



Press Release

April 4, 2019

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Alabama Receives Approval to Manage Recreational Red Snapper Fishery *Recreational Season Begins June 1*

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council met this week in Biloxi, Mississippi, to take final action on Reef Fish Amendment 50: State Management for Recreational Red Snapper. The Council voted unanimously to delegate management authority of the private angling component for recreational red snapper fishing to each Gulf state, beginning with the 2020 fishing year. Under this amendment each state is allocated a portion of the recreational quota. Alabama was allocated just over 26% of the total recreational red snapper quota.

The quota will be allocated as follows:

- Alabama: 26.298%
- Florida: 44.822%
- Louisiana: 19.120%
- Mississippi: 3.550%
- Texas: 6.210%

The Council also will allow a state to close areas of federal waters adjacent to the state by requesting that National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) implement the closure.

Alabama Marine Resources Director Scott Bannon is pleased with the Council's decision. "We are very excited about the opportunity to manage the private angler red snapper season at the state level," he said. "The exempted fishing permits (EFPs) that the states have used for the 2018 and 2019 seasons have shown that the states can be responsive to the desires of the anglers and manage the fishery in a responsible manner.

"The process to develop a fair and equitable amendment has been a very challenging one, and I am very pleased with the efforts of all five Gulf States Fisheries Directors and the Gulf Council. This is good for the private anglers and the fish stock," Bannon said.

Beginning in 2020, the states will have the authority to establish bag limits, minimum size limits (within the designated range) and a maximum size. "These are all tools that resource managers use to ensure stability of a stock and maximize opportunities for anglers," Bannon said.

The Alabama 2019 red snapper fishing season for anglers fishing from a private vessel or state-licensed guide boat will be three-day weekends (Friday-Sunday) from June 1 through July 28, 2019, including Thursday, July 4. Except for the opening weekend, which begins on a Saturday, weekends are defined as 12:01 a.m. Friday through 11:59 p.m. Sunday. This season only applies to private anglers and state-licensed Alabama commercial party boats that do not hold federal for-hire fishing permits. Federal for-hire charter boats will still be under federal management with seasons set by the NMFS. The federally permitted charter season runs from June 1-August 2.

For the 2019 private angling red snapper season in Alabama, the size limit will be 16 inches total length and the bag/possession limit will be two per person per day.

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.