

Tab B, No. 9(a)

Recreational Initiative



Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

June 25, 2024
Houston, Texas

What is the Gulf Council's Recreational Initiative?

- An effort to engage recreational community to:
 1. Review and evaluate past and current management strategies
 1. Explore potential innovative management strategies that could be applied in the future
- Use focal species of key interest to the recreational community to examine past/ongoing challenges and evaluate new approaches
- Timeline: May 2024-April 2025

Recreational Initiative Steering Committee



Ed Walker
Member, Gulf Council



Carrie Simmons
Exec. Director, Gulf Council



Dave Donaldson
Exec. Director, GSMFC



Michael McDermott
Member, Gulf Council



Andy Strelcheck
Reg. Administrator
NOAA Fisheries SERO

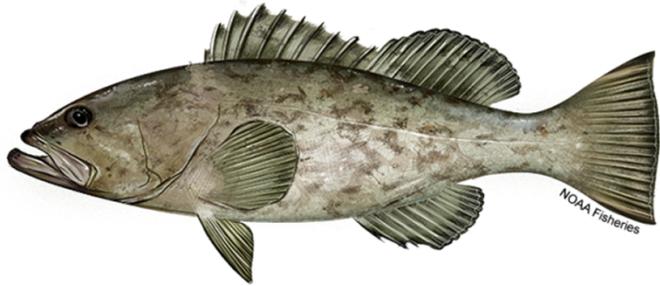


Russ Dunn
Senior Advisor for Rec. Fisheries
NOAA Fisheries

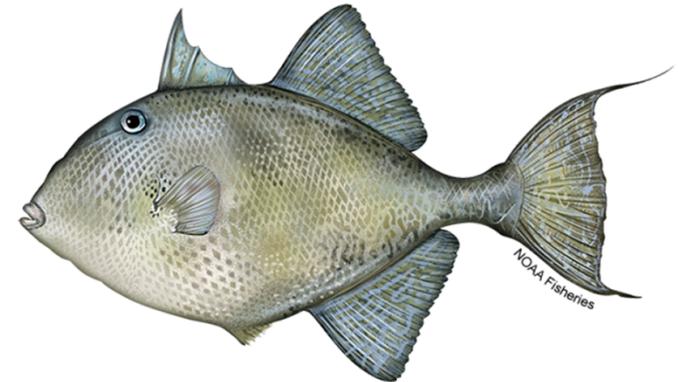
Recreational Initiative Items

1. Development, review, and revision of goals and objectives for recreational fisheries management.	5. Evaluation and consideration of harvest control rules (i.e., pre-agreed guidelines) for setting bag, size, and season limits.
2. A review of the status of Federally managed species in the Gulf of Mexico that are highly sought after by recreational anglers, including recreational sources of directed and bycatch mortality.	6. Scientific recommendations to the Council for addressing variability and uncertainty in recreational catch estimates , including use of multiple years of data, identification of catch estimates that are the result of low sample sizes or outliers, and statistical recommendations and guidance for how such approaches could be implemented.
3. A review of recreational management measures , including how management measures have changed over time.	
4. Assessment of the performance and efficacy of recreational accountability measures and recommended improvements.	7. Exploration of innovative new management strategies .

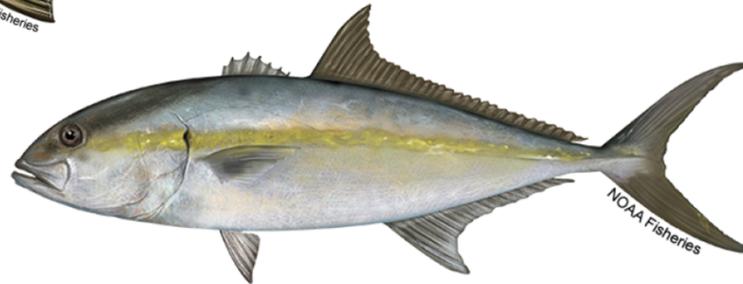
Recreational Initiative: Focal Species



Gag Grouper



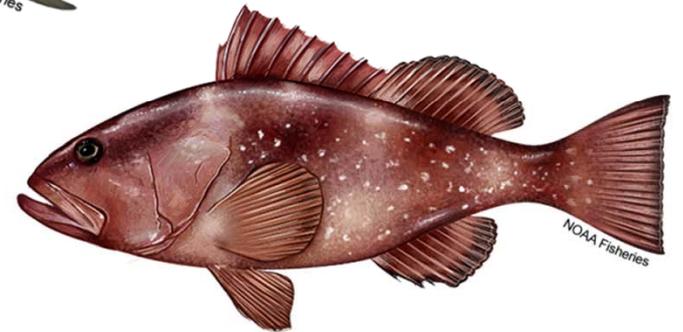
Gray Triggerfish



Greater Amberjack



Red Snapper



Red Grouper

Recreational Initiative Working Group

Goals:

- Review current and historical management successes and failures and advise the Council on potential novel management measures.
- Focus on the exploration of ideas rather than reacting to proposed regulatory decisions from the Council.
- Consensus-based

Composition and Selection:

- 12 members, at least two from each Gulf state
- Intended representation:
 - Private anglers (including spearfishers)
 - For-hire operators (charter or headboat)
 - Associated marine industries such as tackle shops/manufacturers, boat builders, recreational fishing media, etc.
 - Advocates such as trade associations, non-profits, etc.
- Open application process conducted by the Council (open following this meeting)

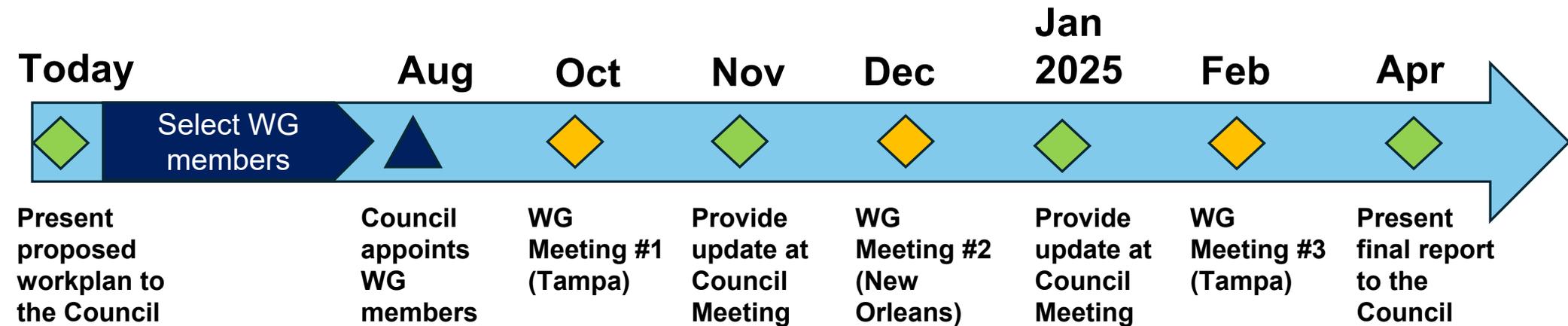
Recreational Initiative Technical Working Group (TWG)

Purpose:

- Provide background information (written and presentations) to Working Group members regarding:
 - Stock status and management (*Items 2, 3, and 4*)
 - Data challenges and potential approaches to address them (*Item 6*)
 - Exploration of innovative management strategies including Harvest Control Rules (*Items 5 and 7*)
- Provide guidance and resources to the Steering Committee and consultants to inform development of detailed Working Group meeting agendas
- Purpose is *not* to provide recommendations to the Steering Committee or Working Group

Composition: Staff from the Council, the NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office, and NOAA Fisheries Southeast Fisheries Science Center, others

Summary of Timeline



- Steering Committee to meet monthly throughout process (and TWG as needed)
- Working Group meetings will be 1.5-2 days and be in-person
- Recreational Initiative will also include development of a stakeholder engagement strategy

Working Group Meetings: Core Tenets

1. The focus of these meetings will be **collecting information** from Working Group members, not one-way communication/lecturing.
1. Working Group members are encouraged to **consider innovative, creative, and potentially “game changing” solutions** for the future of recreational fisheries management in the Gulf.
1. Working Group members should focus not on rehashing issues from the past, but on being **forward-thinking**, using lessons from the past to inform future approaches.
1. The **fisheries landscape is ever-changing** (e.g., advancing technology, increasing participation) and Working Group members should consider strategies that are resilient to a dynamic setting.

Working Group Meeting #1 (Oct 2024)

Purpose: Develop of **goals and objectives** for recreational fisheries management for reef species in the Gulf of Mexico (*Item 1*).

- This meeting will provide Working Group members with an opportunity to share their primary concerns with reef fish management, provide perspectives on what “success” would look like to them, and offer initial thoughts on approaches that they would like to see the Council consider.

Proposed background materials/information (subject to change):

- Because this meeting will focus on hearing Working Group member perspectives from their own experiences, minimal background materials will be provided.

Working Group Meeting #2 (Dec 2024)

Purpose: Ensure collective understanding of stock status and management measures/history for each of the five focal species.

Specifically, Meeting #2 will entail the following:

- A **review of the status of Federally managed species** in the Gulf of Mexico that are highly sought after by recreational anglers, including recreational sources of directed and bycatch mortality (*Item #2*).
- A **review of recreational management measures**, including how management measures have changed over time (*Item #3*).
- Assess the performance and efficacy of **recreational accountability measures** and recommended improvements (*Item #4*).
- Meeting purpose is subject to change given outcomes of Meeting #1.

Working Group Meeting #2 (Dec 2024) (continued)

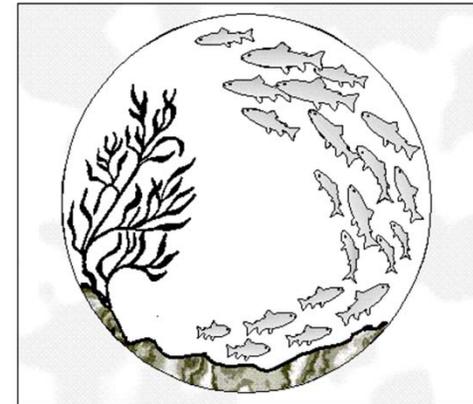
Proposed background materials/information
(subject to change):

- Information on the stock status and management measures/history for each of the five focal species
- Legal requirements (i.e., the Magnuson-Stevens Act) to which the Council must adhere
- Primary data collection sources and key sources of data uncertainty



Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act

As Amended Through January 12, 2007



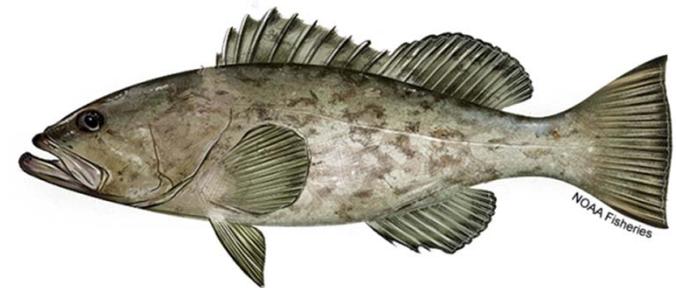
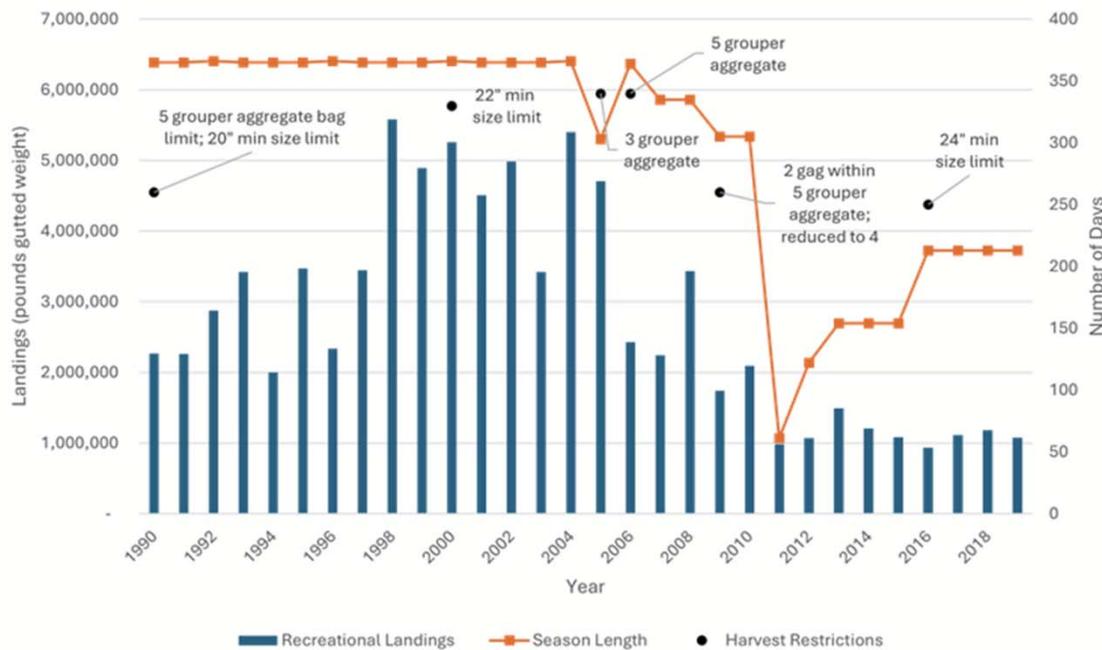
U. S. Department of Commerce
Carlos M. Gutiérrez, Secretary

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Vice Admiral Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Jr., USN (Ret.)
Under Secretary for Oceans and Atmosphere

National Marine Fisheries Service
William T. Hogarth, Assistant Administrator for Fisheries

Item 3 Example: Gag Grouper

Recreational landings (SRFS), season length in number of days*, and harvest restrictions (1990-2019)



*Season lengths do not include spatial closures.

Working Group Meeting #3 (Feb 2025)

Purpose: Explore innovative **new management strategies** for reef species in the Gulf of Mexico, using the five focal species to illustrate potential approaches (*Item 7*)

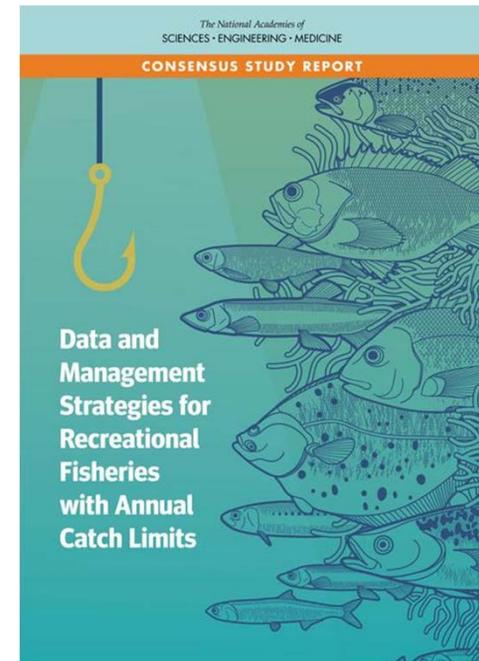
Potential new strategies to discuss include the following:

- Evaluation and consideration of **harvest control rules** (i.e., pre-agreed guidelines) for setting bag, size, and season limits (*Item 5*).
- Approaches for **addressing variability and uncertainty in recreational catch estimates** (*Item 6*)
- Whether certain approaches are better suited to certain fisheries/species than others given the stock status and management discussion at Working Group Meeting #2

Working Group Meeting #3 (Feb 2025) (continued)

Proposed background materials/information (subject to change):

- Introduction to Harvest Control Rules from TWG members
- Insight from TWG members regarding potential measures to address variability/uncertainty in recreational catch estimates, including use of multiple years of data, identification of catch estimates that are the result of low sample sizes or outliers, and statistical recommendations.
- Perspectives from other Councils, interstate commissions, states, and/or participants in the 2021 National Academies Study regarding alternative approaches to recreational data collection and management.

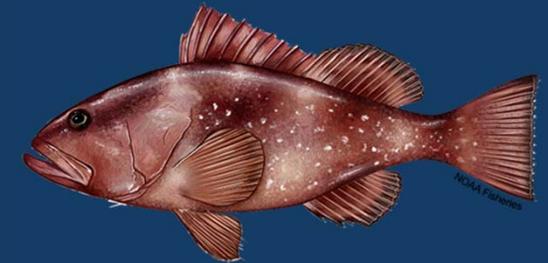
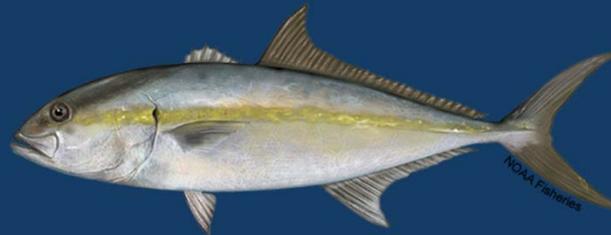
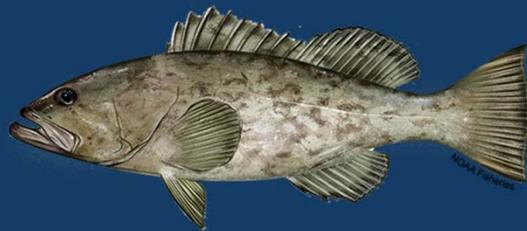


Recreational Initiative: Next Steps

- Solicit and select Working Group members
- Assemble Technical Working Group
- Monthly Steering Committee Meetings
- Finalize agendas for Working Group meetings and collate background materials



Questions?



Recreational  Initiative