

MEMORANDUM



To: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commissioners

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

Date: February 8, 2017

Subject: Consent Agenda: Boundary Lines Cleanup – Draft Rule

Purpose:

Staff will present a series of draft rules that would correct inaccurate geographic coordinates and boundary definitions currently found in a variety of marine fisheries rules in order to improve accuracy and simplicity of the Commission's regulations. This is a cleanup item and is not intended to alter the original intent of the existing regulations.

Summary:

Many of the Commission's marine fisheries rules contain geographic coordinates that define the boundaries of areas where specific regulations apply. Over time, some of these coordinates have become outdated and inaccurate for a variety of reasons, including the repositioning or removal of referenced landmarks (such as aids to navigation, piers, and natural changes in shorelines). The accuracy of Global Positioning System (GPS) technology has also improved since many of these rules were established, leading to inconsistencies when using today's more accurate GPS devices.

The purpose of these draft rules is to correct GPS coordinates currently found in rule to match the actual present-day locations of the relevant landmarks. Doing so will improve the accuracy, clarity and enforceability of the regulations. For the majority of the boundaries addressed in this proposal, the effected fisheries do not operate in close proximity to the boundary and should not be affected by small-scale changes resulting from the proposed corrections. The updated boundaries will preserve the original intent of the regulations and are consistent with the traditional operation of the effected fisheries. Staff from the Division of Marine Fisheries Management worked closely with Division of Law Enforcement personnel with local expertise to develop the proposed updates.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommend approving the proposed draft rules to correct inaccurate geographic coordinates and boundaries found in Chapters 68B-4, 68B-31, 68B-35, 68B-38, 68B-39, and 68B-42, Florida Administrative Code. Staff also recommend the rules be advertised and filed for adoption without further hearing unless requested by a member of the public.

Staff Contact and/or Presenter:

Melissa Recks, Section Leader, Division of Marine Fisheries Management.