

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

RIN 0648–XG082

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC); Public Meeting

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice; public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's (Council) Demersal Committee will hold a public meeting via webinar.

DATES: The meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 27, 2018, from 9 a.m. to noon.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held via webinar. The webinar may be accessed at <http://mafmc.adobeconnect.com/sfsbsb2018fw/>. The audio portion of the webinar may also be accessed via phone by dialing 1–800–832–0736 and entering room number 5068871.

Council address: Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 800 N. State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901; telephone: (302) 674–2331; website: www.mafmc.org.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, telephone: (302) 526–5255.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council's Demersal Committee will meet jointly with a subset of the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Management Board. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss draft management alternatives for an action which will consider adding the following management options to the Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan: (1) Conservation equivalency for the recreational black sea bass fishery, (2) Transit provisions for Block Island Sound for recreational fisheries for all three species, and (3) Slot limits for recreational fisheries for all three species. The two groups will also discuss the possibility of evaluating and modifying recreational management measures based on the annual catch limit, rather than the recreational harvest limit.

A detailed agenda and background documents will be posted to the

Council's website (www.mafmc.org) prior to the meeting.

Special Accommodations

The meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aid should be directed to M. Jan Saunders, (302) 526–5251, at least 5 days prior to the meeting date.

Dated: March 7, 2018.

Tracey L. Thompson,

Acting Deputy Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

RIN 0648–XG033

Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Reef Fish Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Exempted Fishing Permit

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of receipt of applications for exempted fishing permits; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces the receipt of five applications for exempted fishing permits (EFPs) from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC), Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR), Mississippi Department of Marine Resources (MDMR), Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF), and Texas Parks & Wildlife Department (TPWD). If granted, the EFPs would authorize the applicants, with certain conditions, to set the season(s) for red snapper caught by the private angling/headboat (for-hire) component, or both, as applicable, and landed in each respective state. The EFPs would do so by exempting persons from the annual closed Federal fishing seasons if they are landing red snapper in the participating states during the states' open seasons as set by those states, as described in more detail below. These annual closed Federal fishing seasons are the seasonal closure for red snapper which is January 1 through May 31 each year, and the closures that occur based on when NMFS projects that the red snapper annual catch targets will be reached. The private angling component includes

state-permitted for-hire vessels and any red snapper landings by these for-hire vessel would be counted against the private angling component quota. However, these state-permitted for-hire vessels would not be able to fish in Federal waters. NMFS would set separate Federal seasons for Federally permitted for-hire vessels and private-anglers not covered by any EFP. Red snapper landings would be monitored by the respective states and the state seasons set under the EFPs would close when a state's assigned quota is reached, or projected to be reached. These studies, to be conducted in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of the Gulf of Mexico (Gulf), are intended to test the effectiveness of Gulf state management of recreationally caught red snapper.

DATES: Written comments must be received on or before April 2, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments on the application, identified by "NOAA–NMFS–2018–0029", by any of the following methods:

- *Electronic Submission:* Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2018-0029, click the "Comment Now!" icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.

- *Mail:* Submit written comments to Peter Hood, Southeast Regional Office, NMFS, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701.

Instructions: Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered by NMFS. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address, etc.), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter "N/A" in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Peter Hood, 727–824–5305; email: peter.hood@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The EFPs are requested under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act)(16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*), and regulations at 50 CFR 600.745(b) concerning exempted fishing.