

**A RESOLUTION OF THE  
FLORIDA KEYS NATIONAL MARINE SANCTUARY ADVISORY COUNCIL  
October 21, 2008**

Whereas the South Atlantic Fisheries Management Council (SAFMC) voted by an 8-5 margin in September for a closure of the retention of all shallow water Grouper species from Jan 1 2009 until April 30 2009 as a means of protecting spawning Gag Grouper, the so called "interim emergency rule" to amendment 16

And whereas the harvest of Gag Grouper in Monroe County, Florida, represents less than 2% of the total catch for the South Atlantic region.

And whereas a severe economic down turn has resulted in greatly reduced fishing efforts by all user groups

And whereas the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary has trustee responsibilities for marine resources within the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

And whereas a closure of all shallow water Grouper species during the height of the traditional tourist season would have an adverse economic impact on the charter fishing and tourism industry of Monroe County, Florida

And whereas Monroe County, Florida, represents a unique region within the larger South Atlantic area, for many reasons including its inclusion in the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary who's zoning already includes no take zones

Therefore, the Sanctuary Advisory Council (SAC) requests the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Superintendent respectfully request to the SAFMC that they reconsider the interim rule to amendment 16 to exclude all grouper other than Gag Grouper within the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary waters.

Passed unanimously on this date: October 21, 2008.

---

The Council is an advisory body to the sanctuary superintendent. The opinions and findings of this publication do not necessarily reflect the position of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, or the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.