



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

Southeast Regional Office

263 13th Avenue South

St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505

<http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov>

F/SER25:FH

Mr. Gregg Waugh
South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
4055 Faber Place Drive, Suite 201
Charleston, South Carolina 29405

Dear Mr. Waugh:

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) requests the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council review the enclosed exempted fishing permit (EFP) application at their June 2019 meeting. The proposed EFP application was submitted by the North Carolina Aquariums. If issued, the EFP would exempt North Carolina Aquariums from federal snapper-grouper regulations found at 50 CFR 622.180 (prohibited gear and methods), 622.183 (area and seasonal closures), 622.184 (seasonal harvest limitations), 622.185 (size limits), and 622.187 (bag and possession limits); from federal regulations governing coral harvest found at 50 CFR 622.225 (harvest limitations); and from federal regulations for dolphin and wahoo found at 50 CFR 622.275 (size limits), and 622.277 (bag and possession limits). The EFP would be valid for five years, commencing on the date the EFP is issued.

The objective of this project is to incorporate North Carolina native species, including snapper-grouper, corals, and dolphin fish, into the educational exhibits at four aquariums located on Roanoke Island, Pine Knoll Shores, Fort Fisher, and Jeanette's Pier, North Carolina. Specific species and quantities of each species to be collected each calendar year to supply all four aquariums include:

16 Red Hind	9 Yellowfin Grouper
16 Rock Hind	16 Yellowmouth Grouper
16 Graysby	36 Vermilion Snapper
24 Red Porgy	20 Red Snapper
24 Black Sea Bass	36 Yellowtail Snapper
16 Coney	24 Amberjack (greater and lesser)
16 Scamp	24 Almaco Jack
3 Snowy Grouper	100 Bar Jack
16 Red Grouper	50 pounds of Live Rock
16 Gag	24 Dolphin
9 Yellowedge Grouper	

The EFP would not authorize collection of species with an annual catch limit of zero. Collections with SCUBA and hook-and-line gear would take place year-round along the North Carolina coast from latitude 33°10' N up to 36°30' N, from three miles out to 100 fathoms depth offshore. Collections with black sea bass and minnow traps would take place in the same

locations noted by the coordinates above; however, use of traps would occur from May - October each year.

If you have any questions, please contact Frank Helies at (727) 824-5305 or e-mail at frank.helies@noaa.gov.

Sincerely,

Roy E. Crabtree, Ph.D.
Regional Administrator

Enclosures