

# MEMORANDUM



**To:** Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commissioners  
**From:** Jessica McCawley, Director, Marine Fisheries Management  
**Date:** April 26, 2018  
**Subject:** Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council Report

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**Purpose:**

Update Commissioners on actions from the GMFMC's April 16-20 meeting in Gulfport, MS.

**Summary:**

The Council is scheduled to meet the week prior to the Commission's April meeting. Therefore, Commission briefing documents will be updated as soon as possible following the Council meeting. Anticipated Council discussions include:

- Greater Amberjack: Potential management changes to recreational bag limits, seasonal quotas and commercial trip limits.
- Descending Devices/Venting Tools: Development of a policy to support use of descending devices or venting tools on vessels possessing reef fish to reduce discard mortality.
- Deepwater Corals: Potential establishment and expansion of management areas to protect deepwater coral habitats.

Council discussions relating to recreational red snapper management, including the 2018 season, will be reviewed in a separate agenda item.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Staff may request direction on items following the Council meeting.

**Staff Contact and/or Presenter:**

Martha Guyas, Division of Marine Fisheries Management

Four areas off southwest Florida that have deep-water corals are being considered for additional protections that could limit fishing activity. See map below. These areas occur far offshore in very deep water.

