

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: Peter Hood.

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REEF FISH AMENDMENT 18 FINAL ACTION DEFERRED UNTIL NOVEMBER

At its July meeting, the Gulf Council moved to defer final action on Reef Fish Amendment 18 and its accompanying draft supplemental environmental impact statement (DSEIS). In addition, further public hearings will be scheduled and the Reef Fish Advisory Panel (AP) and Science and Statistical Committee (SSC) will be reconvened to further review the documents. This decision was made for several reasons. One was that tables showing landings data in the amendment and in the DSEIS were different due to different data management systems used to obtain the landings information. Another was that when determinations of percent reductions in catch needed to rebuild the red grouper stock were calculated, landings in terms of gutted weights were mixed with whole weights, resulting in an overestimate of the

reductions needed. This discrepancy was discovered by the Council staff; however, because of scheduling difficulties, could not be fixed in the document prior to the June public hearings. Finally, the due date for the DSEIS was after the scheduled public hearings so only an unfinished document was available to the public. For these reasons, the Council moved to defer action so the public record for this document could be strengthened.

Amendment 18 is being prepared to establish a rebuilding plan for red grouper (declared overfished by the National Marine Fisheries Service [NMFS]), and to address other gear and enforcement issues. The

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

September 10-13, 2001

W Hotel

333 Poydras Street

New Orleans, Louisiana 70130



amendment contains alternatives to address the following issues: longline/buoy gear limited entry system, longline/buoy gear boundary line, longline/buoy gear phase-out, use of reef fish for bait, vessel monitoring system (VMS) on reef fish vessels, tilefish and deep-water grouper quotas and closed seasons, additions to the management unit, and modifications to the framework procedure for setting TAC. In addition, Amendment 18 contains alternatives to implement a red grouper stock rebuilding plan, including options for commercial closed seasons, recreational closed seasons, commercial trip limits, recreational bag limits, and closed areas.

The Gulf Council did vote to remove two issues from the main body of the amendment: dormant reef fish permits and use of powerheads when spearfishing. Council members felt that dormant reef fish permits are not a problem at present, and that placing restrictions on them would limit the flexibility of fishermen to move between fisheries. The Council's preferred alternative to require a permit for the use of powerheads was felt to impose an additional paperwork burden on spearfishermen while producing very little new useful information. For reasons of maintaining an administrative record, these sections will not be deleted completely from the amendment, but will be moved into an appendix as rejected alternatives.

The Council asked for new alternatives to be added to the next draft of the amendment. While none of these are preferred alternatives, the following issues will be added:

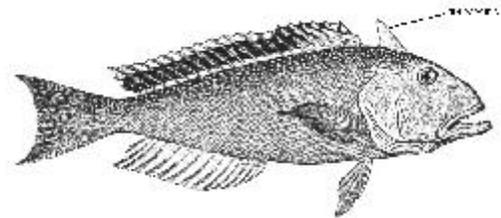
- modify the aggregate shallow-water grouper quota (currently 9.8 million pounds)
- set grouper sub-quotas by gear type for the commercial fishery
- have alternating open months for the commercial bandit rig and longline fisheries
- move commercial bandit rig fishing (or bandit/vertical hook-and-line gear) out to the 20 fathom boundary or deeper
- provide an exemption to the preferred alternative to prohibit the use of reef fish or reef fish parts for bait for blue crab, stone crab, deep-water crab, and spiny lobster trap fisheries.

- decide whether to allow or prohibit a bottom-fishing type of buoy gear that has started to be used in the Gulf of Mexico in recent years
- add an alternative to allow recreational harvests of reef fish species that are closed to commercial fishing on board vessels while they are commercially fishing for other reef fish species
- incorporate into the amendment the alternatives from the draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for identifying essential fish habitat (EFH), identifying habitat areas of particular concern (HAPC), and minimizing fishing impacts on EFH and HAPC

The Gulf Council also asked for some additional analyses from NMFS. To evaluate the assumption of a 33 percent release mortality in the longline fishery, the Council asked NMFS for a series of red grouper assessments and future yield projections to be run under longline release mortality rates of 33, 60, and 90 percent. These runs will be made using the most up to date information (including year 2000 landings), and the allowable biological catch (ABC) for a revised red grouper rebuilding plan will be selected from these updated runs.

In order to allow time for the Gulf Council and NMFS staff to complete the analyses and incorporate the new issues into Amendment 18, final action has been deferred until the November 12-16, 2001 Council meeting in Biloxi, Mississippi.

To receive copies of Amendment 18 and for specific information on where the Reef Fish AP and SSC meetings will occur, and where public hearings will be held, contact the Gulf Council office (see page 12 for details).



Tilefish

THE GULF COUNCIL WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

At its July meeting, the Gulf Council said goodbye to Council members Doug Horn and Alex Jernigan. Their terms will expire on August 10th, 2001. Each received a plaque stating the appreciation the Council has had for their tireless service.

Two new members to the Council were appointed by the Secretary of Commerce to fill these two open positions. The Council welcomes Julie Morris from Florida and David Saucier (pronounced sÄshay) from Mississippi. Irby Basco from Texas was re-appointed to Council. The following are brief biographies of these members:

Julie Morris - Ms. Morris moved to Sarasota Florida in 1970 after spending her childhood in southeastern Wisconsin. She graduated from New College in 1974 with a degree in biology/ecology. She worked as an environmental consultant for several years and then became the coordinator of the New College Environmental Studies Program, a position she still holds. She has held many state and national volunteer leadership positions in the Sierra Club. Ms. Morris was a charter member of Florida's Nongame Wildlife Advisory Council in the 1980s and has served on the Board of The Myakka Conservancy, Inc. (a local land trust) since 1990. In 1992 she was appointed Commissioner of the Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission, and reappointed in 1997. She served as the first Chairman of the newly created Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission during 1999 and 2000, and continues as a Commissioner in 2001.

David Saucier - Mr. Saucier was born in Pascagoula Mississippi where he resides today. He graduated from the University of Southern Mississippi with a degree in mathematics (minor in industrial engineering). He is currently employed by Ingalls Shipbuilding, a Division of Northrop-Gruman Corporation where he has worked for 24 years. His current position is an Engineering Test Superintendent where he oversees the construction and certification of several systems on warships being built for the United States Navy. Mr. Saucier's interest in Gulf saltwater fishing began when he was six-years old and was introduced to fishing by his father and grandfather. While Mr. Saucier will be representing recreational

interests on the Council, he did spend time in his youth working on commercial fishing vessels.

Irby Basco - Mr. Basco will be returning to the Council to fulfill his third term. He was initially appointed in 1995 and re-appointed for a second term in 1998. He has been in the construction business for most of his life and is currently President and CEO of Basco Construction, Inc. Mr. Basco is an avid angler and is a member of several saltwater fishing organizations including the International Game Fish Association, Saltwater Anglers League of Texas-Sabine, Saltwater Anglers League of Texas-Trinity Bay, Gulf Coast Conservation Association, National Coalition for Marine Conservation, Sabine Neches Conservation Association, the Billfish Foundation, Fish Trackers Inc., and Hawaii Big Game Fishing Club. His wife Pamela is also an avid angler and is an active member of the Council's Billfish and Dolphin/Wahoo Advisory Panels.



NMFS SOUTHEAST REGION ACTIVATES TOLL FREE CUSTOMER SERVICE LINE

On June 11, 2001, NMFS Southeast Regional Office activated a toll free customer service line that will enable citizens to quickly get answers to the most frequently asked questions about the Southeast Region's missions, services, regulations and management actions. The number is 1-866-570-5301. Callers can press zero any time during the call to leave a message if the information they are looking for is not available through the recordings. A staff member will monitor the voice message box throughout each business day and direct all messages to appropriate Regional personnel.

GULF COUNCIL SELECTS PREFERRED ALTERNATIVES FOR SHRIMP AMENDMENT 10

At its July meeting, the Gulf council selected preferred alternatives to the draft Amendment 10 to the Shrimp Fishery Management Plan (FMP). This amendment addresses the need for reducing bycatch from the shrimp trawl fishery in the EEZ off the west coast of Florida, specifically in the Gulf EEZ south and east of Cape San Blas (85°30' W. Longitude). Amendment 9 to the Shrimp FMP addressed bycatch reduction of red snapper in the Gulf EEZ west of Cape San Blas, Florida; and the method that was approved was the requirement of bycatch reduction devices (BRDs) that would reduce the mortality from shrimp trawls on age 0 and age 1 red snapper by at least 44% from the average level of mortality during the period 1984-89. Because Amendment 9 did not address bycatch reduction on the west coast of Florida (east of Cape San Blas), this amendment considers the need and practicability of various alternatives for reducing bycatch from shrimp trawling in this area, including the requirement of BRDs.

Bycatch can be reduced through the use of closed seasons, closed areas, or the use of BRDs. The Gulf Council selected as its preferred alternatives that neither further closed areas nor closed seasons be considered to reduce bycatch, but that BRDs be used. With regards to BRDs, the Council selected that the preferred alternative section on BRDs, that requires the installation of NMFS-certified BRDs in each net used aboard vessels

trawling for shrimp in the Gulf of Mexico EEZ east and south of Cape San Blas, Florida (85°30' W. Longitude). Exempted are vessels trawling for royal red shrimp beyond the 100-fathom contour and vessels trawling for groundfish or butterfish. A single try net with a headrope length of 16 feet or less per vessel and no more than two rigid-frame roller trawls limited to 16 feet or less, such as those used in the Big Bend area of Florida are also exempted. The Council further specified through the adoption of a second preferred alternative, that requires the use of BRDs as specified in section 6.3.2 above, only in areas of the EEZ north of 26° N. Latitude (the dividing line between statistical grids 3 and 4).

In addition to public hearings, Shrimp Amendment 10 will be reviewed by the Council's Shrimp Advisory Panel (AP) and Special Shrimp Science and Statistical Committee (SSC) on Monday, August 13, 2001 in New Orleans, Louisiana. The AP will meet from 8:00 a.m. to noon, and the SSC will meet from 1:30 to 5:00 p.m. APs are comprised of recreational and commercial fishermen, charterboat operators, buyers, sellers, and consumers who are knowledgeable about a particular fishery. SSCs are comprised of economists, biologists, sociologists, and natural resource attorneys who are knowledgeable about the technical aspects of fisheries in the Gulf.

The public hearings will be held beginning at 7:00 p.m. at the following locations and dates:

Tuesday, August 14, 2001

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

Monday, August 20, 2001

Holiday Inn Beachside
3841 North Roosevelt Boulevard
Key West, Florida 33040
305-294-2571

Thursday, August 23, 2001

Tampa Airport Hilton
2225 Lois Avenue
Tampa, Florida 33607
813-877-6688

Wednesday, August 15, 2001

Palacios Recreation Center
2401 Perryman
Palacios, Texas 77465
361-972-2387

Tuesday, August 21, 2001

Edison Community College
Room H101
Fort Myers, Florida 33906
941-489-9312

Tuesday, August 28, 2001

Franklin County Courthouse
33 Market Street
Apalachicola, Florida 32320
850-653-8861

In addition, public testimony will be accepted at the Gulf Council meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana on September 12, 2001. Written comments will be accepted if received at the Council office by September 7, 2001. A copy of Amendment 10 and related materials can be obtained by contacting the Council office (see page 12 for details).

SHRIMP FISHERY RE-OPENING OFF TEXAS

Federal waters from 9 to 200 nautical miles off Texas were opened to shrimping 30 minutes after sunset on July 8, 2001. The Federal opening corresponds to when Texas opens its waters to shrimp trawling. The shrimp fishery is closed annually off Texas to allow brown shrimp to reach a larger and more valuable size prior to harvest, and to prevent waste of brown shrimp that would otherwise be discarded due to their small size.

Current regulations establish a Federal closure from May 15 to July 15, each year, but provide an allowance for annual adjustments by the Regional Administrator. Based on a biological sampling program conducted by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), Texas opens state waters, and NMFS opens Federal waters, to shrimp trawling when the mean size of shrimp leaving the estuaries is 112 mm total length, during a period of maximum duration ebb tides. Biological data collected by TPDW indicates that the criteria to end the Texas closure would be met on July 8, 2001.

COUNCIL HEARS REVIEW OF SHRIMP STOCKS

Dr. Jim Nance of the National Marine Fisheries Service's (NMFS) Pascagoula Lab reviewed shrimp catches since 1960. He noted that brown shrimp are the most abundant shrimp species followed by white and then pink shrimp. He stated that catches of both brown and white shrimp were near record levels in 2000; however pink shrimp catches were at the lowest level since the early 1990s. He stated that effort had declined for all three species in 2000.

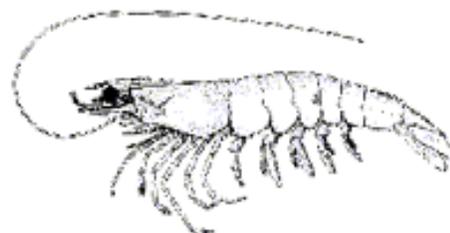
Catch-per-unit-effort (CPUE) for both brown and white shrimp in 2000 were very high at 657 pounds per day and 689 pounds per day, respectively. These figures were much higher than CPUEs from the late 1990s of

around 400 to 500 pounds per day for both brown and white shrimp. The CPUE for pink shrimp was down to around 350 pounds per day compared to approximately 500 pounds per day in the mid 1990s.

The average size for brown shrimp was larger than in most recent years (at about 80 count) while white shrimp count (at 74 count) was slightly lower than 1999 but near recent averages. Pink shrimp size was slightly smaller (higher count) than in 1999; however, at around a 60 count, this was significantly larger than during the mid 1990s (about a 70 count).

Dr. Nance concluded that: (1) brown shrimp is the dominant catch, (2) pink shrimp catch has decreased, (3) other shrimp catch has been variable, (4) there has been a decrease in the average count of shrimp landed, (5) there has been a decrease in effort in recent years, (6) CPUE has increased in recent years, and (7) all stocks are within their overfishing limits and no stock is in a overfished condition.

Dr. Nance also reviewed pink shrimp catches for statistical subareas 1-9 off Florida. He stated that catches were variable in the Tortugas area (statistical subareas 1-3). They were high in the early 1980s (approximately 14 million pounds) and then declined to a low of around 5 million pounds in 1990. Landings have steadily increased since 1990 to about 13 million pounds, but have declined to a low of only about 3 million pounds in 2000. He concluded for pink shrimp that: (1) catch and recruitment were below average when compared to recent years, (2) effort decreased from past years, (3) CPUE was down compared to recent years, (4) the >67 count shrimp decreased in 2000 (fewer numbers of small shrimp), (5) there was some concern about the recruitment and catch levels, and (6) the stock was not in a recruitment overfished condition. However, it should be noted that pink shrimp are close to the overfished threshold of 100 million individuals age 5+ months (July through June) at about 108 million individuals.



White Shrimp (*Penaeus setiferus*)

NMFS APPLIES NEW HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES PERMIT REQUIREMENTS FOR CHARTER/HEADBOAT VESSELS

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) recently announced that it is implementing the requirement for vessels taking paying customers fishing for Atlantic tunas, swordfish, sharks and billfish to obtain an Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Charter/Headboat permit. The regulations requiring the Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Charter/Headboat permit are effective July 1, 2001. This permit replaces the Atlantic tunas Charter/Headboat category permit, and is now required for those vessels taking paying passengers fishing for all regulated highly migratory species. Vessel owners/operators can purchase the mandatory Charter/Headboat permit online at <http://www.nmfspermits.com>, or they can obtain a permit application by calling toll-free, (888) 872-8862.

NMFS ADJUSTS ANGLING CATEGORY RETENTION LIMIT FOR ATLANTIC BLUEFIN TUNA

The NMFS recently announced an adjustment to the Atlantic bluefin tuna angling category daily retention limit. Effective June 15 through October 31, 2001, the daily retention limit in all areas has been adjusted to four fish per vessel, measuring 27 to less than 73 inches curved fork length in any combination of the school, large school, or small medium size class. This is an adjustment from the limit imposed at the beginning of the fishing year (June 1, 2001), that was one school, large school, or small medium bluefin tuna per vessel. NMFS has determined that a retention limit adjustment is warranted to provide increased fishing and data collection opportunities in all areas without risking over harvest of the angling category quota.

The angling category trophy fishery for large medium and giant bluefin tuna measuring 73 inches or greater remains open, with a retention limit of one fish per vessel per year. All bluefin tuna landed under the angling category quota must be reported within 24 hours of landing to the NMFS Automated Catch Reporting System by calling (888) 872-8862 or, if landed in the states of North Carolina or Maryland, to a reporting station prior to offloading. Information about these state harvest tagging programs is

available in North Carolina by calling (800) 338-7804, and in Maryland by calling (410) 213-1531.

For up-to-date information on quota monitoring and retention limit adjustments for Atlantic tunas, anglers may call the Atlantic Tunas Information Line at (888) 872-8862 or (978) 281-9305.

NMFS PUBLISHES EMERGENCY RULE TO REDUCE SEA TURTLE BYCATCH AND BYCATCH MORTALITY IN HMS FISHERIES

The NMFS has issued an emergency rule to implement the alternative identified in the June 8, 2001, biological opinion to reduce bycatch and bycatch mortality of threatened loggerhead and endangered leatherback sea turtles. The rule was effective as of July 11, 2001, and will be in place through January 9, 2002. The closure and gear modifications required by the emergency rule affect all U.S. commercial fishermen who have been issued Federal highly migratory species (HMS) permits and use pelagic longline gear in the Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea. The emergency rule also requires all U.S. commercial and recreational fishermen who have been issued HMS fishing permits to post sea turtle handling and release guidelines in the wheelhouse.

The area closure announced under the emergency rule is for the Northeast Distant Statistical Reporting Area (NED) which will be closed effective July 15, 2001, through January 9, 2002, unless the rule is extended. For the duration of this emergency rule, vessels issued Atlantic HMS permits are prohibited from fishing with pelagic longline gear in the NED. The gear modifications put in place under the rule are in effect beginning August 1, 2001, through January 9, 2002. Under the rule, all vessels issued permits allowing pelagic longline fishing for HMS species will be required to modify how their gear is deployed.

To view the complete announcement, go to: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hmsspg.html>. For more information on this emergency rule and its requirements, call the NMFS at (301) 713-2347.

CLOSED AREAS IN GULF EEZ REMAIN IN EFFECT THROUGH JUNE 16, 2004

The NMFS confirms that areas in the Gulf exclusive economic zone (EEZ) known as Madison and Swanson Sites and Steamboat Lumps remain closed to the recreational and commercial fishing for any species of fish except highly migratory species, mollusks, crustaceans, and all other forms of marine animal and plant life, through June 16, 2004. Litigation over these closures is now concluded. Trolling is only allowed in the closed areas for all Atlantic highly migratory species including tuna species, marlin (*Tetrapturus* spp. and *Makaira* spp.), oceanic sharks, sailfishes (*Istiophorus* spp.), and swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*).

The boundaries of the two closed areas are as follows:

Madison and Swanson Sites

NW corner 29°17' N. lat., 85°50' W. long.
NE corner 29°17' N. lat., 85°38' W. long.
SW corner 29°06' N. lat., 85°50' W. long.
SE corner 29°06' N. lat., 85°38' W. long.

Steamboat Lumps

NW corner 28°14' N. lat., 84°48' W. long.
NE corner 28°14' N. lat., 84°37' W. long.
SW corner 28°03' N. lat., 84°48' W. long.
SE corner 28°03' N. lat., 84°37' W. long.

COUNCIL HEARS ABOUT TEXAS FRESHWATER MANAGEMENT

Ms. Cindy Loeffler of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department discussed the status of freshwater management in Texas with the Council's Habitat Protection Committee. Ms. Loeffler discussed past water management, present freshwater management measures, and future planning. She stated that Texas has developed 16 regional water plans and is now in the process of developing a single state plan from those regional plans. A large task for the state plan will be how to meet the freshwater needs of the downstream estuaries. Ms. Loeffler stated that Texas Parks and Wildlife was involved in drafting the regional water plans, and they stressed the estuarine need for freshwater. In addition, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service also voiced their concern about the need for freshwater inflows to estuaries. Unfortunately, none of the plans proposed how

to meet this freshwater need. Ms. Loeffler stated that the regional water plans will be updated every five years. Hopefully future plan revisions will include ways to meet the estuarine need for freshwater.

Healthy estuaries are important to life stages of many important fishery species of the Gulf of Mexico. In deference to this fact, the Council moved to send the letter to the Governors of Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas, and Georgia, the head of each state's fishery resource agencies, appropriate commissioners, and to the Alabama, Georgia, and Florida negotiating team for water rights stressing the importance of freshwater to the downstream estuaries.

STOCK ASSESSMENTS TO BE REVIEWED BY SAPS

The Gulf Council's Mackerel Stock Assessment Panel (MSAP) was convened in Miami, Florida to review a NMFS stock assessment of cobia. Cobia are part of the Coastal Migratory Pelagic Fishery Management Plan (FMP) that also includes species such as king mackerel, Spanish mackerel, and little tunny. Dolphin and wahoo are in the process of being managed by a separate FMP. The MSAP met at the Miami Laboratory of the Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) from Wednesday, August 1 to Thursday, August 2, 2001. A final report for the meeting will be available by October 1, 2001.

In September, the Reef Fish Stock Assessment Panel (RFSAP) will be convened by the Gulf Council to develop a rebuilding plan for greater amberjack and review NMFS stock assessments of gray triggerfish, gag, and vermilion snapper. This panel will also meet at the SEFSC in Miami, Florida and will meet from Monday, September 24 to Friday, September 28, 2001.

Stock assessment panels are comprised of biologists who are trained in the specialized field of population dynamics. They examine available biological data on fish stocks and advise the Council on the status of stocks and what the level of allowable biological catch (ABC) should be.

COMMERCIAL RED SNAPPER SEASON CLOSED UNTIL OCTOBER 1

The National Marine Fisheries Service has provided the following preliminary landings estimates (see Table below) for the spring Gulf red snapper commercial fishery for the period February 1, 2001 through July 6, 2001, and has announced that the commercial fishery for red snapper will remain closed until noon, October 1, 2001. After the final numbers on spring landings are determined, any remaining poundage will be applied to the fall quota. All landings have been converted to whole weight.

Reporting Period	Texas	AL/MS/LA	Florida	Total
February 1-10	178,346	493,028	68,261	739,635
March 1-10	232,127	398,871	26,027	657,025
April 1-10	199,687	336,923	75,961	612,571
May 1-10	204,620	226,984	93,715	525,319
June 1-10	100,125	112,978	48,839	261,942
July 1-6	65,098	116,336	33,686	215,120
Total Spring	980,003	1,685,120	346,489	3,011,612

In 2000, the Spring, 2000 commercial season closed on May 8, with 3,013,799 pounds of red snapper landed. The NMFS stated that the low catch volumes during some of the 2001 spring 10-day openings were because fishermen targeted grouper that had higher dock-side values and that there had been some harsh weather that kept boats tied up at the dock.

The 2001 commercial red snapper commercial for the entire year is 4.65 million pounds (unchanged since 1996), subdivided into 3.10 million pounds under a February 1 opening, and 1.55 million pounds (or the remaining quota) under an October 1 opening. The commercial fishery is open the first 10 days of each month (noon on the 1st to noon on the 10th) until each sub-quota is reached. Commercial red snapper vessels must have landed and sold their red snapper catch prior to each monthly close.

The recreational red snapper season remains open through October 31, 2001.

NMFS COMPLETES ANNUAL TED TESTING

Scientists from NMFS's Panama City, Pascagoula and Galveston Laboratories conducted their annual research into the effectiveness of turtle excluder devices (TEDs) from June 15 through June 22, 2001. The turtles used during the testing have been released into the Gulf of Mexico. Every year since the mid-1980s NMFS has tested new and existing TED designs in Gulf of Mexico waters near Shell Island, about one mile southeast of Panama City Beach, Florida. During the testing, divers observe and videotape sea turtles' behavior to document

how well they are able to escape from TED-equipped shrimp trawls. Scientists and managers use the data obtained from this important research to determine whether innovative TED designs can be approved for use throughout the shrimping industry.

A key to the reliability of the research is that it entails the use of live, captive-raised loggerhead sea turtles. Each year 200 2-year-old loggerheads that were captured as hatchlings in Florida but raised at the NMFS Sea Turtle Facility in Galveston, Texas, are returned to Florida for use in the testing. The loggerheads used for TED testing are not harmed in any way and are returned to the wild at the completion of the study. Each

turtle when released has a metal tag affixed to its right front flipper that has an identification code and a contact address embossed upon it. NMFS researchers say that all evidence indicates that they become fully assimilated into the wild stocks and do not suffer any adverse effects from being raised in captivity or used in this research. The turtles are released in areas where wild turtles of the same size and maturity are found.

As a reminder, it is a violation of the Endangered Species Act for people to touch, disturb or injure sea turtles (i.e., people should never approach or attempt to catch or feed a sea turtle). If a person should see a sea turtle that appears to be in distress or injured, they should contact their state's marine resources department, the NMFS Southeast Region's Protected Resources Division (727-570-5312) or the NOAA Southeast Enforcement Division (727-570-5344 or the toll free Hotline: 800-853-1964).

ENFORCEMENT REPORTS

NOVAs ISSUED BETWEEN APRIL 1, 2001 AND JUNE 30, 2001

CASE NUMBER	RESPONDENT NAME	AREA	LE UNIT	CASE DESCRIPTION	NOVA AMOUNT	NOPF* AMOUNT	PROPOSED NOPS** DURATION
SE981018MS	Peter G. Giedoldt	FKNMS	NMFS & FWCC	operate a vessel in such a manner as to strike or otherwise injure coral, seagrass or any other immobile organism	\$7,500.00		
SE990385ES	Mot Van Pham	GOM	NMFS	TED violation	\$ 1,000.00		
SE990601ES	Lady Frances, Inc. Joseph R. Rice	GOM	USCG	TED violation	\$ 2,250.00		
SE000159FM	Darrell Knepp Elton Derrick Knepp Richard Shatford	GOM	NMFS & USCG	fail to maintain fish intact (red grouper)	\$ 2,500.00	792 baited gangions	15 days
SE000454FM	Thomas Gerald Fisher Gerald Thomas Fisher Trust	GOM	USCG	1) dispose of fish illegally 2) fail to maintain fish intact 3) possess undersize red grouper	\$ 2,500.00 \$ 500.00 \$ 500.00	32 red grouper fillets	30 days
SE000486FM	William Cox Sea Fever, Inc.	GOM	USCG & NMFS	1) fish in violation of gear restrictions (longline/buoy gear) 2) possess undersize red grouper 3) fail to maintain shark in proper form	\$15,000.00 \$ 1,500.00 \$ 500.00	\$6,129.69	60 days
SE000655FM	Robert L. Hertig, II Rodney J. Witt Eric Hughes Robin W. Hertig	GOM	USGG & NMFS	fish in violation of gear restrictions (longline/buoy gear)	\$10,000.00	\$ 644.00; one nautical chart	30 days
SE000694ES	Elias Reyes Mendoza Cheito Corp.	GOM	NMFS	TED violation	\$ 500.00		
SE001072MS	William F. Kieldsen	FKNMS	NMFS & FWCC	fishing within Western Sambo Ecological Reserve	\$ 150.00		
SE001074ES	Crucilla, Inc. Robert R. Rodriguez	GOM	USCG	TED violation	\$ 500.00		
SE001128MS	Mario L. Morales	FKNMS	FWCC	strike or injure coral, seagrass or seabed	\$500.00		
SE001183FM	Mark Anthony Stuart	GOM	NMFS	1) operate fishing charter without permit 2) operate fishing charter without permit 3) make false statements to authorized officer	\$ 2,000.00 \$ 2,000.00 \$ 2,500.00		
SE001246ES	Julie L. Truong	GOM	NMFS	TED violation	\$ 3,000.00		
SE001247ES	Gregory Doyle Williams	GOM	NMFS	TED violation	\$ 1,000.00		
SE001263FM	Kenneth D. Kendrick	GOM	USCG	possess undersize and over the bag limit red snapper	\$ 750.00		
SE010155ES	Can Van Nguyen Chien Van Nguyen	GOM	USCG	1) TED violation 2) BRD violation	\$ 8,000.00 \$ 6,000.00	\$ 3,402.00	

CASE NUMBER	RESPONDENT NAME	AREA	LE UNIT	CASE DESCRIPTION	NOVA AMOUNT	NOFP* AMOUNT	PROPOSED NOPS** DURATION
SE010183ES	Vasquez Sanchez Julie Marie, Inc.	GOM	USCG	1) TED violation 2) BRD violation	\$12,000.00 \$ 3,000.00	\$ 3,354.95	
SE010296FM	John H. Rawlings, Sr. Randall Kirk Vossler	GOM	NMFS	fish during commercial closure (red snapper)	\$12,000.00	\$ 3,974.40	30 days
SE010297FM	Hamlin B. Johnson John H. Rawlings Ralph Rawlings, Jr.	GOM	NMFS	fish during commercial closure (red snapper)	\$12,000.00	\$ 4,012.80	30 days
SE015036FM	Jimmy R. Tipton HCP, LLC	GOM	USCG	1) exceed bag limit of fish (mangrove snapper) 2) possess fish (shark) over the bag limit 3) retain or possess fish (shark) smaller than the size limit	\$ 500.00 \$ 1,500.00 \$ 1,500.00		30 days
SE015062MS	Grady P. Sullivan	FKNMS	NMFS & FWCC	harvest, or attempt to harvest live rock from a sanctuary	\$ 3,500.00	one hammer, one chisel, four baskets and 237 lbs of live rock	
SE015091MM	Paul Frank Vero	GOM	NMFS	take, harrass, feed dolphin	\$ 100.00		
SE015092MM	Timothy Odell Davis	GOM	NMFS	take, harrass, feed dolphin	\$ 100.00		
SE015094MM	Frederick L. Peacock, jr.	GOM	NMFS	take, harrass, feed dolphin	\$ 100.00		

*NOTICE OF PROPOSED FORFEITURE **NOTICE OF PERMIT SANCTION

SETTLEMENTS BETWEEN APRIL 1, 2001 AND JUNE 30, 2001

CASE NUMBER	RESPONDENT NAME	AREA	LE UNIT	CASE DESCRIPTION	FINAL AMOUNT	FORFEITED AMOUNT	PERMIT SANCT.
SE990252FM	Giang Huu Nguyen	GOM	USCG	BRD violation	\$ 3,000.00		
SE000770ES	Richard Alfred Pena J.B. Zipprian	GOM	NMFS	TED violation	\$ 2,000.00		
SE000771ES	Bay Van Nguyen	GOM	NMFS	TED violation	\$ 4,000.00	\$12,000.00	
SE001072MS	William Kiildsen	FKNMS	FWCC	fish in a sanctuary preservation area	\$150.00		
SE001363ES	Soi V. Nguyen	GOM	USCG	TED violation	\$ 1,500.00		
SE010155ES	Can Van Nguyen Chien Van Nguyen	GOM	USCG	1) TED violation 2) BRD violation	\$ 6,000.00 \$ 4,500.00	\$ 3,402.00	
SE015094MM	Frederick L. Peacock, Jr.	GOM	NMFS	take, harrass, feed dolphin	\$ 100.00		

**TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR THE SEPTMBER
GULF COUNCIL MEETING**

COMMITTEE SCHEDULE

Monday, September 10, 2001

Orientation Session for New Members

Closed Council Session

• **Litigation**

Reef Fish Management Committee

- Review of New Analyses
- Revisions to Draft Amendment 18/SEIS
- FMP Amendment Review Protocol

Tuesday, September 11, 2001

Reef Fish Management Committee (Continued)

Budget Committee

- CY 2002 Budget
- Proposed Replacement of Duplicator

Shrimp Management Committee

- Draft Amendment 10/EA
 - Public Hearing Summaries
 - Public Letters
 - AP Recommendations
 - SSC Recommendations
 - Federal Comments
 - Committee Recommendations
- G&SAFF Bycatch & Effort Monitoring Program

Personnel Committee

- Revisions to Personnel Section of Administrative Handbook

Wednesday, September 12, 2001

Joint Meeting of Law Enforcement Committee and Advisory Panel (LEAP)

- Progress Reports on:
 - Operations Plan
 - Cooperative Enforcement Agreements

COUNCIL SCHEDULE

Wednesday, September 12, 2001

- I. Call to Order and Introductions
- II. Adoption of Agenda
- III. Approval of Minutes
- IV. Public Testimony
 - a. Shrimp Amendment 10/EA

Thursday, September 13, 2001

- V. Reef Fish Management Committee Report
- VI. Committee Reports
 - a. Shrimp Management
 - b. Law Enforcement
 - c. Budget
 - d. Personnel
- VII. Report on Closed Council Session
- VIII. ICCAT Advisory Committee Report
- IX. Enforcement Reports
- X. NMFS NEPA/SFA Workshop
- XI. Regional Administrators Report
- XII. Director's Reports
- XIII. Other Business
- XIV. Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman

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. Although non-emergency issues not contained in the agenda may come before the Gulf Council for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA), those issues may not be the subject of formal Gulf Council action during the meeting. The Gulf Council's actions will be restricted to those issues specifically identified in the noticed agenda and any issues arising after publication of that notice that require emergency action under section 305 (c) of the MSFCMA, provided the public has been notified of the Gulf Council's intent to take final action to address the emergency.

November Meeting:

November 12-16, 2001
Imperial Place Hotel
Biloxi, MS

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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. NA07FC0015 and NA17FC1052.