

## **Gulf of Mexico Public Hearing Summaries**

### **Coastal Migratory Pelagics Amendment 20**

#### **League City, TX**

Though the most recent SEDAR assessment of cobia (SEDAR 28) indicated cobia were neither overfished or experiencing overfishing, fishermen said they were not seeing many juvenile cobia out on the water. They recommended caution in quota increases, and consideration of a bag limit reduction to one fish per person per day.

#### **Grand Isle, LA**

Most fishermen from the Florida east coast opposed changing the season opening date for the Western Zone, while the Gulf fishermen were more divided on the issue.

#### **D'Iberville, MS**

No public testimony was recorded for Amendment 20.

#### **Panama City, FL**

Fishermen favored an October 1 opening for the Eastern Zone northern subzone. One fisherman favored a 1250 pound trip limit for the Western Zone.

#### **St. Petersburg, FL**

Commercial fishermen favored the creation of a central subzone on the Florida West Coast for net fishermen, and opposed the 3000 pound trip limit for king mackerel because it would adversely affect Naples fishermen with a shortened season. Recreational fishermen preferred a 3000 pound trip limit for the Eastern Zone southern subzone and allowing transit from areas open to king mackerel fishing through areas closed to fishing.

#### **Key West, FL**

Fishermen in Key West were divided between Key West/Miami commercial fishermen and Naples commercial fishermen. Key West fishermen largely favored an increase in the trip limit for the Eastern Zone southern subzone to 3000 pounds, claiming that the current 1250 pound trip limit was too low to be economically feasible. Naples fishermen argued for keeping the trip limit at 1250 pounds, citing the risks of shortened seasons and lower prices for landed fish as concerns with a larger trip limit. Most fishermen favored keeping the season opening at July 1, allowing transit from areas open to king mackerel fishing through areas closed to fishing. Most fishermen opposed the current trip limit reduction for the Eastern Zone and the Gulf Mackerel AP's endorsement for restricting transit through closed areas to vessels with VMS. All fishermen present were in agreement that they thought the king mackerel fishery was very healthy.

**Summary of the Public Hearings on  
Coastal Migratory Pelagics Amendments 19 and 20**

**D'Iberville, MS  
8/5/2013**

**Council/Staff**

Dale Diaz  
Corky Perret  
Ava Lasseter

7 members of the public attended.

**Gary Smith:** Recreational angler

The commercial fishermen he knows complain that the Council is constantly trying to downsize the fleet, which conflicts with free markets. The commercial fishermen are against that. The fish houses want to see the industry shrink. His friends have to fish under a fish house permit because they can't get their own permit. When is the Council going to make their own permits so the fishermen don't have to fish under a fish house, which controls what price they get paid? That's the reality of what the Council has created in this system. They ought to have the ability to get their own permits.

He's against removing inactive permits as he's in the insurance business and you have to be inactive sometimes. For Amendment 19 Gary supports the Gulf Council's preferred alternative (Action 2, Alternative 1); permits should be allowed to go inactive which would allow others to come in and they could get their license reactivated. The Council has increased the commercial red snapper quota but not increased the number of people who can fish it. It would scare him to depend on a fish house owner like the commercial fishermen do. His biggest concern is that fishermen not be beholden to the fish houses.

**Panama City, FL  
8/6/2013**

**Council/Staff**

Pam Dana  
Ryan Rindone  
Ava Lasseter

2 members of the public attended.

**BJ Burkett:** Charter and Commercial Fisherman: Hook 'Em Up Charters

Mr. Burkett prefers an October 1 opening for the Eastern Zone, northern subzone (Amendment 20, Action 1, Alternative 3b). He thinks the Western Zone should be reduced to a 1250 pound trip limit. He also thinks permitted vessels should be required to declare the zone in which they want to fish. He needs his zone open when he can fish it. October would be the best time for

him to fish off Panama City. Any one of the three things mentioned would help, but not all of them are necessary.

He also doesn't necessarily agree with the sale of bag limit mackerel (Amendment 19, Action 1). He says it takes fish out of his subzone's quota.

He would also like to see a change in the commercial allocation between the zones, which would shift more of the quota to the Eastern Zone northern subzone.

**Randall Akins:** Charter and Commercial Fisherman

Mr. Akins is a federal Spanish mackerel permit holder. He thinks there is a problem with the distribution of information, since he did not know that he could sell bag limit caught Spanish mackerel. He also wants a chance to read the documents ahead of time, as opposed to receiving them at the meetings. In the past, he has found words like "estimated" and "probably" in reference to quantitative values- these should be exact numbers, not estimates.

Mr. Akins prefers the elimination of the income requirement for CMP permits (Action 3, Alternative 1)

**Mobile, AL**  
**8/8/2013**

**Council/Staff**

Kevin Anson  
Chris Blankenship  
Ryan Rindone  
Ava Lasseter

11 members of the public attended.

No comments received.

**St. Petersburg, FL**  
**8/12/2013**

**Council/Staff**

Martha Bademan  
Ryan Rindone  
Ava Lasseter

8 members of the public attended.

**Gary Smith:** Retired FL Commercial Fisherman

Mr. Smith has been a king mackerel fisherman for 51 years. He wonders why there can't be a central zone from the Collier/Monroe County line north to Cedar Key. The Martin Luther King Day opening of net season took all those fishermen out of the fishery, and they can't get back in. Give the king mackerel increases to the FL West Coast fishermen, not the Keys. Make it a 5,000 pound trip limit for the few net boats that would fish there.

On changing the trip limit in the Eastern Zone southern subzone (Amendment 20, Action 1), increasing the trip limit to 3,000 pounds with no reduction is going to shorten the season and drive the price down. Naples fishermen prefer the 1,250 pound trip limit, and they have to go further than the Keys fishermen. It would have to be a cold winter to push the fish down to the Tortugas.

**Buddy Bradham:** Recreational Fishing Alliance, Retired CFH and Commercial Fisherman  
The following are preferred alternatives for CMP Amendment 19:

- Action 1, Alternative 1- Selling recreational fish helps cover expenses for the CFH industry. Most commercial fishermen just go along with it. Why not have MRIP have an extra question to indicate whether the fish caught are going to a fish house?
- Action 2, Alternative 1- Don't eliminate permits. If the trip limit is increased to 3,000 pounds, guys who have not been fishing their permits will be able to do so again, as it will become economically feasible to go after the fish.
- Action 3, Alternative 1- Keep the income requirement to qualify for permits. It has worked in the past, and it helps to limit entry into the fishery.

The following are preferred alternatives for CMP Amendment 20:

- Action 1, Alternative 3- For the Eastern Zone, southern subzone.
- Action 2, Alternative 1- Leave the season opening as it is.
- Action 3, Alternative 4- Allow transit through all zones.

**League City, TX**  
**8/13/2013**

**Council/Staff**

Robin Riechers  
Lance Robinson  
Emily Muehlstein  
Charlotte Schiaffo

21 members of the public attended.

**Scott Hickman:** Charter Owner/Operator

The science does not show the damage that has been done to cobia since oil spill. They have seen very few juvenile cobia and would like the Council to consider going to a 1 fish limit.

**Shane Cantrell:** Charter Owner/Operator

According the most recent stock assessment the cobia population is in good shape but his eyes on the water are not seeing any little cobia. He would like to see caution with the possibly of missing juvenile cobia. He does not like to lose a fish because he doesn't see the bag increase once it decreases but if it helps ensure the health of the cobia stock he would make the sacrifice.

**Grand Isle, LA  
8/14/2013**

**Council/Staff**

Camp Matens  
Emily Muehlstein  
Charlotte Schiaffo

27 members of the public attended.

**Don Comron:** Commercial Fisherman - Florida

Mr. Comron agreed with participation reduction, stating he would like to reduce participation as much as possible especially on the east coast and he would like to see the reduction 2 for 1 or increasing to a 75% earned income requirement, which he considered the ideal solution. He expressed a desire to see the reduction of part-time fishing, adding that he could not make a living on the east coast of Florida and so he had to travel over to the Gulf to fish. He emphasized that he did not want to keep anyone from fishing if that is what they genuinely do for a living but he did not appreciate recreational part time fishers who made money and filled the quota at the expense of full time commercial fishermen.

**Ryan Mallory:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Generation Fisherman - Florida

Mr. Mallory stated that everyone should have the opportunity to fish but the problem was that there were so many people that want to work and jump on the bandwagon when the fishing is good and take away from the commercial fleet who depend on the fishery for their livelihood. He stated that some action to reduce the number of permits would be better than no action, and asked what would happen to the next generation of fishermen? He stated that if the Council went to a two for one permit reduction it would reduce the fishery and increase the cost of a permit. He noted that it costs \$30-50K to get a snapper-grouper permit in the east coast before you ever catch a fish. He asked why the fishery could not just have more fish. He stated that the stocks were fine, and that mackerel fishers filled the quotas, which they would not be able to do if there was not enough stock. He wanted the quota to stay open until Lent when the fish were worth more, adding that when the price goes down its hard to make money.

**Michael Sappe:** 3<sup>rd</sup> Generation Fishermen: King and Spanish mackerel on 2 boats

Mr. Sappe asked why permits cannot be taken away from people who are not using them- noting that this is done in other fisheries. He noted that all these permits were taken away because they aren't being used. He added that if 1400 people were in LA catching king mackerel and they all came in with the allowed amount it would exceed the quota, and pointed out that there would need to be enough at least 30,000 pounds of fish per permit each year to satisfy them. He strongly urged limiting the permits.

**Dean Blanchard:** Seafood Dealer: Dean Blanchard Seafood

Mr. Blanchard stated that the regulations were causing much friction between the fishermen and urged the different stakeholders to cooperate and not argue amongst themselves. His preferences on the actions are:

For Amendment 19 **Dean supports Action 2, Alternative 1 do not eliminate inactive king mackerel permits.** On Action 3, he would rather no one be restricted from having a permit but he supports Alternative 4, Option a. **Modify Income Requirements for Gulf and South Atlantic Commercial Coastal Migratory Pelagic Permits by requiring people to earn at least 75% of their income from fishing to renew or obtain a commercial mackerel permit.** He urged that part time fishermen should not take the place of real commercial fishermen. He would rather the Council not reduce permits at all but if they had to do something then the option of a 75% of the earned income requirement should be enacted. He questioned why permits should be taken from someone, and added that the Gulf Council was funneling everyone into certain fisheries, then after so long saying this stock is overfished. He stated his opinion that the stock was overfished because the Council had created a system where commercial boats were forced to fish single species. He emphasized that there were plenty of fish in the sea, so they should be allowed to fish for them.

For Amendment 20 Actions 2 he backed the idea of having the season in the Western Zone open as late as possible (Alternative 3a).

**Tim O'Malley:** Commercial King Fisherman - Florida

Mr. O'Malley stated that he first came over to the area in the 70's and had been fishing every year for 25 years in the Gulf. He noted that the 500lb requirement on local fishermen made it harder for them to earn a living when several hundred recreational fishermen from the East Coast came over drinking beer and harvesting 200 pounds of quota each. He stated he has to come over from the East Coast and he had to harvest fish from LA and take those fish away from the locals. For Amendment 19 Action 3 he supported Alternative 4a and noted that if someone made 75% of their living commercial fishing then they were meeting the requirements. He added that 1400 permits were too many, suggesting that the number be reduced to 300, and noted that many of the current 1400 permits were not active. He stated that his quota in Fort Walton Beach was useless since it was so small, that it was met too quickly, and needed to be increased because the fish were plentiful in the Panhandle. For Amendment 20 he supported pushing back the season opening in September in the western zone (Action 2, Alternative 2a) and using a 2007 control date. Otherwise, he suggested not opening it because every little boat on the East coast would descend on the area because the fish could be caught within 10 miles of the beach in the Grand Isle area.

**James Turner:** Commercial Mackerel Fisherman - Florida

Mr. Turner testified that things were getting worse in the fishery each year. He explained that his trips had gone down from 18 per season to 10 and added that if it went any lower he would be out of business. He stated that there are more and more participants and he kept hearing the Council was going to IFQ's and that there were not going to be any new participants allowed, but there had been not any change. He supported endorsements, and a control or cut-off date of 2007 or 2010. He urged the Council to act now and quit allowing more boats to come over and

harvest the fish. He added that he could not afford to come over for one week of fishing, and that the price dropped with so many people selling kingfish from three areas at the same time. In Amendment 20, Action 2, Alternative 1 he suggested that the season opening date should be left alone so the market was not flooded, adding that if the season was opened when the fish were closer to shore it would close after a week because of all the boats coming over and the quota being quickly filled. For Amendment 19, Action 2, Alternative 4 he supported two for one permit reduction in the king mackerel fishery. He catches his fish and he hates having to travel and have people think he is taking local fish. He urged the Council to either give them more fish or stop new fishermen.

**Nick Hill:** Commercial Fisherman - Florida

Mr. Hill stated that this was the 12th fishery he has been kicked out of, and that none of his permit losses were based on science. He asked why the Council was constantly changing the rules before stock assessments were done. He lamented that the Council parroted the same broken record and nobody followed the rules. For Amendment 20, Action 5 he believed that changing the framework would only make it easier to make the changes that no one wants before the science says anything. He supports Amendment 20, Action 3, Alternative 1: if the transit rule was put into effect it would be a law enforcement nightmare. For Amendment 19, Action 3 he expressed his opinion that the only way to get a permit is by lying on the form so if you don't fish you don't qualify, adding that if you have not used it in the last 2 or 3 years then you do not need a permit. He urged the Council to be sure if limits were based on landings that the Council do something to look out for people who have new permits but have been fishing them actively.

For Amendment 19, Action 2 – Elimination of Inactive King Mackerel Permits Nick said that if the rules currently in place- (with a qualifier on the vessel) were enforced it would eliminate a lot of fishermen. He expressed frustration that the Mackerel AP came up with various proposals which were then shot down by the International Protocol Team, ignoring the will of the fishermen. He worried that the children of fishers would not go into the fishery because there was no future in it. Action 1: He suggested that the recreational sale of fish should be counted under the recreational quota, not the commercial quota.

**Al Cassagne:** Commercial Fisherman

On Amendment 19 Mr. Cassagne testified that permits seemed to be an East Coast of Florida issue which followed everyone down Grand Isle. He noted that all he had ever done for a living was to fish and that there did not use to be so many people in the area fishing for mackerel. He added that he had lost his right to some permits as well and does not want to lose another permit. He explained that he has one he doesn't use so he doesn't hurt the quota but he will sell it to someone who wants to fish it and then there will be more people harvesting the permit. He did not have a solution but he does not want his permit to be eliminated and he is worried that this will become like snapper where one person who does not fish will make all the money because he owns the permits. He asked that the Council go back and set control dates/time frames so that people who have not fished an area historically cannot start now.

For Amendment 20 he supported a later opening date.

**Jack Robinson:** Commercial Fisherman

Mr. Robinson said that this was the 3<sup>rd</sup> time he come and made comments. For Amendment 19 he would like there to be some type of historical qualifier to eliminate permits, noting that people were getting pushed out of the different fisheries so they were turning into mackerel fishermen. For Action 3 he supported raising the earned income requirement as a good way to eliminate part-time fishermen.

For Amendment 20 Action 2 he opposed a September opening, stating that it would not be good for Texas fishermen who would not get a chance to fish and added that the price would be too low.

He suggested that the mackerel committee should be used more and it seemed that all the suggestions in the presentations were from the Council. Jack also suggested that the two Councils (S. Atlantic & Gulf) should divorce their co-management of mackerel so that it could be simplified and move faster.

**Dan Kane:** Commercial King Fisherman

Mr. Kane did not understand how the Council could manage the fisheries without doing the math correctly. He stated that there should only be 350 permits with the amount of quota that there is currently allowed. He noted that in 2008 the number of king fish permits almost doubled and added that mackerel needed to be a commercial fishery only. He gave his opinion that recreational fishers did not need so many fish and the commercial quota needed to be increased. He reemphasized the urgency of correct math being used to determine what needs to be done in the fishery. He stated that he lost 2 months of fishing on the east coast of Florida because there are so many fishermen and the fishing over there was not worthwhile, and that he lost over \$200,000 because of the bad math. He stated that there were too many permits and not enough fish. He noted that there were over 50 boats from the east coast in the Grand Isle area, and that the market could only handle about 40,000lbs a week. For Amendment 20, Action 2 he opposed opening the season on September 1<sup>st</sup>, adding that this would cause the market to flood and the fish price to drop. He stated that there was enough room for 18 or 21 boats in the Western zone, and suggested that the Council decide how many boats can fish in each zone. He suggested going back to historical fishermen of 20 years ago. He urged the Council to figure out how to let people make a living.

**Mickey Readenour:** Commercial Fisherman - Grand Isle

Mr. Readenour stated that fishermen in the area have had several events that have happened in the past 10 years; hurricanes oil spills etc.; that have limited fishermen from participating in the fishery. For Amendment 20, Action 2 he supported an October 1<sup>st</sup> opening for the Western Gulf (Alternative 3a), adding that locals who have not been able to participate would then be allowed to because when the quota was reduced to a 3000lbs trip limit it made small boats unable to fish. He suggested a September 1<sup>st</sup> opening would be fine for Florida (Alternative 2 b&c).



**Key West, FL  
8/15/2013**

**Council/Staff**

John Sanchez  
Doug Gregory  
Ryan Rindone

35 members of the public attended.

**David Fleming:** Commercial Fisherman – Naples

Mr. Fleming is opposed to the 3000 pound trip limit increase for the southern subzone (Amendment 20, Action 1, Alternative 3b). Keep it at 1250 pounds. Remove the trip limit reduction (Action 2, Alternative 4b).

**Pedro Almanza:** Commercial Fisherman – Key West

At 1250 pounds, the trip limit is too low for me to make any money. He supports the 3000 pound trip limit for the southern subzone (Action 1, Alternative 3b)

**Rick J. Matthews:** Commercial Fisherman – Naples

Raising the trip limit to 3000 pounds would drop the price of king mackerel and shorten the season. He prefers the 1250 pound trip limit. I am not opposed to the trip limit reduction (Action 1, Alternative 1).

**James Cass:** Commercial Fisherman – Naples

Mr. Cass is opposed to the 3000 pound trip limit for the southern subzone (Action 1, Alternative 3b). The price would drop, the season would be too short, and he can't transport that many fish.

**Patrick Purslow:** Commercial Fisherman – Naples

Mr. Purslow opposed to the 3000 pound trip limit (Action 1, Alternative 3b). It has worked fine at 1250 pounds for the past 15 years. Don't fix what isn't broken. Keep the trip limit reduction. Increasing to 3000 pounds would create more problems than it would solve.

**Bill Kelly:** Florida Key Commercial Fishing Association

For Amendment 19 the FKCFCA prefer no action on eliminating latent permits (Action 2, Alternative 1). FKCFCA opposes the 2 for 1 permit reduction proposal from the South Atlantic Council (Action 2, Alternative 4). We need to create opportunity- not restrict it. We are opposed to an income requirement (Action 3, Alternative 1). We have multi-species fishermen. For Amendment 20 FKCFCA fully supports transit through closed areas from open areas (Action 3, Alternative 4). FKCFCA supports increasing the trip limit in the southern subzone to 3000 pounds (Amendment 20, Action 1, Alternative 3b). The fish stock is healthy. They are not worried about a price drop. This is an opportunity for better marketing. The current low trip limit is hamstringing opportunities. FKCFCA completely oppose Action 4. They are opposed to any IFQ or catch share system. Keep the Gulf mackerel fishery catch share-free.

**Josh Nicklaus:** Commercial Fisherman – Key West

Mr. Nicklaus prefers the 3000 pound trip limit for the southern subzone (Action 1, Alternative 3b). It is too expensive to fish for mackerel at 1250 pounds per trip.

**Billy Niles:** Commercial Fisherman – Summerland Key

Mr. Niles has fished for 61 years, often at Half Moon Shoal. It's always been that the price drops when the fish hit Monroe County. He can't land fish because it is too expensive to fish with a 1250 pound trip limit. He says they need more fish. They need a 3000 pound trip limit in the southern subzone (Action 1, Alternative 3b). He is opposed to the 2 for 1 permit reduction (Amendment 19, Action 2, Alternative 4). Charter for hire sales should be under a separate quota. The fish stocks are healthy.

**Mario Torres:** Commercial Fisherman – Hialeah

Mr. Torres is currently pursuing a Gulf king mackerel permit. It may not be economically feasible to fish king mackerel with a 1250 pound trip limit. He prefers the 3000 pound trip limit increase (Action 1, Alternative 3b).

**Bobby Pillar:** Commercial Fisherman – Summerland Key

Mr. Pillar understands the argument from the Naples fishermen. The 1250 pound trip limit came about to keep the price up. That was when diesel was 75 cents a gallon. Fuel is just too expensive these days to make any money with a 1250 pound trip limit. If they can't get a 3000 pound trip limit, traditional fishermen will be regulated out of the fishery. 1250 pounds per trip may be okay in Naples, but no fishermen are going out for kingfish in Key West at 1250 pounds. They catch their fish from December to January.

**Brian Bennett:** Commercial Fisherman – Key West

Mr. Bennett makes more money on kingfish than anything else. He is opposed to the 3000 pound trip limit increase (Action 1, Alternative 3b). The quota will be filled too quickly and the price will drop. The price is great right now. More boats will fish our zone with a higher trip limit.

**George Niles:** Commercial Fisherman – Summerland Key

In Amendment 19 do not eliminate any permits. He is against the 2-for-1 permit reduction proposed by the South Atlantic (Action 2, Alternative 4). Fuel costs are too high and trip limits are too restrictive. The current southern subzone trip limits are from a time when they had \$1 diesel. There needs to be 3000 pound trip limits (Amendment 20, Action 1, Alternative 3). He is opposed to trip limit reductions. He wants the season in the southern subzone to open on January 1. They need to be able to transit to the closest fish house to offload. Fishermen should have to declare their zone. Fish should be reallocated from the recreational fishery to the commercial fishery.

**Daniel Padron-** Commercial Fisherman – Key West

Mr. Padron supports the 3000 pound trip limit for the southern subzone (Action 1, Alternative 3b). It is too expensive to fish for mackerel at 1250 pounds per trip. He is opposed to sale of bag limit caught fish. Don't eliminate permits. They need new people in the fishery. Give folks a chance to fish. He is opposed to the trip limit reduction (Amendment 20, Action 1). He

supports open transit through closed zones from open zones (Action 3, Alternative 4). He is opposed to any VMS to monitor transit.

**Jason Yarborough:** Commercial Fisherman – Key West

Mr. Yarborough supports the 3000 pound trip limit for the southern subzone (Action 1, Alternative 3b). Fuel is just too expensive. Only one boat landed 1250 pounds at his fish house last year. Increasing the trip limit to 3000 pounds will allow folks to fish again and make money. He is opposed to eliminating permits (Amendment 19, Action 2, Alternative 1). They need to preserve fishing opportunities for future generations.

**Eduardo Gomez:** Commercial Fisherman – Key West

Mr. Gomez supports the 3000 pound trip limit for the southern subzone (Action 1, Alternative 3b). Key West is one of the most important seafood ports in Florida. With fuel costs and distance to the fish, a 1250 pound trip limit is not doable.

**Eduardo Sariol:** Commercial Fisherman – Key West

Mr. Sariol supports the 3000 pound trip limit for the southern subzone (Action 1, Alternative 3b). They need more fish to make money. Trip limit reductions are unnecessary. He is opposed to any VMS for monitoring transit.

**Mike Pierce:** Commercial Fisherman – Key West

Mr. Pierce supports the 3000 pound trip limit for the southern subzone (Action 1, Alternative 3b). He is opposed to the trip limit reduction. Fuel is too expensive to make 1250 pounds economically doable.

**Juan Blanco:** Commercial Fisherman – Key West

Boats used to be loaded with fish. They don't need quotas. More fish coming in means more fish to sell. He supports the 3000 pound trip limit for the southern subzone (Action 1, Alternative 3b). He is opposed to the trip limit reduction. He sees fishermen breaking the law all the time. Fuel is too expensive, and you have to support your mates. He just wants to work. He is opposed to the 2 for 1 permit reduction (Amendment 19, Action 2, Alternative 4). They can still sell the fish. The most they get is \$2, then it drops to about \$1.

**Yordy Martinez:** Commercial Fisherman – Key West

*Speaking for: Himself, and Alberto and Carlos Martinez*

Mr. Martinez supports the 3000 pound trip limit for the southern subzone (Action 1, Alternative 3b). He wants his son to be a fisherman. The regulations make fishing hard. He is opposed to the trip limit reductions and VMS.

**Marco Herrera:** Commercial Fisherman – Key West

Mr. Herrera is a multispecies fisherman. He supports the 3000 pound trip limit for the southern subzone (Action 1, Alternative 3b). The Council needs to give something back to the fishermen. Give the commercial sector some of the recreational quota.

**Jose Blanco:** Commercial Fisherman – (No Location Given)

Mr. Blanco has been fishing in Naples and Tampa. He's seen Naples fishermen catching four days' worth of trip limits, and then sell them at Naples fish houses. They are in 43' and 39' boats. They are selling 6000 pounds of fish at a time. They are hurting everyone.

**Nicholas DeMauro:** Commercial Fisherman – Sugarloaf Key

Mr. DeMauro fishes for snapper/grouper and kingfish. He needs a 250 pound bycatch permit for the charter for hire industry.

**Omar Manso:** Commercial Fisherman – Miami

Mr. Manso supports the 3000 pound trip limit for the southern subzone (Action 1, Alternative 3b). Fuel costs and distance are just too great for 1250 pounds.

**Tom Marvel:** Commercial Fisherman – Naples

Mr. Marvel travels for kingfish. Maintain the trip limit at 1250 pounds (Action 1, Alternative 1). The season would be too short at 3000 pounds. The price of fish would be too low. Collier County fishermen would suffer; they rely on the spring fish. They have to fish for multiple species. At 3000 pounds, no one will catch more fish. With unlimited transit, more folks will travel. For Amendment 19, he prefers Action 1 Alternative 3b, Action 2 Alternative 1, and Action 3 Alternative 2. For Amendment 20, he prefers Action 1 Alternative 4c and Action 2 Alternative 1.

**Randy Wamble:** Commercial Fisherman – Naples

Mr. Wamble has to run long distances for fish. He has tailored his business for 1250 pound trip limits. 3000 pounds is no good (Action 1, Alternative 3b). The price and season would drop, and effort would increase. He opposes the 500 pound reduction.

**Johnny Brown:** Commercial Fisherman – Naples

Mr. Brown opposes the 3000 pound trip limit increase (Action 1, Alternative 3b). 95% of his income is from king mackerel fishing. He fishes alone. He only has 1900 pounds of grouper allocation. He needs the 1250 pound kingfish trip limit to keep the season long and the price up. The 500 pound reduction is not needed. He obeys the rules and does not want to be punished.

**Rick Matthews, Sr.:** Commercial Fisherman – Naples

Mr. Matthews is a multispecies fisherman. The net ban hurt. He got into stone crab, sharks, and grouper. Now he only fishes stone crabs and king mackerel. He opposes the 3000 pound trip limit because the season will drop (Action 1, Alternative 3b). The 500 pound trip limit reduction is not needed. He would rather spend more time fishing than have a higher trip limit.

**Subject:** Amendment 20

**Date:** Friday, August 23, 2013 8:22:08 AM Eastern Daylight Time

**From:** Randy Wamble

**To:** Gulf Council

My name is William R. (Randy) Wamble from Naples. My first commercial kingfish trip was in 1974 continuing through today. Hook and line fishing is my only income producing job. I am against changing the trip limit to 3000# in the Eastern Southern Sub- Zone. I am for keeping it at 1250# with no 500# reduction when 75% of the quota is reached. This trip limit was put in place to lengthen the season and potentially raise ex-vessel prices. It did both and to raise the trip limit would be a step backwards. It would shorten the season most likely to a January closure and no one can argue that would result in lower prices. After 15 plus years with the current limits, the fishermen still in this fishery are the ones who have tailored their businesses to be profitable under the current regulations. An increase to 3000# would also create a derby style fishery to no real benefit to anyone, even the people that think they want the increase. I have a 43ft boat, I'm no stranger to long distance runs, I have crew and I show a profit from this business. I have fished in the Western zone before and would have to go there again if our season here closes early because of a larger trip limit. I don't think the folks up there need anymore help filling that quota. There are no answers that are going to please everyone. Leave amendment 20 status quo. Forget tweaking a plan that everyone has made adjustments to. Leave it alone or go to an ITQ program.



8/13/2013

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council  
2203 North Lois Avenue, Suite 1100  
Tampa, Florida 33607

Dear Gulf Council Member,

Please let me take this time to give you input from The Recreational Fishing Alliance - Florida West Coast on Coastal Migratory Pelagics Amendment 20 Boundaries and Transit Provisions.

**Coastal Migratory Pelagics Amendment 20 Boundaries and Transit Provisions**

**Action 1 : Modify the Commercial Hook and Line Trip Limits for the Gulf Migratory Group King Mackerel**

**We Support :**

**Alternative 3 : Set the commercial hook and line trip limit at 3000 lbs with no reduction.**

**Option B : For the Eastern Zone Southern Subzone.**

**Action 2 : Change the Fishing Season for Gulf Group King Mackerel for the Eastern and Western Zone**

**We Support :**

**Alternative 1 : No Action** - The commercial hook and line season opens for both Eastern and Western Zones on July 1.

**Action 3 : Establish Transit Provisions**

**We Support :**

**Alternative 4 : Allow transit through areas closed to king mackerel fishing for vessels processing king mackerel that were legally harvested in the EEZ.**

**Action 4 : Establish Regional Annual Catch Limits for Atlantic Migratory Group King and Spanish Mackerel**

**We have no preferred alternative**

**Action 5 : Modify the Framework Procedure**

**We have no preferred alternative**

**Action 6 : Modify the Gulf and Atlantic Migratory Group Cobia Annual Catch Limits and Annual Catch Targets**

**We have no preferred alternative**

Thank You for taking the time to look at our input

Capt Buddy Bradham  
RFA- Florida West Coast  
4000 24th N #1307  
St Petersburg FL 33714  
727-458-1192  
MotherOceanCharters@msn.com

I write to express my opposition to the proposed king mackerel trip limit increase (3000 lbs) for the southern subzone (Collier and Monroe Counties).

This is not a fine tuning of a trip limit, it is the abandonment of trip limit management. I am not a fan of such management and if the Council wishes to pursue alternative measures to stabilize this fishery I am all for it. I am a member of the king mackerel LAPP, which has yet to meet. However, to take an existing set of management measures that have been in place for 15-20 years and alter them, thereby redistributing the catch, is not right. It should be a foregone conclusion that either alternative 2 or 3 ( 2500 and 3000 lbs respectively ) will result in a shortened season. In Collier County the fish often do not show until late winter or early spring. Even at 1250 the season often closes before the fish arrive. Furthermore it is most desirable to fish during Lent. At either 2500 or 3000 lbs we will never catch spring fish off Naples.

What are the goals of trip limits and where has the 1250 lbs limit failed? When the Council implemented these limits it was to ' reduce the derby effects and lengthen the season until a more permanent solution could be put in place'. These are the Council's words (paraphrased) not mine. If 1250 lbs were too restrictive the quota would not be filled : it is consistently filled. If the limit were too restrictive for a class of boats or one area within the zone you'd see shifting of landings: this has not occurred. If the landing limit were not restrictive enough one would see no difference in closure dates compared to pre- trip limit seasons: there has been a lengthening of the season compared to the early-mid 1990's.

The Council needs to be mindful that at this point in the game most of the Gulf fisheries are in some way interrelated. Like a balloon: you squeeze one side and the other pops out. If the limits are increased the season will shorten. Those of us that fish for both grouper and kings are now tied to grouper production levels via



the IFQ program. Our qualifying grouper landings were determined by how long the kingfish season lasted which in turn was determined by the trip limit. Shorten the season at this point and we can't compensate which increased grouper effort. What should we do? Go to Louisiana and fish kings thereby further overcapitalizing an already overcapitalized fishery?

Lastly, has the Council considered the prudence of establishing a 3000 lbs (or 2500 lbs) trip limit in a zone adjacent to a 50 fish zone?

Tom Marvel

F/V Sea Marvel

Member Mackerel AP ( we voted to retain the existing limits)

My name is Jack Robinson—100 percent of my earned income is through commercial fishing.

The 2012 Gulf king mackerel season was a 53 day opener, a very short season because too many boats showed up; rent-a-boat, rent-a-captain and cheap fish prices. There will be more boats next year. Destin, FL panhandle 2012 season was very short as well. The same scenario: a lot of boats, rent-a-boat, rent-a-captain; one big party. I know the Gulf Council is aware of this problem, and I hope the Council will consider a historical qualifying endorsement, or catch shares.

The historical fisherman will not last with shorter seasons and cheaper prices. The part-timers and job-fisherman will; they can go back to their jobs. I don't understand...Washington wants a reduction in fleet, but the marine fisheries make it so easy to qualify for these permits. There are way too many king mackerel permits for such a small tack.

Amendments 19 and 20 are not good; a September 1 opening would be a disaster, and that would put the Gulf, panhandle, Naples, Key West, Florida east coast, and North Carolina fishing at the same time. It would just be an absolute disaster. The price of fish would crash, and would never recover as we went into the fall season. This is very, very bad for the fisherman. We need to get our king mackerel committee together and solve these problems. I do not know who came up with amendments 19 and 20, but I DO know that they are not in our user group.

Our stocks are taking a beating because of the huge growth of our king mackerel fleet. There are over 1,400 king mackerel permits out there. Should I do the math? There should only be 100 permits to be allowed an averaged earned income with our tack.

Please help the historical fisherman and their families. Please consider all that I have written, as well as my 25 years of experience as a king mackerel fisherman.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Jack Robinson

## Intelligence and Integrity

Intelligence and integrity are qualities you won't find in Roy Crabtree and company (NMFS)!

This is what is wrong with America today. Today our Government agencies are run by people with the morals of the common thief.

I was raised better than that!

Integrity: moral soundness; honesty; uprightness; rectitude.

Rectitude: rightness of principle or practice; exact conformity to truth, or to the rules prescribed for moral conduct.

I'm might not be intelligent, but I did the 9<sup>th</sup> grade in 45 minutes. I didn't go to school the last half year of the 12<sup>th</sup> grade. My last six years of school I did in four and a half years. I'm not slow!

I'm a man of honor and integrity! I volunteered to serve my country. I did six years and ten months in the Navy. I was an electronic technician those years. That job I was paid to use my brain. I doubt Roy Crabtree and company could do that job or that they served in the military, they lack the intelligence and integrity and honor required.

There's an old saying: nobody knows how stupid you are until you open your mouth. Roy Crabtree and company put their stupidity on paper. Amendment 19 and 20 are criminally stupid and will only complicate the problems in my King Mackerel fishery. I call amendment 19 and 20 criminal intent!

Integrity: My father flew the fastest jet bomber America (and the world) had in the 1970's. During the cold war my dad was given possession of nuclear bombs on dozens of missions. Believe me when I tell you that the U.S.A. military does not give these missions to people with less than perfect integrity!

My mother's intelligence and integrity equals that of my Father's. Besides raising seven children she was the president of the Silver hair legislator's for the state of Florida for three years. Before that she was a substitute teacher, a candy striper at school, a little league coach, a cheerleader coach, sold real estate and much more.

Three of my siblings are Intelligent. All my siblings are people of integrity and high morals. Alas I'm the black sheep of the family.

Believe me when I say that no one in the National Marine Fisheries Service measures up to Kane standards! I was raised better than all of you!

I was taught that you are responsible for your actions. That if you break it, you fix it, or you pay for a new one. Roy Crabtree and company are totally irresponsible!

Roy Crabtree and company have destroyed my life with their incompetence. I used to fish King Mackerel twelve months a year. I've lost my three best months of fishing because these fools can't do simple math. In the past two years my loss totals \$100,000 to \$120,000.

I can do simple math. My calculations tell me there should be about 300 commercial King Mackerel permits in the U.S.A. There is not one person in the NMFS that can figure out how many commercial permits there should be with the small 8 million pound commercial quota.

This proves my point that there is not one person in the NMFS that possess intelligence and integrity! You cannot manage anything without doing the math!

We've had a mackerel committee for years. Why wasn't this committee used to create amendment 19 and 20?

Intelligence: 1. Act or state of knowing. 2. Capacity to know or understand; the intellect. 3. Information communicated; news; notice; advice. 4. Knowledge acquired; general information.

Amendment 19 and 20 were created behind closed doors. Without the knowledge that the problem in the King Mackerel Fishery is that there are over two hundred too many commercial permits in use. Intelligence what's intelligence? Read the previous paragraph sections 3 and 4!

I feel that amendment 19 and 20 is criminal intent. The NMFS intends to double or triple this commercial fleet with sport fishermen. They're throwing gas on a runaway fire.

Roy Crabtree and company have no integrity, just criminal intent to destroy our lives!

The National Marine Fisheries should be shut-down!

Roy Crabtree should resign. Roy Crabtree should do time. Roy Crabtree and company should be held responsible for their criminal incompetence.

We will see what Congress thinks of your shenanigans!

P.S. Roy Crabtree and company: may the fleas of a thousand camels infest your crotch!

Daniel C. Kane AKA Huri-Kane Dan 10-29-2012

## Don't change the landing limits on the King Mackerel

I understand that the NMFS is thinking of changing the daily landing limits of King-mackerel in the Florida Keys. To increase the landing limit from 1,250 to 3,000lbs is not smart.

Last year the price for King mackerel in the Key's bottomed out at 80 cents a pound. At a 3,000lb limit this price will get down to 60 cents or less. Bait cost about a dollar a pound.

The reason the price of King Mackerel is so low in the Keys is the fish are not iced properly. The majority of these lobster-fishermen that King-fish down there won't ice their fish until they are done fishing. I've spent over ten years commercial fishing west of Key West. I was down there King-fishing three years ago, and again five years before that. They wouldn't take proper care of their fish in the 80's, in the 90's, nor the last couple times I was down there.

Don't change the dates on any of the zones or the landings will overlap. This will ruin the price of our fish.

Daniel C. Kane      10-30-2012

This is a bill for \$180,000

The incompetence of Roy Crabtree and company has cost me \$180,000 or better in these past few years!

They refuse to fix the problems that they created in my King Mackerel fishery!

I used to fish twelve months a year. Now I've lost my three best months of King-fishing because Roy Crabtree can't do simple math.

In five years they can't figure out how many King Mackerel permits there should be. How stupid can they be? I'd call it criminally stupid!

In the last two years I've lost my three best months of King-fishing. That cost me about \$110,000. The few years before that I'd lost \$70,000 or better by not being able to fish during lent.

With an eight million commercial quota there should be only 300 King Mackerel permits.

Today there are near 1500 commercial permits out there, a thousand of them are not being used. Roy Crabtree is doing everything he can to activate all these sleeping permits. Why would he do this when there are nearly 300 too many permits in use today? I call it criminal intent.

In lieu of the \$180,000 and the \$500,000 I'm going lose in the next nine years I'll accept 20,000 pounds of Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper IFQ's.

I was raised understanding that you are responsible for your actions. That if you break it you fix it. If you can't fix it you pay for it.

The NMFS should pay me for damages they've inflicted on me!

Your victim: Daniel C. Kane 10-30-2012

**Subject:** Mackerel # 20

**Date:** Friday, August 31, 2012 10:32 AM

**From:** Tom Marvel <marvelt@yahoo.com>

**Reply-To:** "tom marvel" <marvelt@yahoo.com>

**To:** John Milner <GulfCouncil@gulfcouncil.org>

**Conversation:** Mackerel # 20

Dear Members of the Gulf Council,

I strongly opposed the creation of a new subzone off Central Florida. Why is funding of proposed zone only from the Southern hook and line zone? What relationship does the Southern Zone have to the proposed zone? One would think the parent zone would be responsible for funding of a zone created entirely within its' borders. You would be shifting quota from vessels that have shown a dependence on these fish to vessels(zone) that has not demonstrated dependence. What is the need of this proposed zone? Central Florida, according to your table, has only been closed in two of the last seven years. The average landings over seven years is 40,500 lbs. Does this actually warrant the creation of a new subzone? The vast majority of king mackerel vessels in the Southwest Zone (Collier and Monroe) do not travel out of their zone to fish kings. Most of our alternative fisheries ( grouper, stone crab and lobster) are under effort limitation programs: trap certificates for stone crab and lobster and ifqs for grouper/snapper. To a large degree our capitalization in these 'other' fisheries is a function of how much historical access we've had to king mackerel. If our king mackerel quota had been cut from 1999-2006 to create a new sub zone we would have spent more effort targeting, in my case, grouper. Hence my initial grouper allocation would have been larger. To alter our quota after we are more or less locked in to our alternative fisheries seems highly unfair.

Please do not increase the Southern subzone trips limits. I am certainly no fan of trip limit management but until a new approach (ifqs) are in place trip limits are all we have to prevent a mid January closure. Increasing the trip limit will create such a steep gradient between the east coast limits and the Keys that I am quite certain the effort shift will all but overwhelm us.

Thank you

Tom Marvel

Member Mackerel Advisory Panel

Timestamp	Enter your full name	email address	Comments	City, State, Zip Code	Check all that apply
3/22/2012 16:16:46	matthew andrews	restless146464@yahoo.com	matthew andrews owner operator of the fv restless2 The council should consider that opening the king mackerel season in the fall would create a tremendous flood of fish on the market in a very short period of time . Due to the fact that the fish are more plentiful and somewhat closer to shore. Vessels that have not historically participated in this fishery Will start participating .This fishery is as it stands is already under a tremendous economical burden due to over participation allowing this fishery to open in the fall will create disastrous consequences for the market.In short this is a really bad idea.The only true and fair solution to this situation is a catch share program tx capt matthew andrews	32578	Commercial Fisher
3/23/2012 8:57:53	Nicholas Patzig	pmsbigred1@yahoo.com	<p>Action 1. Yes the council should eliminate all the zones and establish a 500 lb trip limit in the gulf. if a boundary is necessary then it should stay where it is. gill nets should be eliminated. if all trip limits were the same then there would be less incentive for the east coast and keys boats to encroach in other waters. If those boats are allowed to travel then the fish that they catch could be taken from their home quota and not taken from the other boats home quota to further reduce the incentive to travel and take livelihood away from other boats.</p> <p>Action 2. no change in opening date.</p> <p>Action 3. no change make them sell their catch in the open zone. any change would only foster black marketing.</p> <p>Action 4 and 5. If zones must remain home zone must be declared at renewal and only 1 zone is allowed and what ever fish are caught by that vessel will be counted against that vessel home zone and not allowed to take quota away from other vessels and their home zone quotas.</p> <p>Action 6. 1 Gulf Quota And 1 atlantic quota and all trip limits at 500 lbs.</p>	Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548	Commercial Fisher
3/26/2012 10:07:21	samuel m baker	mikebaker15@yahoo.com	I oppose all new management options in regards to amendment twenty. In review of this amendment the constraint them running through most of the options is effort reduction. Reducing my rights and fishing options as to when and where I can produce King Mackerel as a valid full time commercial fisherman. I do support a two for one permit plan and a poundage limit for latent permits. This method was used in the shark plan by HMS to qualify sharks permits and proved to be productive.	hobe sound fl. 33455	Commercial Fisher
4/9/2012 5:35:17	Mason Bowen	fpfirelb@aol.com	<p>I have never seen a proposed amendment so Biased in nature as this amendment. It panders to some small groups participating in the fishery, and negatively impacts the much larger groups that support the King Mackerel Industry.</p> <p>When you are dealing with a species of fish as highly migratory as King Mackerel the participants themselves Must Have That Same Freedom. When there is no absolute certainty where these schools of fish will be located,(the fish move with water temperatures and food supply). It is then Absolutely Ridiculous to have to declare zones in Ignorance and would Negatively impact participants.</p> <p>Mason Bowen</p>	Sebastian,FL 32958	Commercial Fisher



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4/15/2012 19:51:41	dennis gillispie	dglledge@gmail.com	Dear amendment 20 i oppose all action with the exception of triplimit deviation. that could help lengthen are fishing season.definitely no home zones or any zones for that matter we shouldnt be caged in like a pet thats a complete joke! not a good idea to change opening dates this would be true disaster we dont need easier fishing this would only entice more participation in the gulf.Get rid of the stagnant permits already, and also the 2 or 3 for 1 kingsih permit plan needs to be engaged asap should have been done yesterday.No state by state quota system not needed..no action on ammendment 20 please ,thankyou.	fot pierce fl 34946	Commercial Fisher
5/31/2012 13:03:50	Mark Tryon	mdtryon@bellsouth.net	I fish out of Pensacola Pass in the Florida northern west coast subzone. Subsequent to the closure of the gulf west coast (AL to TX) zone NMFS has routinely failed to implement the step down from 1250 to 500 lbs in our zone. As such transient vessels have repeatedly wiped out our measly quota in short order each season. My reccommendation here is to reduce the trip limit in our subzone to be relativeto the small quota. Perhaps 500lbs would be logical. In the interim it is imperative that NMFS does their job and implements the step down in a conservative manner. My suggestion would be to have the step down coincide with the closure of the Al-TX zone. Finally I would be in favor of a single zone declaration to protect local interests.	gulf breeze,fl. 32563	Commercial Fisher
6/29/2012 5:29:50	William R. Wamble	fish4living@comcast.net	Action 1. Leave the subzones in place. Leave the boundry lines in place. A 1500 lb. trip limit would help offset trip exspenses in the Southern subzone, however any major increase in the trip limit would shorten the season and lower ex-vessel prices. The kingfish market is poor at best when everyone is catching fish at the same time and larger trip limits would likly cause market gluts and possible shut downs from buyers refusing to take more fish. Fishermen at times stop fishing because prices go below 1.00 per pound. We already have situations like this occuring each year. A reduction at the end to 500 lbs. is unnecessary and an unfair economic burden on fishermen who have proved their dependance on this fishery. If the subzones are eliminated, put the quota back where it came from. ACTION 2. Leave the opening date as it is. ACTION 3. Allow the transportation of legally caught fish through closed areas. This is another unnecessary economic burden on fishermen to have to travel long distances to sell their catch in open zones. ACTION 4. and 5. Locking fishermen into zones is another unnecessary economic burden on fishermen. The historical king fisherman, who has shown his dependence on this fishery, needs to be allowed to follow the fish if he so chooses. ACTION 6. How can any one state catch the entire Annual Catch Limit? With zones in place that have individual quotas? WHEN ARE WE GOING TO QUIT MICRO MANAGING THIS FISHERY? WHEN ARE WE GOING TO QUIT SECOND GUESSING OUR CURRENT REGULATIONS EVERY TIME SOMEONE WITH A NEWLEY PURCHASED PERMIT STARTS COMPLAINING ABOUT THE RULES? ITQ, ITQ, ITQ. ITQ, ITQ.....	Naples, FL. 34104	Commercial Fisher

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1/30/2013 11:25:37	Van Christian	eyewearboutique@yahoo.com	<p>I strongly object to a 27 day snapper season. I've been fishing snapper in the Gulf for over 50 years and have not seen the number and size snapper as good as it has been the past 2 - 3 years. I can take you to reefs in the Gulf off the coast of Louisiana where in the early summer the snapper collect by the thousands - not hundreds but thousands. I'm ready to back up the claim when you are ready to see it</p> <p>Limiting the season so severly also has a detrimental effect to commerce on the Gulf coast in the form of marinas, boat builders, recreation, hotels etc.</p> <p>This research must be coming from another area besides Louisiana. if so that is like setting the elk season in Colorado by the elk population in Louisiana. But by chance that the snapper population is in the state you say it is then we should seriously consider shutting down any commercial harvest.</p> <p>Awaiting your response</p> <p>Dr. Van Christian OD</p>	Opelousas, LA 70570	Private Recreational Angler
4/20/2013 12:39:16	William R. Wamble	fish4living@comcast.net	<p>Please do not change the trip limit from 1250 lbs to 3000 lbs. The lower trip limit is necessary to extend the season. The 3000 lb limit would only lure fishermen from other areas to SW Florida and the season would end quickly. An example would be Louisiana in 2012. The fishermen of the southern west coast sub-zone have become dependant on this fishery and any increase in the trip limit would be devastating to us. I have been king fishing commercialy since 1974 and have been a part of the rebuilding process. It would only reallocate the fish to others who have not shown their dependancy on this group of fish. Please don't make this change. Leave it status quo.</p>	Naples, FL 34101	Commercial Fisher
7/18/2013 19:46:04	Rick W Matthews	rmp2182@aol.com	<p>It will shorten the season and in all likelihood lower the price. In Collier we hope for it to stay open till March so we can catch as the fish move north into our area and the price increases due to Lent. Some years even at 1250 we never see quota off Naples, at 3000 we never will.</p> <p>Rick Matthews</p> <p>F/V Penny Marie</p>	Naples,FL,34120	Commercial Fisher

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8/17/2013 7:34:56	Brian Bennett	captshorthop@comcast.net	<p>My name is Brian Bennett and I have been commercial kingfishing since 1985. The sale of kingfish is my primary source of income. I am strongly AGAINST raising the daily limit to 3000 lbs. There are many reasons to keep the limit at 1250 lbs. Every year in the Southern subzone the quota is caught. This year we were able to fish until March 17 and the year before that Feb 26. I feel that if limit is raised to 3000 lbs the season will close before Feb 1. Here in Key West we never get the best price until after the 607,614 lbs of net fish are caught, and this year the net boats did not start fishing until February. In table 2.1.3 of amendment 20 it is estimated that with a 3000 lb limit the season would close Feb 9, and at 1250 lb close March 7. I went through my records for 2013 and between 2/9 and 3/7 I caught 9418 lbs worth \$22,461. This is not an insignificant figure, it is crucial to my survival.</p> <p>Another issue that is not being factored in is the number of transient boats that would come here to fish if the limit was raised. This would make the season shorter yet and lower the price even more. For some reason the council prefers keeping the limit in the Northern zone at 1250 lbs, I think the same reasons for not changing the limit in the Northern zone apply to us.</p> <p>At the Key West meeting 8/15 some people spoke in favor of raising the limit. I know some of those people and some were net fisherman and some yellowtail fisherman who don't even fish in the southern hook and line fishery. The excuse that people can't make money at 1250 lbs is ridiculous. Although the price of fuel is high, the price of kingfish also has risen tremendously. Since 2/14 I have caught 13,684 lbs worth \$35,872 which averages \$2.62 a pound. If someone can't make a profit with \$3275 in fish money they are not very efficient. I have been hearing of prices consistently over \$3 when the market is not flooded. If the limit is raised to 3000 lbs the market will stay flooded and we will be back to getting \$1 a pound. I did not graduate from college but I would prefer to catch 1000 lbs at \$3 than 3000 lbs at \$1.</p> <p>Please take the AP preferred option, Alternative 1 and keep the limit at 1250 lbs.</p>	Key West Fl. 33040	Commercial Fisher
8/17/2013 10:43:26	Nicholas Patzig	pmsbigred1@yahoo.com	Please see my comments on amendment 19	Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548	Charter/Headboat For-Hire, Commercial Fisher
8/17/2013 22:20:04	Zachary Taylor Bentley III	conchubine@hotmail.com	I strongly oppose Amendment 20 as it would hurt local fisherman. The increased trip limit would attract fishermen from other areas that normally would not commute or relocate to fish Key West. This would give local fishermen a smaller piece of the quota, and most importantly the price would be compromised due to the larger volume of fish being harvested and sold over a shorter period.	Key West FL 33040	Charter/Headboat For-Hire, Commercial Fisher

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8/18/2013 13:41:14	Ira laks	Captainira@att.net	<p>My name is Ira Laks. I am the owner operator of a dual permitted vessel. As an active participant in the King Mackerel commercial fishery, I believe we need a two-for-one permit reduction in the king mackerel commercial fishery and an annual average of at least 1,000 lbs of king mackerel from 2002-2011 to renew .If only one option is chosen I believe it should be the two-for-one option. I have heard council members say in meetings that they do not want to remove inactive permits, some council members said that they want fisherman to be able to use inactive permits as tools in their toolbox. The problem with that rational is that the councils have removed limited access permits from fisherman in other fisheries in the past due to inactivity and low landings. Myself and other active King Mackerel fisherman have had these permits removed from our toolboxes without any compensation. If it is now the position of the councils that fisherman should be able to retain inactive and limited landing king mackerel permits and these permits through sale or effort may become active to the detriment of current active king mackerel fisherman, the councils should reinstate any limited access permits removed from fishermen while holding their current king mackerel permit. How can you effectively manage the king mackerel fishery biologically, socially and economically if you have such a large variability in potential effort.</p> <p>Both the SAFMC and GMFMC have taken a leadership role in the ban of bag limit sales of federally managed species in the EEZ. The most important part of leadership is consistency and if bag limits of Cobia and tournament caught King and Spanish Mackerel are allowed to be sold it will be inconsistent with previous actions of the councils. I have listened to and read the minutes of council meetings as well as spoke to council staff in an attempt to understand why Cobia are excluded from the ban of bag limit sales. From the information I have read and heard, no practical or legal explanation have been sufficiently given for the sale of Cobia in the EEZ. As the holder of a Florida SPL with an RS endorsement, I could go on a recreational Headboat trip in the EEZ off the east coast of Florida and catch my bag limit of 2 Cobia and 2 King Mackerel. I would be able to sell my 2 Cobia to a wholesale dealer but not my 2 King Mackerel, This would bring into play double counting issues in the Cobia fishery that I thought the councils were trying to avoid. Since a significant number of Cobia will be caught recreationally and sold commercially this should be addressed in the commercial allocation for Cobia.</p> <p>As to the sale of tournament caught fish, I think the councils should have to craft the guidelines for any tournament sales policy with alternatives and the ability of the citizens of United States to be able to comment on a specific tournament policy. In the draft amendment 19 book. North Carolina's tournament sales policy is used as an example.</p> <p>This is from the NCDENR Division of Marine Fisheries: Recreational Fishing Tournament License to Sell Fish The Recreational Fishing Tournament License to Sell Fish is a license available to fishing tournaments that sell fish and requires the designation of a tournament organizer. Proceeds from the sale of fish must be used for charitable, religious, educational, civic or conservation purposes - proceeds from the sale of fish cannot be used to pay for tournament expenses. This license is required for tournaments that sell fish plates or provide free fish plates to tournament participants.</p> <p>King and Spanish mackerel in the EEZ are a public trust resource of all the citizens of the United States. If the states are given the authority to convert a federal public resource into cash to benefit a select few, it will raise many ethical and legal objections.</p> <p>A few questions I have are:</p>	Jupiter fl 33478	Charter/Headboat For-Hire, Commercial Fisher

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8/18/2013 13:41:14	Ira laks	Captainira@att.net	<p>How many tournaments will be allowed to sell fish?</p> <p>Many fisherman pre fish the day before the tournament, will those fish be able to be sold?</p> <p>How many fish per boat will be able to be donated? Will it be just the fish weighed in or the bag limit for all on board?</p> <p>If its the bag limit for all onboard that can be donated, will that cause boats to catch more fish than they normally do in a desire to be charitable?</p> <p>Will organizations such as the SKA be able to take a charitable tax deduction on the cash donated to a charity? If so that would be of great financial benefit to them.</p> <p>Can wholesale dealers profit from the sale of these fish and who will decide which wholesale dealer is used? If the choice of wholesale dealers is left to the tournaments, it opens the door for quid pro quo relationships.</p> <p>If the number of tournaments who sell fish expand how will this effect the price commercial fisherman receive for their fish?</p> <p>How ironic would it be if money from the sale of tournament fish was donated to a conservation organization and they used that money to lobby to restrict commercial fishing.</p> <p>Can the town of Boca Raton hold a tournament and use the money from the sale of a federal public resource to build a dog park?</p> <p>Will religious groups be able to capitalize from this public resource to promote their beliefs?</p> <p>Sincerely , Captain Ira Laks</p>	Jupiter fl 33478	<p>Charter/Headboat For-Hire, Commercial Fisher</p>



Timestamp	Enter your full name	email address	Comments	City, State, Zip Code	Check all that apply
			<p>My name is James Matthews and I am for Amendment 20, 2.1 action1 and against the 3000 lbs limit increase!! And here are my reasons.</p> <p>I have been a Commercial Fisherman for over twenty years. I fished with my father for sixteen of those twenty years. First was Gill Net Fishing (which I loved with a passion), then it wasn't long after that many people had voted to take gill net fishing away from us. My father and I then went into Stone Crabbing in which we were happy with. And a few years later earned enough money to afford long line shark and grouper gear which did pretty well for us, until then again we were put on strong reductions on the amount of sharks. They then also banned Sand Bar sharks which were our bread and butter species (which by the way, there are plenty of)! Then there became IFQ for grouper which we had just gotten into, so therefore we did not qualify for very many grouper shares. So that also again basically put us out of business except for Stone Crabbing. Unless you have a lot of money to start into Stone Crabbing you can just basically eke a living between the good and bad years. So we were narrowed down to then again another industry, King Mackerel. The first year for me and my father was a little rough, learning the little tricks of the trade from friends and colleagues of the industry, but we got to where we could pay the bills at least. About 3 1/2 years ago I bought my first crab boat and king fish permit. My father and I went our separate ways and I was very happy to start my new life as a captain/ boat owner and operator also father of three beautiful children and husband to a beautiful woman! Stone Crabbing soon became too expensive to be into with the trap tags going up to 15\$ a piece, then plastic traps becoming over 23\$ a piece after labor, also crew never showing up and the octopus destroying our livestock of stone crabs, this made an impracticable industry to be into. So I sold all my stone crab traps and joined my community family of king fisherman and made King Fishing my sole income for my business. I also became the first mate on a grouper bandit boat in the summer off season so I can stay local for my 3 kids and wonderful wife! And this amendment, would well....Do you see a trend of my life as a fisherman? It would be a disaster! I and my fellow family king fisherman would not only suffer a dramatically shorter season, but we would also see a drive in the price toward the cellar! With myself having three kids, a wife, and a home, I and many other family fisherman who depend solely on King Mackerel would be forced to become travel fisherman and leave our wives and children behind like we were gone to war! I am satisfied with the current regulations and can make a comfortable living even if I have to go 75 + miles to get my 1250. My boat does not burn a lot of fuel. Thank you for your time!</p>		
8/19/2013 7:40:52	James Matthews	Stonecrabberman81@yahoo.com	James James	Naples, FL 34103	Commercial Fisher
8/19/2013 11:12:09	Brian Bennett	captshorthop@comcast.net	<p>I am a commercial fisherman that catches King Mackerel in the Eastern zone, Southern Subzone. I believe the daily trip limit should remain at 1250 lbs. I live in Key West and I have tailored my business to fish for many species but Kingfish is the most important. Since I have put Kingfish as my number one target fish I have missed out on other opportunities. I lost my marine life license and received virtually no grouper quota. This is why keeping things status quo is so important to me.</p> <p>The prices of Kingfish have risen lately, especially towards the end of Lent. I feel that if the trip limit is raised to 3000 lbs. the season would close before the prices rise and make fishing truly profitable. Other fishermen believe that catching 3000 lbs would make the trips more profitable, this is not the case if prices are low. The 3000 lb limit would also bring "trip" fish into the equation, thus flooding the market with poor quality fish. To me raising the limit would create a vicious cycle. If the limit was 3000 lbs more boats would come and fill the quota very quickly. Once closed, I would have to travel from my home and fish another areas quota and that would not be very profitable. Please leave the limit at 1250 lbs so I can stay at home with my family and fish the way that I have for the last 28 years.</p>	Key West Fl. 33040	Commercial Fisher

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8/19/2013 14:01:40	Tyson Veach	tysonveach@gmail.com	<p>Tyson Veach 4 6th Avenue Key West, Florida 33040</p> <p>August 19, 2013</p> <p>Changing the kingfish quota would be a major blow to my income. My income is from hook and line fishing. I kingfish during the open season in the Key West area. I live in the Key West area. This is where others would come to meet their quota of kingfish, taking away from the local fisherman. The cost of expenses would be to great to go elsewhere. Allowing a higher daily quota would not only cut the time we can catch fish but the all the fish caught at the same time and not spread out would mean a cut in quality.</p> <p>Thank you</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Tyson Veach</p>	Key West Fl. 33040	Commercial Fisher
8/19/2013 14:05:15	Charles Morris Veach	Mamamarine@aol.com	<p>Charles Morris Veach 6800 Maloney Avenue #32 Key West, Florida 33040</p> <p>August 19, 2013</p> <p>I have been fishing and supporting my family with the income from the activity for over 50 years. I have three sons and have taught them all how to fish. They all make their living from fishing also. If the kingfish quota were to change it would bring more boats down to the Key West area to fish and our quota would be met faster .That will leave us with little or no income coming in during the time when we would ordinarily be kingfishing close to home. We could go to another area where it would be open but our expenses would increase and therefore bring our income down. Leaving the quota where it is would be of more benefit to more fishermen.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Charles Veach</p>	Key West Fl. 33040	Commercial Fisher
8/19/2013 14:41:43	Randy Sterling	reelconch@bellsouth.net	<p>I strongly OPPOSE Amendment 20, along with changing the daily trip limit from 1250 to 3000 in the Eastern Zone/Southern Subzone. I feel this will dramatically shorten our season and also lower the price we are paid for king mackerel. I feel it will bring more transient fisherman to Key West, which will make us reach our quota faster, thus reducing the number of months for local fisherman to derive income from commercial fishing king mackerel. I ask that you consider me and my family before making changes that would negatively impact my income. I urge you to keep the daily trip limit at 1250.</p> <p>Randy Sterling</p>	Key West	Commercial Fisher

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8/20/2013 11:06:25	Charles Veach	Chipkw@hotmail.com	<p>Council Members</p> <p>Please do NOT increase the trip limit to 3000lbs. If the limit was raised it would surely flood the market and substantially lower my profits. There is a far greater demand for kingfish closer to Easter and that is when prices are at their best. If the daily limit was to be raised I would miss out on up to 8 weeks of work during the most profitable time.</p> <p>Thank you Captain Chip Veach</p>	Key West Fl. 33040	Commercial Fisher
8/21/2013 6:23:12	Jesse Wercholak	Jessewercholak@gmail.com	<p>Most of the year I live and work in New Jersey, but I spend the winter working on a kingfish boat in the Lower Keys. I would like to work out of Stock Island again this winter, if it would be profitable for me. I was told of a possible increase in the daily trip limit which would shorten the season considerably. I urge you to keep the limit at 1250 pounds a day so the season is long enough to be profitable.</p>	East Brunswick, NJ. 08816	Commercial Fisher
8/21/2013 8:26:45	John Buckheim	Johnbuckheim@yahoo.com	<p>I am a commercial hook and line king fisherman out of key west fl who caught over 70,000. Lbs of kingfish last season and made over \$150,000. In 3 months with a 1250 lb daily limit that's not bad in my book !</p> <p>In my opinion changing the limit to 3000 lbs is Not a good idea it will shorten our season lower the price and be extremely dangerous for the smaller boats in our fishery my boat is only 23 ft long and is only capable of holding 1300 lbs of fish now you are trying to force me to dangerously overload my boat and work harder to make less money.</p> <p>I think a 1500 or 2000 lb limit should b considered to keep everybody happy.</p>	Key west fl 33040	Commercial Fisher
8/21/2013 8:26:46	John Buckheim	Johnbuckheim@yahoo.com	<p>I am a commercial hook and line king fisherman out of key west fl who caught over 70,000. Lbs of kingfish last season and made over \$150,000. In 3 months with a 1250 lb daily limit that's not bad in my book !</p> <p>In my opinion changing the limit to 3000 lbs is Not a good idea it will shorten our season lower the price and be extremely dangerous for the smaller boats in our fishery my boat is only 23 ft long and is only capable of holding 1300 lbs of fish now you are trying to force me to dangerously overload my boat and work harder to make less money.</p> <p>I think a 1500 or 2000 lb limit should b considered to keep everybody happy.</p>	Key west fl 33040	Commercial Fisher
8/21/2013 8:26:48	John Buckheim	Johnbuckheim@yahoo.com	<p>I am a commercial hook and line king fisherman out of key west fl who caught over 70,000. Lbs of kingfish last season and made over \$150,000. In 3 months with a 1250 lb daily limit that's not bad in my book !</p> <p>In my opinion changing the limit to 3000 lbs is Not a good idea it will shorten our season lower the price and be extremely dangerous for the smaller boats in our fishery my boat is only 23 ft long and is only capable of holding 1300 lbs of fish now you are trying to force me to dangerously overload my boat and work harder to make less money.</p> <p>I think a 1500 or 2000 lb limit should b considered to keep everybody happy.</p>	Key west fl 33040	Commercial Fisher
8/21/2013 8:26:49	John Buckheim	Johnbuckheim@yahoo.com	<p>I am a commercial hook and line king fisherman out of key west fl who caught over 70,000. Lbs of kingfish last season and made over \$150,000. In 3 months with a 1250 lb daily limit that's not bad in my book !</p> <p>In my opinion changing the limit to 3000 lbs is Not a good idea it will shorten our season lower the price and be extremely dangerous for the smaller boats in our fishery my boat is only 23 ft long and is only capable of holding 1300 lbs of fish now you are trying to force me to dangerously overload my boat and work harder to make less money.</p> <p>I think a 1500 or 2000 lb limit should b considered to keep everybody happy.</p>	Key west fl 33040	Commercial Fisher

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8/21/2013 11:27:13	Marcus Davila	mdavila@historictours.com	<p>I hold a Commercial King Fish Hook &amp; Line Permit, and fish out of my home port of Key West, FL. I also work &amp; live in Key West full time.</p> <p>I am strongly against the increase of the daily catch from 1250lb to 3000lb. The market has all ready been set for the last few years for catch flow and prices. By increasing the quota, you will throw off a chain of events as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 From the increase of fishermen traveling from other zones to fill their quota, it will be over whelming for the markets to handle so much product.</li> <li>2. In turn, the price will fall earlier during the catch season.</li> <li>3. The season will be cut short by meeting quotas earlier and will not reach the higher prices that normally increase at the end of the regular season.</li> <li>4. After Easter, there will not be demand for the product. There will be left over frozen stocks for the next year.</li> </ol> <p>"You have already set the table; by adding another setting for a quick fix you throw the whole thing off balance."</p> <p>Thank you for your time,</p>	Key West FL 33040	Commercial Fisher
8/21/2013 17:20:04	John R Herron	keeperjohn62@yahoo.com	<p>i fish king fish in key west fl changing limit from 1250 to 3000 lbs would flood the market and close the season months early creating a hardship many license holders and workers</p>	margate nj 08402	Commercial Fisher
8/22/2013 7:27:12	William Wickers III	Captwickers@yahoo.com	<p>I am against the 3000lb trip limit because it would flood the market and keep the price down. The same thing happens when the net boats strike and we stop fishing until the fish have cleared through the market. There is good money to make if the limit is reasonable but no more than 1500lbs that way there is a steady supply of fish but not enough to flood the market and drive the price down. I depend on a steady price to make a living. If the price drops you are working twice as hard to make half of the money and if the fish don't bite you lose money.</p> <p>Thank you for your time. I appreciate your consideration William Wickers III</p>	Key West FL 33040	Commercial Fisher

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8/22/2013 13:11:40	Ryon Logan	Ryonlogan@gmail.com	I hold a commercial King Mackerel permit and I am opposed to Amendment 20. I do not believe a large portion of boats can safely hold and properly ice 3000 lbs. Another reason Alternative 3 should not be chosen is the discrimination against dual permitted vessels. As a dual permitted vessel, I am restricted to having only 3 people on the boat, unlike other boats that can have ten or more people help with the work. I agree with other posted comments that the drastic increase in poundage would lower the overall price per pound and cause the season to be shorter. I think an alternative solution that would benefit all fishermen and the fishery as a whole, is not a 140% increase in the trip limit, which is being proposed, but a 20 or 40 % increase which would allow the price to stay stable and the quota to be monitored more accurately. I oppose the kingfish trip limit change from 1250 lbs to 3000 lbs.	Key West, FL 33040	Charter/Headboat For-Hire, Commercial Fisher
8/22/2013 15:02:52	Mel Strahosky	MELSUZ@MSN.COM	What has change since the limit was set that would require the increase? Who would benefit from this change? The kingfish stock? The fishermen? The consumer?  Before a law is changed there should be good solid evidence that the change is necessary and that the change is better.  A natural resource should be managed to sustain and maximize the economic benefit as much as possible to as many as possible.  Sincerely Capt Mel Strahosky Fishing for a living since 1971	KEY WEST FL 33040	Private Recreational Angler, Charter/Headboat For-Hire, Commercial Fisher, Other
8/22/2013 17:51:05	Jonathan kent	Hydroslider@hotmail.com	I would like to voice that changing the current trip limits would unfairly hurt the smaller boats in the southern fleet ( who can't safely hold over 1500 lbs)but also open the door for more out if town fisherman to come down, fish and drive the market price down. Please keep the fishery financially productive and local	Key west fl 33040	Charter/Headboat For-Hire, Commercial Fisher
8/23/2013 5:01:47	William R. (Randy) Wamble	fish4living@comcast.net	I am against changing the trip limit to 3000# in the Eastern Southern Sub- Zone. I am for keeping it at 1250# with no 500# reduction when 75% of the quota is reached. This trip limit was put in place to lengthen the season and potentially raise ex-vessel prices. It did both and to raise the trip limit would be a step backwards. It would shorten the season most likely to a January closure and no one can argue that would result in lower prices. After 15 plus years with the current limits, the fishermen still in this fishery are the ones who have tailored their businesses to be profitable under the current regulations. An increase to 3000# would also create a derby style fishery to no real benefit to anyone, even the people that think they want the increase. I have a 43ft boat, I'm no stranger to long distance runs, I have crew and I show a profit from this business. I have fished in the Western zone before and would have to go there again if our season here closes early because of a larger trip limit. I don't think the folks up there need anymore help filling that quota. There are no answers that are going to please everyone. Leave amendment 20 status quo. Forget tweaking a plan that everyone has made adjustments to. Leave it alone or go to an ITQ program.	Naples, FL 34101	Commercial Fisher