



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Southeast Regional Office
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
(727) 824-5305; FAX (727) 824-5308
<http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov>

JUN 12 2007

F/SER25:JCM

Mr. George Geiger, Chairman
South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201
North Charleston, SC, 29405

Geiger
Dear Mr. Geiger:

NOAA Fisheries Service has determined, based upon the best available scientific information, the South Atlantic gag stock is undergoing overfishing and is approaching an overfished condition according to the current definition of the minimum stock size threshold. Furthermore, South Atlantic vermilion snapper is experiencing overfishing but its overfished status is unknown. The determinations were based upon reviews of the 2006-2007 assessments of these species by the Southeast, Data, Assessment, and Review panel and the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's (Council) Scientific and Statistical Committee. Final reports for the stock assessments can be obtained from the Southeast Fisheries Center's Web site at: www.sefsc.noaa.gov/sedar.

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act requires the Council to prepare a plan amendment or proposed regulations to end overfishing within one year of this notification. I look forward to working with the Council in developing a plan to end overfishing of gag and vermilion snapper.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Roy E. Crabtree".

Roy E. Crabtree, Ph.D.
Regional Administrator

cc: F/SER2 – Phil Steele
F/SEC – Alex Chester
F/SER25 – Joe Kimmel

