

Comments received by February 9, 2004, whether specifically directed to the FMP or the proposed rule, will be considered by NMFS in its decision to approve, disapprove, or partially approve Amendment 21. Comments received after that date will not be

considered by NMFS in this decision. All comments received by NMFS on Amendment 21 or the proposed rule during their respective comment periods will be addressed in the final rule.

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

Dated: December 4, 2003.

**Bruce C. Morehead,**

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