



Gulf of Mexico Fishery Bulletin

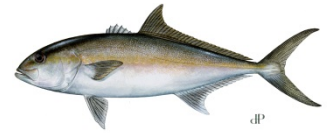
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GREATER AMBERJACK

Seriola lalandi

NOAA Fisheries Announces the Federal Gulf of Mexico Greater Amberjack Recreational Fishing Season Will Close on March 24, 2017

WHAT/WHEN:

Recreational harvest of greater amberjack in federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico **will close at 12:01 a.m., local time, on March 24, 2017**, and will remain closed until January 1, 2018.

WHY THIS CLOSURE IS HAPPENING:

- The 1,255,600-pound whole weight recreational annual catch limit for 2016 was exceeded, requiring the 2017 annual catch limit and annual catch target to be reduced by the amount of the overage in 2016.
- NOAA Fisheries is required to close the recreational sector for greater amberjack when the recreational annual catch target is reached, or is projected to be reached.
- Based on available data, NOAA Fisheries projects the adjusted 335,741-pound whole weight recreational annual catch target for 2017 will be reached by March 24, 2017.
- Therefore, the recreational fishing season will close in federal waters at 12:01 a.m. on March 24, 2017, and remain closed until January 1, 2018.
- This closure is necessary to protect the greater amberjack population. The greater amberjack population is overfished (the population is too low) and limiting harvest is necessary for the population to recover.
- NOAA Fisheries reminds fishermen that state water regulations for greater amberjack may differ from federal water regulations. It is important for fishermen to check the applicable state regulations to determine whether harvest is allowed in state waters.

DURING THE CLOSURE:

- Recreational harvest or possession of greater amberjack is prohibited in federal waters.
- The closure applies in both state and federal waters for vessels that have a valid Gulf of Mexico reef fish charter/headboat permit.

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