

MEMORANDUM



To: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commissioners

From: Jessica McCawley, Director, Division of Marine Fisheries Management

Date: February 8, 2017

Subject: Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council Report

Purpose:

Staff will report on actions from the GMFMC's January 30 – February 2 meeting in New Orleans, LA.

Summary:

The Council is scheduled to take final action to require federally-permitted for-hire vessels to report trip information electronically. The Council's current preferred alternatives would require all federally-permitted for-hire vessels in the Gulf to use GPS-enabled devices (such as smartphones and tablets) to report their landings and trip information before the end of each trip. Staff has been supportive of this option based on Commission direction.

The Council is also scheduled to take final action on king mackerel quota allocation sharing. The Council's current preferred alternative would allow the commercial sector to harvest unused recreational quota if certain conditions are met.

Other items scheduled to be discussed by the Council include:

- A review of the results of the gag grouper assessment update
- Adjusting the acceptable biological catch and annual catch limit for spiny lobster
- Potential protections for areas with deep water corals, including areas off southwest Florida. Additional gear or harvest restrictions could affect fishing activity within these areas
- Potential federal mutton snapper regulations that are consistent with FWC rules approved at the September 2016 FWC meeting
- **NOTE:** Council discussions related to red snapper and gray triggerfish will be reviewed as part of the Gulf red snapper and gray triggerfish agenda item

Staff Recommendation:

Staff may request direction on Council-related items following the Council meeting.

Staff Contact and/or Presenter:

Martha Guyas, Division of Marine Fisheries Management