

Recommendation #3

Diversity of habitat with emphasis on high relief habitat should be the primary siting criterion. The RAWG should be maintained to support NOAA GRNMS in consideration of these various criteria (e.g., habitat, size, existing research and monitoring sites, bottom fishing data) in developing proposed options for a draft environmental impact statement.

Recommendation #4

Minimizing impacts to user communities including fishing, diving, research, and resource management should be a priority under the research area concept. Non-bottom impinging activities should not be viewed as conflicting with the primary objectives of a proposed research area. Based on the recommendations of the Advisory Council, NOAA has concluded that the research area concept should be further explored through a public review process. In the upcoming DEIS, NOAA will likely develop a range of alternatives for the creation of a research area, including a no-action alternative. If this action results in the creation of a research area in the GRNMS, a companion management plan for the research area will serve as a supplement to the 2006 GRNMS Final Management Plan/Final Environmental Impact Statement.

By this notice, NOAA announces the initiation of scoping for the proposed research area in Gray's Reef National Marine Sanctuary. Scoping is the initial process intended to solicit information and comments on the range and significance of issues related to the proposed action. The results of this scoping process will assist NOAA in formulating alternatives for a draft environmental impact statement for the proposed research area.

NOAA encourages the public and interested parties to submit (via mail, e-mail, or fax) comments and to attend the public scoping meetings in March.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1431 *et seq.*
(Federal Domestic Assistance Catalog Number 11.429 Marine Sanctuary Program)

Dated: February 26, 2008.

John H. Dunnigan,

Assistant Administrator, Ocean Services and Coastal Zone Management, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

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

RIN: 0648-XG05

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; Public Meetings

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

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council will convene a public meeting of the Ad Hoc Recreational Red Snapper Advisory Panel (AP).

DATES: The meeting will convene at 9 a.m. on Tuesday, March 25, 2008 and conclude no later than 5 p.m. on Wednesday, March 26, 2008.

ADDRESSES: This meeting will be held at the Renaissance Riverview Plaza Hotel, 64 S. Water St., Mobile, AL 36602; telephone: (251) 438-4000.

Council address: Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 2203 North Lois Avenue, Suite 1100, Tampa, FL 33607.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Steven Atran, Population Dynamics Statistician; Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council; telephone: (813) 348-1630.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: At this meeting, the AP will prioritize the goals and objectives for the recreational red snapper fishery that were developed in earlier meetings as well as the list of ideas for managing the recreational red snapper fishery that was previously developed. The AP will select ideas from its list for further development, and will begin the initial work of developing those ideas into possible management action. The AP will also discuss the possible formation of working groups for the task of developing discussion papers on the ideas to be developed. In addition, the AP will receive several presentations providing an overview on marine protected areas, a review of party boat and charter boat catch data, a discussion of educational materials on proper venting and dehooking, and clarification on referendum requirements pertaining to possible changes in the red snapper allocation.

Although other issues not on the agenda may come before the panel for discussion, in accordance with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, those issues may not be the subject of

formal panel action during this meeting. Panel action will be restricted to those issues specifically identified in the agenda listed as available by this notice.

A copy of the agenda can be obtained by calling 813-348-1630.

Special Accommodations

This meeting is physically accessible to people with disabilities. Requests for sign language interpretation or other auxiliary aids should be directed to Tina Trezza at the Council (see **ADDRESSES**) at least 5 working days prior to the meeting.

Dated: February 29, 2008.

Tracey L. Thompson,

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

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

RIN: 0648-XG06

New England Fishery Management Council; Public Meeting

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

ACTION: Notice of a public meeting.

SUMMARY: The New England Fishery Management Council's (Council) Herring Oversight Committee will meet to consider actions affecting New England fisheries in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ).

DATES: The meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 26, 2008, at 9:30 a.m.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Holiday Inn by the Bay, 88 Spring Street, Portland, ME 04101; telephone: (207) 775-2311.

Council address: New England Fishery Management Council, 50 Water Street, Mill 2, Newburyport, MA 01950.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Paul J. Howard, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council; telephone: (978) 465-0492.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The items of discussion in the committee's agenda are as follows:

1. Review Council actions for 2008 priority-setting and discuss issues to be addressed in Amendment 4 to the Atlantic Herring Fishery Management Plan (FMP).

2. Identify goals and objectives for Amendment 4 to the Herring FMP