



# Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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## **NOAA Fisheries Announces the 2015 Red Grouper Recreational Bag Limit will be Four Fish in Gulf of Mexico Federal Waters**

The 2015 Gulf of Mexico recreational red grouper bag limit will be 4 fish per person per day in federal waters beginning January 1, 2015, until further notice. In addition, the red grouper is part of the 4-fish grouper aggregate bag limit and has a minimum total length of 20 inches for the recreational sector. Red grouper is also included in an annual shallow-water grouper season closure from February 1 through March 31 when fishing beyond the 20-fathom depth contour. For regulation purposes, the 20-fathom depth contour is a series of point-to-point lines that approximate the 20-fathom depth contour. The specific coordinates for these lines are in 50 CFR 627.34.

In 2014, the red grouper bag limit was reduced from 4 fish to 3 fish because the recreational annual catch limit for red grouper was exceeded the previous year. This was a temporary change for 2014 only, intended to extend the 2014 fishing season. For 2015, the bag limit will revert back to 4 fish.

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council has proposed to set the red grouper recreational bag limit at 2 fish, and remove the accountability measure for the bag limit reduction when the annual catch limit is exceeded. If approved, the proposed changes are anticipated to be implemented in 2015.

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