



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
City Commission Agenda Memo
REGULAR MEETING

#16-1496

TO: Honorable Mayor & Members
Fort Lauderdale City Commission

FROM: Lee R. Feldman, ICMA-CM, City Manager

DATE: December 6, 2016

TITLE: Motion Approving a Letter to the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC) Requesting New Catch Allocations, Commercial Trip Limits, and Sale by Licensed Charter Fisherman of Dolphin Fish Species in the Atlantic Ocean off the Coasts of Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Recommendation

It is recommended that the City Commission approve a letter addressed to the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC). The letter asks that the SAFMC recognize the significance of the dolphin fish species to Fort Lauderdale's fishing community by taking action to implement new catch allocations, commercial trip limits on dolphin fish and allow licensed charter fisherman to sell their catch.

Background

Members of the South Atlantic Fishing Environmentalists (S.A.F.E), along with local charter fisherman, approached the Mayor seeking assistance in addressing issues affecting the dolphin fish population in Fort Lauderdale. The group has requested that the Mayor send a letter to the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (SAFMC) seeking to set the permanent total annual catch limit allocation at 93 percent recreational to 7 percent commercial, set a 2,000 pound commercial trip limit, and allow properly licensed charter fisherman the ability to sell their catch of dolphin fish. The proposed letter from the City Commission and signed by the Mayor in his official capacity is included as backup to this memo (Exhibit 1).

The requests from S.A.F.E. and local charter fisherman are in response to what they deem as crisis to the conservation of dolphin fish. Commercial long-line divisions are catching in excess of 30,000 pounds of dolphin fish per trip in the Fort Lauderdale area. This has affected the ability of the species to spawn and has negatively affected the stock of dolphin fish in South Florida. Local charter fisherman rely on the dolphin species to attract tourists and saltwater anglers to the area, and there is a fear that unless commercial trip limits are put in place to protect the dolphin fish species then the industry would be severely damaged.

In addition to placing commercial trip limits on the dolphin species, S.A.F.E and local charter fisherman are requesting that SAFMC allow for properly licensed charter fisherman to sell fresh caught dolphin fish to local fish markets and restaurants.

Resource Impact

There is a no fiscal impact to the City associated with this item.

Strategic Connections

This item is a *Press Play Fort Lauderdale Strategic Plan 2018* initiative, included within the Business Development Cylinder of Excellence, specifically advancing:

- Goal 7: Be a well-positioned City within the global economic and tourism markets of the South Florida region, leveraging our airports, port, and rail connections.
- Objective 2: Facilitate a responsive and proactive business climate.

This item advances the *Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale 2035 Vision Plan: We Are Prosperous*.

Attachments

Exhibit 1 – The Mayor’s Letter to the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

Prepared by: Ryan Henderson, City Manager’s Office

Department Director: Lee R. Feldman, ICMA-CM, City Manager