

indicates the maximum allowed for a concern and its affiliates to be considered small. If your business or organization is a small entity and if any of the requirements in part 571 have a significant economic impact on your business or organization, please submit a comment to explain how and to what degree these rules affect you, the extent of the economic impact on your business or organization, and why you believe the economic impact is significant.

If the agency determines that there is a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities, it will ask for comment in a subsequent notice during the Review Year on how these impacts could be reduced without reducing safety.

II. Plain Language

A. Background and Purpose

Executive Order 12866 and the President's memorandum of June 1, 1998, require each agency to write all rules in plain language. Application of the principles of plain language includes consideration of the following questions:

- Have we organized the material to suit the public's needs?
- Are the requirements in the rule clearly stated?
- Does the rule contain technical language or jargon that is not clear?
- Would a different format (grouping and order of sections, use of headings, paragraphing) make the rule easier to understand?
- Would more (but shorter) sections be better?
- Could we improve clarity by adding tables, lists, or diagrams?
- What else could we do to make the rule easier to understand?

If you have any responses to these questions, please include them in your comments on this document.

B. Review Schedule

In conjunction with our section 610 reviews, we will be performing plain language reviews over a ten-year period on a schedule consistent with the section 610 review schedule. We will review part 571 to determine if these regulations can be reorganized and/or rewritten to make them easier to read, understand, and use. We encourage interested persons to submit draft regulatory language that clearly and simply communicates regulatory requirements, and other recommendations, such as for putting information in tables that may make the regulations easier to use.

Comments

How Do I Prepare and Submit Comments?

Your comments must be written and in English. To ensure that your comments are correctly filed in the Docket, please include the docket number of this document in your comments.

Your comments must not be more than 15 pages long. (49 CFR 553.21.) We established this limit to encourage you to write your primary comments in a concise fashion. However, you may attach necessary additional documents to your comments. There is no limit on the length of the attachments.

Please submit two copies of your comments, including the attachments, to Docket Management at the address given above under **ADDRESSES**.

Comments may also be submitted to the docket electronically by logging onto the Docket Management System Web site at <http://dms.dot.gov>. Click on "Help & Information" or "Help/Info" to obtain instructions for filing your comments electronically.

How Can I Be Sure That My Comments Were Received?

If you wish Docket Management to notify you upon its receipt of your comments, enclose a self-addressed, stamped postcard in the envelope containing your comments. Upon receiving your comments, Docket Management will return the postcard by mail.

How Do I Submit Confidential Business Information?

If you wish to submit any information under a claim of confidentiality, you should submit three copies of your complete submission, including the information you claim to be confidential business information, to the Chief Counsel, NHTSA, U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW., Washington, DC 20590. In addition, you should submit two copies, from which you have deleted the claimed confidential business information, to Docket Management at the address given above under **ADDRESSES**. When you send a comment containing information claimed to be confidential business information, you should include a cover letter setting forth the information specified in our confidential business information regulation. (49 CFR part 512.)

Will the Agency Consider Late Comments?

We will consider all comments that Docket Management receives before the

close of business on the comment closing date indicated above under **DATES**. To the extent possible, we will also consider comments that Docket Management receives after that date.

How Can I Read the Comments Submitted by Other People?

You may read the comments received by Docket Management at the address given above under **ADDRESSES**. The hours of the Docket are indicated above in the same location.

You may also see the comments on the Internet. To read the comments on the Internet, take the following steps:

- (1) Go to the Docket Management System (DMS) Web page of the Department of Transportation (<http://dms.dot.gov/>).
- (2) On that page, click on "search."
- (3) On the next page (<http://dms.dot.gov/search/>), type in the four-digit docket number shown at the beginning of this document. Example: If the docket number were "NHTSA-1998-1234," you would type "1234." After typing the docket number, click on "search."

(4) On the next page, which contains docket summary information for the docket you selected, click on the desired comments. You may download the comments. However, since the comments are imaged documents, instead of word processing documents, the "pdf" versions of the documents are word searchable.

Please note that even after the comment closing date, we will continue to file relevant information in the Docket as it becomes available. Further, some people may submit late comments. Accordingly, we recommend that you periodically check the Docket for new material.

Noble N. Bowie,

Associate Administrator for Planning, Evaluation and Budget.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 622

[I.D. 121903A]

Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; South Atlantic Fishery Management Council; Informational Public Hearings

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and

Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of informational public hearings.

SUMMARY: The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) will hold nine informational public hearings to collect social and economic information on the use of proposed marine protected area (MPA) candidate sites as a fishery management tool with an emphasis on deepwater species found in the snapper/grouper management complex.

DATES: The meetings will be held in January and February 2004. See

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION for specific dates, location and times of the informational public hearings. Written comments, including email will be accepted until close of business on February 27, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be sent to Kerry O'Malley, South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, One Southpark Circle, Suite 306, Charleston, SC 29407; email kerry.omalley@safmc.net. Copies of the informational public hearing document are available by contacting Kerry O'Malley, South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, One Southpark Circle, Suite 306, Charleston, SC 29407-4699; telephone: 843/571-4366 or toll free 1-866/SAFMC-10; FAX 843/769-4520; email: kerry.omalley@safmc.net. The informational public hearing document will also be available at the meeting. See **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** for specific locations.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kim Iverson, Public Information Officer; telephone: 843/571-4366 or toll free 1-866/SAFMC-10; fax: 843/769-4520; email: kim.iverson@safmc.net.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Purpose of Meetings

The Council will hold nine informational public hearings to collect social and economic information from the public on individual marine protected area alternatives being considered for use as a fishery management tool to protect deepwater species in the snapper/grouper management complex. This information is critical to evaluating the impacts of the various MPA candidate sites on people and communities.

Times and Locations of Informational Public Hearings

Public informational hearings will be held at the following dates and locations. All meetings are scheduled to begin at 6 p.m.

1. Monday, January 19, 2004, Sea Turtle Inn, One Ocean Boulevard, Atlantic Beach, FL 32233; telephone: 904-249-7402;

2. Tuesday, January 20, 2004, Ramada Inn, 1200 S Federal Highway, Stuart, FL 34994; telephone: 772-287-6900;

3. Thursday, January 22, 2004, The Islander, 82100 Overseas Highway, Islamorada, FL 33036; telephone: 305-664-2031;

4. Tuesday, January 27, 2004, Crystal Coast Civic Center, 3505 Arendell Street, Morehead City, NC 28557; telephone: 252-247-3883;

5. Wednesday, January 28, 2004, Blockade Runner, 275 Waynick Boulevard, Wrightsville Beach, NC 28480; telephone: 800-541-1161 or 910-256-2251;

6. Tuesday, February 10, 2004, University of Georgia Marine Extension, 715 Bay Street, Brunswick, GA 31520; telephone: 912-264-7268;

7. Wednesday, February 11, 2004, Richmond Hill City Hall, 40 Richard R. Davis Drive, Richmond Hill, GA 31324; telephone: 912-756-3345;

8. Tuesday, February 17, 2004, Holiday Inn, 722 Highway 17, Little River, SC 29566; telephone: 843-281-9400; and

9. Thursday, February 19, 2004, Town & Country Inn, 2008 Savannah Highway, Charleston, SC 29407; telephone: 1-800-334-6660 or 843-571-1000.

Special Accommodations

These meetings are physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to the Council office (see **ADDRESSES**) by January 16, 2004.

Dated: December 29, 2003.

Bruce C. Morehead,

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

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 622

[Docket No. 031217320-3320-01; I.D. 112403D]

RIN 0648-AR66

Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Reef Fish Fishery of the Gulf of Mexico; Extension of Marine Reserves

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

ACTION: Proposed rule; request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS issues proposed regulations to implement Amendment 21 to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for the Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf of Mexico (Amendment 21) prepared by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council). These proposed regulations would modify the fishing restrictions that apply within the Madison and Swanson sites and Steamboat Lumps marine reserves in the eastern Gulf of Mexico and would extend the period of effectiveness of those restrictions through June 16, 2010. The intended effect of these proposed regulations is to protect the spawning aggregations of species within these areas, prevent overfishing, and aid in the evaluation of the effectiveness of marine reserves as a management tool.

DATES: Comments on the proposed rule must be received no later than 5 p.m., eastern time, on February 19, 2004.

ADDRESSES: Written comments on the proposed rule must be sent to Phil Steele, Southeast Regional Office, NMFS, 9721 Executive Center Drive N., St. Petersburg, FL 33702. Comments also may be sent via fax to 727-570-5583. Comments will not be accepted if submitted via e-mail or Internet.

Copies of Amendment 21, which includes a regulatory impact review (RIR), Regulatory Flexibility Analyses, and an environmental assessment (EA), and a copy of a minority report filed by three Council members opposing provisions in the amendment that allow seasonal surface trolling within the reserves, may be obtained from the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, The Commons at Rivergate, 3018 U.S. Highway 301 North, Suite 1000, Tampa, FL 33619-2266; telephone: 813-228-2815; fax: 813-225-7015; e-mail: gulfcouncil@gulfcouncil.org. Copies of