



**Gulf of Mexico  
Fishery Bulletin**  
*Bringing Fishing News to You*



KING MACKEREL *Scomberomorus cavalla*

**FB17-025**

**FISHERY BULLETIN ISSUE DATE:** May 3, 2017

**CONTACT:** Kelli O'Donnell, 727-824-5305, [Kelli.ODonnell@NOAA.gov](mailto:Kelli.ODonnell@NOAA.gov)

**NOAA Fisheries Announces the Opening of the Western, Northern,  
and Southern (Gillnet component) Zones to Commercial King  
Mackerel Fishing in the Gulf of Mexico on  
May 11, 2017**

**KEY MESSAGE:**

NOAA Fisheries announces the re-opening of the western, northern, and southern (gillnet component only) Gulf of Mexico zones to commercial king mackerel fishing at **12:01 a.m. local time, May 11, 2017**. NOAA Fisheries will publish a closure notice for each zone when the respective quota is projected to be reached.

**WHY THIS RE-OPENING IS HAPPENING**

- A final rule effective on May 11, 2017, increases the quota for each zone in the Gulf of Mexico.
- The western, northern, and southern zones are currently closed because landings reached the old quotas.
- The increase in the quotas allows additional harvest for the 2016/2017 fishing year, thus NOAA Fisheries is re-opening the zones in the Gulf of Mexico which have available remaining quota to commercial king mackerel fishing.
- The landings for the southern zone hook-and-line component exceeded the original quota and are at 100 percent of the new quota; thus, only the western, northern, and southern (gillnet component only) zones will re-open.

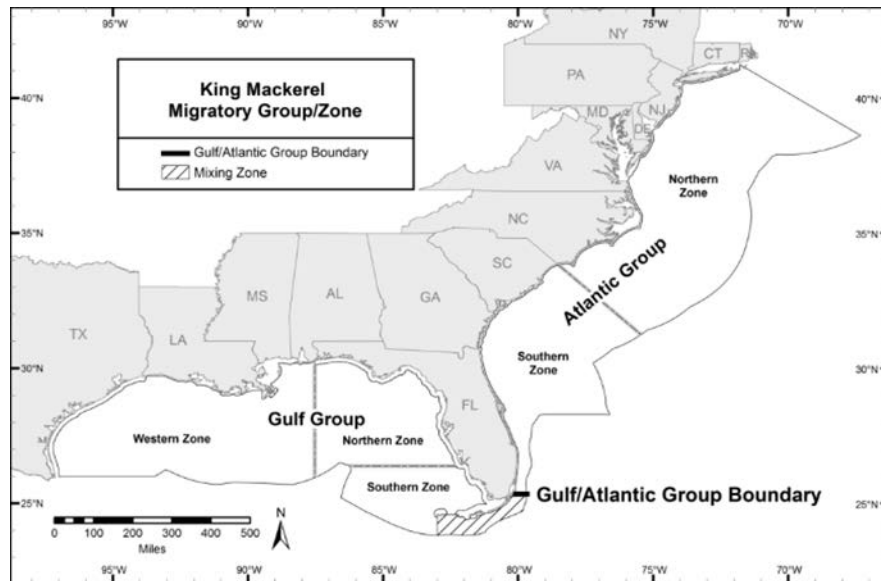
- Beginning May 11, hook-and-line fishing will be prohibited in the Florida Keys, which will now be part of the southern zone in the Gulf year round, and thus is subject to the Gulf of Mexico southern zone hook-and-line component closure.
- Additional quota information for the 2016/2017 season is as follows:

	Pounds landed	Old quota	Old quota %	New quota	New quota %	Pounds left
<b>Western</b>	1,114,278	1,071,360	104.00	1,180,000	94.43	65,722
<b>Northern</b>	289,641	178,848	161.95	531,000	54.55	241,359
<b>Southern Hook and Line</b>	619,544	551,448	112.35	619,500	100.01	0
<b>Southern Gillnet</b>	534,892	551,448	97.00	619,500	86.34	84,608

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

### Where are the zones that will re-open?

- Please see the map below.



### Why aren't all of the zones re-opening?

- Zones are only re-opening if there is sufficient available quota to harvest

- NOAA Fisheries determined that the southern zone hook-and-line component does not have sufficient quota available to allow for a re-opening and a timely closure to prevent exceeding their quota.
- Therefore, the southern zone hook and line sector will not be re-opening for the 2016/2017 fishing year when the final rule becomes effective May 11.
- Because the Florida Keys will now be part of the southern zone in the Gulf year round, harvest of hook-and-line fishing there for king mackerel is prohibited when the southern zone is closed.

### What will the quotas be in later fishing years?

- Quota for years up to the 2019/2020 fishing years are listed below.

Year	Western	Northern	Southern Hook and Line	Southern Gillnet
2016/2017	1,180,000	531,000	619,500	619,500
2017/2018	1,136,000	511,200	596,400	596,400
2018/2019	1,116,000	502,200	585,900	585,900
2019/2020	1,096,000	493,200	575,400	575,400

### What is the status of the king mackerel population in the Gulf of Mexico?

- A 2014 assessment determined that the Gulf of Mexico king mackerel population is not undergoing overfishing (too many fish being harvested) nor is it considered to be overfished (too few fish).
- The assessment indicates that catch levels for the population can be increased.

### Related Links and Information can be found on NOAA Fisheries Website:

[http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable\\_fisheries/gulf\\_sa/cmp/2016/am%2026/index.html](http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/gulf_sa/cmp/2016/am%2026/index.html)

### **SIGN UP FOR TEXT MESSAGE ALERTS - FIND OUT ABOUT IMMEDIATE OPENINGS AND CLOSURES**

NOAA's Text Message Alert Program allows you to receive important fishery related alerts via text message (SMS). Standard message & data rates may apply. You may opt-out at any time.

Text alerts you may receive include:

- Immediate fishery openings and closures
- Any significant changes to fishing regulations that happen quickly

Sign up for one or more of the following groups:

- **Gulf of Mexico Recreational Fisheries Related Alerts**
  - Text GULFRECFISH to 888777
- **Gulf of Mexico Commercial Fisheries Related Alerts**
  - Text GULFCOMMFISH to 888777

- **South Atlantic Recreational Fisheries Related Alerts**
  - Text SATLRECFISH to 888777
- **South Atlantic Commercial Fisheries Related Alerts**
  - Text SATLCOMMFIH to 888777
- **Caribbean Fisheries Related Alerts**
  - Text CARIBFISH to 888777

**Other contacts:**

Media: Kim Amendola, 727-551-5707

Allison Garrett, 727-551-5750