MAGNUSON – STEVENS ACT/NEPA SCOPING DOCUMENT

Amendment 26
to the Joint Fishery Management Plan
for the Coastal Migratory Pelagics in the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Region

JANUARY 2014

South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
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Introduction

The South Atlantic Council is interested in public input on separating the commercial permits for Spanish mackerel and king mackerel into South Atlantic and Gulf permits. This could improve management of the commercial sector of the CMP fishery by allowing each Council to make changes for the commercial sector in its jurisdiction without affecting the fishery in the other Council's jurisdiction. However, fishermen who fish in both regions could be affected if there is a separate permit required for each region.

If the amendment is developed, it will be a joint amendment with the Gulf Council. At this time, the South Atlantic Council wants to hear your thoughts and ideas, and will review your input and decide how to proceed with Mackerel Amendment 26 at their March 2014 meeting.

The South Atlantic Council would like your input on:

- **Should the Spanish mackerel commercial permits be separated into Gulf permits and Atlantic permits?**
- **Should the king mackerel commercial permits be separated into Gulf permits and Atlantic permits?**
- **If so, what would be the requirements to get a permit for each region?**
- **For areas with increased participation (FL mixing zone for king mackerel), would an endorsement program work?**
- **Are there other issues with the current permit system to address, and how should we address those?**

Get involved early and provide your input BEFORE the Council decides which actions to include in the amendment.

- Speak on the record today in the comment room.
- Email comments to CMP26Comments@safmc.net
- Mail written comments to SAFMC, 4055 Faber Place Dr, Suite 201, North Charleston SC 29405.

**Emailed and written comments received by 5pm on February 3, 2014 will be provided to the South Atlantic Council for the March 2014 meeting in Savannah, GA. Because this would be a joint amendment, your input will also be provided to the Gulf Council.

King Mackerel Commercial Permits

- Limited access permit since 1996 (first established in Amendment 8, extended in Amendment 12, and indefinite extension in Amendment 15)
- 1,349 valid permits (as of January 8, 2014)
- The Councils considered ways to address permits with low or no landings in recent years (eliminating them, or making them non-transferable) in Amendment 20A, but based on public input decided to make no changes to the king mackerel permits.

Spanish Mackerel Commercial Permits

- Open access permit
- 1,729 valid permits (as of January 8, 2014); permit number is variable but in recent years is typically between 1,700 and 1,800 permits

Things to Consider for Establishing Separate Gulf and Atlantic permits

- Eligibility requirements to receive in each region
- Control date
- Permit reduction for king mackerel or limited access for Spanish mackerel
- Can an individual be eligible to receive permits for both regions
- Transferable/non-transferable or Limited/Unlimited permits (similar to Snapper Grouper)
- Two-for-one requirement for new entrants
- Endorsement for East Coast Florida subzone (Nov- March) or other areas
- Endorsement for specific areas

Scoping Meeting Dates and Locations

Meetings will be held from 4 - 7 p.m. in the following locations:

January 21, 2014 Bay Watch Resort & Conference Center 2701 S. Ocean Boulevard N. Myrtle Beach, SC 29582 Phone:843-272-4600	**January 22, 2014** DoubleTree by Hilton Atlantic Beach Oceanfront 2717 West Fort Macon Road Atlantic Beach, NC 28512 Phone: 252-240-115
January 27, 2014 Key West Marriott Beachside 3841 N. Roosevelt Boulevard Key West, FL 33040 Phone: 305-296-8100	**January 28, 2014** DoubleTree by Hilton Cocoa Beach Oceanfront 2080 N. Atlantic Avenue Cocoa Beach, FL 32931 Phone: 321-783-9222
January 29, 2014 Wyndham Jacksonville Riverwalk 1515 Prudential Drive Jacksonville, FL 32207 Phone: 904-396-5100	**January 30, 2014** Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum 175 Bourne Avenue Pooler, GA 31322 Phone: 912-743-8888

Please send written comments to:
Bob Mahood, Executive Director
South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201
North Charleston, SC 29405

Please e-mail comments to:
CMP26Comments@safmc.net

All comments must be received by 5 p.m. on February 3, 2014