

South Atlantic
Frequently Asked Questions
Proposed Regulations for Red Snapper in the South Atlantic
Amendment 28
March 2013

What are the proposed actions in Amendment 28?

- *A process* to determine if a fishing season will occur each year, the allowable harvest, and the season lengths for the commercial and recreational sectors.
- *An equation* to determine the annual catch limit amount for each sector.
- *Management measures* if fishing is allowed.

Will red snapper be allowed in 2013?

- It is unknown whether a season in 2013 will occur. The proposed actions, if they are implemented, only specify a process to determine *if* a season would occur.

What is the process to determine if a season is to occur?

- If NOAA Fisheries determines that the estimated landings and dead discards that occurred in the previous year are equal to or greater than the allowable catch for the current year, no harvest would be allowed and the annual catch limit would remain equal to zero. However, if NOAA Fisheries determines that the previous year's estimated landings and dead discards are less than the allowable catch, then the annual catch limit would be set to the amount of harvest that may be allowed for the current year.

If there is a fishing season, what are proposed management measures for the commercial sector?

- Opening date of second Monday in July. The season would end when the annual catch limit is projected to be met.
- Elimination of the current 20 inch minimum size limit during the fishing season.
- Commercial trip limit of 75 pounds gutted weight.

If there is a fishing season, what are proposed management measures for the recreational sector?

- Opening date of second Friday in July. The season would only consist of weekends (Friday, Saturday, and Sunday). The end date would be announced at the same time the opening day is announced.
- Elimination of the current 20 inch minimum size limit during the fishing season.
- A recreational bag limit of one fish per person per day.

Is it possible the red snapper fishing season dates will change if severe weather conditions occur?

- NOAA Fisheries may change the commercial and recreational season dates if severe weather conditions exist during the currently scheduled seasons.
- If severe weather conditions exist, NOAA Fisheries will file a notification to that effect with the Office of the Federal Register, and announce via NOAA Weather Radio and a *Fishery Bulletin* any change in the red snapper fishing seasons.

What are the regulations after the South Atlantic red snapper fishing seasons end?

- Currently, and after the fishing seasons, red snapper may not be harvested or possessed in federal waters of the South Atlantic and in state waters for vessels holding federal snapper-grouper permits.

Where can I find more information on Amendment 28?

- Contact NOAA Fisheries, Southeast Regional Office

By Mail: Rick DeVactor
NOAA Fisheries, Southeast Regional Office
Sustainable Fisheries Division
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505

By FAX: (727) 824-5308

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- Amendment 28 may be found online at the National Marine Fisheries Service Southeast Regional Office Web site at: <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sf/SASnapperGrouperHomepage.htm>.

How can I submit a comment on Amendment 28?

- You may submit comments by either of the following methods. Comments received through other means may not be considered.

Electronic Submissions: Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal.

- Go to: www.regulations.gov/#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2013-0040
- Click on “Comment Now!”. Complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.
- Attachments to electronic comments (up to 10 MB) will be accepted in Microsoft Word, Excel, WordPerfect, or Adobe PDF file formats only.

- **Mail:** Rick DeVactor
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