



GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Meeting Notice

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Gulf Council to Convene its Regularly Scheduled Meeting June 5 - 8, 2006, in Tampa, Florida

Tampa, Florida – May 12, 2006 - The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) will meet June 5 – 8, 2006 at the Quorum Hotel – Royal Palm Ballroom, 700 N. Westshore Boulevard, Tampa, Florida 33609.

Council committees begin meeting Monday, June 5, 2006 at 1:00. On the Committee agenda are several issues, including a discussion by the Sustainable Fisheries/Ecosystem Committee regarding the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act reauthorization. The committee will review and comment on language included in HR 5051, HR 5018, and S 2012. Council comments will then be forwarded to Congress for review and consideration as the bills make their way through the process.

Committee meetings will resume Tuesday morning beginning with the Joint Reef Fish/Shrimp Management Committees who will meet to hear a report on the decline in effort for selected fisheries and an update on the Ad Hoc Shrimp Effort Work Group's findings. The joint committee's larger task is reviewing a public hearing draft amendment for the proposed Joint Reef Fish Amendment 27/Shrimp Amendment 14. The amendment proposes to reduce directed and incidental fishing mortality on the red snapper stock and manage effort in the shrimp fishery to prevent excessive bycatch of juvenile red snapper and maintain the current rebuilding program.

Also related to the shrimp fishery is a draft options paper for Shrimp Amendment 15. The Shrimp Management Committee will review the options to potentially further reduce shrimp trawl bycatch and shrimping efforts and to monitor the fishery through the possible requirement of Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS).

Finally, the Reef Fish Committee will hear a status report of the Ad Hoc Grouper IFQ Advisory Panel (AP), which will meet May 18 and 19, in Tampa, Florida. The AP was formed to examine the benefits and consequences of using IFQ's to better manage the grouper fishery. In addition, a status report on the grouper allocation amendment will be presented. Allocation became an issue last year when the Council began developing a regulatory amendment to aid in the recovery of that fishery. The Council has since had its Socioeconomic Panel review the issue, who recommended a work group be formed to examine the possible social impacts of any change in allocation. The Council, at its March meeting, honored that request and a work group is being formed.

Public testimony is scheduled for Wednesday, June 7, 2006, from 9:15 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. and will be accepted on the following issues:

Exempted Fishing Permits (if any)

Open Public Comment will be heard from 9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

For a complete agenda or for copies of documents pertaining to any of these issues call or E-mail the Council offices. Anyone wishing to testify before the Council should register prior to the start of the scheduled public comment period.

Although other non-emergency issues not on the agenda may come before the Council and Committees for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (M-SFCMA), those issues may not be the subject of formal action during these meetings. Actions of the Council and Committees will be restricted to those issues specifically identified in the agendas and any issues arising after publication of this notice that require emergency action under Section 305(c) of the M-SFCMA, provided the public has been notified of the Council's intent to take action to address the emergency.

The established times for addressing items on the agenda may be adjusted as necessary to accommodate the timely completion of discussion relevant to the agenda items. In order to further allow for such adjustments and completion of all items on the agenda, the meeting may be extended from, or completed prior to the date established in this notice. Meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be made five days prior to the meeting.

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

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