



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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Gulf of Mexico Recreational Gray Triggerfish Federal Fishing Season Will Remain Closed Through December 31, 2016

The annual June 1 through July 31 season closure is currently in effect. The gray triggerfish recreational fishing season will not reopen as scheduled on August 1, 2016. Instead it will remain closed until December 31 and reopen on January 1, 2017, the beginning of the 2017 recreational fishing year.

Currently, the annual catch limit is 241,200 pounds whole weight (pounds) and the annual catch target is 217,100 pounds. The federal fishing season is closed when the annual catch target is met or projected to be met. However, if the harvest exceeds the annual catch limit during a given year, the amount of the overage is subtracted from the catch limit and catch target the following year. The total recreational harvest of gray triggerfish in 2015 exceeded the annual catch limit by 39,977 pounds.

To account for the overage, the 2015 excess catch has been subtracted from the 241,200-pound annual catch limit and 217,000-pound annual catch target, leaving an annual catch limit of 201,223 pounds and an annual catch target of 177,123 pounds for 2016.

NOAA Fisheries projects that the catch target was harvested prior to the June-July seasonal closure. Gulf of Mexico states may not have regulations allowing simultaneous closures in state waters. Therefore, additional harvest may occur in state waters after the federal season closure.