

**Reef Fish Committee
Action Guide and Next Steps for Tab B**

Agenda Item IV: Discussion of 2025 Recreational Gag Grouper and Red Grouper Fishing Seasons

Action: Discussion and recommendations

Council Input and Next Steps: SERO staff will review the recreational fishing season duration projections for Gulf of America (Gulf) gag grouper. The recreational ACL for the 2025 fishing season is 399,000 lb gutted weight (gw), which will be reduced to account for an overage of the recreational annual catch limit (ACL) during the 2024 fishing season. SERO staff will also update the Committee about the status of 2025 recreational red grouper landings, and season closure projections. Committee members should consider the information presented, ask questions of SERO staff, and make any recommendations as appropriate.

Agenda Item V: **FINAL ACTION:** Framework Action: Modifications to Other Shallow-water Grouper Complex Management Actions

Action: Review and Consider Final Action

Council Input and Next Steps: Council staff will review written public comments received regarding proposed management changes in the draft Framework Action: Modifications to Other Shallow-water Grouper Complex Management Actions. This document is being considered to reduce fishing mortality on the Shallow-water Grouper Complex and establish a recreational fishing season ahead of the development and implementation of Draft Amendment 58A. Council staff will review the actions and current preferred alternatives with the Committee. SERO staff will also review the proposed changes to the codified text. If the Committee agrees, it should recommend that the Council take final action on the proposed management changes in the usual manner.

Agenda Item VI: Summary: May 2025 Gulf SSC Meeting

Action: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Council input and next steps: Dr. Mike Allen (Gulf SSC Chair) will review recommendations from the Gulf SSC’s meeting in Tampa, Florida, held on May 8, 2025. Topics will include revised catch projections for scamp and yellowmouth grouper, a review of the Center for Independent Experts peer-review of the shrimp bycatch estimation methodology for finfish species, a review of new bycatch estimates and analyses for smalltooth sawfish and giant manta ray, and a review of a population viability analysis for endangered and threatened species that interact with the shrimp fishery. The Committee should evaluate the information presented, ask questions of Dr. Allen, and make recommendations to the Council as appropriate.

Agenda Item VI: Discussion on Recent Executive Orders: Unleashing Prosperity through Deregulation, and Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness

Action: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Council Input and Next Steps: Council staff will provide a short presentation summarizing the following Executive Orders: Unleashing Prosperity through Deregulation, and Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness. These Executive Orders were signed by President Trump on January 31, 2025, and April 17, 2025, respectively. SERO staff will discuss the expected requirements and impacts of the Executive Orders as they relate to Council activities and responsibilities. The Committee should review the information presented and the proposed plan to virtually gather stakeholder feedback. The Committee should ask questions and make recommendations to the Council as appropriate.

Agenda Item VIII: Draft Options – Reef Fish Amendment 58A: Shallow-water Grouper Complex Management Considerations

Action: Presentation, discussion, and next steps

Council input and next steps: In light of the updated yield stream projections on scamp and yellowmouth grouper the SSC recommended at its May 8, 2025, meeting, the Council should direct staff to update Reef Fish Amendment 58A accordingly. Staff will walk through the most recent version of the document with the Committee as a reminder of the range of actions and alternatives previously considered in the document. The Committee should review the information presented, ask questions, and provide direction to staff as appropriate. The Committee should specifically provide direction to staff regarding the timeline for completion and implementation of the amendment.

Agenda Item V: Public Hearing Draft – Reef Fish Amendment 58B: Modifications to Deep-water Grouper Management Measures

Action: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Council Input and Next Steps: Council staff will present a public hearing draft of Reef Fish Amendment 58B that proposes modifications to the deep-water grouper (DWG) complex, in light of recent stock assessment advice on yellowedge grouper. Management alternatives for DWG include specifying status determination criteria, catch limits, sector allocations, and accountability measures. The Committee should discuss the actions and alternatives presented, including the current preferred alternatives, and suggest revisions if necessary. The Committee may recommend that the Council approve the document for public hearings. Public hearings are currently planned for three locations in Florida, and at one virtual hearing. Following the

completion of public hearings, Council staff would then plan to bring the document back to the Council in August 2025 for final action.

Agenda Item XI: Discussion: Red Grouper Documents

Action: Presentation, discussion, and recommendations

Council input and next steps: Dr. Allen will review recommendations from the Gulf SSC for revised catch projections for Gulf red grouper, which now include 2025 and 2026 for projecting future yields from the SEDAR 88 stock assessment. SERO staff will then discuss the progress and anticipated timeline for the red grouper emergency rule requested by the Council at its April 2025 meeting. Following, Council staff will provide a brief presentation to outline actions and alternatives to be considered for a plan amendment to modify red grouper catch limits and sector allocations. The Committee should evaluate the information presented, propose any necessary modifications, and make recommendations to the Council as appropriate.

Agenda Item XIV: Other Business

Action: Additional items that can be brought up for discussion

Council Input and Next Steps: Additional items may be brought up for discussion by Committee members during the adoption of the agenda, time permitting. If the Committee wishes to pursue action, then action can be scheduled at a future Council meeting.
