

Subject: FW: Red Grouper Issue meeting Wednesday 25 June 2014
Date: Tuesday, June 24, 2014 at 7:44:39 AM Eastern Daylight Time
From: Paul Cherubino
To: Bob Trento, Martha Bademan, Gulf Council
CC: Joe Shannon, John Paster, Capt. Mike Avinon, Bob Lienesch, Joe Bartoletti, Paul Cherubino, Roger Whited, Tom O'Dea

Martha, Bob,

This is the position paper we sent out yesterday. Mike Avinon indicated that the closed spawning season is actually the last two weeks of March and first two of April. We think it is important that this season be closed to commercial as well as recreational fishing.

Paul Cherubino
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Email paulcherubino@me.com

From: Paul Cherubino [<mailto:paulcherubino@me.com>]
Sent: 23 June, 2014 8:37 PM
To: Martha Bademan (martha.bademan@MyFWC.com); 'gulfcouncil@gulfcouncil.org'
Subject: Red Grouper Issue meeting Wednesday 25 June 2014



23 June 2014

Ms. Martha Bademan

Cc: Gulf Council

Subject: Red Grouper Issue

Dear Ms. Bademan,

As President of the Brooks Fishing Club (BFC), I wish to project our interest and position regarding the proposed closures of red grouper off the Southwest Florida Gulf Coast. BFC is comprised of 135 largely retired members who reside in four Brooks communities bridging Bonita Springs and Estero, Florida. Most of our club members are legal Florida residents who occupy their residences between the months of October through April, although about 25% are year-around residents. Nearly all of

our members served in professional positions during their working years; and they have a strong and active affinity for matters of conservation. As active anglers, our members are predisposed to the health of our fisheries. As such, we are typically strong supporters of state and federal regulators who are entrusted with keeping our fisheries healthy. So, it is with some trepidation that we feel compelled to challenge the proposals being entertained for red grouper fishing - at least for the Southwest Florida District.

Based upon our October 2013 - April 2014 actual fishing experiences on numerous Gulf charters, we simply do not understand the anxieties of certain regulators or the need to drastically alter the rules regarding red grouper fishing. Without question, the most recent season indicated the most healthy red grouper stocks of any like season over the past ten years. Club members regularly caught their limit of "keeper-sized" fish, but there was strong evidence of red grouper in EVERY size range. Our experiences - and the broader involvement of respected charter captains - indicate a continuum of strong red grouper stocks for years to come. So, why are regulators so intent on sudden rule changes that would severely limit recreational anglers and compromise charter operators/captains whose livelihood is dependent upon this fishing activity? With gag grouper season already so limited, the proposed regulatory actions for red grouper pose a "double-whammy" to recreational Gulf fishing. If the proposals go into effect as projected, this will undoubtedly have a devastating effect on anglers and operators alike.

With this in mind, we of the Brooks Fishing Club offer what we believe to be a reasonable and effective alternative for recreational red grouper fishing.

1) Reduce the legal "keeper" limit from four fish to three fish daily. (Realistically, most anglers are satisfied with a daily "bag limit" of three fish, and few understood why the limit was increased to four fish. Even in the past when gag grouper were in play during the high season, a single gag could be combined with two reds for an aggregate of three fish. Unlike some other fishing clubs, we feel that a new limit of two red grouper would be insufficient to warrant expensive charter trips and would seriously erode business from the charter boats.)

2) Increase the minimum size to 22 inches from 20" currently.

3) Initiate a "closed" season that would be limited to the prime spawning period for the Gulf District of SWFL. For red grouper, this would seem to be a four to six week period between late January and the end of February.

In well over 14 years of engaging in charter fishing boats from Naples to Ft. Myers, our members have been deeply impressed with the overall professionalism, the ethics, and the effectiveness of charter captains. None, however, can exceed the leadership and the objectivity of Capt. Mike Avinon (of the Findictive Charter). Mike clearly is an extremely effective spokesman for Southwest Florida recreational anglers and for SWFL District Gulf fishing conditions. He is a knowledgeable and important resource for regulators when it comes to recreational fishing.

We hope you and the Gulf of Mexico Council will strongly consider our recommendations.

Sincerely,

Paul Cherubino President, Brooks Fishing Club

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Bonita Springs, FL 34135

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Email paulcherubino@me.com

Subject: Red Grouper Issue meeting Wednesday 25 June 2014
Date: Monday, June 23, 2014 at 8:37:17 PM Eastern Daylight Time
From: Paul Cherubino
To: Martha Bademan, Gulf Council



23 June 2014

Ms. Martha Bademan

Cc: Gulf Council

Subject: Red Grouper Issue

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Sincerely,

Paul Cherubino President, Brooks Fishing Club

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Bonita Springs, FL 34135

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Email paulcherubino@me.com

Subject: Red Grouper limits

Date: Monday, June 23, 2014 at 4:39:49 PM Eastern Daylight Time

From: John

To: Gulf Council

Gulf Council. Am a member of the Marco island Sportfishing Club and a year round Naples resident.

I am in favor of keeping the Red Grouper season open all year but reducing the bag limit to 3 per day.

Also the commercial fisherman should have the same size limit as recreational fisherman.

JOHN MUELLER
239-206-6751

Subject: Marco Island Sportfishing Club RE: Red Grouper closure alternative
Date: Monday, June 23, 2014 at 8:41:18 AM Eastern Daylight Time
From: Edmund Shebert
To: Martha Bademan, liesa.priddy@myfwc.com, Gulf Council
CC: AESJ2323@aol.com, Howard Laskau

Dear Ms Martha Bademan, Ms Liesa Priddy and Gulf Council Recipient;

Please find The MSC letter of recommendation attached. We feel that taking a reasonable position by lowering the bag limit would satisfy both the conservation of this specie and keeping the recreational fisherman happy.

Please distribute our recommendation to whomever you see fit. I am planning on attending and speaking at the public comment session Wednesday in Key West.

Feel free to get in touch with me anytime, 24/7. (I will be on the water Tuesday and may not have communication ability.)

As a heads-up, we invite both of you to attend our next membership meeting, at the Marco Historical Society facility in Marco Island, on Thursday, July 3rd, @ 6:45 pm. Hope you folks can make it.

Thank You for all your help on subject and please let me know if I can help in any other way.

Ed Shebert VP - Chairman, Fishing Committee

Marco Sportfishing Club

www.marcosportfishingclub.com<<http://www.marcosportfishingclub.com>>

c: 914.564.6638

Subject: Red Grouper Closure

Date: Monday, June 23, 2014 at 8:02:40 AM Eastern Daylight Time

From: Jon Kramer

To: Gulf Council

I believe the suggestion put forth by the Marco Sport Fishing Club to reduce the limit to two fish while keeping the season open is an excellent compromise. Please give it your best consideration. It would really help the charter fishing group stay in business year round.

Please keep in mind that there are plenty of red grouper out here, more than I have ever seen.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jon Kramer