

Overview

Snapper Grouper Committee

Sea Palms Resort & Conference Center
5445 Fredrica Road
St. Simons Island, GA
March 5-6, 2012

The Committee will: (A) receive landings reports from SERO and the SEFSC on the species under ACLs, including red snapper recreational landings from the 2012 opening; (B) receive a status report from SERO staff on snapper grouper amendments under Secretarial review; (C) discuss requesting an extension to the temporary rule that increased the yellowtail snapper commercial ACL; (D) receive a presentation on Vessel Monitoring Systems (VMS), receive an overview of Amendment 30, modify the amendment as necessary and approve for public hearings; (E) receive an overview of public comments received on Regulatory Amendment 18, receive an overview of the amendment, make changes as necessary, select preferred alternatives, approve for formal review, and deem the codified text as necessary and appropriate; (F) receive an overview of public comments received on Amendment 27, receive an overview of the amendment, modify the amendment as appropriate, select preferred alternatives, approve for formal review, and deem the codified text as necessary and appropriate; (G) receive an overview of options being considered for inclusion in Regulatory Amendment 14, and provide guidance to staff; (H) receive an overview of options being considered for inclusion in Regulatory Amendment 16, and provide guidance to staff; (I) receive an overview of discussions and recommendations from the MPA Expert Workgroup, and provide guidance to staff; and (J) address issues under Other Business as appropriate.

A. Status of landings for quota-managed snapper grouper species (*Attachments 1a & 1b*)

The Council will receive an update on the status of landings (commercial and recreational) for snapper grouper species under ACLs.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Discuss and take action as necessary.

B. Status of Amendments Approved for Secretarial Review

The Committee will receive a status report from SERO staff on the following amendments:

- Amendment 18B (golden tilefish)
- Regulatory Amendment 13
- Regulatory Amendment 15
- Amendment 28 (red snapper)

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Discuss and take action as necessary.

C. Yellowtail snapper temporary rule extension

The National Marine Fisheries Service issued a temporary rule to increase the commercial ACL for yellowtail snapper based on the most recent stock assessment. The

rule was effective on November 7th, 2012. A temporary rule is effective for 180 days with the option to extend it for an additional 186 days. The temporary rule increasing the yellowtail snapper commercial ACL would expire in early May 2013. The Committee should discuss whether to request that NMFS extend the temporary rule to allow time for Regulatory Amendment 15 to be implemented. The latter includes an action to adjust the commercial and recreational ACLs and the recreational ACT for yellowtail snapper based on the latest stock assessment. The Council approved Regulatory Amendment 15 for formal review at their December 2012 meeting.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Discuss requesting that NMFS extend the yellowtail snapper temporary rule for an additional 186 days.

D. Amendment 30 (Consideration of VMS for commercial snapper grouper vessels; Attachments 2a-2c)

At its December 2012 meeting, the Council requested that the action to consider requiring VMS on commercial snapper grouper vessels be moved out of CE-BA 3 and placed in its own amendment. Council staff received guidance to prepare a draft amendment for the Council to review at its March 2013 meeting and approve for public hearings, which should take place before the June 2013 meeting. The Council decided to proceed in this manner to allow more time for dissemination of information on VMS and its capabilities. Pat O'Shaughnessy, VMS Program Manager, will give a presentation to the Committee during the March 2013 meeting and will present to the Snapper Grouper AP during its April 2013 meeting.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Discuss, modify as needed, select preferred alternatives as appropriate, and approve for public hearings.

E. Regulatory Amendment 18 (Vermilion snapper & red porgy; Attachments 3a-3c)

This amendment would revise annual catch limits for vermilion snapper and red porgy, and revise the annual catch target for red porgy based on results of the latest SEDAR updates for these two species. Also, the amendment would modify the commercial trip limit, commercial fishing seasons, and the recreational closed season for vermilion snapper. Gregg Waugh, Council staff, will present an overview of the amendment.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Discuss, modify as needed, select preferred alternatives, approve for formal review, and deem the codified text as necessary and appropriate.

F. Amendment 27 (Management authority and blue runner; Attachments 4a-4d)

This amendment initially contained actions to modify management measures of yellowtail snapper and mutton snapper and extend South Atlantic Council management authority over these two species into the Gulf of Mexico. At the December 2012 Council meeting, however, the actions were removed due to the Gulf Council's interest in discussing joint management for these, and possibly other south Florida species. In addition, the Council added two new actions to Amendment 27. One addresses the crew size limit for dual-permitted snapper grouper vessels, and the other addresses the restriction on retention of bag limit quantities of certain snapper grouper species by captain and crew of for-hire vessels. Other actions included in this amendment would

extend management jurisdiction of Nassau grouper into the Gulf of Mexico, modify the snapper grouper framework, and address the harvest of blue runner by fishermen targeting mackerel. Myra Brouwer, Council staff, will review public comments on this amendment and present an overview of the amendment.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Modify Amendment 27 as appropriate, select preferred alternatives, approve for formal review, and deem the codified text necessary and appropriate.

G. Regulatory Amendment 14 (multiple species; Attachment 5)

The Committee will review the Options Paper for Regulatory Amendment 14 and provide guidance on actions and alternatives to include in the amendment. At its December 2012 meeting, the Committee voted to move certain actions out of Regulatory Amendment 14 and place them in Regulatory Amendment 18 (vermillion snapper and red porgy). The Options Paper presents a list of the current actions and alternatives and recommendations from the IPT for the Committee's consideration.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Review the Options paper and provide guidance to staff on actions and alternatives to be analyzed.

H. Regulatory Amendment 16 (golden tilefish; Attachment 6)

The Committee will review the Options Paper for Regulatory Amendment 16 and provide guidance to staff. The Options Paper includes a single action to slow down the longline commercial harvest of golden tilefish. Amendment 18B, if approved, would establish an endorsement program for the longline sector, allocate the commercial quota between gear groups, remove the 300-pound step-down trip limit and establish a trip limit for the hook and line sector. However, those commercial fishermen who are eligible to obtain longline endorsements have requested that the Council consider ways to slow down the commercial harvest. The intent is to lengthen the season, prevent derby conditions, and stimulate the market.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Review the Options paper and provide guidance to staff on actions and alternatives to be analyzed.

I. MPAs and HAPCs for speckled hind and warsaw grouper (Attachment 7)

At the December 2012 meeting, the Council directed staff to re-convene the MPA Expert Workgroup prior to the March 2013 meeting. The Regional Administrator offered to have his staff give a presentation to the Workgroup on re-orientation of existing MPAs and new MPAs to protect speckled hind and warsaw grouper. The Workgroup will produce a report with their recommendations to the Council. Roger Pugliese, Council staff, will present an overview of the MPA Expert Workgroup report.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Consider the information provided and provide guidance to staff.

J. Other Business

The Committee will address items under Other Business as appropriate.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE ACTION: Discuss and take action as necessary.