



GULF OF MEXICO FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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August 27, 2008

Bonnie
Dr. Bonnie Ponwith
Director
National Marine Fisheries Service
Southeast Fisheries Science Center
71 Virginia Beach Drive
Miami, Florida 33149

09.AUG.10 005742

Larry
Mr. Larry Simpson
Executive Director
Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission
Post Office Box 726
Ocean Springs, Mississippi 39564

Dear Dr. Ponwith and Mr. Simpson:

At its meeting on August 11-14, 2008 in Key Largo, Florida, the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council) had a lengthy discussion of ways to get better and more timely data regarding fishing activities and catches from for-hire vessels. Following that discussion, the Council voted to request that within six months the National Marine Fisheries Service in conjunction with the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission evaluate the combination of precision and cost for the following: a mandatory trip ticket system, e-logbooks, web-based reporting, video monitoring, and/or catch cards for permitted for-hire vessels in the Gulf.

With this letter, we respectfully request that your respective agencies work together to provide us with this evaluation. If possible, we would like to have this information prior to our January 26-29, 2009 meeting in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi. We greatly appreciate your willingness to provide us with this needed information that we believe will help all of our agencies obtain better and more accurate data on recreational fisheries that in turn will lead to better stock assessments and better decisions regarding the use of our valuable fishery resources. If Council staff can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact the Council office.

Sincerely,

Tom
Thomas D. McIlwain, Ph.D.
Chairman

c: Gulf Council
Technical Staff