From: Myra Brouwer
To: Mike Collins
Subject: FW: New Information Regarding Amendment 17B
Date: Wednesday, March 09, 2011 11:04:00 AM

Mike,
Please pass along to the SG Committee
Thanks,
Myra

-----Original Message-----
From: Dondemaria@aol.com [mailto:Dondemaria@aol.com]
Sent: Wed 3/9/2011 9:53 AM
To: oceanmaster@bellsouth.net; JoeMesser1@aol.com; Myra Brouwer
Cc: Fishdelph@aol.com; Edward.Little@noaa.gov; wade_graft@yahoo.com; quickrelief@aol.com; rtspindrift@aol.com; kwonthefly@aol.com; RaeAnn76@aol.com
Subject: Re: New Information Regarding Amendment 17B

Myra:

Last night a group of us got together to discuss alternatives to amendment 17B. Joe has already sent you an e-mail with recommendations, which I think are reasonable. The council can do better than a complete closure beyond 240'. This is extreme, but it did bring people out of the woodwork to comment, and that has been productive.

I did learn much last night from listening to others, particularly Ralph Delph. One point, which is an important one, is that warsaws and speckled hinds are not caught in the deeper water (over 500 feet) while fishing for snowy grouper and tilefish here in the Keys. They seem to be more of an intermediate depth fish. No one present last night can recall ever catching either past about 400'. It is for this reason that I do not believe prohibiting fishing for snowy grouper and tilefish past about 500 feet will serve any purpose in the protection of qrouper and speckled hind. All this will accomplish, for us in the Keys, is to add more financial drain on an already stressed recreational and commercial fishing industry.

Another important point, that I think the council has overlooked, is that we have a large section of prime bottom set aside as a no take marine reserve in the Tortugas area. Tortugas south extends from the shallow waters of Riley's Hump (approx. 80') out to 1,800'. This area is about 4 miles wide and lies up current from all other areas of the South Atlantic--an important fact to consider when it comes to larval dispersal. The council should review the paper by Dr. Domier regarding larval drift in the Riley's Hump area to see how important this area is.

Also, there are areas in the lower Florida Keys where anecdotal reports strongly suggest that warsaw grouper spawning aggregations historically existed. These are small, high relief areas in approx, 240'-320' depths. If these areas could be protected from all bottom fishing then spawning aggregations of warsaw grouper may reform, as we have seen with the mutton, cubera and dog snapper on Riley's Hump.

In closing I have to say that it seems only when fishermen (recreational,commercial and charter) are faced with the possibility of severe restrictions do they come out and openly offer information much needed by the council to make informed decisions. In that respect amendment 17B was a good

move--fishermen are talking, offering knowledge and part of the process now.

Don DeMaria
Snapper Grouper AP chariman