

GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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November 30, 2001

Mr. Robert Jones
Southeastern Fisheries Association, Inc.
Mount Vernon Square
1118-B Thomasville Road
Tallahassee, Florida 32303-6287

Dear Mr. Jones:

In response to your request, there are currently 6 species of fish listed by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) as overfished in the Gulf of Mexico exclusive economic zone (EEZ). These species are Gulf-group king mackerel, red snapper, red grouper, Nassau grouper, goliath grouper, jewfish and red drum (Source: Report to Congress Status of the Fisheries of the United States that was prepared by NMFS in January, 2001). At this time, there is no harvesting of Nassau grouper, goliath grouper, and red drum in the EEZ. Red drum may be harvested in state waters by recreational fishermen subject to each states' bag and size limits. Only Mississippi allows for a minimal commercial harvest of red drum. Gulf-group king mackerel will likely still be declared overfished in the next NMFS Report to Congress; however, with recent increases in stock biomass and changes within the framework procedures, this species will be no longer considered overfished. The allocation of catches for the Gulf-group king mackerel are 32 percent commercial and 68 percent recreational. For red snapper, the allocation of the catch between commercial and recreational fisheries is 51 percent commercial and 49 percent recreational. At this time, there is no allocation specifically for red grouper although it is currently being examined in Amendment 18 to the Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan (FMP). The current allocation that red grouper fall under is the 65 percent commercial and 35 percent recreational split for the shallow-water grouper quota.

I hope that this letter addresses the information you required. If there is any other information you need, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Wayne Swingle
Executive Director

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