



GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL



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MEETING NOTICE

RELEASE: IMMEDIATE

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LAW ENFORCEMENT ADVISORY PANEL SCHEDULED TO REVIEW AN OPTIONS PAPER FOR JOINT AMENDMENT 27 TO THE REEF FISH FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN (FMP)/AMENDMENT 14 TO THE SHRIMP FMP

Tampa, Florida – February 22, 2006

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council will convene the Law Enforcement Advisory Panel (LEAP) to review an Options Paper for Joint Amendment 27 to the Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan (FMP)/ Amendment 14 to the Shrimp FMP. This amendment contains alternatives to regulate the harvest and bycatch of red snapper by both the directed commercial and recreational fisheries and the shrimp fishery in the Gulf of Mexico. The need for this amendment arose from the Southeast Data, Assessment and Review (SEDAR) process through which a recent stock assessment showed that the red snapper stock in the Gulf was overfished and overfishing was continuing.

In addition, the LEAP will discuss the Automated Identification System that will soon be required of many fishing vessels in the Gulf. The LEAP will also review a discussion paper that may ultimately be used as the basis for developing Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) programs for the grouper and potentially other commercial reef fish fishing operations in the Gulf. Finally, the LEAP will review the status of various FMP amendments and other regulatory actions and report on the various activities of participating organizations.

The LEAP consists of principal law enforcement officers in each of the Gulf states, as well as the NMFS, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's General Counsel for law enforcement.

The panel will meet Monday, March 13, 2006 from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn Downtown/Market Square, 318 W. Durango Boulevard, San Antonio, Texas. A copy of the agenda and related materials can be obtained by calling the Council office at 813-348-1630.

Although other issues not on the agenda may come before the panel for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, those issues may not be the subject of formal panel action during this meeting. Panel action will be restricted to those issues specifically identified in the agenda listed as available by this notice.

This meeting is open to the public and is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to the Council office five working days prior to the meeting.

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council is 1 of 8 regional fishery management councils established by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976. The Council prepares fishery management plans that are designed to manage fishery resources in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of the U.S. Gulf of Mexico.

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