historic range in the contiguous United States may be warranted.

In making this finding, we recognize that there have been declines in Columbian sharp-tailed grouse populations because of habitat loss and degradation. The loss and degradation of habitat is due to any one or a combination of factors including crop production, livestock grazing, rural and suburban development, dam construction, herbicide spraying, fire, recreation, and other factors. The petition presented evidence that isolated local and regional populations of this subspecies are at risk. We also recognize that many states in which Columbian sharp-tailed grouse occur are attempting to restore the birds by relocating birds to unoccupied habitats and/or actively managing for them to improve their overall population status.

When making a positive 90-day finding on a petition, we are required to promptly commence a review of the status of the species. In the case of the Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, we are requesting information on the status of the species throughout its range in the contiguous United States and Canada. We solicit information regarding occurrence and distribution of the species; threats to its continued existence; and any additional comments and suggestions from the public, other concerned governmental agencies, the scientific community, industry, or any other interested parties concerning the status of the Columbian sharp-tailed grouse. Of particular interest is information regarding: (1) Population status and trends; (2) Extent of fragmentation and isolation of population segments; (3) Significance of discrete population segments; and, (4) Ongoing management measures that may be important with regard to the conservation of Columbia sharp-tailed grouse.

In regard to the petitioner's request that critical habitat be designated for the Columbian sharp-tailed grouse, the designation of critical habitat is not a petitionable action under the Act. If our 12-month finding indicates that the petitioned action to list the Columbian sharp-tailed grouse is warranted, then any subsequent proposed rule will address any designation of critical habitat.

After consideration of additional information submitted during the indicated time period (see DATES section), we will prepare a 12-month finding as to whether listing of the species is warranted.

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Author: The primary author of this notice is Christopher D. Warren, Upper Columbia River Basin Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (see **ADDRESSES** section).

Authority: The authority for this action is the Endangered Species Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) .

List of Subjects in 50 CFR Part 17

Endangered and threatened species, Exports, Imports, Reporting and record keeping requirements, and Transportation.

Dated: October 14, 1999.

Jamie Rappaport Clark,

Director, Fish and Wildlife Service.

[FR Doc. 99–27851 Filed 10–25–99; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 622

[I.D. 101499D]

RIN 0648–AK05

Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Snapper-Grouper Fishery off the Southern Atlantic States; Resubmission of a Disapproved Measure in Amendment 9

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

ACTION: Notice of availability of a resubmitted measure in an amendment to a fishery management plan; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces that the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) has resubmitted a previously disapproved measure contained in Amendment 9 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region (Amendment 9). The resubmitted measure would establish a 1,000–lb (454–kg) commercial trip limit for greater amberjack. Written comments are requested from the public.

DATES: Written comments must be received on or before December 27, 1999.

ADDRESSES: Comments must be mailed to the Southeast Regional Office, NMFS, 9721 Executive Center Drive N., St. Petersburg, FL 33702.

Requests for copies of Amendment 9, which contains the proposed greater amberjack trip limit, a final supplemental environmental impact

statement, an initial regulatory flexibility analysis, a regulatory impact review, and a social impact/fishery impact statement, should be sent to the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, One Southpark Circle, Suite 306, Charleston, SC 29407–4699; Phone: 843–571–4366; Fax: 843–769–4520. Requests for NMFS' economic analysis should be sent to Peter J. Eldridge.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Peter J. Eldridge, 727–570–5305.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) requires each Regional Fishery Management Council to submit a fishery management plan (FMP) or FMP amendment to the Secretary of Commerce for review, approval, and implementation. The Magnuson-Stevens Act also requires that NMFS, upon receiving an FMP or FMP amendment, immediately publish a document in the **Federal Register** stating that the FMP or FMP amendment is available for public review and comment.

Under Amendment 9, the Council proposed management measures to ensure that greater amberjack did not approach an overfished condition. One proposed measure was the establishment of a 1,000–lb (454–kg) daily commercial trip limit for greater amberjack. On December 9, 1998, after conducting Secretarial review of Amendment 9, NMFS disapproved the proposed 1,000–lb (454–kg) commercial trip limit for greater amberjack because the scientific information and analysis of socioeconomic impacts at that time indicated that the trip limit would not provide benefits that would exceed costs.

NMFS' economic analysis based on more recent information indicates that the trip limit may result in net benefits exceeding costs, especially if a ''derby'' fishery is prevented. Accordingly, the Council has resubmitted the proposed 1,000–lb (454–kg) commercial trip limit for greater amberjack, as contained in Amendment 9, to NMFS for review, approval, and implementation.

NMFS has also received a proposed rule to implement the trip limit from the Council. In accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Act, NMFS is evaluating the proposed rule to determine whether it is consistent with Amendment 9, the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and other applicable law. If that determination is affirmative, NMFS will publish it in the **Federal Register** for public review and comment.

NMFS will consider comments received by December 27, 1999, whether specifically directed to the resubmitted measure in Amendment 9 or the proposed rule, in its decision to approve, disapprove, or partially approve the resubmitted measure in Amendment 9. NMFS will not consider comments received after that date in this decision. NMFS will address all comments received during the comment periods on the resubmitted measure in Amendment 9 or on the proposed rule in the preamble of the final rule.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: October 20, 1999.

Bruce C. Morehead,

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

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