



SOUTHEASTERN FISHERIES ASSOCIATION

H O T L I N E S

M A R C H 2 0 0 6

FWC SUPPORTS DISASTER RELIEF FOR FISHING INDUSTRY

The Fish & Wildlife Commission has unanimously passed two Resolutions asking the Florida Congressional Delegation to help secure needed funds for the commercial fishing sector. The February 1 Resolution called for the delegation to help find funds and the February 2 Resolution noted \$200 million was being appropriated to help commercial fishing in the Gulf and asked that the Florida commercial fishing industry be treated fairly in the allocation of these funds. Additionally, FWC Chairman Rodney Barreto sent a letter to US Department of Agriculture Secretary Mike Johanns stating, *"The Commission is requesting that you utilize these funds by taking all appropriate measures at your disposal to help put this vital industry back on its feet and Florida's commercial fishermen back to work. On behalf of the Commission and the commercial fishing industry, I wish to thank you for*

your efforts thus far, and for considering our request for federal aid." Thank you Chairman Barreto.

"FOOD SAFETY BILL BAD FOR CONSUMERS"

The US House of Representatives passed legislation, WITHOUT HOLDING HEARINGS, which will preempt many consumer protection laws in Florida. Florida Agriculture and Consumer Services Commissioner Charles Bronson said the bill threatens existing food safety programs and jeopardizes state-federal cooperative programs such as those related to retail food protection and shellfish sanitation according to an editorial in the Tampa Tribune on March 10, 2006. Under the HR 4167, any state regulation different from the US Food and Drug Administration's regulation would be repealed and the only way to have it reinstated would be to petition the FDA, which could take years to get through the process.

When Commissioner Bronson and others who are involved in the day to day struggle to maintain a safe food supply say, *"the absence of state programs would surely mean a greater likelihood of food borne illnesses,"* lawmakers ought to listen. In addition 39 State Attorney Generals have written letters opposing this bad bill. The

fact this bill will be responsible for more food borne illnesses is bad enough, but almost as distasteful, is the fact the US House of Representatives did not allow professionals who regulate America's food supply to be heard. This is not an example of good governance.

LOW MERCURY FISH BRAND TO START IN CALIFORNIA

Fish wholesaler Pacific Seafood Group and California grocer Holiday Quality Foods have teamed together to sell Safe Harbor, the country's first brand of low-mercury fresh fish. Other wholesalers and grocers, including Albertsons, reportedly have expressed interest in the mercury-testing technology that is being used to designate Safe Harbor products. A label will identify these fish.

The label is part of a market test by the supermarket chain and Pacific Seafood Group, one of the nation's largest fish wholesalers, to see whether customers would buy more fish if they had more information about its mercury content. Holiday is using a new technology, developed by a high-tech company in San Rafael, Calif., that takes just minutes to measure the mercury concentration in fish rather than days.

This newsletter is published by Southeastern Fisheries Association. Please pass it along and encourage others to be added to our mailing list.

If you want to be removed from the list, please contact us.

SFA is a non-profit association founded in 1952, charged with maintaining a viable seafood industry in the Southeast.

Robert P. Jones, Editor

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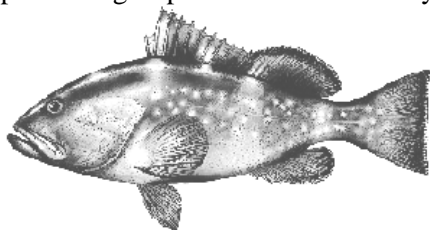
LEGISLATION TO ASSIST FLORIDA SEAFOOD INDUSTRY FILED

Representative Aaron Bean, Fernandina Beach has filed HB 1287 which allows seafood facilities that exclusively unload seafood products to qualify for an agricultural classification. Senator Charles Clary has filed SB 2476, the identical bill in the Senate increasing the odds for passage. It has become common knowledge that if our shoreside facilities can't attain some kind of tax relief a working waterfront will not be possible in Florida. This is a good bill and the agricultural classification would only remain in effect as long as the fish house was used as such. SFA asks all its members to contact their state representatives and senators and ask for their help.

GULF OF MEXICO GROUPEY FISHERY OPEN MARCH 15TH

After a month of closure to protect the spawning aggregations in the Gulf of Mexico, commercial harvest of grouper will open. During the month's closure, no commercial harvest could take place but charter and head boats could catch their normal bag limit but IT WAS ILLEGAL FOR ANY OF THESE FISH TO BE SOLD.

Many restaurants let their customers know about the grouper season being closed and offered other species in their place or good imported grouper that was also caught in the Gulf of Mexico and in the Caribbean region. Few people realize there are over 500 species of grouper in the world. Many



50/50 TICKET RAFFLE SALES NEEDS PUSHING

Making ends meet is no easy task for anyone in our business these days.

The Board of Directors urges each member who has raffle tickets to sell them and return the money to SFA. Only 200 tickets to be sold so odds are great.



If you don't receive a ticket and brochure by mail and are interested in purchasing a drawing ticket just call the office 850.224.0612 or fax a request to 850.222.3663 and we will mail you a ticket.



customers have a paradigm that the grouper they order is fresh and mostly from Florida. There seems to be some shifting of that paradigm as the customers become more informed as to what they are really eating.

FWC TO DISCUSS DUE PROCESS

The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission announces a public workshop and workgroup video conference meeting for the purpose of rule development concerning Due Process Procedures and Standards to which all interested persons are invited: **DATE:** March 16, 2006 6:00 p. m. to 8:00 p. m. Standard Time **Place:** Farris Bryant Building, Room G52C, 620 South Meridian Street, Tallahassee, Florida, Ground Floor. Ever since a Florida Constitutional Amendment created the FWC, there have been questions concerning Due Process. The Commission has rewritten some Standards they feel address this issue. Due Process is guaranteed to every citizen and must be protected no matter what.

GOLIATH GROUPEY TAKEN OF LIST

NOAA Fisheries Service removed goliath grouper (formerly known as jewfish) from the species of concern list in early February because a recent status report showed a significant increase in abundance to the U.S. population segment. The report also showed the species is re-establishing throughout its historical range. These positive enhancements are the results of protective management measures established over a decade ago by state and federal agencies. In spite of this information, the stock is still considered overfished under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act; therefore, all recreational and commercial harvest is still prohibited.

SOME GROCERS WILL NOT SELL CO TREATED MEAT

Several grocers, including [Publix Super Markets](#), [Kroger Co.](#) and [The Great Atlantic & Pacific Tea Co.](#)'s Wald-
baum's, **will not sell carbon monoxide-treated meat in their stores.** The FDA approves of the process, which helps

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meat keep its red color longer, and has found no evidence that it is harmful to consumers, but critics contend it opens up the possibility of retailers selling meat that is not fresh. [The New York Times](#)

DISCARDED MONOFILAMENT FISHING LINE KILLING SEABIRDS

The last time the FWC counted the number of seabirds wounded or killed by monofilament fishing line was in 1999-2000. The FWC or some state regulatory agency needs to be the official clearinghouse concerning the num-



ber of seabirds wounded or killed from discarded or lost monofilament

fishing line. Only when an accurate number can be given will a clear picture of the situation be available. When this assessment is done on a regular basis efforts will be made to reduce seabird entanglement. There are ways to reduce seabird deaths which could be discussed through broader educational fishing programs.

The anti-commercial fishing groups spent thousands of dollars portraying a fish trap as "wall of death" or some other attention grabbing headline to get the public angry and concerned about "ghost fishing." Fish traps have been outlawed in Florida for well over a decade but thousands of pounds of monofilament fishing line can be found in the vertical water column and on wrecks and outcroppings either from a big fish stripping a line clean or someone changing their reel and not bring-

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ing the old line back in for proper disposal. Whatever the reason, gigantic, practically invisible, "balls of death" are swaying gently in the water waiting to snare anything swimming by. Where are the old Audubon folks when they are needed for a real seabird emergency?

SOUTH ATLANTIC COUNCIL TO CONSIDER BANNING ANGLER SALES

In a recent letter from Dr. Hogarth in response to an SFA inquiry about recreational sale of fish in the South Atlantic, he writes, *"Thank you for your e-mail regarding the recreational sale of fish. The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council is concerned about recreational sale of fish, particularly with the new quotas proposed in Amendment 13C to the Snapper Grouper Fishery Management Plan. Amendment 15 of this plan, which is being developed by the Council, would consider alternatives to prohibit the recreational sale of fish."*

There is only one thing SFA can say about this and that is,
HALLELUJAH!!!

It has been an especially bitter pill to

swallow that allowed recreational fishermen in the South Atlantic to sell their catch and then charge that angler sale against the commercial quota. A regulation of that sort only happens when the rule of man is substituted for the rule of law.

KEY LARGO IN JUNE

SFA's 54th Annual Meeting will be held in Key Largo June 8-10, 2006 at the Sheraton Beach Resort. Make this a mini-vacation or make it a business trip but make it appear on your calendar and then just be there. The industry has been hard hit for the past several years and we may be hard hit again this year but we can't control that, all we can do is prepare for it and then build it back for as many times as we are able. We have a great lineup of speakers to be listed in the April Hotline. We have assembled the speakers based on input from the membership. Make plans to attend.



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We invite anyone receiving this newsletter, who is not already a member of SFA to join us and become an activist for your business. We are here to respond to your business needs in the state capital and around the Southeast Region. We can help you only if we know you and correspond with you regularly.....We would look forward to serving you and your company!

Welcome to SFA New Members: SFA is proud to welcome the following new members into its growing family of successful seafood companies. We encourage each member to support one another for the overall good of maintaining an economic and cultural presence for commercial fishing in America as well as providing marine protein to the people.

- ◆ **Associate Membership**—KAPPA Laboratories, Inc.,
Dr. Peter J. Kmieck, Director, Miami, FL
- ◆ **Retail Market/Restaurant Membership**—Dewey Destin Club,
Dewey Destin, Destin, FL
- ◆ **Boat Owner Membership**—M/V Johnnie Joyce,
Johnnie M. Clopton, Milton, FL

**UPGRADE YOUR SFA
MEMBERSHIP**

Retail and HACCP members are urged to upgrade their membership in SFA to either to Associate members status but preferably to Corporate Member status. Notify the SFA office for financial methods to accomplish this upgrade. Thanks.

Goal for 2006 – 2007...

Each member sign up a **NEW** member this year!

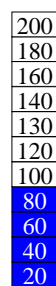
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**NMFS TO CONDUCT SAFE
HANDLING WORKSHOPS**

NMFS will be conducting safe handling of turtles workshops for shark and reef fish fishermen during May and June. There will be workshops from Brownsville, Texas to Ocean City, Maryland in hopes of getting soon to be required information to the fishermen. Announcements for time and location will be disseminated very soon by those in charge.

**50/50 Ticket Raffle
Update**

**Be sure to work on selling
your tickets . If you have
not received a ticket, just
phone, email or fax the
office and we will be glad
to send you one or more!**



73 sold as of 3/15/2006

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