



# Reef Fish Amendment 28 Red Snapper Allocation

9/17/2013



Photos courtesy of: Kathy Hoak and Mike Jennings.

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### How do your comments affect fishery management?

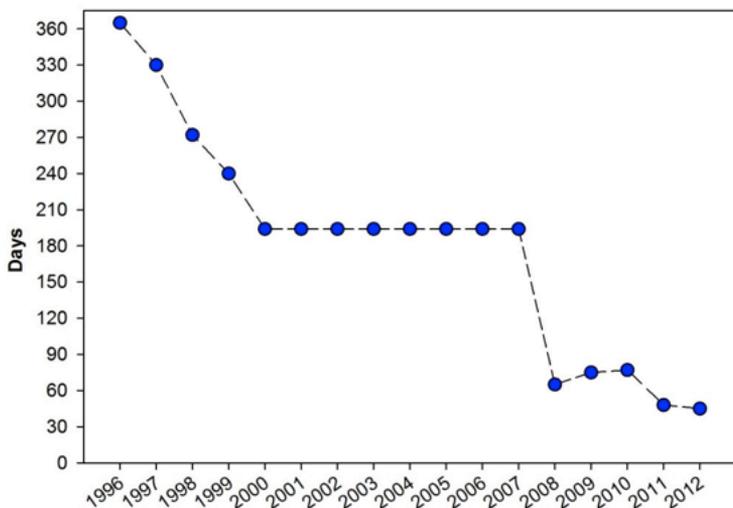
Your comments are reported to the Council and NOAA Fisheries Service, and will be considered as the amendment goes through the development process. Once a public hearing draft and draft environmental impact statement are developed, you will have another opportunity to comment on the management alternatives under consideration. Your input will be considered as the Council deliberates and chooses the most appropriate management measures.

## Introduction

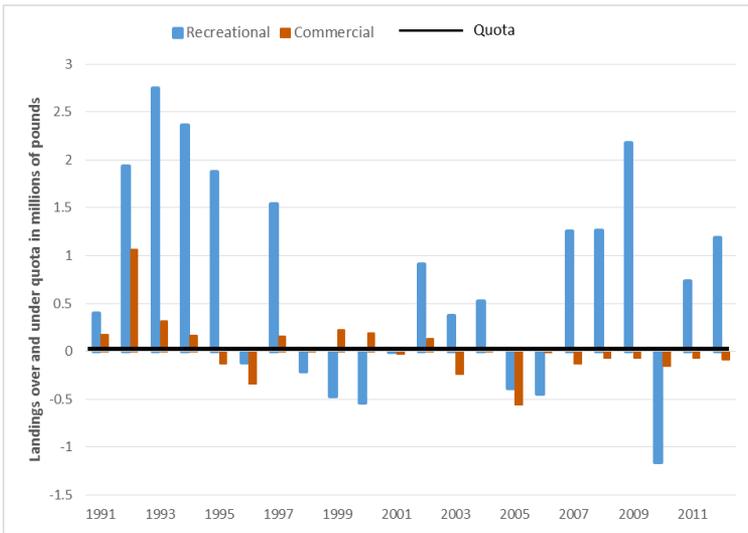
The current allocation of Gulf of Mexico red snapper, which is 51% commercial and 49% recreational, was established in 1990 through Reef Fish Amendment 1. This allocation was based on the historical average of red snapper landings by sector from 1979 through 1987.

The red snapper stock in the Gulf of Mexico has been under a rebuilding plan since 1997, and in 2012, NOAA Fisheries declared that overfishing of the stock had ended.

Since 2007, the recreational red snapper season has become shorter and shorter, with an overharvest every year except 2010, the year of the BP oil spill (Figures 1 and 2). The commercial sector, which has operated under an Individual Fishing Quota program since 2007, has the potential for a year-round season and has consistently harvested below its quota (Figure 2).



**Figure 1.** Season length (days) that the Gulf of Mexico recreational red snapper season was open from 1996 through 2012.



**Figure 2.** Differences between annual red snapper landings and quotas by sector, 1990 through 2012. Positive values indicate landings are greater than the quota; negative values indicate landings are less than the quota.



To provide a historical perspective of landings, Table 1 shows the recreational and commercial harvests in millions of pounds and as a percent of the total landings from 1986 to 2012.

**Table 1.** Recreational and commercial red snapper landings, in million pounds whole weight and in percent of the total landings.

Year	Recreational		Commercial	
	Pounds	Percent	Pounds	Percent
1986	2.770	42.81	3.700	57.19
1987	1.814	37.15	3.069	62.85
1988	2.568	39.34	3.960	60.66
1989	2.656	46.16	3.098	53.84
1990	1.614	37.85	2.650	62.15
1991	2.358	51.59	2.213	48.41
1992	3.899	55.66	3.106	44.34
1993	5.687	62.76	3.374	37.24
1994	5.299	62.19	3.222	37.81
1995	4.814	62.13	2.934	37.87
1996	4.346	50.19	4.313	49.81
1997	6.008	55.54	4.810	44.46
1998	4.258	47.64	4.680	52.36
1999	3.999	45.06	4.876	54.94
2000	3.932	44.84	4.837	55.16
2001	4.468	49.14	4.625	50.86
2002	5.383	52.97	4.779	47.03
2003	4.847	52.37	4.409	47.63
2004	4.996	51.79	4.651	48.21
2005	4.084	49.93	4.096	50.07
2006	4.021	46.38	4.649	53.62
2007	4.440	58.24	3.183	41.76
2008	3.712	59.91	2.484	40.09
2009	4.625	65.06	2.484	34.94
2010	2.239	39.76	3.392	60.24
2011	4.602	56.15	3.594	43.85
2012	5.146	56.04	4.036	43.96

Source: NMFS SERO

In recent years, the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council has expressed its intent to evaluate and possibly adjust the allocation of red snapper between the commercial and recreational sectors. Amendment 28 aims to reallocate red snapper resources between the commercial and recreational sectors to increase the net benefits from red snapper fishing and increase the stability of the red snapper component of the reef fish fishery, particularly the recreational sector that has experienced shorter and shorter seasons. The resulting allocation must distribute benefits expected from red snapper resources in a fair and equitable manner.

## Scope of Actions

### **I. Allocation of Red Snapper**

The alternatives include a “no action” alternative where the 51:49 commercial:recreational allocation remains, three alternatives that shift allocation by the amount of 3%, 5%, or 10% of the quota from the commercial sector to the recreational sector, and two alternatives that allocate either 75% or 100% of quota increases to the recreational sector if the allowable red snapper harvest is greater than 9.12 million pounds.

#### Issues

Do nothing - Leave the allocation where it is? This no action alternative would leave the allocation at 51:49 commercial:recreational.

Reallocation of Quota - How should the existing quota be reallocated between the recreational and commercial sectors? Current alternatives under this action would increase the recreational allocation between 3% and 10%. Should some other percentage be considered?

Allocation of Quota Increases - How should future quota increases be allocated between the recreational and commercial sectors? Current alternatives under this action would allocate either 75% or 100% of quota increases to the recreational sector if the allowable red snapper harvest is greater than 9.12 million pounds. The current allocation remains in place if the quota is 9.12 million pounds or less. The 9.12 million pound level is equal to the red snapper total allowable catch from 1996 to 2006. Should some other percentage be considered?

The draft options paper for Amendment 28 that was reviewed by the Council during its August 2013 meeting can be found [here](#).

To comment, please visit: <http://tinyurl.com/ndzbvny>, or click on the thermometer icon on our home page at [www.gulfcouncil.org](http://www.gulfcouncil.org).





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