



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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Final Rule: Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Permit Income Requirement and Dual-permitted Crew Size *Small Entity Compliance Guide*

NOAA Fisheries published a final rule on October 19, 2012, (77 FR 64237) for **Gulf of Mexico Reef Fish Permit Requirements and Dual-Permitted Vessel Crew Size**. The rule is effective on November 19, 2012.

The rule:

- Eliminates the earned income qualification requirement for the renewal of Gulf of Mexico commercial reef fish permits, and
- Increases the maximum number of crew members for dual-permitted (commercial and charter) vessels.

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council determined the existing earned income requirement in the reef fish fishery is no longer necessary. The regulation pertaining to the maximum number of crew stipulates that dual-permitted vessels without a certificate of inspection are limited to a three-person crew when fishing commercially. The increase to four

crew members would most directly benefit commercial spear fishermen, by allowing two persons to remain aboard, resulting in improved safety during commercial diving operations.

This bulletin serves as a Small Entity Compliance Guide, complying with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996.

Electronic copies of the amendment and final rule may be obtained from the NOAA Fisheries Web site http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sf/pdfs/Gulf_Amendment_34_EA.pdf

For more information on Amendment 34, refer to the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) on the NOAA Fisheries Web site.

This summary is not a substitute for the actual regulations. We encourage you to read the full text of the regulations, available at <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/>.

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