



# Southeast Fishery Bulletin

National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

November 22, 2005  
FB05-062

## ***Proposed Rule for Commercial Grouper Trip Limit Available for Public Review and Comments***

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has published a proposed rule in the *Federal Register* (70 FR 70575, November 22, 2005) that, if approved, would implement the regulatory actions proposed in a Regulatory Amendment to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for the Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf of Mexico. The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council has submitted the regulatory amendment for review by NMFS.

NMFS is now requesting comments from the public regarding the proposed rule. The proposed rule would provide the regulatory authority to implement management measures to moderate the rate of harvest of the available commercial grouper quotas and reduce the adverse social and economic effects of derby fishing. Written comments on the proposed rule must be received before 5:00 p.m., eastern time, on December 7, 2005. See the **Addresses** section at the end of this bulletin for information on where and how to submit comments.

### **Summary of Proposed Rule**

The regulatory amendment proposes a 6,000-pound gutted weight commercial trip limit for shallow-water (red grouper, gag, black grouper, scamp, yellowfin grouper, yellowmouth grouper, rock hind, and red hind) and deep-water grouper (yellowedge grouper, warsaw grouper, speckled hind, misty grouper, and snowy grouper), combined, in the exclusive economic zone of the Gulf of Mexico. The Council and NMFS have agreed the existing trip limits implemented via emergency rule on

March 3, 2005 (70 FR 8037), and extended on August 17, 2005 (70 FR 48323), will terminate upon implementation of the trip limit proposed in this rule.

### **Addresses**

The FMP, which includes a Regulatory Impact Review, Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis, Social Impact Assessment, and a Fishery Impact Statement, is available from:

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council  
2203 N. Lois Avenue  
Suite 1100  
Tampa, Florida 33607  
Phone: 813-348-1630; fax: 813-348-1711  
e-mail: [gulfcouncil@gulfcouncil.org](mailto:gulfcouncil@gulfcouncil.org)  
website: [www.gulfcouncil.org](http://www.gulfcouncil.org)

Written copies of the proposed rule may be obtained from the NMFS Southeast Regional Office, 263 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, St. Petersburg, Florida 33701. Electronic copies of the proposed rule may be obtained from the Federal Register website at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/index.html>.

Comments regarding the proposed rule should be sent to Mr. Andy Strelcheck at NMFS Southeast Regional Office at the address provided above. Comments may be submitted via fax to 727-824-5308 or by e-mail to 0648-AT12.Proposed@noaa.gov. For e-mail comments, include in the subject line the following identifier: 0648-AT12.

All comments on the proposed rule must be received before 5:00 p.m., eastern time, on December 7, 2005. All comments received by NMFS on the proposed rule will be addressed in any final rule that is published to implement the actions.

NMFS is dedicated to protecting and preserving the nation's living marine resources and their habitats through scientific research, management, and enforcement. NMFS provides effective stewardship of these resources for the benefit of the nation, supporting coastal communities that depend upon them, and helping to provide safe and healthy

seafood to consumers and recreational opportunities for the American public.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners and nearly 60 countries to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes.

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