



GULF FISHERY NEWS



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GULF FISHERY NEWS is a publication of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council for persons interested in the Gulf's fishery resources. Editor: Steven Atran.

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PUBLIC HEARINGS FOR REEF FISH AMENDMENT 23 (VERMILION SNAPPER REBUILDING PLAN) AND SCOPING MEETINGS FOR A CHARTER VESSEL/HEADBOAT PERMIT MORATORIUM EXTENSION SCHEDULED

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council will hold public hearings to solicit comments on draft Amendment 23 to the Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan that contains alternatives for the vermilion snapper population in the Gulf of Mexico that was declared to be overfished and undergoing overfishing on October 30, 2003. The Council has one year from

that date to develop a plan to end overfishing and rebuild the stock. The Amendment specifies alternatives to set status determination criteria and

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

July 12-15, 2004

Omni

4 Riverway

Houston, Texas 77056



biological reference points that determine when overfishing has ended and the vermilion snapper stock is no longer overfished. Alternatives that establish a plan to end overfishing and rebuild the stock include 10-year and 7-year rebuilding plans and harvest reduction measures that change size limits, bag limits, trip limits, or specify quotas or seasonal closures.

Following presentation and comment on Reef Fish Amendment 23, the Council will present the scoping document for the extension of the moratorium on the issuance of additional charter vessel/headboat permits. The rule creating the moratorium on the issuance of the permits was implemented through Amendment 14 to the Coastal Migratory Pelagic FMP and Amendment 20 to the Reef Fish FMP effective June 16, 2003 for a 3-year period (68 FR 26230). The scoping document presents alternatives for consideration and comment by the public for allowing the permit moratorium to expire at the end of the 3-year period or to extend the moratorium period by another 5 to 10 years. The rationale for alternatives for extension of the moratorium is that during the extended period the Council would consider a more complex limited access system for the charter vessel/headboat fishery. The Council is also considering a system whereby the number of passengers allowed per vessel could be increased by purchasing a vessel permit and exchanging it for additional passengers capacity. The Council is soliciting public comment on these issues through the scoping hearings and by mail.

All written comments must be received by the Council on or before July 1, 2004. Copies of both documents can be obtained by calling the Council at 813-228-2815 or by e-mail at gulfcouncil@gulfcouncil.org

The public hearings will be held beginning at 7:00 p.m. on Reef Fish Amendment 23 immediately followed by the Charter Vessel Permit Moratorium concluding no later than 10:00 p.m. at the following locations and dates:

Monday, June 7, 2004

Naples Depot Civic Cultural Center
(Windisch Room)
1051 5th Avenue South
Naples, FL 34102
239-262-1776

Wednesday, June 9, 2004

City of Madeira Beach
300 Municipal Drive
Madeira Beach, FL 33702
727-391-9951

Monday, June 21, 2004

New Orleans Airport Hilton
901 Airline Drive
Kenner, Louisiana 70062
504-469-5000

Tuesday, June 22, 2004

MS Department of Marine Resources
1141 Bayview Drive
Biloxi, Mississippi 39530
228-374-5000

Wednesday, June 23, 2004

Perdido Beach Resort
27200 Perdido Beach Boulevard
Orange Beach, Alabama 36561
251-981-9811

Thursday, June 24, 2004

Destin Community Center
101 Stahlman Avenue
Destin, Florida 32541
850-654-5184

Monday, June 28, 2004

Laguna Madre Learning Center
Port Isabel High School
Highway 100
Port Isabel, TX 78578
956-943-0052

Tuesday, June 29, 2004

Port Aransas Community Center
408 N Alister
Port Aransas, TX 78373
361-749-4111

Wednesday, June 30, 2004

San Luis Resort
5222 Seawall Boulevard
Galveston Island, TX 77551
409-740-8616

These meetings are open to the public and are physically accessible to people with disabilities.

Copies of the materials to be discussed can be obtained by calling the Council office (813-228-2815 or toll-free 888-833-1844). Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to the Council office by May 28, 2004.



EXTENSIONS TO REEF FISH AND KING MACKEREL PERMIT MORATORIA UNDER CONSIDERATION

The Council is currently addressing the issue of expiration dates of moratoria for commercial vessel permits for reef fish and king mackerel. The moratorium on the issuance of new commercial king mackerel permits is scheduled to expire on October 15, 2005, and the reef fish permit moratorium would expire on December 31, 2005. The Council is considering alternatives to either let these moratoria expire, extend them for 5 or 10 years, or replace the moratoria with a limited access permit with an indefinite expiration date. These alternatives are being address through separate amendments to the Coastal Migratory Pelagics FMP (Amendment 15) and the Reef Fish FMP (Amendment 24). These amendments should be completed in July 2004 and presented at public hearings in October 2004.



AD HOC OFFSHORE AQUACULTURE ADVISORY PANEL

At its May 2004 meeting, the Council appointed members to a newly formed Ad Hoc Offshore Aquaculture Advisory Panel. The charge of this AP is to help the Council revise its Scoping Document for a Generic Amendment to allow and regulate offshore marine aquaculture facilities in the EEZ. The AP is expected to meet early this summer to begin its work. Members of the AP and their affiliations are:

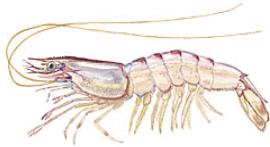
- Jesse Chappel - Auburn University
- Don Allen - Oil & Gas Industry
- Marianne Cufone - Environmental Matters Inc.
- Dave McKinney - NOAA Fisheries Enforcement
- Tom McIlwain - Gulf Coast Research Lab
- Robert Romaine - LSU
- Cynthia Sarthou - Gulf Restoration Network
- Robert Stickney - Texas A&M
- Rick Wallace - Auburn Univ. Sea Grant
- Paul Zajicek - Florida Agriculture Dept.

DEVELOPMENT OF SHRIMP AMENDMENT 13 CONTINUES

At its May 2004 meeting, the Council considered a revised options paper for Amendment 13 to the Shrimp FMP that includes definitions of overfishing and the overfished condition of royal red shrimp, as well as definition of MSY and OY for brown, white, and pink shrimp. These definitions were either not included or rejected by NMFS when the original Generic Amendment to implement these provisions under the Sustainable Fisheries Act was submitted. Amendment 13 also includes a standardized bycatch reporting methodology for the shrimp fishery through the use of paper logbooks, electronic logbooks, or observers, or some combination of these alternatives, and the potential requirement of a Shrimp Vessel Gear Characterization Form. The Council also voted to add alternatives to potentially establish a commercial shrimp vessel permit moratorium. Alternatives considered would establish the effective date of the moratorium as: (1) December 6, 2003 (the effective date of the control rule), (2) May 18, 2004 (the date that the Shrimp Management Committee voted to consider alternatives for a moratorium), or (3) the effective date of implementation of the final rule for Amendment 13 (probably in early 2005). The

¹ Clipart courtesy of A Perfect World (<http://www.aperfectworld.org>)

moratorium would not impact existing permit holders, as long as they continued to renew their permits; however, new vessels would not be allowed to purchase commercial shrimp vessel permits. The economic and social analyses for all the alternatives are currently being completed, and a public hearing draft is scheduled for review by the Council at its July 2004 meeting. Public hearings could be held as early as August 2004, but they could be delayed until October 2004 if analyses are not completed.



SCOPING MEETINGS FOR RED SNAPPER IFQ PROFILE/OPTIONS PAPER TO BE SCHEDULED

The Gulf Council at its May 17-20, 2004 meeting approved holding a series of scoping meetings on a red snapper individual fishing quota (IFQ) profile/options paper. The profile is a description of a potential IFQ program with alternatives for implementation. It was developed by Dr. Walter Keithly, Coastal Resources Institute, Louisiana State University with input from the Council's Ad Hoc Red Snapper Advisory Panel, following approval to begin the process of developing an IFQ system by commercial red snapper fishermen in a referendum held earlier this year. This is the first step in the development of such a program. The scoping meetings provide the public with an opportunity to review the program and provide input at a very early stage of development.

The IFQ Profile scoping meetings will be scheduled in August. The Council tentatively is planning to hold the scoping meetings in conjunction with public hearings on Shrimp Amendment 13. However, it is uncertain at this time whether Shrimp Amendment 13 will be ready for public hearings in August. If Shrimp Amendment 13 is ready for public hearings, then the combined IFQ Profile/Shrimp Amendment 13 meetings will be held at the following cities (specific dates and locations to be announced later):

- Brownsville, TX
- Aransas Pass, TX
- Palacios, TX
- Galveston, TX
- New Orleans, LA
- Houma, LA
- Abbeyville, LA
- Biloxi, MS
- Mobile, AL
- Panama City, FL
- Tampa, FL

In case of delay of Shrimp Amendment 13, the IFQ Profile scoping meetings only will be held in:

- Corpus Christi, TX
- Palacios, TX
- Galveston, TX
- New Orleans, LA
- Houma, LA
- Lake Charles, LA.
- Biloxi, MS
- Orange Beach, AL
- Panama City, FL
- Madeira Beach, FL

REEF FISH AMENDMENT 22 (RED SNAPPER REBUILDING PLAN) SUBMITTED TO NOAA FISHERIES

The Gulf Council gave final approval to Reef Fish Amendment 22 (Red Snapper Rebuilding Plan) at the May 17-20 Council meeting, and submitted the amendment to NOAA Fisheries for their approval and implementation. The plan calls for the red snapper stock to be rebuilt to its maximum sustainable yield (MSY) biomass level by 2032. The Council's proposed alternatives are as follows:

Section 4.1.2 - Alternative Biological Reference Points and Status Determination Criteria

Maximum Sustainable Yield (MSY) - Alternative 2: MSY for red snapper equals the yield associated with fishing at FMSY, (where FMSY = 0.092) or 41.13 million pounds, assuming low maximum recruitment and an initial steepness of 0.90 for the stock recruitment relationship.

- Optimum Yield (OY) - Sub-option B: Until recovery, OY is defined to be consistent with the rebuilding strategy selected in this amendment. After achieving the rebuilding target, the OY for red snapper shall correspond to a fishing mortality rate defined as $F_{OY} = 0.75 * F_{MSY} = 0.069$. (The OY yield corresponding to this

F_{OY} is not specified, but it typically is 94-96 percent of MSY .)

- Minimum Stock Size Threshold (MSST) - Sub-option E: $(1-M) \cdot B_{MSY} = 2,453$ billion pounds where $B_{MSY} = 2,726$ billion pounds, and M (natural mortality rate) = 0.10.
- Maximum Fishing Mortality Threshold (MFMT) - Sub-option G: Red Snapper MFMT is equal to the fishing mortality rate specified by the rebuilding strategy adopted in this amendment. Under equilibrium conditions, MFMT would equal F_{MSY} .

Section 4.22 - Rebuilding Strategy*

Alternative 2: Maintain TAC at 9.12 million pounds and rebuild red snapper by 2032. Review and adjust this policy, as necessary, through periodic assessments. Monitor annual landings to ensure quota is not exceeded.

Section 4.3.3.1 - Bycatch Reporting Methodologies for Commercial and Recreational For-Hire Vessels (2 preferred alternatives adopted)

Alternative 4: Direct NOAA Fisheries to develop and manage an observer program for the reef fish fishery. NOAA Fisheries will develop a random selection procedure for determining vessels that will be required to carry observers in order to collect bycatch information. In selecting vessels, the agency will consider the suitability of the vessel for such purpose and ensure that the universe of vessels included are representative of all statistical sub-zones in the Gulf. Vessel permits will not be renewed for vessels that fail or refuse to carry observers in accordance with this process. The implementation of the observer program shall be initiated as soon as NOAA Fisheries obtains sufficient funding for the program. **

Alternative 6 - Enhance the MRFSS by including headboats using the same sampling methodology as used for charter vessels. This motion is contingent on the ongoing studies demonstrating that this would be an improvement in the current estimates.

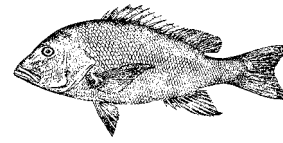
Section 4.3.3.2 - Bycatch Reporting Methodologies for Private Recreational Fishery

Alternative 1. No action (status quo). Use the existing MRFSS catch and effort program to continue collecting bycatch information from the private recreational sector.

* The 9.12 million pound TAC (status quo) included in the rebuilding strategy is based on the last red snapper stock assessment, conducted in 1999. A new 2004 red snapper stock assessment is currently underway, scheduled for completion in the fall of 2004 and presentation to the Council in early 2005. Based on the results of the 2004 stock assessment, it is possible that the TAC in 2005 may be increased, decreased or kept at its current level.

** Under Bycatch Reporting Methodologies, Proposed Alternative 4 has been reworded to remove language making the requirement for a reef fish

observer program contingent upon NOAA Fisheries obtaining sufficient funding. The observer program is now a required part of the rebuilding program.



FINAL RULE EXTENDS MADISON-SWANSON AND STEAMBOAT LUMPS MARINE RESERVES

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) has published the final rule to continue the Madison-Swanson sites and Steamboat Lumps marine reserves through June 16, 2010 and to modify the fishing restrictions within the reserves. Without this new rule, the reserves would have expired after June 16, 2004 (four years after their initial implementation). The Madison-Swanson and Steamboat Lumps sites are located in the eastern Gulf of Mexico and encompass a total area of approximately 219 square nautical miles.

The new rule extends the marine reserves for 6 additional years in order to provide protection for spawning aggregations of gag and other reef fish and to continue research into the effectiveness of the area closures. The new rule also modifies the fishing restrictions within the reserves. Currently, fishing is prohibited for all species except for highly migratory species (billfish, sharks, swordfish and tunas other than blackfin tuna). However, research conducted during the initial 4-year period indicated that surface trolling is unlikely to impact reef fish within the reserves. Consequently, the new rules will allow surface trolling in the reserves during May through October, with additional measures to assure that only that form of fishing is allowed and that the protection for reef fish is continued. Specifically, within these marine reserves, this final rule:

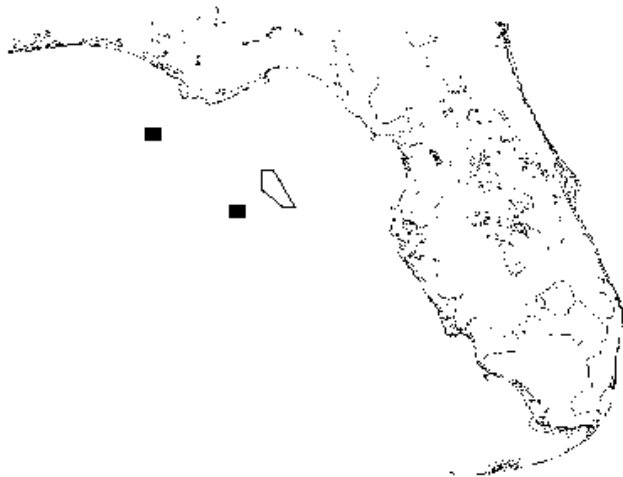
- (1) Prohibits the possession of Gulf reef fish year-round, except for possession aboard a vessel in transit with fishing gear appropriately stowed. Transit means non-stop progression through the area; fishing gear appropriately stowed means: (a) A longline may be left on the drum if all gangions and hooks are disconnected and stowed below deck. Hooks cannot

be baited. All buoys must be disconnected from the gear; however, buoys may remain on deck; (b) trawls may remain on deck, but trawl doors must be disconnected from the trawl gear and must be secured; (c) gillnets must be left on the drum. Any additional gillnets not attached to the drum must be stowed below deck; (d) rods and reels must be removed from the rod holder and stowed securely on or below deck. Terminal gear (i.e., hook, leader, sinker, flasher, or bait) must be disconnected and stowed separately from the rod and reel. Sinkers must be disconnected from the down rigger and stowed separately.

(2) From November 1 through April 30, all fishing and possession of any fish species is prohibited with exceptions for highly migratory species and for fish possessed aboard a vessel in transit with fishing gear appropriately stowed. Fish means finfish, mollusks, crustaceans, and all other forms of marine animals and plant life other than marine mammals and birds.

(3) From May 1 through October 31, fishing activity is restricted to surface trolling only. Surface trolling is defined as fishing with lines trailing behind a vessel which is in constant motion at speeds in excess of four knots with a visible wake. Such trolling may not involve the use of down riggers, wire lines, planers, or similar devices.

The effective date of the final rule is June 3, 2004.



REEF FISH AMENDMENT 18 TO BE SPLIT INTO TWO AMENDMENTS

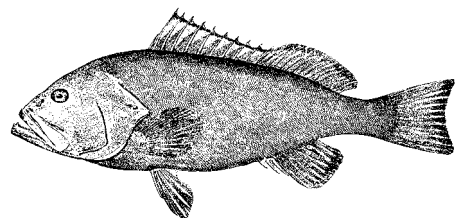
Due to the large number and complexity of issues contained in Reef Fish Amendment 18, the Gulf Council voted to split the amendment into two amendments. Each of the two smaller amendments will concentrate on a more focused set of issues. Amendment 18A will focus primarily on capacity control and enforcement issues in the reef fish fishery, while Amendment 18B will focus on development of Sustainable Fisheries Act requirements to develop status determination criteria, address bycatch reduction, and develop rebuilding plans for Nassau grouper and goliath grouper. The issues in each of the two new amendments will be as follows:

Amendment 18A:

- Effort Capacity Control - Endorsements
 - Shallow-water Grouper Endorsement
 - Endorsement for Use of Longline/Drift Buoy Gear
 - Transferability of Endorsements
 - Appeals Process for Initial Issuance of Endorsements
- Effort Capacity Control - Other
 - Dormant Commercial and Charter Vessel Reef Fish Permits
 - Simultaneous Commercial and Charter Vessel Permits on a Vessel
 - Maximum Crew Size on Commercial Vessels With Charter Permits
- Enforcement and Monitoring Issues
 - Use of Reef Fish for Bait
 - Vessel Monitoring System
- Fishing Mortality Issues
 - Longline and Buoy Gear Phase-out
 - Seasonal Closed Areas

Amendment 18B:

- Administrative and Procedural Issues
 - Changes to the Reef Fish Management Unit
 - Modifications to the TAC Framework Procedure
- Sustainable Fisheries Act Issues
 - Status Determination Criteria for Reef Fishes
 - Goliath Grouper Rebuilding Plan
 - Nassau Grouper Rebuilding Plan
- Reduce Bycatch and Bycatch Mortality



NOAA FISHERIES - REMINDER ABOUT CHARTER VESSEL/HEADBOAT PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) implemented Amendment 14 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources of the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic and Amendment 20 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf of Mexico on June 16, 2003. The rule established a 3-year moratorium on the issuance of charter vessel or headboat (for-hire) permits for the coastal migratory pelagics and reef fish fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of the Gulf of Mexico. In addition, as a consequence of the moratorium, the current charter vessel/headboat permit system for coastal migratory pelagic fish has been restructured to provide separate permits for the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic fisheries. "Open access" permits issued prior to the moratorium were invalid as of November 13, 2003. The intended effect of this rule is to cap the number of for-hire vessels operating in these respective fisheries at the current level while the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council evaluates the need for further management actions that may be needed to manage/rebuild these fishery resources, and to promote attainment of optimum yield.

This Bulletin is to remind charter vessel and headboat operators that if they fish for coastal migratory pelagic or reef fish species in EEZ waters of the Gulf of Mexico, they are required to have the appropriate vessel permits. Operators of, and clients aboard, vessels without valid charter vessel/headboat permits are not allowed to fish for or possess, in or from the EEZ, species from these species groups.

Persons seeking a charter vessel/headboat permit for Gulf coastal migratory pelagic fish or Gulf reef fish may transfer an existing permit to their vessel, with or without sale of the permitted vessel, providing that the permit does not have a historical captain endorsement. Permits without the historical captain endorsement are transferable between individuals. Permits with an historical captain endorsement may only be transferred to a vessel operated by the historical captain.

The transfer of an existing moratorium permit also has additional passenger capacity provisions. Please contact the NOAA Fisheries Permit Branch if you anticipate purchasing a moratorium permit for transfer to your vessel. Questions regarding permits, including permit requirements, permit transferability, or permit renewal, should be directed to the NOAA Fisheries' Permits Branch at 727-570-5326.

NOAA Fisheries is an agency of the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.



NOAA FISHERIES - REMINDER OF REQUIREMENT THAT FEDERAL FISHERIES PERMIT HOLDERS MUST ADVISE THE NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE OF ANY CHANGES TO APPLICATION INFORMATION WITHIN 30 DAYS

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) issues this reminder that the owner or operator of a vessel with a permit, a person with a coral permit, a person with an operator permit, or a dealer with a permit issued by NOAA Fisheries' Southeast Region, **must notify** NOAA in writing (Permits Branch, 9721 Executive Center Drive N., St. Petersburg, FL 33702) within 30 days after **any change** in the application information. The application information most critical to administration of NOAA Fisheries' permit program includes name, address, phone, vessel ownership, homeport, horsepower, vessel overall length, and vessel tonnage, as specified on the permit. For instance, if you do not provide accurate address changes in a timely manner, NOAA Fisheries will be unable to notify you of permit renewal information, application deadlines or other important fishery management regulatory changes. **You do not have to pay an administrative fee to advise NOAA Fisheries of the changes in your application information to comply with the 30-day notification requirement.**

The above information is a partial summary of regulatory requirements contained in 622.4(c). "The

owner or operator of a vessel with a permit, a person with a coral permit, or a dealer with a permit must notify the Regional Administrator within 30 days after any change in the application information specified in paragraph (b) of this section. The permit is void if any change in the information is not reported within 30 days.” If you have questions regarding permits, you may telephone the Regional Permits Branch at 727/570-5326, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., eastern time, Monday through Friday.



NOAA FISHERIES - REMINDER ABOUT BYCATCH REDUCTION DEVICES (BRDS) AND TURTLE EXCLUDER DEVICES (TEDS)

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) is issuing this bulletin as a reminder that all trawl vessels fishing for shrimp in federal waters of the South Atlantic or Gulf of Mexico must use BRDs and all shrimp trawl vessels in any waters of the southeast United States must use TEDs that are certified by NOAA Fisheries.

Bycatch Reduction Device Requirements

South Atlantic

Since April 1997, BRDs have been required, with limited exceptions, in shrimp trawls being used to catch penaeid (brown, white, pink) shrimp in federal waters of the South Atlantic region. Legal BRDs included the “Fisheye,” “Expanded Mesh,” and “Expanded Mesh - Extended Funnel.”

Gulf of Mexico

Since May 1998, BRDs have been required, with limited exceptions, in shrimp trawls towed in federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico shoreward of the 100-fm (183-m) depth contour west of 85°30' W. longitude (western Gulf), the approximate longitude of Cape San Blas, Florida. Legal BRDs include the “Fisheye,” “Gulf Fisheye,” and “Jones-Davis.”

Beginning in February 2004, BRDs are now also required, with limited exceptions, in all shrimp trawls towed in federal waters of the eastern Gulf of Mexico (east of 85°30' W. longitude) shoreward of the 100-fm (183-m) depth contour. All BRDs certified for the South Atlantic region, or the western Gulf are legal in the eastern Gulf. These include the “Fisheye,” “Gulf Fisheye,” “Expanded Mesh,” “Expanded Mesh - Extended Funnel,” and “Jones-Davis.”

For the “Fisheye” and “Gulf Fisheye” BRDs used in the Gulf, no part of the lazy line attachment system may overlap the escape opening of the fisheyes.

Details regarding the configurations, construction, and installation of these BRD types are available by contacting NOAA Fisheries’ Harvesting Technology Branch, Mississippi Laboratories, Pascagoula Facility, 3209 Frederic Street, Pascagoula, Mississippi 39568-1207; phone (228) 762-4591. Written specifications are also available via the Internet as Appendix D of the following regulations:

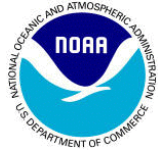
<http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/regulations/inter622.htm>

Turtle Excluder Device Requirements

NOAA Fisheries would also like to remind fishermen that as of April 15, 2003, in the Atlantic and August 21, 2003, in the Gulf of Mexico, trawls capable of catching shrimp that are required to use TEDs must use TEDs with new, larger escape openings. Currently TEDS used in inshore waters (landward of the COLREG demarcation line), except the inshore waters of Georgia and South Carolina, must have a minimum grid size of 32 inches by 32 inches with an opening size that is at least 44-inches stretched mesh. The Parker soft TED with the 56-inch opening and a hooped hard TED with a new larger opening can also be used in these waters.

TEDs that can be used in all waters of the southeast United States, including offshore waters and all waters off Georgia and South Carolina, must have a minimum grid size of 32 inches by 32 inches. These TEDs can either be the double cover flap TED or a TED with a 71-inch stretched mesh opening. A Parker soft TED with a 96-inch opening and a hooped hard TED with an opening large enough to release leatherback turtles can be also used.

As of May 28, 2004, the double cover flap TED may be used with a 24-inch flap. Note that these new TED configurations must meet other requirements such as the size of the escape hole cut; however, these requirements are too detailed to present in this bulletin. For more information on construction and installation requirements, readers are urged to contact the NOAA Fisheries' Harvesting Technology Branch, Mississippi Laboratories, Pascagoula Facility, 3209 Frederic Street, Pascagoula, Mississippi 39568-1207; phone (228) 762-4591. Additional TED installation information is also available at: <http://www.mslabs.noaa.gov/mslabs/harvest/harvesting.htm>.



NOAA FISHERIES - CONSTITUENT SESSIONS REPORTS AVAILABLE ONLINE

Beginning in June 2003, NOAA Fisheries held a series of Constituent Sessions at many locations around the nation. For the most part, they coincided with regional Fishery Management Council meetings to take advantage of the constituents who would also be attending those gatherings. The Gulf of Mexico Constituent Session was held July 15 and 16, 2003 in Naples, Florida, in conjunction with the Gulf Council meeting. These constituent sessions had 114 attendees, 29 of whom made presentations during the sessions. In addition, 25 email messages were received from constituents from the Gulf region.

The sessions were held to gather public input on ways to improve the effectiveness of NOAA Fisheries and its management of living marine resources. The primary objective was to assemble and provide a comprehensive analysis of the diverse opinions, attitudes, and perspectives of marine resource stakeholders as they relate to broad themes in fisheries management, with a secondary objective to identify performance measures.

The Constituent Session Reports are now available online. You can view the synthesis report, the NOAA Fisheries response, and the eight regional reports at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov>. Once on the website,

click on the "2003 Constituent Sessions Reports" button on the right.



NOAA FISHERIES - QUOTA MONITORING PROCEDURES FOR SHALLOW-WATER AND DEEP-WATER GROUPER

The Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) has established the following procedures for monitoring commercial landings for the shallow-water and deep-water grouper fisheries in the U.S. Gulf of Mexico:

Purpose

To provide the aggregate quantity of pounds, in gutted weight, for all species in the deep-water and shallow-water grouper management units, and to provide the quantity of pounds, in gutted weight, for red grouper that are submitted by seafood dealers selected to report to the grouper quota monitoring program.

Contact

The program is administered by John Poffenberger and Mike Judge, Sustainable Fisheries Division, SEFSC, Miami, Florida.

Background

On January 31, 2003, NOAA Fisheries Regional Administrator Roy Crabtree requested the SEFSC to establish a quota monitoring program for both the shallow-water and deep-water grouper fisheries in the Gulf of Mexico. In response to this request, the SEFSC established a new data collection program that requires seafood dealers to submit monthly total landings for all species in these two fisheries.

The new data collection program required approval by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). In the supporting documentation for the Paperwork Reduction Act submitted to OMB, the SEFSC described the methods that would be used to collect the necessary landings data. The objective of the program is to provide accurate information in a timely manner. Therefore, the SEFSC developed a plan that

will provide a sufficient percentage of the total landings, but will not place an unnecessary reporting burden on all of the dealers that handle species in these two fisheries. The 2002 landings for shallow-water and deep-water grouper were used to determine how many dealers would be required to report. During 2002, a total of 286 dealers reported purchases of some quantity of the species in the deep-water and shallow-water grouper complexes. In order to account for at least 90% of the total landings, reporting by 80 to 90 dealers will be necessary.

After evaluating the additional costs, especially the extra staff time, that would be required to select all dealers that purchased groupers, the SEFSC decided that the allocation of the additional staff time (estimated to be 1/3 of a person per year), to receive an additional 10% in landings was not warranted. Furthermore, the directives from OMB are to limit the amount of burden placed on the public by federal reporting programs. Thus, the SEFSC selected 86 dealers with the largest amount of grouper purchased during 2002 to participate in the quota monitoring program.

Approval from OMB was received in July 2003 and the SEFSC initiated the quota monitoring program in August 2003. The selected dealers are required to submit the monthly purchases of the 13 species in these two fisheries (8 species in the shallow-water grouper fishery and 5 species in the deep-water grouper fishery). See Appendix I for the species in the two grouper fisheries.

Procedures

1. The initial dealer selection was made in August 2003 and dealer reporting began in September 2003.
2. The data collection form approved by OMB was mailed to the selected dealers. Dealers are required to summarize the monthly purchases of each of the 13 species of grouper and record these quantities on the reporting form. Dealers are instructed to designate whether the purchases are in whole (round) or gutted weights. The dealers are required to return the completed form by the 5th of the following month. They have the option of mailing the form (postage paid envelopes are provided), or sending the form via fax to the SEFSC. Special provisions are provided to those dealers that are reporting electronically to the

respective state.

If dealers report electronically and the SEFSC has access to the electronic data, these dealers are not required to submit a paper form.

3. When reporting forms are received, they are entered into a database for review and analysis by the SEFSC. Dealers that have not reported by the 10th of the month, are sent a follow-up letter requesting the landings for the previous month. An additional 5 days are included to allow for those dealers that submitted their forms by mail. If a dealer did not purchase any grouper species during the calendar month, the dealer is required to submit a form stating that no purchases were made.

4. When the SEFSC determines that all data are received for a month, a report is prepared and submitted to the Southeast Regional Office. This report includes the monthly landings for deep-water and shallow-water grouper fisheries. The report also includes the monthly landings of red grouper separate from the shallow-water grouper landings. A separate quota has been established for red grouper and landings of this species need to be monitored independently from the total shallow-water grouper fishery. The SEFSC will also include an "adjustment" factor that can be applied to the reported landings to provide an estimate of the total landings for the month. Because only a portion of the dealers are selected to report, the adjustment is used to account for the dealers that are not selected. The "adjustment" factor will be re-evaluated when the landings for the quota monitoring program are compared to the general canvas landings statistics reported to the state programs (see #5 below).

5. Periodically, the quota monitoring data are compared to the general canvas landings statistics reported by the dealers to the state fishery agencies to determine if the dealers selected by the SEFSC continue to provide an acceptable percentage of the total reported landings. This periodic comparison is critical because fishermen constantly change the dealers to whom they sell fish. If the SEFSC finds dealers that have purchases of more than 1,000 pounds of grouper per month and are not among the dealers already selected, the SEFSC will then select those dealers to participate in the quota monitoring program. Comparisons were made between the

landings reported by dealers and data from the general canvas landings statistics for October and November 2003. Based on the comparisons for those two months, the SEFSC received 83% and 87% of the total landings of all shallow-water and deep-water groupers, respectively, compared to the general canvas landings statistics. Furthermore, the SEFSC received data for 83% and 86% of the total red grouper landings compared to the general canvas statistics. Thus, the SEFSC is using an adjustment of 15% for all shallow-water and deep-water grouper and an adjustment of 17% for red grouper. Landings summaries for shallow-water grouper, deep-water grouper, and red grouper will be provided to the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council on a monthly basis and will be posted on the Southeast Regional Office web site at <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov>.

Shallow-water grouper species

- red grouper
- black grouper
- gag
- scamp
- yellowmouth grouper
- yellowfin grouper
- rock hind
- red hind

Deep-water grouper species

- yellowedge grouper
- misty grouper
- snowy grouper
- Warsaw grouper
- speckled hind



NOAA FISHERIES - REVISED ADJUSTMENT FACTOR FOR RED GROUPER QUOTA MONITORING

The procedure used by NOAA Fisheries for monitoring monthly commercial grouper landings includes applying an “adjustment” factor” to the

reported landings from selected dealers to provide an estimate of total landings for that month to account for dealers that were not selected to participate in the quota monitoring program. Until recently, a 30% “adjustment” factor was applied to the red grouper landings data reported by selected dealers. Upon closer examination, the SEFSC determined that the “adjustment” factor of 30% was inaccurate and should be 17%. The “adjustment” factor is derived from comparing the general canvas landings statistics reported by the dealers to state fisheries agencies and those landings reported by dealers selected to report in the quota monitoring program. Comparisons were made between the landings reported by dealers and data from the general canvas landings statistics for October and November 2003. Based on the comparisons for those two months, the SEFSC received 83% and 86% of the total red grouper landings compared to the general canvas statistics and not the 72% and 75% previously reported. Therefore, the SEFSC is using an “adjustment” of 17% for red grouper rather than the previously reported 30%. Red grouper landings (gutted weight) reported from the quota monitoring program with the corrected 17% “adjustment” factor are provided in the table below. The 2003 red grouper general canvas landings data (gutted weight) are also provided for comparison.

Adjusted red grouper landings for 2004 compared to General Canvas Landings for 2003.

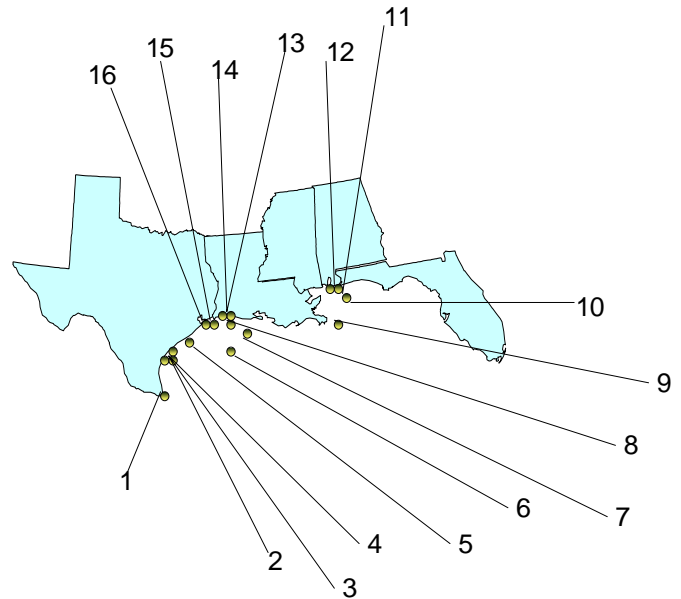
Month	Adjusted Wt.	2003 General Canvass Landings Statistics
Jan	674,676	457,140
Feb	412,974	327,844
Mar	215,587	209,804
Apr	524,562	412,855
May		445,003
Jun		437,374
Jul		453,223
Aug		515,437
Sep		483,969
Oct		430,413
Nov		404,481
Dec		296,327
Total	1,827,799	4,873,870



GULF COUNCIL OPPOSES THE USE OF OPEN LOOP LNG SYSTEMS IN THE GULF OF MEXICO

The Gulf Council, at its May meeting, received a presentation on proposed liquified natural gas (LNG) facilities in the Gulf of Mexico from Mr. Miles Croom of the NOAA Fisheries Southeast Region Habitat Conservation Division. Demand for liquefied natural gas is increasing. To meet this demand, 15 new LNG terminals are proposed for the Gulf of Mexico. One LNG currently exists in Lake Charles, Louisiana. Nine of the proposed facilities are closed loop systems that will not impact fishery resources, but six proposed facilities would each circulate approximately 100 - 200 million gallons of water per day to heat the liquefied natural gas back to its gaseous phase. Each facility would impact billions of fish eggs, larvae, and plankton each year. All fish eggs and larvae are assumed to be killed after passing through these systems. NOAA Fisheries is concerned about the potential impact of these facilities on fish populations in the Gulf of Mexico. One facility at Sabine Pass, Texas would filter 30% of the water in Sabine Lake each year. EPA has required the power generating industry to use closed loop systems to mitigate impacts on aquatic biota. As a result of the information presented to the Council, the Council adopted a position that it believes LNG open loop systems will adversely affect the biota of the Gulf of Mexico and the recreational and commercial fishing industries that depend on this biota. Therefore, the Council opposes the use of open loop LNG systems in the Gulf of Mexico, and recommends the use of closed loop systems in inshore, near shore, and offshore locations.

Existing and Proposed LNG Facilities.



1. Cheniere Brownsville
2. Cheniere Corpus Christi
3. Vista del Sol
4. Oxy-Chem
5. Freeport
6. El Paso (approved)
7. Port Pelican (approved)
8. Gulf Landing
9. Main Pass
10. Compass Port
11. Cheniere Mobile
12. ExxonMobile Mobile
13. Lake Charles (existing)
14. Hackberry (approved)
15. Cheniere Sabine Pass
16. Golden Pass

NOVA QUARTERLY REPORT FOR GULF OF MEXICO AND FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY
January 1, 2004 through March 31, 2004

Case No.	Respondent's Name	Vessel Name	Area	LE Unit	Case Description	NOVA* Amount	NOPF** Amount	NOPS*** Duration
SE025348MS	Ricardo Sanchez	FL2863LA	FKNMS	FFWCC	fish in a sanctuary preservation area	\$ 625.00		
SE030321ES	Whiskey Joe, Inc. Manuel Trevino	WHISKEY JOE	GOM	USCG	TED violation	\$2,500.00		
SE030323ES	Diem Thi Nguyen Hong T. Nguyen	ANDREW TU	GOM	USCG	TED violation	\$2,500.00		
SE030324ES/FM	Nhieu Thi Nguyen Yen Van Tran	HAI YEN	GOM	USCG	i) TED violation ii) fish without federal permit	i) \$2,500.00 ii) \$2,500.00		
SE030325FM	Quinton A. Cummings	CAPT. JERRY	GOM	MSMR	i) possess undersized red snapper; ii) exceed a bag or possession limit (red snapper & amberjack)	\$ 1,500.00		
SE030361FM	James Martin	AL8490KS	GOM	FFWCC	fish in violation of seasonal and/or area closures	\$ 750.00		
SE030397ES	Glenn E. Untermeyer Kelli J. Untermeyer	LUCKY U	GOM	USCG	1) TED violation; 2) TED violation; 3) dispose of fish, wildlife, gear, cargo, etc., after signal from authorized officer	1) \$8,000.00 2) \$8,000.00 3) \$3,000.00		
SE030414FM	Richard Hein Thanh Vo Qui Van Tran Eugene Nix	RICHARD	GOM	LADWF NMFS	possess or sell undersized red snapper	\$20,000.00		60 days
SE033057FM	Richard Bailey	FL3446JT	GOM	FFWCC	fish in violation of seasonal and/or area closures (recreational red snapper)	\$ 750.00		
SE033060FM	Arthur Eugene Carr	AL1814KE	GOM	FFWCC	fish in violation of seasonal and/or area closures (recreational red snapper)	\$ 750.00		
SE033061FM	Brian B. Thomas & Hardrick Smith Ovealia Caswell Thomas	FL4150GT	GOM	FFWCC	fish in violation of seasonal and/or area closures (recreational red snapper)	\$ 750.00		

Case No.	Respondent's Name	Vessel Name	Area	LE Unit	Case Description	NOVA* Amount	NOPF** Amount	NOPS*** Duration
SE035033MS	Juan V. Nathaniel Barbara Nathaniel	LAURI ANN	FKNMS	FFWCC	strike or otherwise injure coral, seagrass or other immobile organism attached to seabed	\$3,500.00		
SE035034MS	Eric Parish	WESTERLY	FKNMS	FFWCC	strike or injure coral, seagrass, etc.	\$ 2,500.00		
SE035072MS	Frank J. Jelsch	FL6636MC	FKNMS	FFWCC	strike or otherwise injure coral, seagrass or other immobile organism attached to seabed.	\$ 2,500.00		
SE035093MS	Fabricio Foletto	FL9138HK	FKNMS	FFWCC	fish in a sanctuary preservation area	\$ 625.00		
SE035141MS	Blas Rodriguez	FL8475DL	FKNMS	FFWCC	fish in a sanctuary preservation area	\$ 625.00		
SE0353612MS	William J. Stogsdill, Jr.	ALIENATION OF AFFECTION II	FKNMS	FFWCC	strike or otherwise injure coral, seagrass or other immobile organism attached to seabed.	\$ 5,000.00		
SE035362MS	Michael Tiplady	FL8983LN	FKNMS	FFWCC	strike or otherwise injure coral, seagrass or other immobile organism attached to seabed.	\$ 5,000.00		
SE035365MS	Edward Burke and John Burke	AMANDA LYNN	FKNMS	FFWCC	fish in a sanctuary preservation area	\$ 5,000.00		
SE035378MS	Black Diamond Administrative Services, L.C. and John Winter	BLACK DIAMOND	FKNMS	FFWCC	strike or otherwise injure coral, seagrass or other immobile organism attached to seabed.	\$ 5,000.00		
SE035379MS	MTG Charters, LLC David Burchard	COTTON RANCH	FKNMS	FFWCC	strike or otherwise injure coral, seagrass or other immobile organism attached to seabed.	\$ 5,000.00		
SE035380MS	Theodore Reese	CADENCE	FKNMS	FFWCC	strike or otherwise injure coral, seagrass or other immobile organism attached to seabed.	\$ 7,500.00		
SE035381MS	James Handley	SHERYL LYNN	FKNMS	FFWCC	strike or otherwise injure coral, seagrass or other immobile organism attached to seabed.	\$ 1,200.00		
SE040026FM	Grant Weller	DEBORAH	GOM	USCG	fish in area closure (reef fish stressed area)	\$5,000.00	15 days	22 fish traps

* NOVA - Notice of Violation Assessment

** NOPF - Notice of Proposed Forfeiture

***NOPS - Notice of Permit Sanction

**SETTLEMENTS FOR GULF OF MEXICO AND FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY BETWEEN
January 1, 2004 through March 31, 2004**

Case No.	Respondent Name	Area	LE Unit	Vessel Name	Case Description	Final Amount	Forfeited Amount	Days of Sanction
SE000528FM	Benjamin J. Sprinkle, II	GOM	USCG	MISS LINDA DARLENE	Tortugas shrimp sanctuary violation	\$ 2,500.00		
SE010633FM	Marvin (Jessy) Hickman Patsy C. Hickman	GOM	FFWCC	GRANDPA'S DREAM	1) Tortugas shrimp sanctuary violation; 2) undersized spiny lobster	\$ 11,500.00		30 days
SE020277FM	Thoi Ngu Dan Phi Vo	GOM	USCG	MISS LANA	BRD violation	\$ 3,000.00		
SE025062MS	Rolando Garcia	FKNMS	FFWCC	FL8239LT	harvesting sponges	\$4,000.00		
SE025113FM	Fishermen IX, Inc.	GOM	FFWCC/ NMFS	CAPT. CHRISTOPHER	fish in Tortugas shrimp sanctuary and/or during Southwest Florida Seasonal Trawl Closure	\$10,000.00		10 days
SE025116FM	Trawler Master Jeffrey, Inc.	GOM	FFWCC	MASTER JEFFREY	Tortugas shrimp sanctuary violation and/or the Southwest Florida Seasonal Trawl Closure violation	\$ 7,500.00		15 days
SE025463MS	Lloyd W. Rye	FKNMS	FFWCC	BLUEPRINT MATCH	operate a vessel in such a manner as to cause prop scarring	\$ 1,500.00		
SE030013FM	Jeffrey Lynn Starks	GOM	NMFS LDWF	N/A	1) fish during recreational red snapper closure; 2) fail to maintain fish intact; 3) possess prohibited species (red drum)	\$ 2,800.00		
SE030079FM	Jeffrey K. Evans Gregory Evans	GOM	USCG	COLBEE RAE	1) Tortugas shrimp sanctuary violation; 2) fish without permit	\$ 8,750.00	\$5,268.20	4 months
SE030192FM	Patrick Wayne Damico	GOM	USCG	FL3086JG	1) unlawfully possess spiny lobster and spiny lobster tails; 2) unlawfully fish for, harvest or possess a prohibited species, Nassau Grouper	\$2,300.00		

Case No.	Respondent Name	Area	LE Unit	Vessel Name	Case Description	Final Amount	Forfeited Amount	Days of Sanction
SE030257FM	Red Fin, Inc. Nam Truong	GOM	USCG	RED FIN	i) fish with pelagic longline in closed area ii) falsify or fail to report or maintain information	\$20,000.00	\$32,213.39	
SE030258FM	Steven O. Russ Jeffrey W. Timson Donna Beaubien Mike Beaubien	GOM	NMFS	BORN TO BOOGIE III	fish during red snapper closure	\$1,500.00		
SE030290FM	Carl E. Bartlett Bruce Bartlett	GOM	NMFS	FLAT CALM	sell Atlantic tuna to other than permitted dealer	\$3,000.00		10 days
SE030306ES/ FM	Edward Garcia, Sr. Greg Garcia	GOM	NMFS/ USCG	CHRISTIAN G	i) to xxx) TED violations xxx) to vx) BRD violations	\$100,000.00	\$78,399.69	209 days
SE030325FM	Quinton A. Cummings	GOM	MSMR	CAPT. JERRY	1) possess undersized red snapper; 2) exceed a bag or possession limit (red snapper & amberjack)	\$ 1,125.00		
SE030361FM	James Christopher Martin	GOM	FFWCC / NMFS	AL8490KS	fish during recreational red snapper closure	\$ 600.00		
SE030385FM	Kenneth Evans, Jr. Bruce Stiller	GOM	FFWCC	MISS SHARON	1) exceed a trip limit for Spanish Mackerel; 2) fish for Spanish Mackerel with gear not meeting the requirements	\$ 5,250.00	\$1,124.90	
SE033018FM/ MS	Julie Ann, LLC Darryl L. Cover	FKNMS	USCG	JULIE ANN	fish in the Tortugas North Ecological Reserve	\$ 7,600.00		
SE033042FM	Michael David Eller	GOM	NMFS FFWCC	FISH-N-FOOL	exceed the greater amberjack bag/possession limit	\$ 2,000.00		5 days
SE033057FM	Richard Bailey	GOM	FFWCC / NMFS	FL3446JT	fish during recreational red snapper closure	\$ 600.00		
SE033060FM	Arthur Eugene Carr	GOM	FFWCC	AL1814KE	fish in violation of seasonal and/or area closures (Gulf recreational red snapper)	\$ 600.00		

Case No.	Respondent Name	Area	LE Unit	Vessel Name	Case Description	Final Amount	Forfeited Amount	Days of Sanction
SE033061FM	Hardrick Smith Thomas Ovealia Caswell Thomas Brian B. Thomas	GOM	FFWCC	FL4150GT	fish in violation of seasonal and/or area closures (recreational red snapper closure)	\$ 600.00		
SE033062FM	Todd A. Williams	GOM	FFWCC	FL6739LG	fish in violation of seasonal and/or area closures (recreational red snapper)	\$ 600.00		
SE035012MS	Stephen M. Weiss	FKNMS	FFWCC	MOMENT'S NOTICE	strike or otherwise injure coral, seagrass or other immobile organism attached to seabed	\$ 2,200.00		
SE035034MS	Eric Parish	FKNMS	FFWCC	WESTERLY	strike or otherwise injure coral, seagrass or other immobile organism attached to seabed	\$1,500.00		
SE035072MS	Frank Joseph Jelsch	FKNMS	FFWCC	FL6636MC	strike or otherwise injure coral, seagrass or other immobile organism attached to seabed.	\$ 1,500.00		
SE035141MS	Blas Rodriguez	FKNMS	FFWCC	FL8475DL	fish in a sanctuary preservation area	\$ 150.00		
SE035225MS	Richard G. Sharples	FKNMS	FFWCC	FL2210LL	operate a vessel in such a manner as to cause prop scarring	\$ 1,000.00		
SE035297MS	William R. Grosscup Chip Quimby	FKNMS	FFWCC	SEA EAGLE	strike or otherwise injure coral, sea grass or other immobile organism attached to seabed	\$ 3,750.00		
SE035340MS	Clifton L. Davis Daha, Inc.	FKNMS	FFWCC	CAT'SASS	anchor in the Tortugas Ecological Reserve	\$ 1,250.00		
SE035362MS	Michael Tiplady	FKNMS	FFWCC	FL8983LN	strike or otherwise injure coral, seagrass or other immobile organism attached to seabed	\$ 3,000.00		
SE035365MS	John Burke Edward Burke	FKNMS	FFWCC	AMANDA LYNN	fish in a sanctuary preservation area	\$ 3,000.00		
SE035378MS	Black Diamond Administrative Services, LC John Winter	FKNMS	FFWCC	BLACK DIAMOND	strike or otherwise injure coral, seagrass or other immobile organism attached to seabed	\$ 3,500.00		

TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR THE JULY GULF COUNCIL MEETING

COMMITTEE SCHEDULE

Monday, July 12, 2004

1:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Shrimp Management Committee (Tab D)

- Public Hearing Draft Shrimp Amendment 13/EIS
 - Revisions
 - Provisions for permit moratorium
 - Committee Recommendations
- Violations of Shrimp Rules (Richard Cook/Dave McKinney)

3:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Joint Reef Fish/Mackerel Committees (Tab F)

- Public Hearing Draft of Reef Fish Amendment 24/EA
- Public Hearing Draft of Mackerel Amendment 15/EA
- Scoping Document for Extension of Charter Vessel/Headboat Permit Moratorium Amendment

Tuesday July 13, 2004

8:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

Joint Personnel/Administrative Policy Committees (CLOSED SESSION)

- Revision of Joint SOPPs/Administrative Handbook
 - AdHoc Chairs Committee Recommendations
 - Forming an SSC Pool for Standing Committee
 - Committee Recommendations

- recess -

1:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.

Mackerel Management Committee (TAB C)

- South Atlantic/Gulf Council Joint Committee Actions
 - Options Paper for Amendment 16
 - Other Issues

2:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Reef Fish Management Committee (Tab B)

- Final Reef Fish Amendment 23/EIS (Vermilion Snapper Rebuilding Plan)
 - Public Hearing Comments
 - Public Letters
 - AP/SSC Recommendations
 - EPA Comments
 - NMFS Comments
 - Committee Recommendations
- Red Snapper IFQ Scoping Document

COUNCIL SCHEDULE

Wednesday, July 14, 2004

- I. Call to Order and Introductions - B. Walker
(8:30 a.m. - 8:35 a.m.)
- II. Adoption of Agenda - B. Walker
(8:35 a.m. - 8:40 a.m.)
- III. Approval of Minutes - B. Walker
(8:40 a.m. - 8:45 a.m.)

- IV. Public Testimony - B. Walker
 - a. Reef Fish Amendment 23/EIS
 - b. Applications for Exempted Fishing Permits (EFPs)
(8:45 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.)

- V. National Mercury Working Group Report - Brown
(10:45 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.)

-recess-

- VI. NMFS Draft HMS Amendment 2 - Stirratt
(1:00 p.m. - 2:15 p.m.)

- VII Committee Reports
 - a. Shrimp Management - Perret
(2:15 p.m. - 2:45 p.m.)
 - b. Joint Reef Fish/Mackerel Management - Minton/Fischer
(2:45 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.)
 - c. Mackerel Management - Fischer
(3:30 p.m. - 4:15 p.m.)
 - d. Joint Personnel/Administrative Policy(**CLOSED SESSION**) -K. Williams/Fensom
(4:15 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.)

- recess -

Thursday, July 15, 2004

- VII. Committee Reports (continued)
 - e. Reef Fish Management - Minton
(8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.)
 - f. Joint Personnel/Administrative Policy - K. Williams/Fensom
(10:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.)

- VII. SAFMC Liaison Report - B. Walker
(11:00 a.m. - 11:15 a.m.)

- VIII. Enforcement Reports - Sherlock/Rogers/McKinney
(11:15 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.)

- IX. Regional Administrator's Report - Crabtree
(11:30 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.)

- XI. Directors' Reports - Simpson/Brown/R. Williams/Minton/Perret/Foote/Riechers
(11:45 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.)

- XII. Other Business - B. Walker
(12:15 p.m. - 12:30 p.m.)

The above agenda is tentative and is not final until it becomes noticed. Updates to the agenda will be posted on the Gulf Council web site as they become available.

GULF FISHERY NEWS WANTS YOUR NEWS AND VIEWS

GULF FISHERY NEWS is a publication of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council. Any material in this newsletter may be reprinted or reproduced. We would like to hear from you regarding fishery questions you would like to see covered in GULF FISHERY NEWS. GULF FISHERY NEWS or the Gulf Council office can be contacted at c/o Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 3018 North U.S. Highway 301, Suite 1000, Tampa, Florida, 33619-2272. Telephone: 813-228-2815 (toll-free 888-833-1844). Fax: 813-225-7015. E-mail: gulfcouncil@gulfcouncil.org Website: <http://www.gulfcouncil.org>

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council is one of eight regional fishery management councils that were established by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act in 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. This is a publication of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council and financial assistance for this newsletter was provided by grant funds pursuant to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Award No. NA04NMF4410020.

July Meeting:

July 12-15, 2004
Omni
4 Riverway
Houston, Texas 77056

September Meeting:

September 13-16, 2004
Edgewater Beach Resort
11212 Front Beach Road
Panama City Beach, Florida 32407

GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT
COUNCIL

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