



# GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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This is a publication of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council pursuant to National Oceanic and Atmospheric Award No. NA05NMF4410003.

NEWS RELEASE

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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## SCOPING DOCUMENTS FOR JOINT REEF FISH AMENDMENT 27/SHRIMP 14 AND SHRIMP AMENDMENT 15 NOW AVAILABLE

**Tampa, Florida – January 13, 2006** - The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council has made available for review and comment draft scoping documents for Joint Reef Fish Amendment 27/Shrimp 14 and Amendment 15 to the Shrimp Fishery Management Plan (FMP). The first document, Joint Reef Fish Amendment 27/Shrimp 14, proposes actions that deal with adjustments to the total allowable catch (TAC) for red snapper, size limits, bag limits, recreational season dates, and the certification of new shrimp bycatch reduction devices (BRDs). The amendment will also look at directed fishery gear restrictions and depth restrictions on the commercial fishery, as well as effort reduction in the shrimp fishery.

The second document, Amendment 15 to the Shrimp FMP, will consider such issues as shrimp trawl gear limits, limitations of shrimp vessel permit transferability, further reducing bycatch, shrimp fishery bycatch quota and quota monitoring, shrimp effort reduction, latent permits and enforcement actions.

Documents are now available and can be obtained online at [www.gulfcouncil.org/downloads.htm](http://www.gulfcouncil.org/downloads.htm), or by contacting the Council at 813-348-1630. Interested parties are encouraged to participate in the process by attending meetings or providing written comments. Written comments should be no later than March 6, 2006.

Scoping meetings have been scheduled throughout the gulf coast to give the public an opportunity to provide input on the types of management changes the Council should consider. A total of ten scoping meetings will be held, from Brownsville, Texas, to Key West, Florida, to receive comments on the draft documents, as well as other comments that may help address the goals of the amendments. Public input will be used by the Council to further develop the amendments.

All scoping meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. and will conclude when public testimony is completed, but no later than 10:00 p.m. Meeting dates and locations are as follows:

### Monday, January 23, 2006

Four Points by Sheraton  
3777 North Expressway  
Brownsville, Texas 78520  
956-547-1500

Holiday Inn Mobile I-10 Bellingrath Garden  
5465 Highway 90 West  
Mobile, Alabama 36619  
251-666-5600

### Tuesday, January 24, 2006

University of Texas Marine Science Institute  
750 Channel View Drive  
Port Aransas, Texas 78373  
361-749-6711

LaFont Inn  
2703 Denny Avenue  
Pascagoula, Mississippi 39567  
228-762-7111

### Wednesday, January 25, 2006

Holiday Inn on the Beach  
5002 Seawall Boulevard  
Galveston, Texas 77551  
409-740-3581

Hilton Garden Inn Orange Beach  
23092 Perdido Beach Boulevard  
Orange Beach, Alabama 36561  
251-974-1600

### Thursday, January 26, 2006

Larose Regional Park Gym  
307 East 5<sup>th</sup> Street  
Larose, Louisiana 70373  
985-693-7355

National Marine Fisheries Service  
3500 Delwood Beach Road  
Panama City, Florida 32408  
850-234-6541

Monday, January 30, 2006  
Tampa Marriott Westshore  
1001 North Westshore Boulevard  
Tampa, Florida 33607  
813-287-2555

Tuesday, January 31, 2006  
DoubleTree Grand Key Resort  
3990 South Roosevelt Boulevard  
Key West, Florida 33040  
305-293-1818

A recent stock assessment showed that red snapper continues to be overfished and is undergoing overfishing. A large portion of the fishing mortality comes from the shrimp trawl bycatch of juvenile age 0 and age 1 fish. Shrimp trawl bycatch, combined with bycatch of red snapper from the directed commercial and recreational fisheries could jeopardize the success of the recovery plan. The proposed amendments may change current management practices to help achieve an appropriate level and rate of rebuilding of the red snapper fishery. Other actions could further reduce bycatch and increase profitability in the shrimp fishery.

Meetings are open to the public and are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to the Council office within five business days of the meeting date.

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 Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council prepares fishery management plans designed to manage fishery resources in the U.S. Gulf of Mexico.

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