



## **Press Release**

**June 27, 2019**

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### **2019 Private Angler Red Snapper Fishing Update**

For 2018 and 2019, the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (ADCNR) has been issued an Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) from NOAA Fisheries to manage the private vessel and state-licensed charter vessel components of Alabama's recreational red snapper fishery. The EFP does not cover federally permitted charter vessels, which have their own season. The 2019 private angler season began June 1 and is expected to be open every Friday, Saturday and Sunday through July 28 and the Fourth of July – a total of 27 days.

In 2019, Alabama's red snapper quota is 1,079,513 pounds. ADCNR monitors red snapper landings via Snapper Check, a program created to collect mandatory reports from recreational anglers landing red snapper in Alabama.

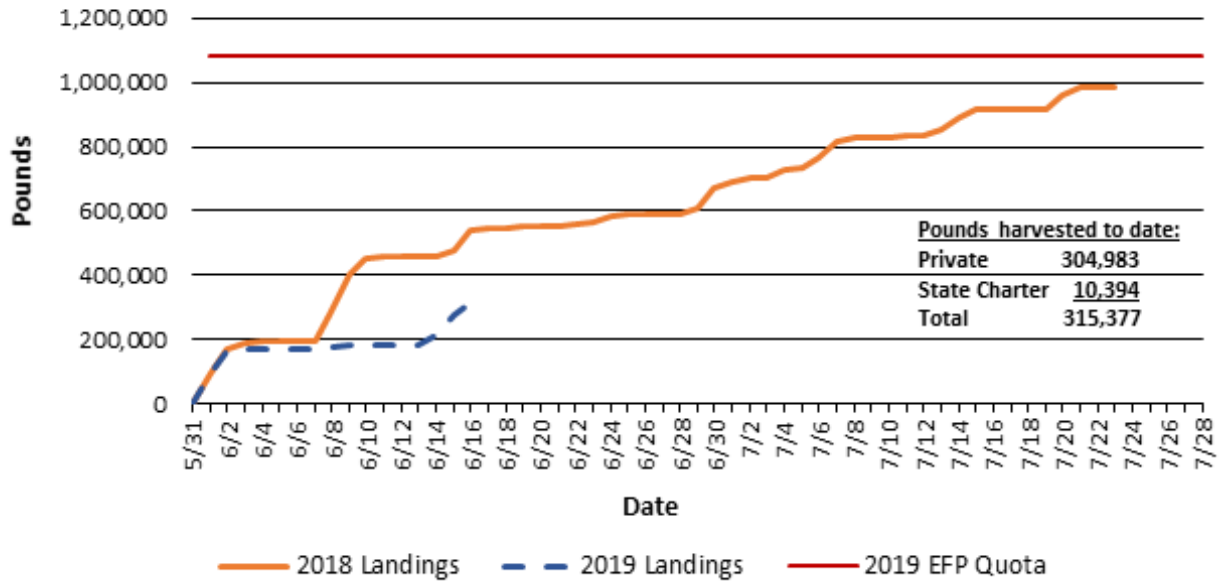
In order to obtain landings estimates, the number of reported harvested fish is multiplied by the average weight of fish measured and weighed by ADCNR staff from randomly selected vessels. The reporting ratio is determined by comparing information collected by ADCNR staff at public boat ramps and marinas to vessel reports submitted by anglers through Snapper Check.

Through June 16, 2019 – the first three weekends of the nine-weekend season – an estimated 315,377 pounds have been harvested by recreational anglers from private and state-licensed charter vessels (see graph below). The average weight of the fish has been 7.17 pounds. This estimate is based on the current Snapper Check reporting rate of 50%. The percentage of harvested quota and elapsed fishing days are nearly identical at 29.2 and 28.6, respectively.

ADCNR recognizes the impact that local weather has on the landings this season and will continue to monitor the fishing effort, catch rates, and average fish size to determine if the season length will need to be adjusted.

The goal of the state-managed plan is to ensure that anglers fishing from Alabama have the opportunity to catch the state's fish allocation but not exceed those pounds. The critical portion of managing the quota is accurate and timely reporting by anglers through the Snapper Check program. Any landings amount above the quota in 2019 will be deducted from the 2020 quota prior to the start of the 2020 season.

“There have been a lot of nice red snapper landed in Alabama this year despite the rough waters,” said Chris Blankenship, Commissioner of the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. “We are a little below our projections due to the winds earlier this month. We hope the winds are fairer through the Fourth of July holiday weekend, so people can enjoy catching this tasty fish.



“We appreciate the fishermen who have reported their catch through Snapper Check, but there is definitely room for improvement. Our officers will be issuing citations for vessels that fail to report their catch before landing,” Blankenship said.

Anglers are reminded that the federally permitted, for-hire charter boats are not managed under the state system. That season runs seven days a week until August 1, 2019.

Additional information regarding the Alabama EFP and 2019 season statistics can be found at <https://www.outdooralabama.com/saltwater-fishing/exempted-fishing-permit>.

The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources promotes wise stewardship, management and enjoyment of Alabama’s natural resources through four divisions: Marine Resources, State Lands, State Parks, and Wildlife and Freshwater Fisheries. To learn more about ADCNR, visit [www.outdooralabama.com](http://www.outdooralabama.com).

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