

Annotated Agenda - Aquaculture
MAFAC Meeting, Silver Spring, Maryland
October 13-15, 2015

**Mock Permit Project for
the Gulf of Mexico**

John Corbin
Co-Chair, MAFAC Commerce Subcommittee

Bob Rheault
MAFAC Commerce Subcommittee

Objective/Purpose (Update)

The purpose is to update MAFAC on the Aquaculture Task Force's (ATF) project to help the Regulatory Task Force of the Inter Agency Working Group on Aquaculture develop a mock permit application and Coordinated Permit Process for establishing an aquaculture facility in Federal waters in the Gulf of Mexico.

Background/Synopsis

In September, the ATF finalized a mock permit request to establish a commercial aquaculture operation in a primary site of interest in waters off the coast of Texas. The mock pre-application provides a detailed description of the proposed project and preliminary evaluation of the proposed site. The goal of the fictional company is to produce 12 million lbs. of finfish at full build out, the maximum allowed by the draft rule, to be phased in over nine years.

The mock permit was submitted to the Regional Aquaculture Coordinator in the Southeast Regional Office. She will review for completeness and will then schedule a pre-application meeting. This meeting will involve the applicants (the ATF) and representatives from all relevant federal agencies (NOAA, EPA, ACoE, USCG, BOEM). The pre-application meeting will provide the agencies with a project overview as well as allow for discussion of permit requirements. As this is a mock project, it has not yet been determined what the next steps of the process are. There is interest on the part of the ATF to complete an application, when it becomes available, review various draft guidance documents and go through the process to provide feedback to the agencies.