

Pre-notification Letter

Dear Mr/Ms. XXX:

I have been hired by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to conduct a survey that inquires about fishers' perceptions, attitudes and beliefs about the performance of the red snapper individual fishing quota (IFQ) program. The results of this survey will be used to assist with the review of the Gulf of Mexico red snapper IFQ program as mandated by the reauthorization of the Magnuson Stevens Act (MSA). To examine the socio-economic performance of the program, we need to collect data on the changes brought about the IFQ program particularly as they relate to your fishing and business practices.

You have been selected to participate in this survey. In the next couple of days, you will receive the survey in the mail. **We are requesting that you complete and return the survey in the postage pre-paid envelope to be enclosed.** We will be asking for your thoughts on the strengths and weaknesses of the program as well as economic information on expenditures for crew, fuel, bait, and other trip supplies for your main fishing vessel. Some further questions will inquire about quota and allocation holdings and future participation of the fishery. We have tried to limit the collection to a minimum. All individual information will be strictly confidential and your participation is voluntary.

The information provided will help us voice your opinions about the program and conduct socio-economic analyses to examine whether the program was able to reduce overcapacity and mitigate the adverse impacts of derby fishing. Obtaining this information will be valuable to the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council since they will decide on the future of the program.

If you have any questions or do not receive the survey material in the next two weeks, please contact me at (225) 578-6296

Thank you in advance for your cooperation with this data collection.

Sincerely yours,

Walter Keithly