



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, Florida 33701

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:

NOAA Fisheries Service Southeast Regional Office Permits Branch
727-824-5326, FAX 727-551-5747

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

September 7, 2007
FB07-036

Application Period for a Gulf Shrimp Vessel Moratorium Permit Expires October 26, 2007

All shrimp vessel owners are reminded that after **October 26, 2007**, applications for commercial shrimp vessel moratorium permits (moratorium permit) will no longer be accepted or approved. Vessels fishing for or possessing shrimp in federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico have needed a moratorium permit since March 26, 2007.

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries Service) identified more than 2,600 vessels that might qualify for a moratorium permit. So far, just over 1,800 moratorium permits have been issued.

If you have obtained your moratorium permit, you do not need to do anything else. However, NOAA Fisheries Service would appreciate it if you would pass this bulletin along to other shrimp vessel owners who may be eligible for a moratorium permit, and let them know the application deadline is approaching.

Who is eligible?

NOAA Fisheries Service first required commercial shrimp vessel permits in December 2002. Vessels eligible for a moratorium permit must have been permitted before December 6, 2003. The vessel is still eligible for a moratorium permit, even if it was sold to a new owner after December 6, 2003.

In addition, an owner who sold his qualified vessel or otherwise lost use of his qualified vessel (i.e., damage, sinking, unaffordable repairs, repossession) may be eligible. If, prior to September 26, 2006, the owner obtained a new vessel permit for the same vessel or a replacement vessel of at least 5 net tons that is equipped for offshore shrimp fishing, then the vessel is eligible for a moratorium permit.

NOAA Fisheries Service permit records are the sole basis for determining eligibility. A person who believes he/she meets the permit eligibility criteria based on

ownership of a vessel under a different name, as may have occurred when ownership has changed from individual to corporate or vice versa, must document his/her continuity of ownership.

How to get a permit

If you are the owner of a shrimp vessel and you think your vessel qualifies for a moratorium permit, please contact the Permits Branch at the address listed below:

NOAA Fisheries Service Southeast Regional Office Permits Branch

263 13th Avenue South

St. Petersburg, Florida 33701

Phone: 727-824-5326; FAX: 727-551-5747

Applications for a moratorium permit also are available on NOAA Fisheries Service's Southeast Regional Web site at <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov>. The application may be filled out online, printed, and mailed to the Permits Branch at the address above, along with all other pertinent information and payments.

A fee will be charged for each permit application or a written request for permits replacement. The applicable fee is specified on the appropriate form.

Incomplete applications

If an application is received that does not have all the necessary information, the Permits Branch will notify the applicant telling them what is needed to complete the application. The applicant then has 30 days to provide the needed information. After 30 days, the application is considered abandoned, and the applicant must submit a new application.

Notification of ineligibility

If the applicant does not meet the applicable eligibility requirements, the applicant will be notified in writing of such determination and the reasons for it.

Permit transferability

Commercial vessel moratorium permits for Gulf shrimp are fully transferable, with or without the sale of the vessel. The owner who is transferring the permit must sign on the reverse of the permit, and the signature must be notarized. The person who is to receive the transferred permit must ensure the transfer information on the reverse of the permit is complete and return the permit and a completed application for transfer to the Permits Branch.

Renewal

Renewal of a commercial vessel moratorium permit for Gulf shrimp is contingent upon compliance with the recordkeeping and reporting requirements. A commercial vessel moratorium permit for Gulf shrimp that is not renewed will be terminated and will not be reissued during the moratorium. A permit is considered to be not renewed when an application for renewal, as required, is not received within 1 year of the expiration date of the permit.

How can we improve these fishery bulletins?

If you have any suggestions on how we may improve future fishery bulletins please contact:

Kim Amendola, Communication Specialist

Phone: 727-551-5707

FAX: 727-824-5320

E-mail: SERO.Communications.Comments@noaa.gov

If you would like to receive these fishery bulletins via e-mail as soon as they are published, please e-mail us at the address below. You will still receive a hard copy of these bulletins through the mail.

E-mail: SERO.Communications.Comments@noaa.gov and include: (1) "Request for Electronic Fishery Bulletins" in the subject line; and (2) your preferred e-mail address in the body of the e-mail.

This bulletin provides only a summary of the information regarding the existing regulations. Any discrepancies between this bulletin and the regulations as published in the *Federal Register* will be resolved in favor of the *Federal Register*.

FIRST CLASS MAIL
POSTAGE AND FEES PAID
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
PERMIT NO. G-19

National Marine Fisheries Service
Southeast Regional Office, F/SERI
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, FL 33701
Official Business
Penalty for Private Use - \$ 300
FB07-036