



## Louisiana Fisheries 2011 Legislative Update

The following are bills relevant to fisheries in Louisiana and their status at the end of the session. For more information on any bill, go to <http://www.legis.state.la.us/> and search by the bill type (HB, SB, HCR, etc.) and number.

### HB292 MORRIS

- Status: Sent to the Governor
- Summary: ENVIRONMENT: Provides for litter abatement, enforcement and education programs

### HB293 DOVE

- Status: Sent to the Governor
- Summary: FISHING/VESSELS: Authorizes the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to regulate the taking of certain species of fish and to require the use of vessel monitoring systems in certain circumstances

### HB312 CHANDLER

- Status: Sent to the Governor
- Summary: FISHING/DEVICES: Provides relative to placement of hoop nets in Little River

### HB321 DOERGE

- Status: Subject to call - House Final Passage
- Summary: WATER/RESOURCES: Provides for the authority to sell the surface waters of Lake Bistineau

### HB423 HOWARD

- Status: Assigned to House Natural Resources
- Summary: WATERWAYS/RIVERS: Provides relative to acquisition of property for wetlands mitigation associated with the Comite River Diversion Project

## HCR97 HOFFMANN

- Status: Filed with the Secretary of State
- Summary: WILDLIFE & FISHERIES: Urges and requests the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to study creel limits on freshwater fish in the state

## HCR102 DOVE

- Status: Filed with the Secretary of State
- Summary: FISHING/COMMERCIAL: Expresses support for the request by the secretary of the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to the U.S. Secretary of Commerce to declare a fisheries disaster in the state of Louisiana

## HR34 HARRISON

- Status: Filed with the Secretary of State
- Summary: SPECIAL DAY/WEEK/MONTH: Recognizes Tuesday, May 10, 2011, as Seafood Day in Louisiana

## SB73 MORRISH

- Status: Sent to the Governor
- Summary: FISH/FISHING: Provides relative to oyster harvesting in Calcasieu Lake

## SB81 MILLS

- Status: Sent to the Governor
- Summary: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Creates the Louisiana Buy Local Purchase Incentive Program to promote the consumption of Louisiana agricultural products by granting incentive payments to certain restaurant establishments for purchases of Louisiana agricultural products

## SB240 CHABERT

- Status: Assigned to Senate Natural Resources
- Summary: FISH/FISHING: Provides relative to oysters leases

## SCR18 MORRISH

- Status: Filed with the Secretary of State
- Summary: FISH/FISHING: Requests the office of coastal protection and restoration and the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries to jointly study shoreline protection, effects on marine species diversity and habitat quality, and economic and other ecosystem service values of the Sabine Reef

### Oyster Reef Rehabilitation

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) biologists, along with Louisiana Sea Grant scientists, deployed more than 100 million oyster larvae and 500,000 oyster spat (immature oysters approximately one-quarter inch in size). This joint effort between LDWF and Louisiana State

University (LSU) is part of a \$500,000 grant provided to LSU to help rehabilitate vital oyster grounds impacted by hurricanes in the last six years.

The oyster larvae and spat were released in the Hackberry Bay Public Oyster Seed Reservation, located in north Barataria Bay. The specimens were deployed on test plots of reef to enable biologists to track progress.

This is the first of many ventures to help rehabilitate Louisiana's oyster grounds. The state plans to institute similar deployments of larvae and spat on other public grounds and private leases. Figures prior to the Deepwater Horizon incident in 2010 indicate that Louisiana produces approximately one-third of all oysters harvested in the United States and 50 percent of oysters harvested in the Gulf of Mexico.

### **Summer Camp for Kids 12 to 16 Years Old**

LDWF is sponsoring a summer camp from July 18-22 for children aged 12 to 16 at the Waddill Outdoor Education Center in Baton Rouge.

The camp is completely free of charge and will allow participants to receive their official boater and hunter education certifications. LDWF will also offer a fish identification class, fishing and canoeing in the ponds at the Waddill Outdoor Education Center, skeet shooting and other outdoor-related classes and activities.

"We want to teach children, before they finish middle and high school, the fun and excitement of spending time outdoors," said LDWF Secretary Robert Barham. "For a week, parents have the chance to let their kids become sportsmen and women in a safe, supervised environment. Not only will they get valuable boater and hunter education certificates, but they will have the chance to get excited about spending less time with computers and video games and more time enjoying the truly exciting activities Louisiana's great outdoors has to offer."

The Louisiana Wildlife Agents Association and Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Foundation are providing a daily lunch free of charge for the five-day summer camp. Cabela's in Gonzales also donated a rod and reel combo set that each child will receive to fish with while at the camp and take home. In addition to LDWF's instructors, the Louisiana branch of the Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) will also have personnel on site and will give each student a CCA membership upon completion of the camp.

The camp is open to the first 20 children who register. Contact Adam Einck at (225)765-2465 or [aeinck@wlf.la.gov](mailto:aeinck@wlf.la.gov). The camp is only open to children who do not have a boater or hunter education certificate.

## **Lagniappe Fisheries Newsletter**

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## Construction Completed on Louisiana's Largest Limestone Inshore Artificial Reef

The Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) and LDWF have completed construction on Independence Island Reef. It is believed to be the largest limestone inshore artificial reef project ever in Louisiana. Work crews finished the job on June 7.

“This project is the result of nearly two years of hard work and dedication by CCA volunteers, the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and NOAA,” said David Cresson, CCA Louisiana Executive Director. “We are so appreciative of all of them for their incredible commitment to this important project. Anglers and their families will enjoy the benefits of this reef for generations.”



Construction on the Reef. Photo credit: Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries

LDWF Assistant Secretary Randy Pausina said, “The recreational fishing industry has sustained a number of challenges over the last six years. Hurricanes, the BP oil spill and recent flood waters from the Mississippi River have and will continue to impact our inshore reefs along Louisiana’s coast. Projects like this one are an essential component in restoring our recreational fisheries. We are incredibly grateful to Governor Jindal, Secretary Barham, CCA and of all our partners for their leadership in what is an essential effort to rebuild areas along our coast that have been damaged by erosion.”

Nearly 8,000 tons of limestone were dropped from barges onto four acres about three miles northeast of Grand Isle, where Independence Island was once located. The total site is more than 50 acres. The center of the reef is located at 29° 18' 26.98" N, -89° 56' 01.01" W and will be marked by several mooring buoys that will be deployed later this month.

Cresson also thanked a number of additional partners who helped make the project possible, namely Shell Oil Company, the Paul Candies Family, Vulcan Materials and Bertucci Contractors.

## Louisiana Boaters Can Take Free Boating Safety Course at Home

LDWF is now offering a new online boating safety course provided by the BoatUS Foundation. The course can be found at [www.BoatUS.org](http://www.BoatUS.org) or [www.wlf.louisiana.gov/boating/courses](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov/boating/courses).

The new online course is approved by LDWF and the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) and allows Louisiana boaters to get their safe boating certification at no cost in the comfort of their own home.

“The department wants to provide as many opportunities as possible for people to get their boating safety certification,” said Lt. Col. Jeff Mayne, the state’s boating law administrator. “Since the course is free and people can take it at home, we want to encourage everybody to give it a try, even those who don’t need their certification. This free online course will teach new boaters how to become safer on the water and old boaters some new tips.”

Louisiana boaters born after Jan. 1, 1984, must complete a NASBLA-approved boating education course and carry proof of completion to operate a motorboat in excess of 10 horsepower. LDWF initiated the state's boating education program in 2003 and has certified over 40,000 boaters during that time.

Studies have shown that states with a mandatory boating education program have fewer boating incidents that result in fatalities than states that have no boating education program. States with a boating education program for more than 20 years had 3.67 fatalities per 100,000 registered boats, and states with no boating education program had 6.61 fatalities per 100,000 boats.

With the free online course, those looking to get certified now have three options to choose from: the traditional classroom course taught in one day, the free online course from BoatUS.org and an online course for a small fee from boat-ed.com. The free online course and exam is recognized by the U.S. Coast Guard as exceeding the minimum requirements for the National Recreational Boating Safety Program.

"We've loaded the course with interactive animations, videos and photos to give boaters, sailors and anglers an education that goes well beyond the basics of boating," said BoatUS Foundation Director of Boating Safety Chris Edmonston. "It includes videos that demonstrate important safety devices such as visual distress signals, how to get help in an emergency, how to prevent and extinguish fires aboard your boat, and the best way to fit a life jacket to a child so they will not slip out."

Upon successful completion of the course, boaters print out their own certificate as proof of boater education.

### **Local Anglers Take Home Top Prize at Louisiana Saltwater Series Fishing Tournament**

The second annual Louisiana Saltwater Series made its third stop on the tournament trail at Sweetwater Marina in Delacroix with 44 boats entered and over \$7,000 awarded in cash prizes. The series was developed by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) in conjunction with the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Foundation to promote conservation of Louisiana's saltwater sport fish resources and targets one of Louisiana's most valuable sport fish, redfish.

Taking home first place overall were Jason LeBlanc and Kory Matherne of Marrero with a two-fish total weight of 16.57 pounds. A total of 109 redfish were tagged and released during Saturday's event. The results of the tagging will aid conservation efforts for redfish in the future, helping to ensure healthy populations and a successful recreational fishing industry.

## **LOUISIANA RULE CHANGES**

### **Drawdown for Lake Bruin in Tensas Parish**

LDWF, in conjunction with the Lake Bruin Recreation and Water Conservation District, will drawdown Lake Bruin in Tensas Parish beginning Sept. 6.

The water level will be lowered 4 1/2 feet below pool stage and will remain lowered until Dec. 15. The drawdown is being conducted to allow for replacement of a disabled water control structure, vegetation control in the Brushy Lake area, fisheries improvement and also to allow homeowners to conduct shoreline and property maintenance. All homeowners are advised to take appropriate preparatory measures, as boat access into the lake will be limited.

For further information regarding the drawdown, contact LDWF Biologist Manager Ryan Daniel at (318) 343-4044 or Gary Smith, president of the Lake Bruin Recreation and Water Conservation District, at (318) 766-4252.

## **2011 Season for Gag Grouper**

The season for the recreational harvest of gag grouper is set to begin Sept. 16 and will remain open until Nov. 15 in both state and federal waters. The bag limit for gag grouper in Louisiana state waters is up to five gag grouper within a five grouper aggregate bag limit at a minimum size limit of 22 inches total length. Federal regulations allow only two gag grouper within a four grouper aggregate bag limit with a minimum size of 22 inches total length.

The recreational gag grouper season is set based on rules issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service as recommended by the Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council.

Captains and crew of charter vessels have a bag limit of zero. For further information on gag grouper regulations, visit [http://www.gulfcouncil.org/fishing\\_regulations/index.php](http://www.gulfcouncil.org/fishing_regulations/index.php).

## **GULF OF MEXICO RULE CHANGES**

### **Environmental Impact Statement for Sea Turtle Conservation**

Over the past two years, NOAA Fisheries Service has documented elevated sea turtle strandings in the northern Gulf of Mexico, particularly throughout the Mississippi Sound area. A significant number of those turtles necropsied indicate they likely perished due to forced submergence, which is commonly associated with fishery interactions. Additionally, recent information on the size and scope of the skimmer trawl fleet indicates the fishery may be affecting sea turtles in a manner not previously considered, which warrants a new evaluation. As a result, NOAA is considering new regulations to reduce the incidental bycatch and mortality of sea turtles in the shrimp fishery of the southeastern United States.

The scoping process will be the first stage in a multi-step process required by the National Environmental Policy Act to ensure that federal agencies evaluate the environmental impacts of major federal actions. During the scoping process, the public is provided with an opportunity to assist in determining the scope of issues that require analysis. The analysis of issues and the environmental impacts of the proposed actions will be presented in a draft environmental impact statement (EIS), which will be made available for public comment. The notice of intent to prepare the draft EIS was published in the *Federal Register* on June 24. The agency prepared a scoping document and a list of frequently asked questions as aids to the public on the scoping process, available online at <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pr.htm>.

The scoping document describes the major issues, current management and legal requirements, and identifies potential management measures to reduce interactions, and in particular, lethal interactions, between sea turtles and trawl fisheries. Five scoping meetings have been scheduled in July to solicit public input on alternatives to reduce sea turtle bycatch.

The dates, times and locations of the meetings are as follows:

1. *Gray, La.* -- July 12, 12-2 p.m.

Terrebonne Parish Public Library, North Terrebonne Branch  
4130 West Park Ave., Gray, LA 70359

2. *Belle Chasse, La.* -- July 12, 6-8 p.m.

Belle Chasse Community Center  
8398 Hwy. 23, Belle Chasse, LA 70037

3. *Biloxi, Miss.* -- July 13, 4-6 p.m.

Mississippi Department of Marine Resources  
1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi, MS 39530

4. *Bayou La Batre, Ala.* -- July 14, 12-2p.m.

Bayou La Batre Community Center  
12745 Padgett Switch Rd., Bayou La Batre, AL 36509

5. *Morehead City, N.C.* -- July 18, 2-4 p.m.

Crystal Coast Civic Center  
3505 Arendell St., Morehead City, NC 28557

Scoping comments also may be submitted during a concurrent 45-day comment period. Once published, the draft EIS has a 45-day public comment period.

### **South Atlantic Vermilion Snapper Commercial Fishery**

The commercial sector for vermilion snapper in federal waters of the South Atlantic reopened, effective 12:01 a.m. (local time) July 1. The July-December quota is 302,523 pounds, and the January-June quota is 315,523 pounds. Starting July 15, the trip limit for vermilion snapper will be 1,500 pounds. A trip limit is the amount of a species that may be possessed, landed, purchased or sold from a vessel per day.

Reminder:

Commercial and recreational harvest of red snapper in federal waters of the South Atlantic is prohibited. This prohibition also applies in state waters for commercial and for-hire vessels holding federal snapper-grouper permits. Fishermen should contact their state agencies to inquire about compatible regulations in state waters.

### **Gulf Council to Convene Ad Hoc Reef Fish IFQ Advisory Panel**

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council will convene a meeting of its Ad Hoc Red Snapper Individual Fishing Quota Five-Year Review Advisory Panel Thursday, July 14, from 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Gulf Council office, 2203 N. Lois Ave., Suite 1100, in Tampa, Fla.

The advisory panel will meet to discuss issues related to the design, implementation, evaluation and monitoring of reef fish individual fishing quota programs in the Gulf of Mexico. Copies of the agenda and other related materials can be obtained by calling (813) 348-1630, or they can be downloaded from the council's ftp site at [ftp.gulfcouncil.org](ftp://ftp.gulfcouncil.org) <<ftp://ftp.gulfcouncil.org>> .

### **Public Comment on Draft Environmental Impact Statement for Grouper Management**

NOAA Fisheries Service is seeking public comment on a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) for Amendment 32 to the Fishery Management Plan for Reef Fish Resources in the Gulf of Mexico. The Environmental Protection Agency announced the availability of the DEIS on June 10 (76 FR 34072).

A DEIS is draft analysis of potential significant impacts that proposed actions can have on the natural and social environment. The analysis is done by comparing a series of alternatives for each action to evaluate the effects on the environment.

Actions contained within the DEIS include: 1) Rebuilding plans for the gag stock; 2) establishing or modifying recreational bag limits, size limits and closed seasons for gag and red grouper; 3) applying commercial gag quota adjustments to account for dead discards; 4) adjusting multi-use individual fishing quota shares (allocation); 5) changing the commercial gag size limit; 6) establishing time and area closures; and 7) modifying current gag, red grouper and shallow-water grouper accountability measures.

#### **Request for Comments**

Written comments on this DEIS must be received no later than July 25 in order to be considered by NOAA Fisheries Service. Electronic copies of the DEIS may be obtained from the NOAA Fisheries Service website, <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sf/GrouperSnapperandReefFish.htm> in the "Items of Interest" section and the e-Rule Making Portal, <http://www.regulation.gov>.

The public may submit comments by any of the following methods:

- Electronic Submissions: Federal e-Rulemaking Portal, <http://www.regulations.gov>. After selecting "Submit a Comment," enter the following docket number into the "Search" box: NOAA-NMFS-2011-0135. All comments received are part of the public record and will generally be posted to <http://www.regulations.gov> without change. All personal identifying information (for example, name, address, etc.) voluntarily submitted by the commenter may be publicly accessible. Do not submit confidential business information or otherwise sensitive or protected information. NOAA Fisheries Service will accept anonymous comments. Attachments to electronic comments will be accepted in Microsoft Word, Excel, WordPerfect or Adobe PDF file formats only.
- Mail: Peter Hood, NOAA Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, Sustainable Fisheries Division, 263 13th Ave. South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701-5505



## Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council June Update

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council met in Key West, Fla., June 6–10 to address numerous fishery issues, including Reef Fish Amendment 32 and a generic amendment to set annual catch limits and accountability measures. During the weeklong meeting, the council took the following actions:

*Red Grouper Rerun:* The Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council was presented with the results of the rerun of the red grouper projections using the actual 2009 and 2010 landings data. The red grouper catches were below the total allowable catch in both 2009 and 2010. As a result of the rerun, the Scientific and Statistical Committee recommended that the red grouper acceptable biological catch be set at 7.93 million pounds (Mp). Based on that recommendation, the council has initiated a regulatory amendment that will increase the red grouper total allowable catch for 2011 through 2016. This will increase the total allowable catch as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Old Total Allowable Catch</u>	<u>New Total Allowable Catch</u>
2011	5.68 Mp	6.88 Mp
2012	5.90 Mp	7.07 Mp
2013	6.19 Mp	7.27 Mp
2014	6.38 Mp	7.41 Mp
2015	6.54 Mp	7.52 Mp
2016	6.69 Mp	7.72 Mp

The council initially requested a rerun for both red grouper and gag; however, the gag projections were not rerun because the difference between the 2010 estimated landings and the actual landings for gag was less than 1 percent.

*Gag and Red Grouper - Reef Fish Amendment 32:* The council postponed final action on Reef Fish Amendment 32 until its August meeting in Austin, Texas. The council representative from the state of Florida requested the delay in order to allow the state commission to review the council's preferred alternatives before final action is taken. The council also has decided to hold three additional public hearings in Florida to gather more public input on the actions proposed in Amendment 32. Meeting dates, locations and materials will be provided as soon as possible.

*Red Snapper Rerun:* In April, the council requested a rerun of the red snapper projections that included the 2009 and 2010 actual landings data. The results of that rerun indicated that the overfishing limit could be increased. The council's Scientific and Statistical Committee reviewed the rerun results and determined that the 2011 total allowable catch could be increased by 345,000 pounds. As a result, the council requested that NOAA Fisheries Service develop an emergency rule that would suspend the Sept. 30 closure date and assign the entire 345,000 pounds of increased total allowable catch to the recreational sector for the 2011 season. The council will also request that the SEDAR steering committee schedule a benchmark red snapper stock assessment in 2012.

*Red Snapper Fall Season:* The council was presented with an options paper for an amendment that would revise the structure of the fall recreational snapper season. The three actions contained within the options paper are:

- Revise or eliminate the October through December fixed closed season. Currently, the recreational red snapper season must end by Sept. 30. Pushing back or eliminating the closure date will provide the council with more red snapper season management options.

- Provide for weekends-only or weekdays-only fishing periods. This would provide the council with more options for in-season management or a supplemental season if the fishery is reopened after being prematurely closed.
- Increase the 2012 red snapper total allowable catch based on the 2011 red snapper re-run analyses.

Public hearings for this regulatory amendment will be held sometime after the August council meeting.

*Generic Annual Catch Limits and Accountability Measures Amendment:* The council postponed final action on the Generic Annual Catch Limits and Accountability Measures Amendment until the August council meeting in Austin, Texas.

*Greater Amberjack:* In April, the council was presented with the results of the latest greater amberjack update stock assessment, which concluded that greater amberjack continues to be overfished. Meanwhile, the end of 2011 marks the 10th and final year of the amberjack rebuilding plan. National Standard 1 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act requires that overfished stocks be managed under rebuilding plans that will rebuild stocks in 10 years or less. It is unlikely that the greater amberjack stock in the Gulf will be rebuilt by the end of 2011. As a result, the council's Scientific and Statistical Committee adjusted the acceptable biological catch levels for greater amberjack through 2013 to adhere to the national standards.

The council also reviewed an options paper that includes actions to:

- Modify the greater amberjack rebuilding plan.
- Adjust recreational management measures, including vessel limits, minimum size limits and closed seasons.
- Adjust commercial management measures, including trip limits and closed seasons.

Staff will develop a public hearing draft for review during the August council meeting. Public hearings will be scheduled sometime before the council meets in October.

*Earned Income and Crew Size Amendment:* The council reviewed an options paper on the proposed amendment to consider the temporary suspension, modification or elimination of the earned income requirements necessary for commercial reef fish vessel permit renewal and potentially increasing or eliminating the crew size requirement that limits the number of crew allowed on dually permitted vessels. The council directed staff to develop a public hearing draft of the amendment for future consideration.

*Yellowedge Grouper Benchmark Stock Assessment:* A recent benchmark stock assessment for yellowedge grouper concluded that the stock is not overfished, and overfishing is not occurring.

*Spiny Lobster Amendment 10:* The Gulf and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils took final action on Amendment 10 to the Spiny Lobster Fishery Management Plan. Actions contained within the amendment include:

- Removal of some lobster species from the fishery management plan
- Setting of biological and management reference points
- Using undersized lobster as lures
- Modifying tailing requirements

This amendment will be submitted to the secretary of commerce for approval and implementation.

*Mackerel - Amendment 18:* The council approved the public hearing draft for Amendment 18 to the Mackerel Fishery Management Plan. The Amendment contains actions to set annual catch limits, annual catch targets and accountability measures for Gulf-group king mackerel, Gulf-group Spanish mackerel and Gulf-group cobia. It also contains measures to remove cero, little tunny, dolphin and bluefish from the fishery management plan; to revise the framework procedure; and to separate cobia into Atlantic and Gulf migratory groups. Public hearings will be scheduled prior to the August council meeting.

### **Reset of the 2011 GoM Commercial Gag Quota and Set a Recreational Gag**

NOAA Fisheries Service announced a temporary rule to reset the commercial quota of gag at 430,000 pounds, to continue the suspension of the use of red grouper multi-use individual fishing quota (IFQ) commercial allocation, and to set a gag recreational season from Sept. 16 through Nov. 15. The final rule became effective June 1.

Gag is considered overfished (population abundance is too low) and undergoing overfishing (rate of removal too high). The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act requires that overfished stocks be rebuilt and that overfishing be halted. The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council requested NOAA Fisheries Service implement this temporary rule to revise 2011 commercial and recreational measures in light of the rerun of the gag update stock assessment. The council is developing a long-term plan to address gag stock rebuilding through Amendment 32 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf of Mexico.

*Commercial management measures:* The rule increases the 2011 quota from 100,000 pounds to 430,000 pounds. The rerun of the 2009 population assessment update for gag indicated the commercial quota should be reduced from 1.49 million pounds to 500,000 pounds. However, setting the quota at this level assumes equal reductions in both landings and dead discards (fish that die after they are released). Testimony from industry indicated that although gag can be avoided when targeting the capture of other species, gag cannot be completely excluded from the catch and there will be some gag bycatch and associated dead discards. Therefore, the council recommended the quota be set at 430,000 pounds to account for discards. The rule also continues the suspension of the use of red grouper IFQ multi-use allocation, which could be used to harvest gag. If the suspension is not in place, 4 percent of an IFQ participant's red grouper allocation is converted to multi-use allocation. If the multi-use allocation is used to harvest gag, these additional gag landings would likely allow the harvest to exceed the gag quota. Note that this part of the rule will not reduce an IFQ participant's red grouper allocation. The rule will simply not allow 4 percent of the total allocation to be converted to multi-use allocation.

*Recreational management measures:* For the recreational sector, the rule establishes a 2011 recreational season from Sept. 16 through Nov. 15. The current bag limit of two gag within the four fish aggregate grouper bag limit and the minimum size of 22 inches total length will be in effect during the fishing season. In recommending the season, the council examined several options for the fishing season including summer, fall and winter openings. It recommended a fall season as a compromise between public testimony for summer and winter seasons. In addition, a fall season maximizes the season length.

*Other information:* This bulletin serves as a Small Entity Compliance Guide, complying with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996. This bulletin provides only a summary of the information about the rule. Discrepancies between this bulletin and the rule as published in the *Federal Register* will be resolved in favor of the *Federal Register*.

Copies of the final rule are available by contacting NOAA Fisheries Service's Southeast Regional Office at 263 13th Ave. South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701, or by downloading it off the Southeast Regional Office's web site for reef fish at <http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sf/GrouperSnapperandReefFish.htm> once it has published.

## **OTHER REGULATION CHANGES**

### **Black Sea Bass to Re-open in the South Atlantic**

Commercial and recreational fishing for black sea bass opened at 12:01 a.m. June 1. Both sectors will remain open until May 31, 2012, or until the commercial quota or recreational annual catch limit is met.

The recreational bag limit is 15 fish per person per day. A final rule for Regulatory Amendment 9 to the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region is under review. If approved, the final rule would reduce the black sea bass bag limit from 15 fish per person per day to five fish per person per day. NOAA Fisheries Service will provide notice of these regulation changes as soon as the rule files in the *Federal Register*.

### **South Atlantic Snapper-Grouper Trip Limits and Bag Limit**

NOAA Fisheries Service published a final rule on June 15 implementing management measures to prevent the progressive shortening of fishing seasons for black sea bass, gag and vermilion snapper and to increase the trip limit for greater amberjack.

Harvest restrictions implemented through recent amendments to the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region (FMP) have resulted in some reduced quotas and effort shifts causing derby fisheries for black sea bass and vermilion snapper to develop. The potential also exists for a derby commercial fishery to develop for gag. Additionally, the quota for greater amberjack has never been met under the current trip limit of 1,000 pounds gutted weight (gw). To address these issues, Regulatory Amendment 9 to the FMP was developed by the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council and NOAA Fisheries Service.

The Final Rule for Regulatory Amendment 9 will:

- Reduce the recreational bag limit for black sea bass from 15 fish per person to five fish per person.
- Establish a commercial trip limit of 1,000 pounds gw for gag.
- Establish a commercial trip limit of 1,500 pounds gw for vermilion snapper.
- Increase the commercial trip limit for greater amberjack from 1,000 pounds gw to 1,200 pounds gw.

*Changes from the Proposed Rule:* The proposed rule contained an action to split the commercial quota for black sea bass into two six-month seasons (June-November and December-May) in order to extend fishing opportunities during the fishing year. However, during the proposed rule comment period, NOAA Fisheries Service received new information from the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team (ALWTRT) indicating that saving a portion of the commercial black sea bass quota for the December-May season would result in the presence of numerous vertical black sea bass pot buoy lines within the endangered northern right whale migration route during the time of year when the whales are transiting off the southeast coast. Though no marine mammal interactions with black sea bass pot gear have been documented, allowing an increased risk of right whale entanglement is inconsistent with the goals of the ALWTRT, and recent scientific information suggests they are more vulnerable to entanglement in Mid-Atlantic and South Atlantic fisheries than previously thought. Therefore, NOAA Fisheries Service determined it was not appropriate to approve the split season quota at this time.

*Effective Dates:*

- The black sea bass recreational bag limit reduction became effective June 22.
- The commercial trip limits for gag and vermilion snapper and the commercial trip limit increase for greater amberjack will be effective July 15.
- The split season quotas for the black sea bass commercial sector will not be implemented at this time.

### **Public Comment on Draft Environmental Impact Statement for South Atlantic Comprehensive Annual Catch Limit Amendment**

NOAA Fisheries Service is seeking public comment on a draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) for the Comprehensive Annual Catch Limit (ACL) Amendment for the South Atlantic Region. A DEIS is a draft analysis of potential significant impacts that proposed management actions can have on the natural and social environment. The analysis compares a series of alternatives for each action to evaluate the effects on the environment. The Environmental Protection Agency announced the availability of the DEIS for the Comprehensive ACL Amendment on June 17, (76 FR 35433).

The Comprehensive ACL Amendment proposes the establishment of ACLs and accountability measures (AMs) for species in the Snapper-Grouper, Dolphin-Wahoo and Golden Crab Fishery Management Plans (FMP) not subject to overfishing. ACLs are set at levels that prevent overfishing from occurring. AMs are management controls to prevent ACLs from being exceeded and to correct overages of ACLs if they occur.

Other actions contained within the DEIS include:

- Changes to the species managed by the snapper-grouper FMP, including removing some species from the FMP and grouping some species together
- Specification of an acceptable biological catch (ABC) for species in FMPs for snapper-grouper, dolphin-wahoo, golden crab and *Sargassum*. ABC is the level of a stock or stock complex's annual catch that accounts for scientific uncertainty, such as variability or gaps in data
- Annual catch targets to account for management uncertainty, such as compliance rates
- Allocations: Jurisdictional (between South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico) for mutton snapper

and yellowtail snapper, and Sector (between commercial and recreational sectors) for dolphin, wahoo and snapper-grouper species

- Management measures for wreckfish, dolphin and wahoo

*Request for Comments:* Comments on this DEIS must be received no later than Aug. 1 in order to be considered by NOAA Fisheries Service.

### **Recreational Measures for Snowy Grouper, Golden Tilefish and Black Sea Bass**

NOAA Fisheries Service reminds fishermen of recreational measures for golden tilefish, snowy grouper and black sea bass. These measures include annual catch limits (ACLs) on the amount of fish that can be caught in pounds or numbers and possible adjustments to ACLs and fishing seasons if ACLs are exceeded.

*Background:* NOAA Fisheries Service published a final rule to implement Amendment 17B to the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region (Amendment 17B) in the *Federal Register* on Dec. 30, 2010 (75 FR 82280). These provisions were effective Jan. 31.

Amendment 17B established ACLs and accountability measures (AMs) for nine snapper-grouper species as required by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. ACLs are set at levels that prevent overfishing. AMs are management controls established to ensure landings do not exceed the ACL, or they may correct for overages if ACLs are exceeded during a fishing season. During the 2010 fishing year, the recreational ACLs for golden tilefish, snowy grouper and black sea bass were exceeded.

*Golden Tilefish:* Because the recreational ACL was exceeded for golden tilefish late in 2010, an adjustment to the length of the fishing year will be needed at the end of 2011.

*Snowy Grouper:* The recreational ACL was also exceeded for snowy grouper, and an adjustment to the length of the 2011 fishing year may be needed. Data from 2011 will be examined to determine if new management measures in Amendment 17B, which include a reduction in the bag limit, will prevent the ACL from being exceeded in 2011.

*Black Sea Bass:* Accountability measures for black sea bass require the recreational fishing season to be closed when the ACL is met. The recreational ACL for black sea bass was reached on or before Feb. 12, and the recreational sector was closed on that date. Additionally, an overage from the prior fishing season must be deducted from the ACL for the following fishing year. NOAA Fisheries Service is awaiting final landings data for the 2011 fishing year to determine the extent of the recreational black sea bass ACL overage. Final data will be available this summer, after which time NOAA Fisheries Service will adjust the black sea bass ACL for the 2011/2012 fishing year.

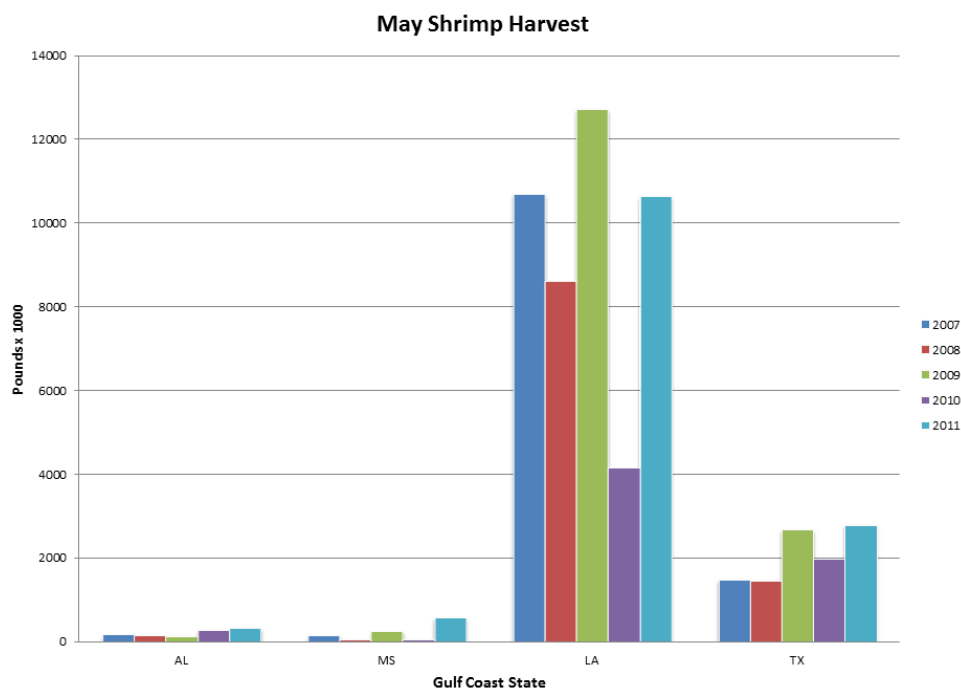
Recreational anglers will be notified as soon as possible regarding any adjustments to recreational fishing seasons or ACLs.

*More Information:*

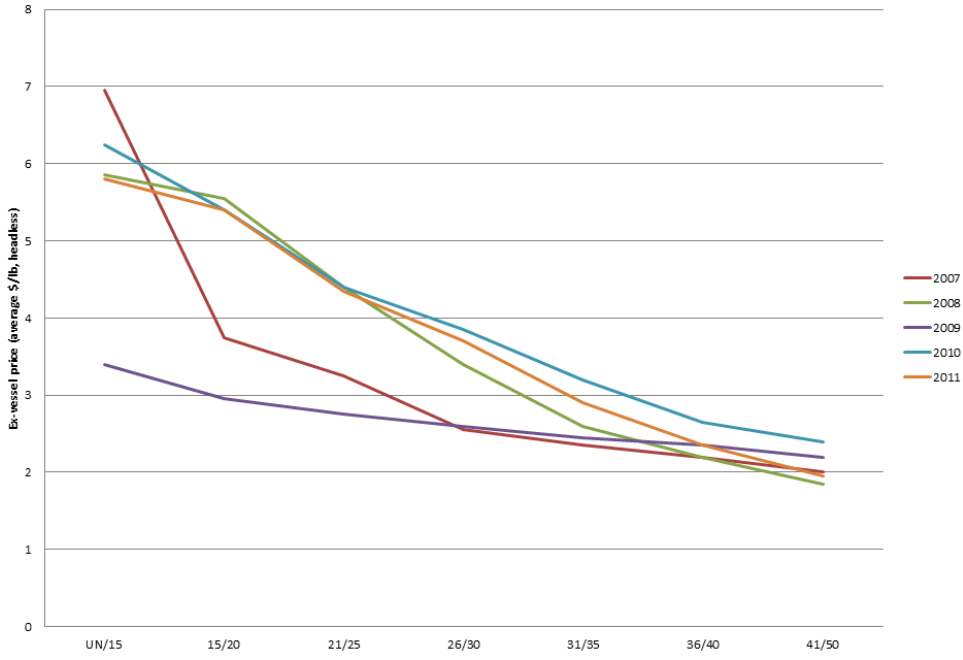
Species	Recreational ACL	Recreational Landings
Golden Tilefish	1,578 fish	4,391 fish
Snowy Grouper	523 fish	2,215 fish
Black Sea Bass	409,000 lbs gutted weight (482,620 lbs whole weight)	416,336 lbs gutted weight (491,276 lbs whole weight)

**Louisiana Shrimp Watch**

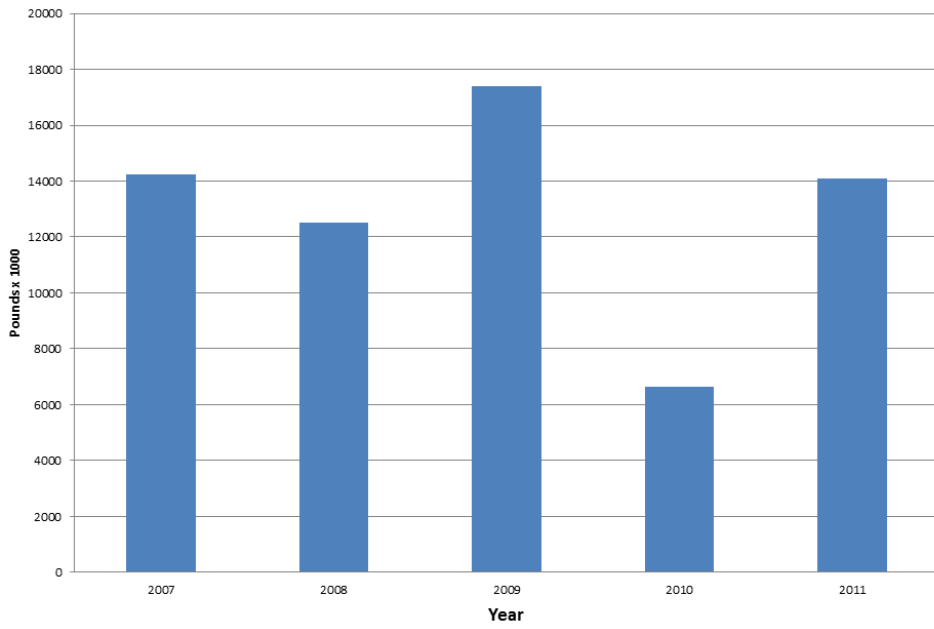
Louisiana-specific data portrayed in the graphics are selected from preliminary data posted by NOAA on its website. All data portrayed are subject to final revision and approval by NOAA. Shrimp landings are ex-vessel prices, inclusive of all species harvested. Missing, inadequate or withheld reports are portrayed as “zero” in these graphics. Price graphics reflect central Gulf states only (Texas and Florida are reported independently). For more information, refer to [www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/st1/market\\_news/index.html](http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/st1/market_news/index.html).



May Northern GoM Shrimp Prices

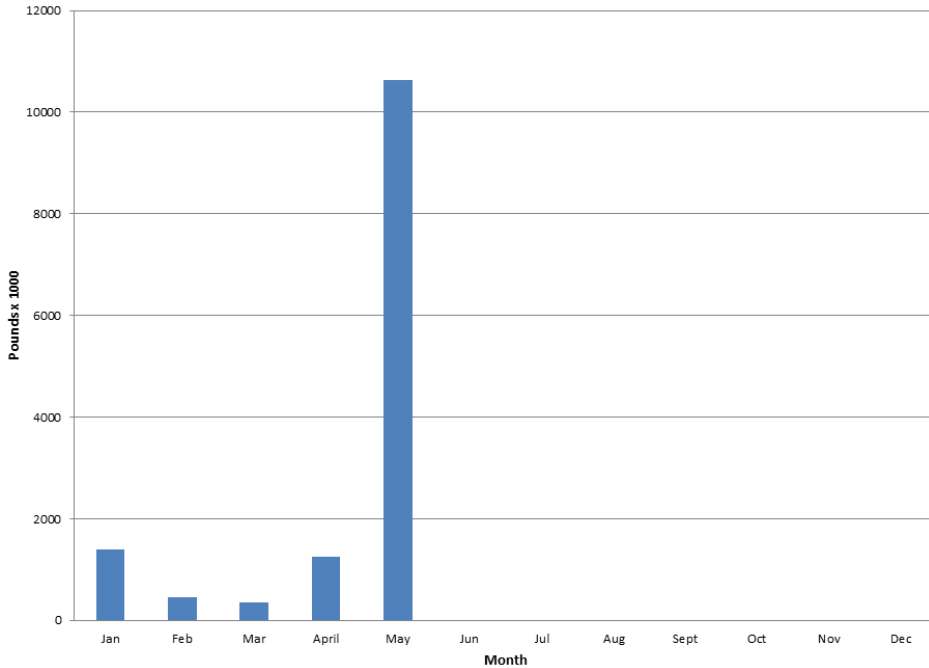


LA Year To Date 2011 Shrimp Harvest





LA 2011 Shrimp Harvest



### Fish Gear Coordinates May 2011

In accordance with the provisions of R.S. 56:700.1 et. seq., notice is given that three claims in the amount of \$11,986.55 were received for payment during the period May 1- May 31. There were three paid and zero denied.

Latitude/Longitude coordinates of reported underwater obstructions are:

29 15.576	89 56.402	JEFFERSON
29 43.868	89 41.903	ST. BERNARD
30 02.346	89 42.446	ST. BERNARD

A list of claimants and amounts paid can be obtained from Gwendolyn Thomas, Administrator, Fishermen's Gear Compensation Fund, P.O. Box 44277, Baton Rouge, LA 70804 or (225) 342-0122.

## The Gumbo Pot

Crab Bisque a La Pittari's

For all its fame for wild game and lobster, the best food at the extinct T. Pittari's was its Creole cooking. Whenever I went there I hoped the soup of the day would be their crab bisque. It wasn't the creamy concoction that goes under that name now, but a brown-roux potage with claw crabmeat. The waiter brought the bowl to the table and dropped in two just-fried crabmeat croquettes. I have only rarely encountered anything that compared with this.

Bisque:

4 lbs. crab claws  
 1 bay leaf  
 1 cup flour  
 1/2 cup vegetable oil  
 1 cup chopped onion  
 1/2 ripe green bell pepper, seed and membranes removed, chopped  
 2 cloves garlic  
 6 sprigs flat-leaf parsley, chopped  
 1/2 cup tomato sauce (preference: a good prepared marinara sauce, your own or from a jar)  
 1/2 tsp. salt  
 1/8 tsp. cayenne

Crab boulettes:

3 Tbs. butter  
 1 cup chopped onions  
 1 stalk celery, chopped  
 1/2 ripe green bell pepper, seed and membranes removed, chopped  
 2 cloves garlic  
 1 Tbs. Worcestershire sauce  
 1 tsp. black pepper  
 1/4 tsp. cayenne  
 1/2 tsp. salt  
 1/4 tsp. thyme  
 2 Tbs. lemon juice  
 6 inches of stale poor boy bread, cut into cubes, with all crumbs  
 2 green onions, thinly sliced  
 10 sprigs flat-leaf parsley, leaves only, chopped  
 3 Tbs. butter

1. Pick the meat off the crab claws. Divide the crabmeat into two equal portions and set both aside.
2. Put the shells into a food processor and grind them for about ten seconds. Scrape the processor contents and the bay leaf into a saucepan with a half-gallon of cold water. Bring it to a light boil, then lower to a simmer. After 45 minutes, strain the stock into a large, clean saucepan. Reserve 1/2 cup for the boulettes. Bring to a simmer.
3. In a saucepan, make a roux, stirring constantly, with the flour and vegetable oil. When it reaches a medium-dark, old-penny color, remove the pan from the heat and quickly add the onion, bell pepper, garlic and parsley. Cook, stirring until the vegetables are soft.

4. Stir in the tomato sauce, salt, cayenne and about 1/2 cup of the crab stock. Stir until the stock disappears.
5. Add the roux mixture to the simmering crab stock and whisk until blended. Cover the pan and keep on the lowest heat setting.
6. Now, make the boulettes. In a large skillet over medium heat, heat the butter until it bubbles. Add the onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic and cook until the vegetables are soft.
7. Stir in the Worcestershire, black pepper, cayenne, salt, thyme and lemon juice. Cook while stirring until all the ingredients are combined.
8. Wet the bread cubes with the reserved crab stock. Add them and half of the reserved crabmeat to the pan contents. Stir until everything is well mixed and the mixture is starting to get noticeably drier. Lower the heat and allow to cool for five minutes.
9. Stir the parsley and green onions into the crabmeat mixture. With a round soup spoon, scoop up balls of the crabmeat mixture about an inch in diameter. Roll them gently with your hands to make them uniform.
10. Heat the butter in a skillet over medium heat until it bubbles. Add the crab balls, a few at a time, and roll them around until browned all over. (You can also bake these for about 15 minutes in a 375-degree oven.)
11. Check the seasoning of the crab bisque and add salt, pepper or Tabasco to taste. Add the remaining reserved crabmeat. Let it simmer another minute or two, then ladle the bisque into bowls or cups. Drop one or two crab boulettes into each bowl at the table.

Serves four entrees or six to eight preliminary courses.

If you have a favorite seafood recipe that you would like to share, please send it to Julie Anderson at [janderson@agcenter.lsu.edu](mailto:janderson@agcenter.lsu.edu) for inclusion in future issues.



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We would like to hear from you! Please contact us regarding fishery questions, comments or concerns you would like to see covered in the Lagniappe. Anyone interested in submitting information, such as articles, editorials, or photographs pertaining to fishing or fisheries management is encouraged to do so.

**Please contact Lagniappe editor Julie Anderson at [janderson@agcenter.lsu.edu](mailto:janderson@agcenter.lsu.edu).**

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