

OVERVIEW

Spiny Lobster Committee Meeting

December 5, 2011
Holiday Inn Brownstone Hotel
1707 Hillsborough Street
Raleigh, NC

At this Spiny Lobster Committee Meeting, the Committee will: (a) receive a presentation about how NMFS prepares Biological Opinions; (b) receive a presentation about the gear marking requirements in the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan; (c) receive an update on Spiny Lobster Amendment 11 and review actions and alternatives; (d) select preferred alternatives; and (e) approve Spiny Lobster Amendment 11 for public hearings.

A. NMFS Presentations on ESA/MMPA Requirements

SERO staff will provide an overview presentation on how NMFS prepares Biological Opinions. NERO staff will present on the gear marking requirements in the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan, which are similar to requirements in the Spiny Lobster Trap Fishery Biological Opinion, and how the gear markings have contributed to achieving plan objectives.

B. Spiny Lobster Amendment 11 (Attachments 1-4)

In October, the Gulf of Mexico Council discussed Amendment 11 and selected preferred alternatives for each action; Council staff will provide a summary of the recent meeting. Additionally, Council staff will update the Committee on recommendations from the Coral Advisory Panel and the Science and Statistical Committee. Council staff will review Amendment 11 actions and alternatives, and analysis of alternatives. The Committee will discuss the amendment, select preferred alternatives, and approve Amendment 11 for public hearings in January/February.

Option 1. Do not approve for public hearings until additional analyses are completed. (Council would need to specify what additional analyses are required.)

Option 2. Approve Amendment 11 (as modified) for public hearings and request that a NMFS staff member involved in writing the Biological Opinion and working with the public in developing the management alternatives attend the hearings to answer questions.

Option 3. Others?