



Gulf Fishery News

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

October - December, 2011

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Members Appointed to Ad Hoc Advisory Panel

The Council recently confirmed appointments to its newly formed Ad Hoc Recreational Data Collection Advisory Panel. Congratulations to the following individuals:

Ken Creel
FJ Eicke
Paul Giordano
Bo Gorham
Scott Green
Megan Robillard
Ed Sapp
Gary Smith
David Sowell
Ray Weldon
Jason Whitaker
Troy Williamson

The panel will provide guidance to the Council regarding the collection of private recreational angler data.



Volume 33, Issue 5

Greater Amberjack - Reef Fish Amendment 35

The latest greater amberjack assessment shows that the stock is both overfished (population is too low) and experiencing overfishing (rate of removals is too high). As such, the Gulf Council's scientific advisors recommended that the greater amberjack Acceptable Biological Catch be set at 1.78 million pounds whole weight. As a rule, an Annual Catch Limit cannot be higher than the Acceptable Biological Catch, so the current stock Annual Catch Limit of 1.87 million pounds whole weight must be adjusted.



Photo by Mike Jennings

Additionally, under federal law the system of Annual Catch Limits must be re-evaluated and modified if catch exceeds the Annual Catch Limit for a stock more than once in four years. Both the commercial and recreational sectors have exceeded the greater amberjack sector Annual Catch Limits twice in the last three years.

As a result, this amendment looks at options to adjust the current Annual Catch Limit, as well as modifying recreational size limits/closed seasons and commercial trip limits/closed seasons to help prevent overages in the sector Annual Catch Limits.

The Council has chosen preferred alternatives for the following actions:

1. Adjust Annual Catch limits based on the Scientific and Statistical Committee recommendations. The Council selected a preferred alternative that would modify the rebuilding plan for greater amberjack and set the Annual Catch Limit equal to Acceptable Biological Catch, which is 1,780,000 pounds whole weight. It also establishes an Annual Catch Target of 1,539,000 pounds whole weight.
2. Consider changing the fixed recreational season (currently June 1 - July 31); adjusting the minimum size limit; and exploring proportional bag limits. The Council took proportional bag limits off the table and chose a preferred alternative that would retain both the 30" size limit and the June 1 - July 31 closed season.
3. Consider adding trip limits to the commercial sector and modifying the fixed closed season. The Council chose a preferred alternative that would maintain the March - May closure and add a 2,000 pound (whole weight) trip limit.

The Council is expected to take final action on Amendment 35 during its January/February Council meeting. Public hearings are scheduled for early January. A Public Hearing Guide to Amendment 35 is available for download - <http://gulfcouncil.org/Beta/GMFMCWeb/downloads/Amendment%2035%20Greater%20Amberjack%20Public%20Hearing%20Guide%20Booklet.pdf>. To submit comments, please visit www.gulfcouncil.org/council_meetings/RF35GAJ.php





Bob Gill,
Council Chair

From the Helm

What's on the plate in this issue is my view of the role science has in fishery management. Not being a scientist, my view is necessarily that of an interested, and hopefully informed, layman. I think we can all agree that the backbone of fishery management is science. We can also agree that everyone wants better data to better manage our fisheries. Moreover, we can all agree that more and better data can only serve to improve the fishery management process. Improvements, however, will come only with additional money and time.

From there, I suspect, the views among the various stakeholders may diverge. For example, a common refrain is that no additional management measures should be enacted until the outcome of the data analysis is black and white. Unfortunately, those that take this position may not realize that the results of scientific analyses will NEVER be black and white. There is always some degree of uncertainty in science, from observations, to assumptions, to data, to analyses, to predictions. While the inherent uncertainty in science can be reduced, perfect knowledge will never be attained. It is a truism that the more you know, the more there is to learn. So the unknown will always be there - and unknown equals uncertainty.

Similarly, the balance of quality versus quantity must be understood. One example of this is a recent revision to the stock assessment process that reduced the amount of time required for some stock assessments. While not always applicable to all stocks, the revised protocol provides

for a robust assessment, while refining and scaling back the scope to what is needed. This new protocol allows more assessments to be done, and since most of our stocks have never been assessed, this new procedure is an improvement on the quantity of assessments that can be done with a limited budget. To complete more assessments might require limiting the extent of the science investigation. So there are trade-offs to be made and considered, and not everyone will always agree with those trade-offs. To put it another way, there is a limit to the amount of analyses you can conduct on a given fishery issue. Given scarce resources, priorities must be set to make the best use of available funds, time, and talent.

Another consideration is participation by stakeholders in the science side of the process. Many folks think of science as a complex black box, too complicated for the average fisherman. As a result, the thinking goes, fishermen cannot and should not participate in the science of fishery management. There is no doubt that the science is very difficult for a nonscientist to fully grasp, but opting out means leaving out the knowledge of the folks on the water. Like the management issues that we deal with at the Council meetings, the science side needs the participation of those nonscientists who have information otherwise only partially understood, if recognized at all.

There are many ways to participate in the fishery management process. If you are interested in learning more, contact the Gulf Council office. Public involvement in fishery science - from identifying problems, to data input, to analysis, to review - is a vitally needed input. It's all part of our process in integrating science into a realistic and comprehensive view of any fishery. 

Upcoming Public Hearings

Reef Fish Amendment 35 - Greater Amberjack

January 9, 2012
Hilton Tampa Airport
2225 North Lois Avenue
Tampa, Florida

January 11, 2012
Hilton Garden Inn
23092 Perdido Beach Boulevard
Orange Beach, Alabama

January 11, 2012
Crowne Plaza
2829 Williams Boulevard
Kenner, Louisiana

January 12, 2012
Four Points Sheraton
940 Beach Boulevard
Biloxi, Mississippi

January 12, 2012
Hilton Garden Inn
1101 U.S. Highway 231
Panama City, Florida

January 17, 2012
Hilton San Luis
5400 Seawall Boulevard
Galveston, Texas

January 18, 2012
Plantation Suites
1909 Highway 361
Port Aransas, Texas

Spiny Lobster Amendment 11

January 23, 2012
Marathon Government Center
2798 Overseas Highway
Marathon, Florida

January 24, 2012
Harvey Government Center
1200 Truman Avenue
Key West, Florida

All public hearings begin at 6 p.m. and will end no later than 9 p.m.



Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

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Executive Director

Richard Leard
Deputy Director

Appointed Voting Members

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Spiny Lobster Amendment 11

The Endangered Species Act requires that action by NOAA Fisheries Service not harm threatened or endangered species. A recent Biological Opinion of the spiny lobster fishery concluded that spiny lobster trap fishing activities put sea turtles, smalltooth sawfish, Gulf sturgeon, and corals (i.e., elkhorn and staghorn) at risk. The Biological Opinion specified ways to minimize the impact of the spiny lobster trap fishery on these protected species and set requirements for the terms and conditions under which action must be taken.

As a result, the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils must consider creating closed areas to reduce the impacts of traps with protected coral species and establish trap line marking requirements to clearly determine what fishery is responsible for interactions with protected resources.

These two actions were originally part of amendment 10, but were moved to Amendment 11 because the public asked for more opportunity to work with managers to identify effective closed areas and reasonable gear marking options. The alternatives in this action were developed jointly with NOAA Fisheries Service, members of the spiny lobster industry, Florida Fish and Wildlife Institute, and Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary to ensure coral colonies were protected with the least possible impact on the spiny lobster fishermen.

Public hearings for Spiny Lobster Amendment 11 will be held in January (see Public Hearing Schedule on page 2). A Public Hearing Guide to Spiny Lobster Amendment 11 is available for download - <http://gulfcouncil.org/Beta/GMFMCWeb/downloads/Amendment%2011%20Spiny%20Lobster%20Public%20Hearing%20Guide.pdf>. To submit comments on this amendment, please visit www.gulfcouncil.org/council_meetings/Spiny_11.php



Grouper Allocation - Reef Fish Amendment 28

The Council has reopened discussions on setting allocations for gag, red grouper, and black grouper. The Southeast Fisheries Science Center will conduct analyses of existing allocations and alternatives for reallocation and present the results to the Council during its April meeting in Corpus Christi, Texas. The Council will then determine whether to move forward with a scoping document to address grouper allocation issues.

Allocation is the division of the Total Allowable Catch for each fish stock between commercial and recreational fishing sectors. The Council set temporary allocations through Reef Fish Amendment 30B that assign each sector a percentage of the Total Allowable Catch for gag and red grouper. Current allocations for red grouper are 76% commercial and 24% recreational; gag allocations are 39% commercial and 61% recreational. The Generic Annual Catch Limits and Accountability Measures amendment apportioned black grouper between the Gulf and South Atlantic and established a 75% commercial and 27% recreational allocation for the Gulf.



Photo by Scott Hickman

Red Snapper Update

Fall Season Options and 2012 Total Allowable Catch

During its October Council meeting the Council reviewed an options paper that would provide more red snapper season management options, as well as options to increase the 2012 Total Allowable Catch.

The first option considers a change to the fixed recreational red snapper closed season that runs from October through December. For the past three years, the recreational season has closed before the September 30 season closure date. This is because NOAA Fisheries Service must close the fishery when the quota is met or projected to be met. The Council chose an action that would remove the fixed closure. This will provide the Council with more options for a fall season, if quota remains.

This amendment also includes an action to increase the red snapper catch limits in 2012. The Council is waiting for a review by its Scientific and Statistical Committee before considering appropriate catch levels.



Alternatives to allow for weekend only or weekday only periods during the regular recreational season or supplemental season were moved into a separate amendment to prevent any delay in changing the red snapper Annual Catch Limit.

Restrict Individual Fishing Quota Transfer - Reef Fish Amendment 36

When the red snapper Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) Program was established, it included a provision that would allow any U.S. citizen or permanent resident alien to buy and sell IFQ shares beginning in 2012. The Council is working on an amendment that would restrict the transfer of IFQ shares and allocation and has chosen an alternative that will continue to limit transfer to commercial reef fish permit holders.

Public hearings on this amendment will be held around the Gulf of Mexico sometime next year.

The Council has also requested that NOAA Fisheries Service establish a January 1, 2012 control date to notify red snapper shareholders that the Council is contemplating a "use it or lose it" provision. If you own red snapper shares after January 1, 2012 and you are not using them, you may be at risk of losing them.

Five-Year Individual Fishing Quota Review

The commercial Individual Fishing Quota program for red snapper was implemented in 2007. The Council recently convened an advisory panel to help conduct a five-year review of that program. The Council has begun discussions on a new amendment that will address potential changes to the red snapper IFQ program.

Final Action Expected on Crew Size/Income - Reef Fish Amendment 34

The Gulf Council is slated to take final action on Reef Fish Amendment 34 during its January/February Council meeting in Mobile, Alabama. The amendment addresses crew size limits for dually permitted vessels. Dually permitted vessels are vessels with both a charter for-hire permit and a commercial reef fish permit. The proposal also looks at suspending or eliminating the earned income qualification requirement for the renewal of commercial reef fish permits.

The Council has chosen preferred alternatives that:

1. Eliminate the income requirement for Gulf Commercial Reef Fish Permits, and;
2. Increase the maximum crew size from three to four for dual-permitted vessels.

Visit http://gulfcouncil.org/council_meetings/comment_forms/crewsizes-income.php to comment on the proposed amendment.



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January Council Meeting Reminder

The next Council meeting is scheduled for the week of January 30 - February 3, 2012, at the Renaissance Mobile Riverview Plaza Hotel in Mobile, Alabama. Please make your reservation under the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council room block to receive the special discounted room rate.

Submission of written comments and materials to be received in time for Council member review **MUST BE RECEIVED** by 5:00 p.m. EDT January 23, 2012.

If you miss the deadline and bring your own copies to the meeting, please bring at least 30 copies for the Council. If you wish your materials to be made available to the public, please bring additional copies.

A draft agenda will be posted on the Gulf Council web site at www.gulfcouncil.org.



Fishery Closures

Recreational Closures:

Red Snapper

The 2011 recreational red snapper season closed 12:01 a.m., July 19, 2011. The 2012 recreational season will open June 1. Closure date has not yet been determined.

Gag

The 2011 recreational gag fishing season closed 12:01 a.m., November 16. The 2012 recreational season will open July 1, and close October 31.

Commercial Closures:

King Mackerel

The king mackerel commercial run-around gillnet fishery in the southern Florida west coast subzone is closed from February 2, 2011, through 6 a.m. January 17, 2012. King mackerel commercial gillnet fishing is prohibited in the Gulf of Mexico off Collier and Monroe Counties, from a line directly west of the Lee/Collier county line on the west coast of Florida south and east to a line directly east of the Monroe/Miami-Dade county line on the east coast of Florida.

The daily vessel trip limit is reduced to 500 pounds beginning 12:01 a.m. March 8, 2011, for commercial hook-and-line vessels fishing for Gulf group king mackerel in the southern Florida west coast subzone.

The western Gulf of Mexico zone is closed to commercial king mackerel fishing effective noon September 16, 2011, through June 30, 2012. Commercial king mackerel fishing is prohibited in federal waters from the U.S./Mexico border to the Alabama/Florida boundary.

Commercial king mackerel harvest is prohibited in the northern Florida west coast subzone beginning October 7, 2011 until June 30, 2012.

Greater Amberjack

The commercial harvest of greater amberjack in the Gulf of Mexico is closed, effective 12:01 a.m. (local time) October 20, 2011, through December 31, 2011.

Send us Your Fishing Photos

We want to see your favorite fishing and fishery-related photos! Whether they are from a spear fishing adventure, a charter trip, or a commercial effort, we'd like to see your photos and possibly use them on our web site or in our publications.

Send us your photos and help us build a photo library! To submit your photos, please send an e-mail with "Photo Library" in the subject line to gulfcouncil@gulfcouncil.org. Be sure to include your name, address, phone number, along with a description and proper photo credit, then simply attach the image and send. Photo descriptions may be edited for grammar, clarity, and/or length. Photos must be in jpeg format and should not exceed 1.5 MB (no more than 200 ppi).

NOTE: By submitting photos, you understand that if we decide to use your photo, it can be used on our web site, in our newsletter, or other publications. We will display a brief description of the photo and your name, unless requested otherwise.



Photo by Doug Dodson

Marine Recreational Information Program Update

Tracking Discards the Subject of New MRIP Video

Getting an accurate count of released fish has always been a challenge. A new MRIP project is looking at a better way to capture this valuable information. Fishermen are working alongside scientists from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission to pilot test a simple camera system to capture releases on video. Camera systems have been outfitted on a range of private sport fishing boats in the St. Pete, Florida, area since this past summer. To learn more about this project, view the video at www.CountMyFish.noaa.gov or contact Chris Bradshaw at Chris.Bradshaw@MyFWC.com.

NOAA Testing Angler Logbooks

NOAA's current surveys collect catch data at public sites like piers, marinas, or beach access points, generally during daytime hours. As a result, we may be missing the activities of anglers whose trips originate from private land or who may fish only at night. To help identify differences between public and private access fishing that may lead to bias in survey results, NOAA has selected panels of anglers in North Carolina and Florida to keep logbooks of their activities.

To ensure complete coverage of the angling population, participants were drawn from both state fishing license holders and all residential addresses within the two states and pre-screened. Selected anglers are provided a paper logbook to record trip information and will be contacted regularly to provide information. The pilot project begins this month and will run for one year. For more information, please contact Rob Andrews at Rob.Andrews@noaa.gov.

Release of Revised MRIP Catch Estimates Pending

NOAA anticipates the release of revised catch estimates for the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts in early 2012. The estimates will be produced using a new peer-reviewed MRIP catch estimation methodology, which will yield more accurate results by eliminating numerous sources of potential bias that could skew the survey results. The revised estimates of catch will date back to 2004.

Until the revised estimates are released, NOAA will continue to produce wave estimates using the current MRFSS method. Preliminary catch estimates for Wave 4 of 2011 are now online. You can query estimates at <http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/st1/recreational/queries/index.html>.

Updating Stakeholders on Progress

MRIP staff has provided project updates to a number of key stakeholders, including the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, and NOAA Fisheries.

Reader Q&A: Angler Registries

Question: "When will MRIP begin using the angler registry information collected from the states?"

Answer: The short answer is, we already have. See the example above about the angler logbook project. But one thing we've stressed in the MRIP process is that before we start using any new method broadly, we first have to conduct rigorous testing to make sure it works, and that it works better than what we've used in the past. Currently, we're using the angler registry information collected from the states in three key ways: verifying that the information is suitable for use in our surveys, determining the most effective sampling frame, and determining the most effective sampling mode.

Suitability

We are reviewing the data we have received from states to make sure it is thorough, accurate, and contains all the information we need to contact active anglers.

Sampling Frames

The "sampling frame" is the list from which we choose which anglers to contact. We know that there are inefficiencies and missed anglers inherent in the Random-Digit-Dialing frame we have traditionally used to contact anglers. But before completely switching over to the angler registry, we need to make sure that the new frame is more effective at reaching anglers.

Sampling Mode

The "mode" is the way we contact anglers: via telephone, by mail, by asking anglers to participate in panels, or some combination of means. Our studies - and those of others in the field - have shown that phone surveys may not be as effective at getting information as other means. We will use the angler registry information as a sample frame to contact anglers in multiple ways and test which one gives the best results.

In its 2006 review, the National Research Council (NRC) stressed the importance of using the most scientifically sound methods possible to collect and use data. MRIP is replacing past assumptions about data collection with our comparison tests and evaluations, which will help to ensure we are using the data in the best way. Once we know the best way to determine who to contact and how to contact them, we will be able to most effectively use the angler registry information collected from the states.

Ask MRIP

Do you have questions about MRIP? Ask us and we'll answer your question in an upcoming newsletter. Submit questions to Forbes Darby at forbes.darby@noaa.gov.



Recipe Rewind

Here's another blast from the past. This recipe was taken from "Shrimp Tips from New Orleans."

Shrimp Newburg

Ingredients

1 pound packaged (pre-cooked, frozen) fully peeled, de-veined shrimp	Dash nutmeg
1/4 cup butter or margarine	1 pint coffee cream
2-1/2 tablespoons flour	2 egg yolks, beaten
3/4 teaspoon salt	2 tablespoons sherry
Dash cayenne pepper	Toast points



Photo from "Shrimp Tips from New Orleans"

Thaw shrimp. Cut large shrimp in half. Melt butter; blend in flour and seasonings. Add cream gradually and cook until thick and smooth, stirring constantly. Stir a little of the hot sauce into egg yolks; add to remaining sauce, stirring constantly. Add shrimp; heat. Remove from heat and slowly stir in sherry. Serve immediately on toast points.

Serves 6.

For an updated version of this recipe, try fresh Gulf shrimp, and replace the coffee cream with half and half or almond milk. Serve over pastry shells or brown rice instead of toast.

Take the retro recipe challenge! Send us your favorite retro recipe and have it published in the next edition of Gulf Fishery News.

Free Federal Fishing Regulations App for Droid and iPhone

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council offers a fishing regulations App for the Android and the iPhone - both are available for download.

The Apps are free and provide immediate access to the most up-to-date commercial and recreational federal fishing regulations for species managed by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council. The Apps also provide information on fish identification, measurement guidelines, sanctuaries and closures, and important telephone numbers.

Visit the App Store or Android Market to download the App - or simply scan the appropriate QR code on the left with your iPhone or Droid to begin downloading the Gulf Council's free regulations App!



Droid



iPhone

Free QR Code Reader Apps are available in both the App Store and Android Market.

For more information on federal fishing regulations, visit www.gulfcouncil.org.

Gulf Council Launches Gulf Currents

The Council is pleased to announce the launch of **Gulf Currents** - a blog about the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council.

Gulf Currents will keep you in the loop. It will prepare you to participate effectively in the creation of fisheries management measures by educating you about current events, possible management considerations, regulatory changes, the fisheries management process, and more.



Check it out at: <http://gulfcouncil.blogspot.com/>

Deepwater Horizon Natural Resource Trustees Call for Public Input on Early Restoration of the Gulf

The Deepwater Horizon Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) Trustees have released the Deepwater Horizon Draft Phase I Early Restoration Plan & Environmental Assessment (DERP/EA) for formal public comment. It is the first in an anticipated series of plans to begin restoration of the Gulf of Mexico to compensate for natural resource injuries, including the loss of human use of Gulf resources, from the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill.

The DERP/EA describes the initial projects proposed to receive funding from the \$1 billion Early Restoration Framework Agreement announced by the Trustees and BP on April 21, 2011. The Trustees will hold 12 public meetings throughout Gulf Coast communities and in Washington, D.C. during January and February 2012, to solicit formal public comment on the DERP/EA.

“Public feedback is of the utmost importance, and we encourage people to submit comments and attend the upcoming public meetings,” said Cooper Shattuck, chair of the Trustee Council Executive Committee, speaking on behalf of the Trustees. “This is the first step in beginning restoration of injuries caused by the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill. While continuing to accept project ideas, we will move forward with additional phases of Early Restoration until the entire \$1 billion is committed to Gulf Coast restoration.”

The DERP/EA describes eight proposed projects for the initial round of Early Restoration, two each in Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, and Mississippi. These projects reflect the ideas and input received by the Trustees through project solicitation and outreach efforts. The proposed projects include shoreline marsh creation, coastal dune habitat restoration, nearshore artificial reef creation, oyster cultch restoration and construction of boat ramp facilities. The total estimated cost of the proposed initial suite of projects is more than \$57 million. The projects included in the Deepwater Horizon DERP/EA are:

Lake Hermitage Marsh Creation - NRDA Early Restoration. Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana; approximately 104 acres of marsh creation; benefitting brackish marsh in the Barataria Hydrologic Basin; estimated cost: \$13,200,000.

Louisiana Oyster Cultch Project - St. Bernard, Plaquemines, Lafourche, Jefferson, and Terrebonne Parishes, Louisiana; approximately 850 acres of cultch placement on public oyster seed grounds; construction of improvements to an existing oyster hatchery; benefitting oysters in coastal Louisiana; estimated cost: \$14,874,300.

Mississippi Oyster Cultch Restoration - Hancock and Harrison Counties, Mississippi; 1,430 acres of cultch restoration; benefitting oysters in Mississippi Sound; estimated cost: \$11,000,000.

Mississippi Artificial Reef Habitat - Hancock, Harrison, and Jackson Counties, Mississippi; 100 acres of nearshore artificial reef; benefitting nearshore habitat; estimated cost: \$2,600,000.

Marsh Island (Portersville Bay) Marsh Creation - Mobile County, Alabama; protecting 24 existing acres of salt marsh; creating 50 acres of salt marsh; 5,000 linear feet of tidal creeks; benefitting coastal salt marsh in Alabama; estimated cost: \$9,400,000.

Alabama Dune Cooperative Restoration Project - Baldwin County, Alabama; 55 acres of primary dune habitat; benefitting coastal dune and beach mouse habitat in Alabama; estimated cost: \$1,145,976.

Florida Boat Ramp Enhancement and Construction - Escambia County, Florida; four boat ramp facilities; benefitting human use in Escambia County, Florida; estimated cost: \$4,406,309.

Florida (Pensacola Beach) Dune Restoration - Escambia County, Florida; 20 acres of coastal dune habitat; benefitting coastal dune habitat in Escambia County, Florida; estimated cost: \$585,898.

Visit www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov to view the DERP/EA, access public meeting details, and view additional details of the proposed Early Restoration projects and ways to submit public comment. The public comment period will end Feb. 14, 2012.

The following public meetings are scheduled for early 2012 (additional details will be made public as they become available):

Florida: Wednesday, Jan. 11 and Thursday, Jan. 12
 Mississippi: Tuesday, Jan. 17; Wednesday, Jan. 18; and Thursday, Jan. 19
 Alabama: Monday, Jan. 23 and Tuesday, Jan. 24
 Texas: Thursday, Jan. 26
 Louisiana: Tuesday, Jan. 31; Wednesday, Feb. 1; and Thursday, Feb. 2
 Washington, D.C.: Tuesday, Feb. 7

NRDA is the process used by natural resource trustees to develop the public's claim for natural resource damages against the party or parties responsible for a spill and to seek compensation for the harm done to natural resources and the services provided by those resources.

Early Restoration provides an opportunity to implement restoration projects agreed upon by the Trustees and BP under the Framework Agreement prior to the completion of the NRDA. The damage assessment will continue while Early Restoration planning is under way. BP and other responsible parties are obligated to compensate the public for the full scope of the natural resource injury caused by the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, including the cost of assessing such injury and planning for restoration.



Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council Committee Schedule

Renaissance Mobile Riverview Plaza Hotel
Bon Secour Ballroom
Mobile, Alabama
January 30-31, 2012

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council Meeting Agenda

Renaissance Mobile Riverview Plaza Hotel
Bon Secour Ballroom
Mobile, Alabama
February 1-2, 2012

Monday January 30, 2012

- 1:00 pm – 2:00 pm
Scientific & Statistical Committee (SSC) Selection Committee (Tab I)
- SSC Duties and Responsibilities
- 2:00 pm – 4:00 pm
Mackerel Management Committee (Tab C)
- Scoping Document for Amendment 19- No Sale and Permits
 - Scoping Document for Amendment 20 – Boundaries and Transit Provisions
 - Select Scoping Hearing Locations
- 4:00 pm – 4:30 pm
Shrimp Management Committee (Tab D)
- Texas Closure
- 4:30 pm – 4:45 pm
Scientific & Statistical Committee (SSC) Selection Committee- Full Council
CLOSED SESSION (Tab J)
- Review of Members of the Spiny Lobster SSC
 - Replacement of a Member of the Shrimp SSC
 - Appointment of Additional Coral SSC Members

Tuesday January 31, 2012

- 8:30 am – 12:00 noon & 1:30 pm – 5:30 pm
Reef Fish Management Committee (Tab B)
- Final Regulatory Amendment for Red Snapper Fall Closed Season Revision and 2012 Annual Catch Limit
 - Options Paper for a Regulatory Amendment for Red Snapper Weekend/Weekday Openings
 - Gray Triggerfish Update Assessment
 - Final Action on Amendment 34 – Crew Size and Income Requirement
 - Final Action on Amendment 35 – Greater Amberjack
 - Draft Amendment 36 – Red Snapper IFQ Transferability
 - Discussion on Reef Fish Amendment 33 – LAPP Program
 - Options Paper for Vermilion Snapper ACL Framework Action
 - Discussion on Reef Fish Framework Action for Red Snapper Payback Provisions for Overages
 - Additional SSC and AP Comments

Immediately Following Committee Recess will be the Informal Question & Answer Session on Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Issues.

Wednesday February 1, 2012

- 8:30 am – 10:00 am
Reef Fish Management Committee - CONTINUED (Tab B)
- 10:00 am – 10:30 am
Joint Mackerel/Reef Fish/Red Drum (Tab G)
- Aquaculture Proposed Rule
 - Default Status Determination Criteria
- 10:30 am – 11:30 am
Data Collection Committee (Tab E)
- Discussion on Generic Amendment for Dealer Permits and Electronic Reporting
- 11:30 am – 12:00 noon
Artificial Reef Committee (Tab H)
- Shipp Presentation/Issue
- 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm
Spiny Lobster Management Committee (Tab F)
- Final Action on Spiny Lobster Amendment 11

¹The established times for addressing items on the Council and committee agendas, except for those setting times for public comment, may be adjusted as necessary to accommodate the timely completion of discussion relevant to the agenda items. Such adjustments may result in the meeting being extended from, or completed prior to the date established by these agendas.

Wednesday February 1, 2012

- I. Call to Order and Introductions – Gill
3:00 pm – 3:05 pm
- II. Adoption of Agenda¹ – Gill
3:05 pm – 3:10 pm
- III. Approval of Minutes – Gill
3:10 pm – 3:15 pm
- IV. Public Comment¹²³⁴⁵ - Gill
- a. Agenda Testimony
 - (1) Final Action on Reef Fish Amendment 34 – Crew Size and Income Requirement
 - (2) Final Action on Reef Fish Amendment 35 Greater Amberjack
 - (3) Final Action on Regulatory Amendment for Red Snapper Fall Closed Season Revision and 2012 Annual Catch Limit
 - (4) Final Action on Spiny Lobster Amendment 11
 - (5) Exempted Fishing Permits
 - b. Open Testimony on any other Fishery Issues or Concern
3:15 pm – 6:15 pm

Thursday February 2, 2012

- V. Approval of Restoration Committee Membership and Development the Committee Charge - Gill
8:00 am – 8:30 am
- VI. Fisheries 101 – Bortone
8:30 am – 8:45 am
- VII. Flower Garden Banks Sanctuary Lionfish Presentation
8:45 am – 9:15 am
- VIII. Committee Reports
- a. Shrimp – Perret
 - b. Mackerel – Fischer
 - c. Reef Fish – Shipp
 - d. Joint Mackerel/Reef Fish/Red Drum - Shipp/Fischer/Pearce
 - e. Data Collection – Pearce
 - f. Artificial Reef – Anson
 - g. Scientific & Statistical Committee Selection - Simpson
 - h. Spiny Lobster – Teehan
9:15 pm – 4:15 pm
- IX. Other Business – Gill
4:15 pm – 4:45 pm

²Persons wishing to give public testimony must turn in a registration card before the beginning of the public comment period. During public comment the Council will first hear testimony related to final actions of the Council and pertinent agenda items; and then allow for open public testimony regarding any fishery issue or concern. During public comment, time constraints may limit individual speaking time as determined by the presiding officer. If your sentiments are reflected in comments made by others, please avoid duplication and allow the next speaker to address the Council.

³Persons wishing Council members to have copies of written testimony or information should provide 30 copies to staff before public comment begins for distribution to members. All written information shall include a statement of the source and date of such information. Any oral or written statement shall include a brief description of the background and interests of the person testifying.

⁴Oral or written communications provided to the Council, its members or its staff that relate to matters within the Council's purview are public in nature. These communications will be made available to the public in their entirety and maintained by the Council as part of its permanent record. Further, knowingly and willfully submitting false information to the Council is a violation of Federal law.

⁵Anyone wishing to use electronic visual aids during public testimony must provide staff with a copy of the material at least one hour before comment begins to allow for a virus scan of said material.

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

Protecting our marine resources

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The Gulf Council would like to hear from you! Please contact us regarding fishery questions, comments, or concerns you would like to see covered in the ***Gulf Fishery News***. Anyone interested in submitting information, such as articles, editorials, or photographs pertaining to fishing or fisheries management, is encouraged to do so. Submissions may be mailed to Charlene Ponce, Public Information Officer, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 2203 N. Lois Avenue, Suite 1100, Tampa, FL 33607. Materials can also be sent via fax to 813-348-1711, or by e-mail to charlene.ponce@gulfcouncil.org.

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. The Council is responsible for the development and modification of fishery management plans (FMPs) that are designed to manage fishery resources in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of the Gulf of Mexico from state boundaries to the 200-mile limit.

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