



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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December 21, 2006
FB06-062

NOAA FISHERIES SERVICE ANNOUNCES THE OPENING OF THE SNOWY GROUPER AND TILEFISH FISHERY IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC

NOAA Fisheries Service announces the opening of the 2007 fishing year for snowy grouper and tilefish in South Atlantic federal waters. Both fisheries will open at 12:01 a.m., local time January 1, 2007.

The most recent stock assessment on snowy grouper and golden tilefish in the South Atlantic region indicates snowy grouper are overfished and undergoing overfishing, and golden tilefish are undergoing overfishing. In response to these determinations, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council and NOAA Fisheries Service developed and implemented Amendment 13C to the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region. Actions in Amendment 13C include reduced trip limits and annual quotas for the commercial fishery. The

intent of these actions is to address overfishing for both species.

For golden tilefish, the commercial quota for the 2007 fishing year is 295,000 pounds gutted weight (lbs gw) with a 4,000 lbs gw trip limit. These harvesting restrictions are expected to end overfishing immediately.

For snowy grouper, harvesting restrictions will be implemented in annual steps, with the intent of ending overfishing by 2009. For the 2007 fishing year, the quota for the commercial snowy grouper fishery is 118,000 lbs gw with a trip limit of 175 lbs gw. The trip limits and quota will be further reduced in 2008 to an 84,000 lbs gw quota and a 100 lbs gw trip limit.

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FB06-062