UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
PROGRAM PLANNING AND INTEGRATION
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910

APR 2 1 2011

To All Interested Government Agencies and Public Groups:

Under the National Environmental Policy Act, an environmental review has been performed on the following action.

TITLE: Environmental Assessment for a Regulatory Amendment to the Fishery Management Plan for the Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf of Mexico to Implement 2011 Total Allowable Catch for Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper: RIN 0648-BA54

LOCATION: Gulf of Mexico

SUMMARY: Results from the red snapper update assessment in 2009 project that the red snapper stock is no longer undergoing overfishing and that total allowable catch could be increased. For 2010, the total allowable catch was raised from 5.0 million pounds [MP] to 6.945 MP. Management measures considered in this action are intended to increase the red snapper total allowable catch in 2011 from 6.945 MP to 7.185 MP and make the resulting recreational and commercial quotas consistent with goals and objectives of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council's red snapper rebuilding plan. Based on the current 51 percent commercial and 49 percent recreational allocation of red snapper, the preferred total allowable catch increase adjusts the commercial and recreational quotas from 3.542 and 3.403 MP to 3.664 MP and 3.521 MP in 2011 respectively. The commercial sector is under an individual fishing quota program and has maintained landings within their quota in recent years. The recreational fishing season will be 48 days; June 1 through 12:01 a.m. July 19.

The environmental assessment analyzes the impacts of the action. The proposed action is intended to provide an opportunity to harvest the full recreational red snapper quota and provide flexibility in achieving the Council's designated optimum yield for the fishery, thus enhancing social and economic benefits to the fishery.

RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL: Roy E. Crabtree, Ph.D., Regional Administrator, Southeast Regional Office, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, Florida 33701, (727) 824-5305, FAX (727) 824-5308.

The environmental review process led us to conclude that this action will not have a significant impact on the environment. Therefore, an environmental impact statement was not prepared. A copy of the finding of no significant impact, including the environmental assessment, is enclosed for your information.

Sincerely,

Cristi Reid

for Paul N. Doremus
NOAA NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure

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