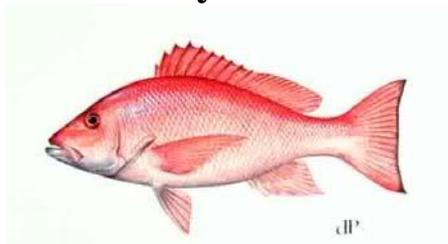


# Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper

## Final Rule – Commercial and Recreational Quota Increases

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### May 2015



#### How did the final rule change the Gulf of Mexico red snapper quotas?

- The final rule increased the quotas for commercial and recreational harvest of red snapper for 2015-2017. Unless changed in the future by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (Council), the values for 2017 will remain effective for 2018 and onward.
- For 2015, the total allowable catch is increasing from 11.0 million pounds (mp) whole weight to 14.3 mp.
- The commercial and recreational quotas are based on the current allocation where 51 percent of the allowable catch is provided to the commercial sector and 49 percent goes to the recreational sector. **The commercial quota will be 7.29 mp; the recreational quota will be 7.01 mp.**

#### What is the effect of the recent partitioning of the recreational sector into two components with their own sub-quotas (Amendment 40)?

- To better ensure the recreational sector does not exceed its quota, the Council recently established a recreational catch target that is less than the recreational quota.
- NOAA Fisheries bases the recreational fishing season on this catch target.
- Amendment 40 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf of Mexico established a federal charter vessel/headboat (**for-hire**) component and a **private angling** component within the recreational sector, allocated the red snapper recreational quota and annual catch target between the components, and established separate seasonal closure provisions for the two components.
- The resulting annual catch targets for each component are 2.371 mp for the **for-hire** component, and 3.234 mp for the **private angling** component of the recreational sector.

#### What are the red snapper recreational seasons for each component, bag limits, and size limits in 2015?

- Based on the allocations between the two components of the recreational sector, the fishing season for both the for-hire and private angling components will open on June 1, 2015, at 12:01 a.m., local time. Closing dates are:
  - **Private Angling Component:** June 11, 2015, at 12:01 a.m., local time.
  - **For-Hire Component:** July 15, 2015, at 12:01 a.m., local time.
- The federal red snapper bag limit is 2 fish with a 16-inch minimum total length size limit.

### **How does the quota increase affect the red snapper commercial sector?**

- Because the commercial sector is managed under an individual fishing quota program, the increase in quota will be allocated as pounds of red snapper among participating shareholders on or shortly after the effective date of the final rule.

### **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](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/sustainable\\_fisheries/gulf\\_fisheries/reef\\_fish/archives/reef\\_fish\\_amend\\_27\\_june\\_2007.pdf](http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/gulf_fisheries/reef_fish/archives/reef_fish_amend_27_june_2007.pdf)).
- Commercial red snapper Individual Fishing Quota program (<https://portal.southeast.fisheries.noaa.gov/cs/>).
- Recreational Red Snapper Management ([http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable\\_fisheries/gulf\\_fisheries/red\\_snapper/index.html](http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/gulf_fisheries/red_snapper/index.html)).
- Amendment 40- Partitioning the Recreational Sector ([http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable\\_fisheries/gulf\\_fisheries/reef\\_fish/2013/am40/index.html](http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/gulf_fisheries/reef_fish/2013/am40/index.html))