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

JUN 17 2010

To All Interested Government Agencies and Public Groups:

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

TITLE: Supplemental Environmental Assessment (SEA) for Emergency Action to Prohibit Fishing in Waters in the Southeastern United States in Response to the Deepwater Horizon MC252 Oil Spill [RIN: 0648-AY90]

LOCATION: Gulf of Mexico, South Atlantic, and Caribbean exclusive economic zones and adjacent high seas

SUMMARY: NOAA Fisheries Service proposes this action to amend the emergency regulations published on May 14, 2010 (75 FR 27217) in response to the evolving nature of the Deepwater Horizon MC252 oil spill. This emergency action would continue to allow NOAA Fisheries Service to make timely revisions to the area closed to all fishing, and would extend the area to allow NOAA Fisheries Service to prohibit U.S. registered vessels from fishing in the EEZ, and the adjacent high seas that have been affected by the oil spill. This emergency action would also revise the protocol for opening areas previously closed to fishing by exempting fishing vessels that fish for non-consumptive species such as sponges, liverock, and octocoral from the testing protocol. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration concurs with the implementation of these fisheries closures in oil affected areas as one appropriate public health measure to prevent potentially unsafe seafood from being harvested and reaching consumers. The intent of this emergency action is to prohibit harvest of adulterated seafood while promoting public safety and consumer confidence in seafood products regarding areas affected by the oil spill.

RESPONSIBLE
OFFICIAL: Roy E. Crabtree, Ph.D.
Regional Administrator
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)
National Marine Fisheries Service
Southeast Regional Office
263 13th Avenue South
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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 (FONSI), including the Supplemental EA, is enclosed for your information.

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Although NOAA is not soliciting comments on this completed Supplemental EA/FONSI we will consider any comments submitted that would assist us in preparing future NEPA documents. Please submit any written comments to the Responsible Official named above.

Sincerely,

for Paul N. Doremus, Ph.D.
NOAA NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure