend the socioeconomic models and information the Council should use in setting grouper allocations.

See Grouper, page 4

Generic Amendment 3 to the Essential Fish Habitat Fishery Management Plan is implemented

The final rule implementing the approved regulatory actions in Generic amendment 3 to the Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Fishery Management Plan (FMP), has been published in the Federal Register.

The amendment addresses EFH requirements, Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPCs), and adverse effects of fishing in the fisheries for shrimp, red drum, reef fish, stone crab, coral and coral reefs of the Gulf of Mexico, as well as spiny lobster and the Coastal Migratory Pelagic resources of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic.

The Gulf Council, in cooperation with NOAA Fisheries Service, developed the FMP. Its intended effect is to minimize, to the extent practicable, any adverse effects of fishing on EFH. The final rule became effective January 23, 2006.

Management measures include:

- (1) Prohibiting bottom anchoring to protect coral reefs in the East and West Flower Garden Banks, McGrail Bank, Pulley Ridge, and the North and South Tortugas Ecological Reserves, as well as Stetson Bank HAPCs;
- (2) Prohibiting the use of trawling gear, bottom longlines, buoy gear, and all traps/pots to protect coral reefs in those same HAPCs; and
- (3) Requiring a weak link in the tickler chain of bottom trawls on all habitats through the Gulf of Mexico exclusive economic zone. A weak link is defined as a length or section of the tickler chain that has a breaking strength less than the chain itself and is easily seen as such when visually inspected.

West Flower Garden Bank

Point	North lat.	West Long.
A	27° 55'22.8"	93°53'09.6"
B	27° 55'22.8"	93°46'46.0"
C	27° 49'03.0"	93°46'46.0"
D	27° 49'03.0"	93°53'09.6"
A	27° 55'22.8"	93°53'09.6"

East Flower Garden Bank

Point	North lat.	West Long.
A	27° 59'14.4"	93°38'58.2"
B	27° 59'14.4"	93°34'03.5"
C	27° 52'36.5"	93°34'03.5"
D	27° 52'36.5"	93°38'58.2"
A	27° 59'14.4"	93°38'58.2"

Stetson Bank HAPC

Point	North lat.	West Long.
A	28° 10'38.3"	94°18'36.5"
B	28° 10'38.3"	94°17'06.3"
C	28° 09'18.6"	94°17'06.3"
D	28° 09'18.6"	94°18'36.5"
A	28° 10'38.3"	94°18'36.5"

Pulley Ridge HAPC

Point	North lat.	West Long.
A	24° 58'18"	83°38'33"
B	24° 58'18"	83°37'00"
C	24° 41'11"	83°37'00"
D	24° 40'00"	83°41'22"
E	24° 43'55"	83°47'15"
A	24° 58'18"	83°38'33"

McGrail Bank HAPC

Point	North lat.	West Long.
A	27° 59'06.0"	92°37'19.2"
B	27° 59'06.0"	92°32'17.4"
C	27° 55'55.5"	92°32'17.4"
D	27° 55'55.5"	92°37'19.2"
A	27° 59'06.0"	92°37'19.2"

Boundaries listed above are bounded by rhumb lines connecting, in order, the points specified. Note that boundaries for the North and South Tortugas Ecological Reserves have not changed.

Council Maintains Texas Shrimp Closure

In a unanimous vote during its January meeting, the Gulf Council approved a motion to continue the Texas closure for 2006 to the 200-mile limit of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

Since 1981, when the Shrimp Fishery Management Plan (FMP) was implemented, there has been some form of closure off the coast of Texas. In 1989, though, the 200-mile closure went into effect and has remained in effect since.

The management objectives of the Texas closure are to increase the yield of brown shrimp and eliminate the waste of the resource caused by discarding undersized shrimp caught during a period in their life cycle when they are growing rapidly.

The closure results in larger shrimp in the fishery and subsequently a higher market value. This enables fishermen to harvest premium marketable-sized shrimp, thereby increasing revenues to the shrimping industry.

Wilma Anderson, Executive Director, Texas Shrimp Association, and a member of the Shrimp Advisory Panel spoke in favor of the measure and asked the Council to approve the closure.

The closure is part of cooperative seasonal closure with the State of Texas and runs concurrent with its mid-season closure.

Texas Shrimp Closure:

- Closed from the coast line to 200-miles off Texas
- Closure for 2006, approximately May 15 until approximately July 15. Actual duration depends on sampling done by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
- Protects migrating juvenile shrimp which results in larger shrimp
- Larger shrimp result in increased revenues to the shrimping industry



The Texas Shrimp closure extends from the coast line to 200 miles off Texas

Frequently Used Acronyms

ABC Acceptable Biological Catch

AP Advisory Panel

BRD Bycatch Reduction Device

CPUE Catch Per Unit Effort

EEZ Exclusive Economic Zone

EFH Essential Fish Habitat

FMP Fishery Management Plan

GSMFC Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission

HAPC Habitat Area of Particular Concern

HMS Highly Migratory Species

IFQ Individual Fishing Quota

MSY Maximum Sustainable Yield

MRFSS Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey

NMFS National Marine Fisheries Service

OY Optimum Yield

SEDAR Southeast Data, Assessment and Review

SSC Scientific and Statistical Committee

SFA Sustainable Fisheries Act

TAC Total Allowable Catch

TED Turtle Excluder Device

VMS Vessel Monitoring System

Council Implements Open Public Comments Sessions

In an effort to give the public an opportunity to present issues and ideas that may not necessarily be under consideration by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, the Council has implemented general public comment sessions to be held at the end of public hearings, scoping meetings, and regular Council meetings.

“We’d like to give our constituency an opportunity to address the Council on not only the amendments we’re working on, but on general fishery issues of public concern,” said Robin Riechers, Council Chair. Riechers raised the issue during the Council’s January meeting and the Council, in a unanimous vote, adopted the measure.

The new open comment sessions will allow the public to make remarks or ask questions about other fishery issues. For example, someone may have a comment about the differences between state and federal regulations—these sessions provide an opportunity for input.

Bill Daughdrill, the newest member of the Council, chaired the Panama City scoping meeting and said he believes the public testimony is one of the most impor-

tant elements of the process.

“Sometimes there are issues floating around out there that we’re unaware of. This gives the public and the Council a better means of communication—an opportunity to air concerns and frustrations face-to-face,” said Daughdrill.

More than 30 people showed up at the Panama City meeting to address the amendments. “But we did have a few speak on general issues, so there is an interest.” Daughdrill added.



Photo by Wade Osborne/Afishionado Radio
Scott Childress testifies during a recent public hearing

Grouper *from page 1*

Grouper allocation became an issue last year when the Council began developing a regulatory amendment to aid in the recovery of that fishery. In 2000, red grouper was declared overfished. A rebuilding plan was devised to establish a commercial red grouper quota that reduced harvest, and to determine the recreational fishing management measures necessary to implement a similar reduction for that sector.

The procedure for determining commercial and recreational allocations of TAC, as outlined in 1990 in Reef Fish Amendment 1, is based on the landing information for each sector during the years 1979 to 1987. Those years were chosen because they provided the best available basis for allocating reef resources since they represented the longest time period of documented commercial and recreational annual harvests.

According to Steven Atran, a biologist with the Council, this was also a period when there were few regulations limiting catch, thus the commercial and recreational sectors each caught grouper according to their respective social and economic needs.

However, allocations for individual grouper species were impossible to calculate for this period because commercial grouper landings were not reported by species until 1986.

Short-term adjustments to commercial and recreational red grouper harvest for the first phase of the red grouper rebuilding plan are based on proportional commercial and recreational harvest data from 1999-2001.

These data, though, are not representative of the long-term trends in commercial and recreational harvest. Because of the short-term variability of the landings data used, Florida Wildlife and Conservation Commission asked the Council to evaluate factors that should be considered in the allocation of grouper species.

The SEP is tentatively scheduled to meet March 2-3, 2006 in Tampa, FL. The panel is made up of social scientists and economists familiar with models and data available on which to base a new allocation scheme.

Scoping Underway for Joint Reef Fish Amendment 27/Shrimp 14 and Shrimp Amendment 15

The Gulf Council recently completed a series of scoping meetings for proposed Joint Reef Fish Amendment 27/Shrimp 14 and Shrimp Amendment 15. The meetings were held throughout the Gulf coast and, in all, attracted more than 500 citizens and industry representatives.

“Our purpose here is to review and receive feedback on the options for reducing overfishing of red snapper,” said Dr. Richard Leard, Deputy Director, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council.

Of the many comments and suggestions that came out of the meetings, the leading request was for the Council to consider a management alternative that reduces or eliminates size limits in order to reduce red snapper regulatory discards,” said Leard.

Others suggested requiring the use of circle hooks, and assessing the post-hurricane shrimp effort before adding more restrictions to the shrimp fishery.

“We had a fairly good turnout at all the hearings, and we’re hopeful that we’ll continue to receive comments on the issue as we move forward in developing an options paper,” Leard added.

The options paper will outline management alternatives, including some presented by the public, for the

Council to consider as they begin to develop these amendments.

A recent stock assessment shows that red snapper continues to be overfished and is undergoing overfishing. A portion of the fishing mortality comes from the shrimp trawl bycatch of juvenile fish. That bycatch, combined with the current catch level and bycatch of red snapper from the directed commercial and recreational fisheries, jeopardizes the success of the recovery plan. The proposed amendments could change current management practices to help achieve an appropriate level and rate of rebuilding of the red snapper fishery.

Joint Reef Fish Amendment 27/Shrimp 14 will address short-term issues such as total allowable catch (TAC) and bycatch reduction device (BRD) criterion changes. Shrimp Amendment 15 will address long-term bycatch reduction issues.

Documents are available for review and can be downloaded from www.gulfcouncil.org. The Council will continue to receive comments on the scoping documents through March 10, 2006. Comments can be mailed to the Council, or submitted via e-mail to SnapperShrimp@gulfcouncil.org. For more information, please contact the Council at 813-348-1630 or toll free at 888-833-1844.

2006 Gulf Council Meeting Schedule

Dates	City	Location	Telephone
March 20-23	Mobile Alabama	Radisson Admiral Semmes	800-333-3333
June 5-9	Tampa, FL	Quorum Hotel	877-408-6766
August 14-18	Baton Rouge, LA	Baton Rouge Marriott	225-924-5000
November 13-17	To be determined		

US Department of Justice Announces Four-count Indictment Against Texas Red Snapper Smugglers

Washington, D.C.—The Department of Justice announced that a federal grand jury in Houston, Texas returned a four-count indictment charging two Port Bolivar-based commercial fishermen with illegally importing red snapper into the United States, a violation of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (the Magnuson-Stevens Act).

The indictment alleges that Hoang Nguyen, captain of the fishing vessel Thanh Tam, along with fellow crew members, illegally harvested red snapper while the commercial fishing season was closed, in excess of the 2,000 pound trip limit and beneath the minimum size limit of 15 inches. The indictment further alleges that Nguyen imported the illegally-harvested red snapper into the US, a violation of federal law.

Historically, the red snapper fishery has been over-fished due in part to the red snapper's marketability. The Magnuson-Stevens Act regulates commercial fishing activities in the waters extending from the seaward boundary of each coastal state to 200 miles

out to sea. In order to ensure red snapper stocks for the future, the Magnuson-Stevens Act's fishery management plan for the Gulf of Mexico requires that legally-permitted commercial fishing vessels only harvest red snapper during an open season, maintain a maximum single trip limitation of 2,000 pounds and take only red snapper having a minimum length measurement of 15 inches.

The investigation was conducted by special agents from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries Office for Law Enforcement with assistance provided by game wardens with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. The case is being prosecuted by Trial Attorney Georgiann Cerese of the Department of Justice's Environment and Natural Resource Division, Environmental Crimes Section.

Each of the charges in the indictment carries a maximum penalty of five years imprisonment and a fine of \$250,000.

Individuals named in indictments are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in court.

An Explanation of Commercial & Recreational Red Snapper Seasons

Differences between commercial and recreational seasons for red snapper can sometimes cause confusion, since sector allocations are managed differently.

On the commercial side, the red snapper quota is divided into spring and fall sub-quotas. The spring season opens at noon on the first of February and closes at noon on the tenth. This continues every month until the sub quota of 3.06 million pounds is reached.

The fall season begins at noon on the first of October and ends at noon on the tenth, continuing through November. In December, the fishery remains open until the quota, 1.60 million pounds (adjusted for any over or under harvest during the spring), is caught, or December 31, whichever occurs first.

“When the commercial red snapper season remains open for the entire month of December, it isn't an extension of the season, it's simply what's outlined in the regulations that have been in place for years.” said Dr. Richard Leard, Deputy Director of the Gulf of

Mexico Fishery Management Council.

Recreational red snapper is managed in a different manner, through a fixed season, and is open from April 21 through October 31. The fixed recreational season is expected to keep the recreational sector within its quota on average. This means that in some years the recreational fishery may exceed its quota, while in other years it may catch less; but the average over several years should be close to the quota.

By comparison, the commercial fishery, with real-time monitoring, will rarely exceed its quota by any significant amount, though it may come in under quota in some years.

Any adjustment to either the recreational or commercial regulations would require an amendment of those regulations through the rule making process.

For more information on fishing rules and regulations, visit our web site at www.gulfcouncil.org and click on **Fishing Rules**.

**COMMITTEE SCHEDULE
GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
THE RADISSON ADMIRAL SEMMES
CRYSTAL BALL ROOM
Mobile, AL
March 20-21, 2006**

Monday, March 20, 2006

1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Standing SSC (**Tab E**)
Attendance/Operations Issues
Review of SEP Report

3:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Administrative Policy Committee and Standing SSC (**Tab F**)
SOPPs Provisions on SSC Operations

4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Joint Reef Fish/Shrimp Management Committees and Standing
SSC (**Tab C**)

- Options Paper for Joint Draft Amendment (Reef Fish 27/Shrimp 14)
 - Public Comments from Scoping Hearings
 - SSC Review
 - Committees Recommendations
- Scoping Document for Draft Shrimp Amendment 15
 - Public Comments from Scoping Hearings
 - SSC Review
 - Committees Recommendations

Tuesday, March 21, 2006

8:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon

Joint Reef Fish/Shrimp Management Committees and Standing
SSC (**Tab C**) – (Continued)

1:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Joint Reef Fish/Shrimp Management Committees (**Tab C**) –
(Continued)

Wednesday, March 22, 2006

8:30 a.m. – 12:00 noon

Reef Fish Management Committee (**Tab B**)

Amendment 26 (Red Snapper IFQ)

- Report on Red Snapper Referendum Result
- Public Comment/Letters
- Committee Recommendations

Grouper IFQ Amendment Issues

- Recommendations of Ad Hoc Grouper IFQ AP
- Committee Recommendations

Grouper Allocation Amendment Issues

- SEP Recommendations via Report
- SSC Recommendations
- Committee Recommendations

**COUNCIL AGENDA
GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
THE RADISSON ADMIRAL SEMMES
CRYSTAL BALL ROOM
Mobile, AL
March 22-23, 2006**

Wednesday, March 22, 2006

- I. Call to Order and Introductions – Riechers
(1:30 p.m. – 1:35 p.m.)
 - II. Adoption of Agenda – Riechers
(1:35 p.m. – 1:40 p.m.)
 - III. Approval of Minutes (**Tab A**) – Riechers
(1:40 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.)
 - IV. Monitoring Report on Madison/Swanson Marine
Reserves (**Tab G**) - Coleman
(1:45 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.)
 - V. Public Testimony ^{1 2} - Riechers
 - a. Reef Fish Amendment 26 (Red Snapper IFQ)
 - b. Exempted Fishing Permits (EFP) (if any)
(2:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.)
- Open Public Comment Period^{2*} – Riechers
(4:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.)

Thursday, March 23, 2006

- VII. Committee Reports
 - a. SSC Selection Committee (**CLOSED SESSION**)
(**Tab H**) - Simpson
(8:30 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.)
 - b. Joint Reef Fish/Shrimp Management
(**Tab C**) – Minton/Perret
(9:00 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.)
 - c. Administrative Policy (**Tab F**) – Morris
(11:15 a.m. – 12:00 noon)
- VII. Committee Reports – **Continued**
SSC Selection Committee (**Tab H**) – Simpson
(1:30 p.m. – 1:45 p.m.)
Reef Fish Committee (**Tab B**) - Minton
(1:45 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.)
- VIII. Council Chairs Budget Meeting Report (**Tab I**) –
Riechers/Perret
(3:45 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.)
- XIII. Other Business (**Tab K**) - Riechers
(4:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.)
 - a. See Tabs O, P, Q, and R for Written Reports
 - b. Special Announcements
 - c. Other Business Items

¹Persons wishing to testify must turn in a registration card before the beginning of the public testimony period.

²Persons wishing Council members to have copies of written testimony or information should provide 30 copies to staff for distribution to members. All written information shall include a statement of the source and date of such information. Oral or written statements shall include a brief description of the background and interests of the person testifying.

³The Council has set aside this time for open public comment regarding any fishery issue or concern. People wishing to speak before the Council should complete a public comment card, making sure to check the box marked *Open Public Comment*.

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Closures

Recreational Closures:

Red Grouper

By interim rule, the red grouper fishery is closed November 1, 2005 through December 31, 2005.

Red Snapper

The recreational fishery for red snapper closed at 12:01 a.m., EST, on November 1, 2005 and will remain closed until 12:01 a.m., EST, April 21, 2006.

Commercial Closures:

Gag, Red, and Black Grouper

NOAA Fisheries Service announced a prohibition on the sale or purchase of gag, red, or black grouper harvested from the Gulf of Mexico exclusive economic zone (EEZ) from February 15 until March 15, 2006. No person aboard a vessel for which a valid federal commercial Gulf reef fish permit has been issued may possess these species in the EEZ regardless of where harvested.

Additionally, during the closure, the recreational bag and possession limits of gag, red and black grouper for those vessels which have been issued a valid federal commercial Gulf reef fish permit is zero.

A person aboard a vessel for which the federal permit indicates both charter vessel/headboat for Gulf reef fish and commercial Gulf reef fish may continue to retain gag, red, and black grouper under the recreational bag and possession limit, provided the vessel is operating as a charter vessel or headboat. Reef fish caught under the recreational bag limit may not be sold.

King Mackerel

The commercial fishery for Gulf group king mackerel in the western zone is closed, effective 12:00 noon, EST, November 17, 2005, through June 30, 2006. The western zone extends from the U.S./Mexico border to the Alabama/Florida boundary.

During the closure, no king mackerel caught in the closed zone/subzone may be purchased, bartered, traded, or sold. This includes recreational and tournament caught fish.

Exceptions: A person aboard a vessel that has a valid charter/headboat permit for coastal migratory pelagic fish may continue to retain king mackerel in or from the closed zone/subzone under the 2-fish daily bag limit, provided the vessel is operating as a charter vessel or headboat. Charter vessels or headboats that hold a commercial king mackerel permit are considered to be operating as a charter vessel or headboat when carrying a paying passenger or when more than three persons are aboard, including operator and crew.

The prohibitions listed above do not apply to fish that were harvested, landed ashore, and sold prior to the start of the closure and were held in cold storage by a dealer or processor.

IFQ *continued from page 1*

between the period of January 1, 1993, and September 1, 1996.

NOAA Fisheries has obtained applicable red snapper landings from the Southeast Fisheries Science Center reef fish logbook database. Information from the NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office permit database has been used to assign total applicable landings to each eligible voter.

In cases where only one eligible voter has eligibility tied to a particular license, all applicable landings associated with that license accrue to that voter, and the voter will be assigned a vote-weighting factor of one vote per pound.

In cases where more than one eligible voter has eligibility tied to a particular license, all eligible voters associated with that license will have their vote weighted equally such that their combined vote will equal one vote per pound of landings applicable to that license.

How will the vote be conducted?

On or about January 17, 2006, NOAA Fisheries mailed, return receipt requested, each eligible voter the draft plan amendment and a ballot that specifies the number of votes the voter is assigned.

All votes assigned to the eligible voters must be cast for the same decision, i.e., either all in favor or all opposed.

The ballot must be signed by the eligible voter and returned to Phil Steele, Southeast Regional Office, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701.

A stamped, self-addressed envelope for return of the ballots was provided.

Ballots must be received by 4:30 p.m., eastern time, February 21, 2006; ballots received after that date will not be considered in determining the outcome of the second referendum.

How will the outcome of the second referendum be determined?

Vote counting will be conducted by NOAA Fisheries. Approval or disapproval will be determined by a majority of the votes cast. NOAA Fisheries will prepare a Fishery Bulletin announcing the results of the referendum and will distribute the bulletin to all Gulf reef fish permittees, including dealers and other interested parties. Results will also be posted on NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office web site at <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov>.

What will happen after the second referendum?

NOAA Fisheries will present the results to the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council during its March 20-23, 2006 meeting in Mobile, AL. If approved, the Council will be authorized to submit the finalized plan amendment to the Secretary for review. If it fails, the Council cannot proceed with development of an IFQ program.

The proposed IFQ program was developed through the usual Council process that involves extensive opportunities for industry and public review and input at various Council meetings and public hearings.

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

Wayne Swingle Executive Director Richard Leard Deputy Director

Appointed Voting Members

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GMFMC wants your news and views

The Gulf Council would like to hear from you! Please contact us regarding fishery questions, comments, or concerns you would like to see covered in the *Gulf Fishery News*. Anyone interested in submitting information, such as articles, editorials, or photographs pertaining to fishing or fisheries management are encouraged to do so. Submissions may be mailed to Charlene Ponce, Public Information Officer, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 2203 Lois Avenue, Suite 1100, Tampa, FL 33607. Materials can also be sent via fax to 813-348-1711, or by e-mail to charlene.ponce@gulfcouncil.org.

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council is one of eight regional fishery management councils established by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976. The Council is responsible for the development and modification of fishery management plans (FMPs) that are designed to manage fishery resources in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of the Gulf of Mexico from state boundaries to the 200-mile limit.

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The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council
Protecting our marine resources

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