

To: Dr. Roy Crabtree, Southeast Regional Administrator NOAA/NMFS
Subject: Comments on the catch share program being pushed by NGO's
CC Steve Bortone, BobMahood, BonniePonwith, Andy Winer, et al

SOUTHEASTERN FISHERIES ASSOCIATION

Comments on NOAA's proposed catch share mandate.

March 22, 2010

1. Southeastern Fisheries Association requests a moratorium on any additional catch share programs for any species of fish in the southeastern United States until the NOAA-conceived catch share program is fully vetted by all stakeholders. The fishing industry – commercial and recreational - must be included in managing their fisheries.
2. Southeastern Fisheries Association believes the catch shares granted in the Gulf of Mexico red snapper program remain in place so no current share holder loses any fish awarded by NOAA.
3. Southeastern Fisheries Association supports any increases in the Total Allowable Catch of Gulf of Mexico red snapper being allocated to fishermen who failed to qualify under original catch share distribution.
4. Southeastern Fisheries Association strongly urges a regional outreach program be implemented by the Southeast Regional Office. The outreach program must provide all fishermen and affected businesses the opportunity to have grievances addressed and alternatives fully discussed before any Council adopts NOAA's policy on catch shares. Outreach meetings must be held at venues where fishermen are not limited to five minutes or less to discuss their points of view.

We offer our comments on behalf of all individual members and all associations affiliated with the organization.

Bob Jones
Executive Director