



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Permit Renewal Reminder to Commercial Reef Fish Permit Holders in the Gulf of Mexico

Owners of vessels possessing Gulf of Mexico commercial reef fish vessel permits should remember to renew their reef fish vessel permits in a timely fashion. Failure to have an active commercial reef fish permit aboard the vessel will prohibit the owner/operator from being able to sell the catch.

This is especially important for owners/operators of vessels participating in the red snapper Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ) program. In the case of the IFQ program, a landing transaction will not be possible if the vessel permit has expired. Additionally, without an active commercial reef fish vessel permit, a person can sell, but not buy, shares. The IFQ database automatically removes vessels on the day the commercial reef fish vessel permit expires, even if the owner has submitted a renewal application. The vessel permit renewal process must be completed prior to the expiration date to maintain an active permit at all times.

To ensure a vessel permit is renewed prior to the expiration date, a vessel owner should submit a complete permit renewal application at least 30 days before the expiration date. As a courtesy, NOAA Fisheries Service's Southeast Regional Office Permits Branch mails a renewal application to vessel owners 60 days before a vessel permit expires. However, it is the responsibility of the vessel owner to be aware of the expiration date of the vessel permit, and take appropriate action to acquire and submit all renewal forms and supporting documentation.

Vessel owners can call or write the Permits Branch (contact information below) and request necessary application forms, or these forms are also available online at the Southeast Regional Office Web site: <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov>. The application may be filled out online, printed, and mailed to:

NOAA Fisheries Service
Southeast Regional Office
Permits Branch
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701
Phone: 727-824-5326

How can we improve these fishery bulletins?

If you have any suggestions on how we may improve future fishery bulletins please contact:
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If you would like to receive these fishery bulletins via e-mail as soon as they are published, please e-mail us at: 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. You will still receive a print copy of these bulletins through the mail.

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

National Marine Fisheries Service
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