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**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The EFP is requested under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*), and regulations at 50 CFR 600.745(b) concerning exempted fishing.

The described research is part of a Cooperative Research Program Grant. The Cooperative Research Program is a means of involving commercial and recreational fishermen in the collection of fundamental fisheries information. Resource collection efforts support the development and evaluation of fisheries management and regulatory options.

The proposed collection for scientific research involves activities otherwise prohibited by regulations implementing the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region. The applicants require authorization to possess undersized and out-of-season snapper and grouper for scientific research activities during the period July 1, 2008, through September 30, 2009. Specimens would be collected from Federal waters off the east coast of Florida and Federal waters off the coasts of Georgia, South Carolina, and North Carolina. Sampling would occur during normal fishing operations of the commercial snapper-grouper vertical hook-and-line fishery. Sampling would occur year-round, collecting up to 500 fish during the course of the sampling. Data collections for this study would support improved information about the catch, bycatch, discards, and discard mortality for species in the snapper-grouper complex. These data would provide insight on a stock's resilience to fishing, and would help refine estimates of long-term biological productivity of the stocks. Currently, these data are unavailable, and it is anticipated project results would yield valuable data within this fishery.

NMFS finds this application warrants further consideration. Based on a preliminary review, NMFS intends to issue an EFP. Possible conditions the agency may impose on this permit, if it is indeed granted, include but are not limited to, a prohibition of conducting research within marine protected areas, marine sanctuaries, or special management zones, without additional authorization. Additionally, NMFS may prohibit the possession of Nassau or goliath grouper, and require any sea turtles taken incidentally during the course of fishing or scientific research activities to be handled with due care to prevent injury to live specimens, observed for activity, and returned to

the water. A final decision on issuance of the EFP will depend on a NMFS review of public comments received on the application, consultations with the affected states, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council, and the U.S. Coast Guard, and a determination that it is consistent with all applicable laws.

**Authority:** 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: May 15, 2008.

**Emily H. Menashes,**

*Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)

[Docket Number: 080513656-8657-01]

#### Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research; NOAA Science Advisory Board's Ecosystem Sciences and Management Working Group

**AGENCY:** Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce (DOC).

**ACTION:** Notice of solicitation for members of the NOAA Science Advisory Board's Ecosystem Sciences and Management Working Group.

**SUMMARY:** The Under Secretary of Commerce for Oceans and Atmosphere requested the NOAA Science Advisory Board (SAB) to establish a standing working group to provide scientific advice and broad direction on NOAA's ecosystem related programs in the context of both national and international activities. The Ecosystem Sciences and Management Working Group (ESMWG) will focus on research, monitoring, and management components of NOAA's ecosystem portfolio, as well as the underlying observations and data management issues. The ESMWG will assist in establishing plans, assessing progress, and reviewing priorities on a continuing basis. The ESMWG will be composed of 10-12 scientists and leaders in the following disciplines as related to ecosystem sciences and management: social science, oceanography, living marine resources, sampling and remote sensing, and modeling. The SAB is requesting nominations for membership in the ESMWG.

**DATES:** Nominations must be received July 21, 2008.

**ADDRESSES:** Nominations should be submitted electronically to *noaa.sab.ecosystem@noaa.gov*, or mailed to: NOAA Science Advisory Board (SAB) c/o Dr. Cynthia Decker, 1315 East-West Highway-R/SAB, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Dr. Cynthia Decker, 301-734-1156.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The complete Terms of Reference of this working group can be found on the NOAA Science Advisory Board Web site: [http://www.sab.noaa.gov/working\\_groups/standing/docs/2008/ESMWG\\_TOR\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.sab.noaa.gov/working_groups/standing/docs/2008/ESMWG_TOR_FINAL.pdf).

At this time, the SAB is soliciting for up to twelve members in the following disciplines related to ecosystem sciences and management: social science, oceanography, living marine resources, sampling and remote sensing, and modeling. Members should have a credible science background, and an operational knowledge of federal agencies and interactions with state and local partners. Members will be appointed for three-year terms on a rolling and randomized basis with the opportunity for one additional term. The Working Group will convene 2-3 times per year.

The intent is to select the membership of the group from the suggested candidates; however, the SAB retains the prerogative to name members to the working group who were not nominated if it deems this necessary to achieve the desired balance. Once selected, the SAB will post the review panel members' names at <http://www.sab.noaa.gov>.

#### *Nominations:*

Anyone is eligible to nominate members of the working group. Self-nominations will be accepted. Nominations should provide: (1) The nominee's full name, title, institutional affiliation, and contact information; (2) the nominee's area(s) of expertise; and (3) a concise Curriculum Vitae (CV) or resume that covers education, experience, relevant publications and summarizes how this expertise addresses the ESMWG terms of reference.

Dated: May 16, 2008.

**Mark E. Brown,**

*Chief Financial Officer, Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.*

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