



NOAA
FISHERIES

SERO

Interim Measures for Gag in the Gulf of Mexico

April 2022 GMFMC Meeting

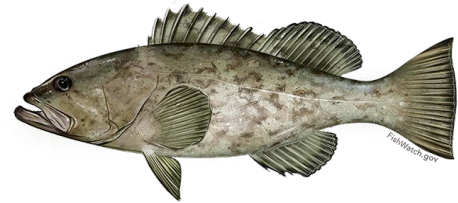


Interim Measures

- Under MSA section 304(e)(6), Council may request the Secretary implement interim measures to reduce overfishing until such measures can be replaced by a plan, amendment, or regulations
- Limited to 180 days duration
- May be extended one time for up to 186 more days (366 total days)

Timeline

- Council notified of stock status on January 26, 2022
- Interim measures in place to reduce or end overfishing for 2023 fishing year
- Action to end overfishing and implement rebuilding plan by 2024 fishing year



2017-2021 Landings

Gag Grouper (gw)									
	Commercial			Recreational (MRIP-CHTS)			Total		
Year	Total Reported	ACL	ACL %	Total Reported	ACL	ACL %	Total Reported	ABC/ACL	ACL %
2021 (prelim)	562,849	1,217,000	46.2	1,225,803	1,903,000	64.4	1,788,652	3,120,000	57.3%
2020	475,714	1,217,000	39.1	909,703	1,903,000	47.8	1,385,417	3,120,000	44.4%
2019	532,015	1,217,000	43.7	859,828	1,903,000	45.2	1,391,843	3,120,000	44.6%
2018	492,934	1,217,000	40.5	1,008,468	1,903,000	53	1,501,402	3,120,000	48.1%
2017	492,095	1,217,000	40.4	832,960	1,903,000	43.8	1,325,055	3,120,000	42.5%

*Source: Commercial: SERO Catch Shares Database (Accessed 3/25/22). Recreational: SEFSC MRIP CHTS ACL Data (Access March 2022)

- Preliminary 2021 landings indicate catch was slightly higher than in recent years
- Before 2021, Fishermen had not harvested more than 50% of the combined ACL since 2016
- 2020 commercial harvest was the lowest since 2011

Council Decision Points - Interim Rule

- Rebuilding plan ACL/reduction
- Allocation change?
- Recreational
 - Change season opening date or structure
 - Reduce bag limit from 2 fish to 1 fish
 - Reduce vessel limit to 1 fish
 - Other?
- Commercial
 - Eliminate red grouper multi-use allocation
 - Other?

Status Quo Management

Recreational

- ACT = 90% of recreational ACL
- Open June through December unless or until landings projected to reach ACL
 - Note that in Florida waters, off Franklin, Wakulla, Jefferson and Taylor counties: Open April 1–June 30, & Sept 1–Dec. 31.
- Minimum size limit = 24" total length
- Bag limit = 2 per person within 4 grouper aggregate
- If ACL exceeded, ACT used the following year to project closure; payback if overfished and ACL exceeded

Commercial

- IFQ program
- Minimum size limit - 24" total length
- The IFQ program serves as the AM

Target Reduction from 2017-2019 Landings

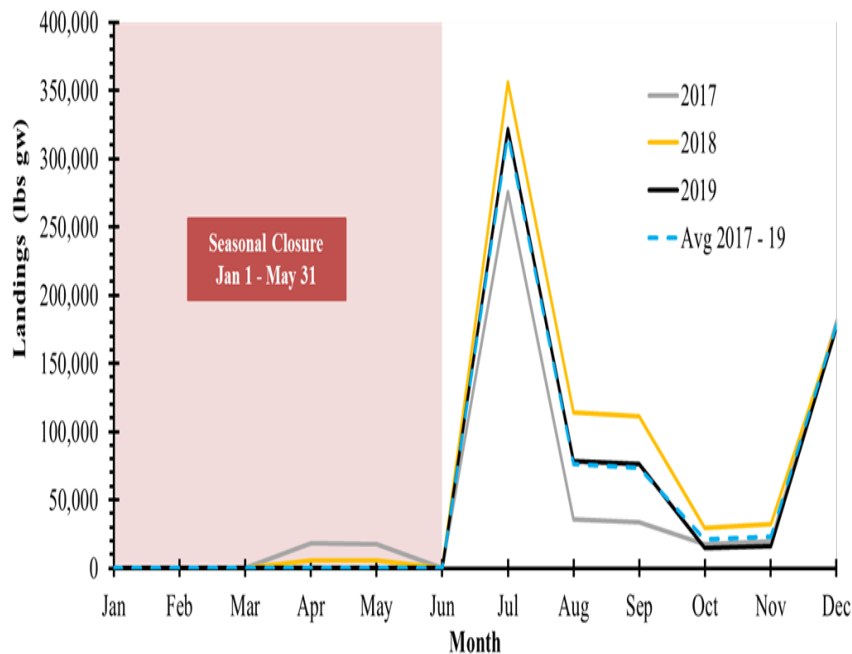
- Average Landing 2017-2019 (MRIP-CHTS): 890,244 lb gw
- Average Landing 2017-2019 (MRIP-FES): 2,887,229 lb gw

Year	Option 1 (75%MFMT)	Option 2 (Tmin + 1 generation)	Option 3 (Tmin*2)
2022	3,150,000	3,150,000	3,150,000
2023	540,000 (82%)	600,000 (79%)	660,000 (77%)
2024	850,000	950,000	1,020,000

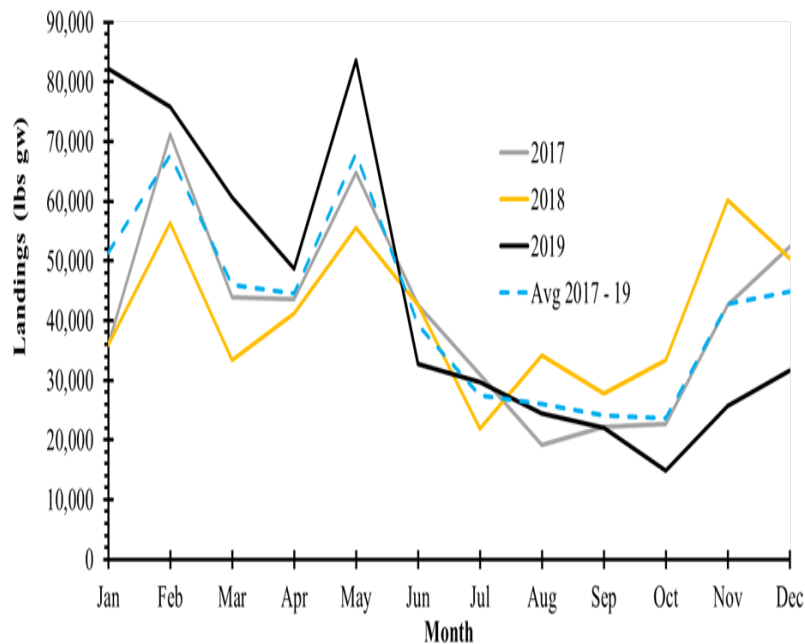
Allocation

- Current allocation is **61% Rec / 39% Comm** based on pre-FES landings data from the 1986-2005 reference period
- If re-calculated using the FES/ACL dataset incorporated in SEDAR 72, the allocation would be approximately **79.5% Rec / 20.5% Comm**
- Does Council want to reallocate for interim rule?

Gag Monthly Rec/Comm Landings, 2017-2019

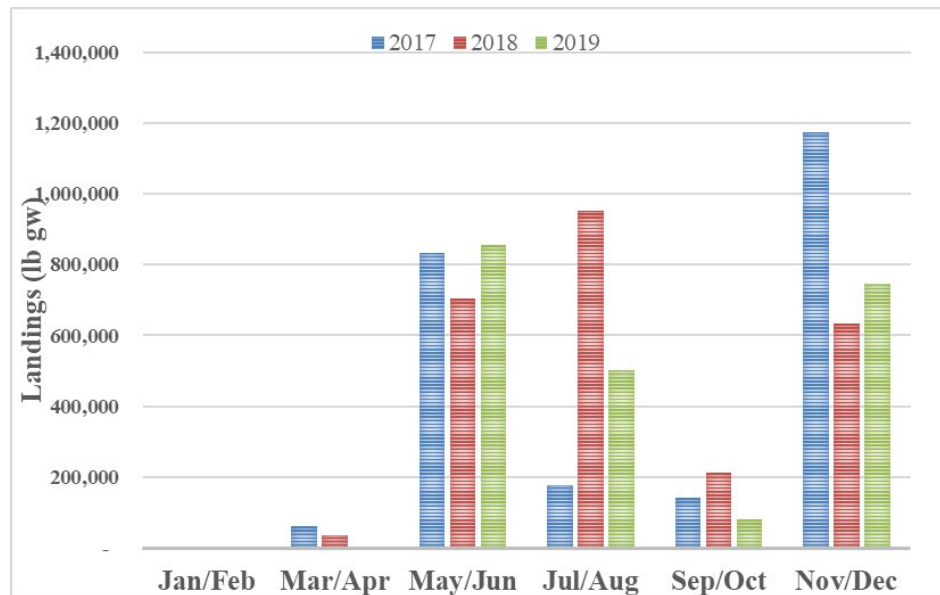


Source: SEFSC MRIP CHTS Recreational ACL Dataset (March 17, 2022)



Source: SERO Catch Share Database (March 25, 2022)

Recreational Landings (MRIP-FES) by Wave



- Recreational landings peak in Wave 3* (May/Jun) and Wave 6 (Nov/Dec)

Change Recreational Fishing Season

Options for changing recreational fishing season assuming different start dates and using 2017-2019 MRIP-FES landings (by wave). Shifts in fishing effort could considerably change seasons.

Start Date	Estimated Number of Days Open		
	ACL Options with 61/39% Recreational/Commercial split		
	329,400	366,000	402,600
June 1	12	13	15
July 1	37	41	46
August 1	55	70	85
Sep 1	73	76	79

Change Bag Limit

- *Current bag limit: 2 gag/angler*
 - **Reduce Bag Limit to 1 gag/angler**
 - ~99% of trips did not harvest more than 1 gag/angler
 - Thus, no effect on gag harvest/season length expected
 - **Reduce Bag Limit to 1 gag/vessel**
 - 50% of vessels reported harvesting more than 1 gag
 - 60% of headboats reported harvesting more than 1 gag
 - A 1 gag per vessel limit may reduce gag harvest/ lengthen season

Projections based on 2015-2019 trips that landed gag as collected from MRIP-CHTS, TPWD Creel Survey, and SE Headboat Survey.

Eliminate Red Grouper Multi-Use

- If gag is under a rebuilding plan, red grouper multi-use would be set at zero
- For this interim rule, setting the RG multi-use at zero may:
 - Decrease gag harvest and overall mortality
 - Increase RG discards (including dead discards)

Questions?



Extra Slides



Commercial and Recreational ACLs

Options for commercial and recreational ACLs (lbs gw) based on rebuilding plan options

ACL Option	Total ACL	Rec ACL	Comm ACL
Rebuilding Plan Option 1 (75%MFMT)			
Status Quo (61% Rec / 39% Comm) Allocation	540,000	329,400	210,600
Updated (79.5% Rec / 20.5% Comm) Allocation	540,000	429,300	110,700
Rebuilding Plan Option 2 (Tmin + 1 Generation)			
Status Quo (61% Rec / 39% Comm) Allocation	600,000	366,000	234,000
Updated (79.5% Rec / 20.5% Comm) Allocation	600,000	477,000	123,000
Rebuilding Plan Option 3 (Tmin*2)			
Status Quo (61% Rec / 39% Comm) Allocation	660,000	402,600	257,400
Updated (79.5% Rec / 20.5% Comm) Allocation	660,000	524,700	135,300

Change Recreational Fishing Season

Options for changing recreational fishing season assuming different start dates and using 2017-2019 MRIP-FES landings (by wave). Shifts in fishing effort could considerably change seasons.

Start Date	Estimated Number of Days Open					
	ACL Options with 61/39% Recreational/Commercial split			ACL Options with 79.5/20.5% Recreational/Commercial split		
	329,400	366,000	402,600	429,300	477,000	524,700
June 1	12	13	15	16	18	19
July 1	37	41	46	49	54	60
August 1	55	70	85	92	96	99
Sep 1	73	76	79	81	84	87

Change Recreational Fishing Season

Options for changing recreational fishing season assuming state season is retained. Closure dates are estimated with different start dates and ACLs.

Start Date	Closure Date					
	ACL Options with 61/39% Recreational/Commercial split			ACL Options with 79.5/20.5% Recreational/Commercial split		
	329,400	366,000	402,600	429,300	477,000	524,700
State Waters Open April 1	No federal season - ACL met Aug 17	No federal season - ACL met Sept 21	No federal season - ACL met Oct 31	No federal season - ACL met Nov 6	No federal season - ACL met Nov 15	No federal season - ACL met Nov 25

*Assumes state landings continue throughout the year beginning in April.

**On 3/30/22, FWC announced that state waters off the coast of Franklin, Wakulla, Jefferson and Taylor counties will open to recreational harvest of gag grouper April 1 through June 30 and September 1 through December 31 and the gag grouper season in the remainder of Gulf of Mexico state and federal waters will open June 1 through December 31.