



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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RED SNAPPER COMMERCIAL FISHERY IN GULF OF MEXICO FEDERAL WATERS WILL OPEN AT NOON, JUNE 1, 2003

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) announces that the commercial fishery for red snapper in Gulf of Mexico Federal waters will open at noon, local time, on June 1, 2003, and close at noon, local time, on June 10, 2003. The 2003 Gulf of Mexico red snapper quota is 4.65-million pounds. The commercial fishing season is divided into spring and fall seasons. The spring season began at noon, local time, on February 1, with 3.10 million pounds available, and the fall season begins at noon, local time, on October 1, with the remainder of the annual quota available. During the spring and fall seasons fishing will be allowed during the first 10 days of each month until the quota is reached. Preliminary landings data for February 1-10, 2003 (629,211 pounds), March 1-10, 2003 (597,386 pounds), April 1-10, 2003 (483,992 pounds), and May 1-10, 2003 (515,503 pounds) totaled 2,226,092 pounds of red snapper landed. Therefore, a total of 873,908 pounds remain in the spring quota.

The operator of a vessel with a valid reef fish permit and a Class 1 or Class 2 red snapper license having red snapper aboard must have landed and sold such red snapper before noon, local time, on June 10, 2003. The minimum size limit for the commercial fishery is 15 inches total length.

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NOAA Fisheries is an agency of the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.