



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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May 22, 2013
FB13-041

Recreational Harvest of Snowy Grouper Closing to Vessels Fishing in the South Atlantic Federal Waters on May 31, 2013

Recreational harvest of snowy grouper in the South Atlantic waters will **close, at 12:01 a.m. (local time) May 31, 2013.** Recreational harvest will reopen at 12:01 a.m. (local time) on January 1, 2014. The 2013 recreational annual catch limit is 523 fish. The accountability measure for snowy grouper requires that the 2013 fishing season be shortened if the average 2010-2012 recreational landings exceed the annual catch limit. Reports indicate the average 2010-2012 landings exceeded the annual catch limit; therefore, the recreational harvest of snowy grouper should close by May 31, 2013, to protect the snowy grouper resource.

During the closure:

- Recreational harvest or possession of snowy grouper is prohibited.
- The closure applies in both state and federal

waters for vessels with a valid charter/headboat permit for South Atlantic Snapper-Grouper.

Commercial harvest of snowy grouper for the 2013 fishing season is currently open. Commercial landings are updated on the Southeast Regional Office's Web site:

http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/acl_monitoring/commercial_sa/index.html. Another *Federal Register* notice and Fishery Bulletin will be published if and when the commercial annual catch limit for snowy grouper is projected to be met.

This bulletin provides only a summary of the existing regulations. Full regulations can be found in the *Federal Register*.