



Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Commissioners

Rodney Barreto
Chair
Miami

Kathy Barco
Vice-Chair
Jacksonville

Ronald M. Bergeron
Fort Lauderdale

Richard A. Corbett
Tampa

Dwight Stephenson
Delray Beach

Kenneth W. Wright
Winter Park

Brian S. Yablonski
Tallahassee

Executive Staff

Kenneth D. Haddad
Executive Director

Nick Wiley
Assistant Executive Director

Karen Ventimiglia
Deputy Chief of Staff

Gil McRae
FWRI Director
(727) 896-8626
(727) 823-0166 FAX

Managing fish and wildlife resources for their long-term well-being and the benefit of people.

Fish and Wildlife Research Institute
100 Eighth Avenue SE
St. Petersburg, Florida
33701-5020
Voice: (727) 896-8626
Fax: (727) 823-0166

Hearing/speech impaired:
(800) 955-8771 (T)
(800) 955-8770 (V)
research.MyFWC.com

Dr. Roy Crabtree, Regional Director
NOAA Fisheries Service
Southeast Regional Office
263 13th Avenue South
Saint Petersburg, FL 33701

June 2, 2009

Dear Dr. Crabtree;

The FWC Fish and Wildlife Research Institute in Saint Petersburg, Florida, is receiving funding from three separate grants during 2009 through 2012 to conduct at-sea observer trips on board recreational for-hire (charter boat and headboat) fishing trips in state and federally-managed waters of the Gulf of Mexico. This research will focus on reef fish species, including snappers and groupers that are targeted by the recreational fishery. The main objective of this work will be to tag and release snappers and groupers discarded from recreational for-hire trips as part of a discard mortality study. During sampled trips, we would also like to collect a representative sample of under-sized and/or out of season reef fish to characterize the age and sex composition of recreational discards. This information will be an important contribution to upcoming regional stock assessments. Species that we intend to sample include red snapper, vermilion snapper, gag, red grouper, black grouper, and greater amberjack.

We are requesting an exemption from recreational fishing regulations for reef fish species when a for-hire vessel is selected and agrees to carry an FWC observer during a scheduled for-hire recreational fishing trip. Any undersized or out of season fish taken will be used only for scientific research. Fish will be stored in a closed cooler and taken to an FWC facility for work-up. Carcasses will be donated to a local food bank, if possible, or properly disposed of by FWC staff. Attached is a list of vessels that have agreed to participate in this research, a list of sampling targets for the species of interest, and statements of work for the three funded projects relevant to this request. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

Richard P. Cody

Dr. Richard Cody,
Research Administrator II

Participating Owners and Vessels:

Stanley F. Czaplicki
Super Queen, DO541178
Gulf Queen, DO611950

Mark Hubbard
Florida Fisherman II, DO953498
Friendly Fisherman, DO917625
Hub, DO651869

Sanford A. Haggert
Double Eagle II, DO522907
Double Eagle III, DO622650

Target Number of Fish to be Collected:

Totals:	
Red Snapper	490
Greater AJ	480
Red Grouper	520
Gag	480
Vermillion	100
Black Grouper	160