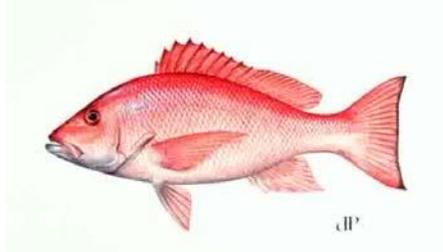


Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper Proposed Rule – Quota Increase

Frequently Asked Questions

April 2013



What will the proposed rule do?

- Set the 2013 quota for commercial and recreational harvest.
 - The red snapper quota would be increased from **8.08** million pounds whole weight in 2012 to **8.46** million pounds whole weight in 2013.

	2012	2013
Overall Quota	8.080	8.460
Commercial Allocation (51%)	4.121	4.315
Recreational Allocation (49%)	3.959	4.145

How would the proposed rule affect the recreational red snapper season in 2013?

- For all federal waters, the season begins June 1, 2013.
 - States with consistent regulations (**Tentative**)
 - In federal and state waters off Mississippi and Alabama, the season will end June 28, 2013.
 - States with inconsistent regulations (**Tentative**)
 - In federal waters off Texas, the season will be 12 days long, ending June 12, 2013. Texas state waters are open all year for recreational red snapper fishing with a four-fish bag limit.
 - In federal waters off Louisiana, the season will be 8 days long, ending June 8, 2013. Louisiana state waters are open weekends only (Friday, Saturday, Sunday), March 23 – September 30, 2013, with a three-fish bag limit.
 - In federal waters off Florida, the season will be 21 days long, ending June 21, 2013. Florida state waters are open June 1 – July 14, 2013, with a two-fish bag limit.
- **The final recreational red snapper season dates will be announced in a Fishery Bulletin and posted on the Southeast Regional Office's Web page: <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov> .**

How would the proposed rule affect the commercial red snapper sector?

- Because the commercial sector is managed under an individual fishing quota (IFQ) program, and has maintained landings within their quota in recent years, the increase in quota would be reflected in the allocation of pounds of red snapper for the fishing year.

What is the status of the current action?

- The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council submitted the framework action to NOAA Fisheries Service on March 8, 2013, for review by the Secretary of Commerce.
- The proposed rule published in the *Federal Register* on April 4, 2013, and will be subject to a 15-day public comment period until April 19, 2013.
- Comments may be submitted:
 - By mail: Cynthia Meyer, NOAA Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, Sustainable Fisheries Division, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505.
 - By Electronic Submission: Federal e-Rulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>.
 - Enter the following docket number into the “Search” box:
NOAA-NMFS-2013-0055.
 - Select the appropriate title, and click “Submit a Comment.”

How is the red snapper fishery currently managed?

- Recreational red snapper harvest in federal waters:
 - 49 % of the quota.
 - Minimum size limit of 16 inches total length.
 - Daily bag limit of two fish with a zero bag limit for the captain and crew of for-hire vessels.
 - Seasonal closure: Opens June 1, and closure date is announced each year.
- Commercial red snapper harvest:
 - 51 % of the quota.
 - Minimum size limit of 13 inches total length.
 - IFQ program, which allocates the commercial quota among individual fishers and corporations (see link at end of this document).

Will any other changes take place for red snapper this year?

- A new stock assessment will be presented to the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council in June 2013 and may influence the current catch level recommendation.
- If the recommended catch level from the stock assessment is higher than the current catch level, the recreational quota could be increased.

Links to additional information on red snapper management and rulemaking

- Red snapper assessment process and reports (http://www.sefsc.noaa.gov/sedar/Sedar_Workshops.jsp?WorkshopNum=07)
- Regulations implemented in 2008 through Amendment 27/14 for Gulf of Mexico red snapper and shrimp fisheries (http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sf/RedSnapper/Amendment_27_14.htm)
- Commercial red snapper IFQ program (<https://ifq.sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/ifqrs/index.cfm>)
- Red snapper recreational quota closure (<http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sf/RedSnapperClosure.htm>)
- Recreational Red Snapper Management http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/gulf_fisheries/red_snapper/index.html