



Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

Managing Fishery Resources in the U.S. Federal Waters of the Gulf of Mexico

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Meeting Notice
September 14, 2012

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Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council Announces Public Hearings Affecting Proposed Actions for Gray Triggerfish and Gag

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) will convene Public Hearings on two proposed actions to the Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan. Reef Fish Amendment 37 proposes modifications to the gray triggerfish rebuilding plan including modifications to the annual catch limits and annual catch targets for the commercial and recreational sectors. Proposed commercial management measures needed to meet the reduction in the annual catch limit and annual catch target for gray triggerfish include establishing a fixed closed season and a trip limit. Proposed recreational management measures include establishing a fixed closed season and modifying the recreational bag limit for gray triggerfish within the 20-reef fish aggregate bag limit. This amendment also includes proposed modifications to the recreational accountability measures to allow NOAA Fisheries Service to close the recreational sector once the annual catch target is reached or projected to be reached, and if the annual catch limit is exceeded, to apply an overage adjustment by reducing the annual catch limit and optional annual catch target the following fishing season.

The Framework Action to set the 2013 gag recreational fishing season, bag limit, and to modify the February through March shallow-water grouper closed season contains alternatives for modifications to regulations addressing recreational fishing for gag and shallow-water grouper. Alternatives being considered to modify the recreational gag fishing season would change the starting date for the recreational gag season from July 1 to an earlier time when there is greater demand to fish for gag, or would split the season into two or three sub-seasons. Changing the season to times when there is greater demand may reduce the number of fishing days relative to the status quo, so suboptions within the alternatives consider either retaining the current gag bag limit of 2 fish per person within the 4-fish aggregate shallow-water grouper bag limit, or reducing the bag limit for gag to 1 fish in order to extend the season. The Framework Action will also consider revising the current closed season on recreational harvest of shallow-water grouper by either shortening or eliminating the closed season, moving it to a different date, or having the closed season apply only seaward of the 20 fathom depth contour while eliminating it shoreward of 20 fathoms.

The meetings schedule is as follows:

October 15, 2012	October 16, 2012	October 17, 2012	October 18, 2012
Country Inn & Suites 4415 Commons Dr. E Destin, FL 32541 (850) 650-9191	Sirata Hotel 5300 Gulf Boulevard St. Petersburg, FL 33706 (727) 363-5100	Courtyard Marriott 11471 Cinema Drive D'Iberville, MS 39540 (228) 392-1200	Harte Institute 6300 Ocean Dr, Rm 127 Corpus Christi, TX 78412 (361) 825-2000
Courtyard Marriott 3250 Tamiami Trail N Naples, FL 34103 (239) 434-8700	Holiday Inn Express 160 W. Commerce Blvd. Gulf Shores, AL 36542 (251) 948-6191	Hilton Galveston 5400 Seawall Blvd. Galveston, TX 77551 (409) 744-5000	Crowne Plaza Airport 2829 Williams Blvd. Kenner, LA 70062 (504) 467-5611

All meetings will begin at 6pm and conclude at the end of public testimony, but no later than 9pm. A virtual public hearing will be available for viewing by visiting <http://www.youtube.com/user/gulfcouncil>. Comments can be submitted online by visiting the Council web site at http://gulfcouncil.org/fishery_management_plans/scoping-thru-implementation.php.

Copies of the public hearing materials can be obtained by calling 813-348-1630. Materials will also be posted on the Council website at www.gulfcouncil.org.

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Kathy Pereira at the Council office at least five working days prior to the meeting.

About Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council is one of eight regional Fishery Management Councils established by the Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976. The Council prepares fishery management plans, which are designed to manage fishery resources within the 200-mile limit of the Gulf of Mexico.

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