



Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

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Meeting Notice

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Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council to Meet in Biloxi, Mississippi

Tampa, Florida – October 4, 2007 - The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) will meet October 29 – November 1, 2007 at the Beau Rivage, Biloxi, Mississippi. Council Committees will meet beginning Monday afternoon until about 2:00 p.m. Wednesday, followed by a meeting of the full Council.

The Reef Fish Management Committee will review the results of the scoping meetings for Reef Fish Amendment 29 and meet with industry representatives from British Columbia with experience in individual fishing quota (IFQ) programs. Amendment 29 proposes to rationalize effort and reduce overcapacity in the commercial grouper fishery in order to achieve and maintain optimum yield. Options under consideration include eliminating latent permits, a buyback or buyout program, permit endorsements, an IFQ, and an individual transferable effort quota (ITEQ).

A preliminary public hearing draft of Reef Fish Amendment 30B, which will co-manage gag and red grouper, will also be discussed. The amendment looks at adjusting total allowable catch (TAC) for both species – increasing it for red grouper and, because gag is currently undergoing overfishing, lowering its TAC. Adjustments to the recreational and commercial allocations for both species is also under consideration, along with additional restricted areas to provide increased protections for spawning gag and other reef fish.

Amendment 30A is also up for discussion. The committee will review public hearing summaries, as well as recommendations from its SSC and AP. This amendment proposes to reduce the harvest of both greater amberjack and gray triggerfish in order to end overfishing and rebuild the stocks. It also adjusts allocation between recreational and commercial sectors for both species.

The Committee will also receive reports on and discuss:

- A preliminary draft red snapper allocation discussion document
- The effects of marine reserves (Madison-Swanson and Steamboat Lumps)
- The results of two Ecosystem Modeling Workshops held to determine the feasibility of this approach in addressing fishery management issues

The Joint Reef Fish/Mackerel/Red Drum Management Committee will discuss the Generic Amendment for Regulation of Offshore Aquaculture. The Aquaculture amendment proposes to develop a regional permitting process for regulating environmentally sound aquaculture in the Gulf of Mexico Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). It will apply to all Gulf fishery management plans.

The Data Collection Committee is also slated to meet, and will discuss reports from the Council's SSC Select Committee on its participation in the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) workshops. The MRIP workshops are a result of a 2006 report by the National Research Council on potential problems with the current marine recreational fishing surveys, and will eventually result in a complete redesign of the MRFSS data collection system.

The Red Drum Management Committee is scheduled to discuss recommendations from the Ad Hoc Review Panel for Red Drum. The panel will meet this month and is charged with developing a long-term research program to collect age structure information on red drum.

The Shrimp Management Committee will receive reports on the status of the shrimp stocks and review data on 2007 permits and effort, and the Habitat Protection Committee will discuss recommendations made by the Texas and Mississippi/Louisiana Habitat Protection Advisory Panels.

Finally, the Spiny Lobster/Stone Crab Management Committee will discuss a draft public scoping document on imported size limits for imported spiny lobster.

Public testimony is set for Wednesday, October 31, 2007, beginning at 2:15 p.m. ending no later than 4:15 p.m., and will be accepted on Exempted Fishing Permits (if any) and Reef Fish Amendment 30A. The Council will also hold an open public comment session to give members of the public an opportunity to address the Council on fishery issues that may not be on the agenda. Open public comment will begin immediately following public testimony.

Beginning Thursday, the Council will deliberate and take action on committee recommendations made earlier in the week. Before adjourning, the Council will elect a new Chairman and Vice Chairman.

For a copy of the [Committee Agenda](#) or [Full Council Agenda](#), or for copies of documents pertaining to any of these issues, please call 888-833-1844, or E-mail the Council at gulfcouncil@gulfcouncil.org.

Although other non-emergency issues not on the agenda may come before the Council and Committees for discussion, in accordance with the 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 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 directed to Tina Trezza at the Council five days prior to the meeting.

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