



# Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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

## FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:

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FB12-024

## NOAA Seeks Comments on a Proposed Supplementary Rule for the Shallow-water Grouper Quotas and Annual Catch Limits in the Gulf of Mexico

*Comment Period Ends April 23, 2012*

NOAA Fisheries Service seeks public comment on a proposed supplementary rule. The rule would correct the regulations for the "other shallow-water grouper" complex. It published in the *Federal Register* on April 6, 2012. The comment period will end on April 23, 2012.

The final rule implementing management measures in the Annual Catch Limits (ACL) and Accountability Measures Amendment for Reef Fish, Red Drum, Shrimp, and Coral Fisheries of the Gulf of Mexico (Generic ACL Amendment) established a new species complex called "other shallow-water grouper." This complex includes scamp, black, yellowmouth, and yellowfin grouper. The rule set an "other shallow-water grouper" quota and annual catch limit.

Following the Generic ACL Amendment final rule, a final rule for Amendment 32 to the Fishery Management Plan for Reef Fish Resources in the Gulf of Mexico published. It erroneously replaced the new "other shallow-water grouper" quota and annual catch limit with older language that included gag and red grouper. Gag and red grouper are also considered shallow-water grouper, but they have their own quotas, annual catch targets, and annual catch limits. This proposed supplementary rule would re-establish commercial quotas and annual catch limits for "other shallow-water grouper."

### Definitions

**Annual catch limit** is the highest level of landings that is acceptable to maintain an adequate stock size.

**Annual catch target** is the acceptable level of landings that provide a buffer, if needed, for management uncertainty.

**Accountability measures** are actions taken if the annual catch limit is exceeded.

### Dates and Addresses

Comments on this amendment must be received no later than **April 23, 2012**, in order to be considered by NOAA Fisheries Service. Electronic copies of Amendment 32

and the Generic ACL Amendment may be obtained from the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>, the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council's Web site at <http://www.gulfcouncil.org>, or from NOAA Fisheries Service's Southeast Regional Office's Web site at <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/>. You may submit comments from April 6, 2012, to April 23, 2012, by either of the following methods:

- Electronic Submissions: Federal e-Rulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. All comments received are part of the public record and will generally be posted to <http://www.regulations.gov> without change. All personal identifying information (for example, name, address, etc.) voluntarily submitted by the commenter may be publicly accessible. Do not submit confidential business information or otherwise sensitive or protected information. NOAA Fisheries Service will accept anonymous comments. Enter "NOAA-NMFS-2011-0135" in the search field and click on "search". Once you locate the document "TITLE," with the ID listed as "NOAA-NMFS-2011-0135," click the "Submit a Comment" link in that row. This will display the comment web form. You can then enter your submitter information (unless you prefer to remain anonymous), and type your comment on the web form. You can also attach additional files (up to 10MB) in Microsoft Word, Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe PDF file formats only. For further assistance with submitting a comment, see the "Commenting" section at: <http://www.regulations.gov/#!faqs> or the Help section at <http://www.regulations.gov>.
- Mail: Peter Hood, NOAA Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, Sustainable Fisheries Division, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505.

Comments received through means not specified in this bulletin will not be considered.

This bulletin is only a summary of the regulations. The rule in the *Federal Register* is the official regulation.