

# Gulf Fishery News

A publication of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council



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## RAP Session Wrap-up

In January, the Gulf Council held a series of Recreational Angler Participation (RAP) Sessions around the Gulf to get feedback from anglers on federal fishery management. In February, the Gulf Council met and heard a summary of those RAP Sessions. The following is a brief summary of the Council's actions.

### Fisheries Dependent Data Collection

One theme that emerged from the RAP Sessions was angler concern about information the Council uses to determine how many fish are caught recreationally each year. That data collection system (MRIP) is a national program that combines dockside intercept surveys with telephone surveys to determine what recreational anglers are catching. In the Gulf, Texas and Louisiana (for red snapper only) use their own survey methods and submit data for use in federal management. The Council does not have control over the data collection programs, therefore cannot directly change them. But, they did take the following steps toward improving the fisheries dependent data collection:



Photo by Mark Miller

- The Council directed staff to develop a framework action to establish electronic reporting within the charter component of the recreational sector.
- This year, the Council will look at a scoping document that addresses improving private recreational red snapper fisheries data. The document was developed with the input from the Council's Private Recreational Data Collection Advisory Panel that met early last summer.

### Allocation

Many recreational anglers brought up the idea of reconsidering the allocation of fish between commercial and recreational fishing sectors. The Council is currently working on a document that reconsiders the 51% commercial/49% recreational split for red snapper. There are no options in the document that increase the commercial sector's share of the quota - they all allocate more fish to the recreational. Public hearings on this amendment are scheduled in March. See page 5.

### Short fishing seasons

Anglers are unhappy with short federal fishing seasons, especially for red snapper. The red snapper Annual Catch Limit increased from 8,460,000 pounds to 11,000,000 pounds this past summer, but seasons are still short. Because the Council is unable to open a season that would exceed the red snapper quota, they are considering other ways to lengthen the season while still meeting the rebuilding goals for the stock. The Council directed staff to develop a framework action that considers red snapper slot limits that may protect the breeding stock and add more days by limiting the harvest of large fish.

### Red Drum

Anglers suggested that the Council "perform a stock assessment and consider a recreational season" for red drum in the federal waters of the Gulf. The Council can't initiate harvest of a stock without assessing the population. The Council decided to make red drum the top stock assessment priority for 2016. A positive assessment could allow for some harvest of red drum.

To review RAP Session summaries, visit <http://bit.ly/MzQ6mj>.

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## Did you know?

The Gulf Council encourages and accepts public testimony at every stage of the fishery management plan process. Comment opportunities go beyond scoping workshops and public hearings. The Council also takes open public comment during each Council meeting and accepts written comments throughout the process. Written comments can be emailed to: [gulfcouncil@gulfcouncil.org](mailto:gulfcouncil@gulfcouncil.org), or mailed to:

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council  
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## Questions?

Call Charlene or Emily at 813-348-1630

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## A Marine Resource Education Program for the Southeast

Over the past decade, the Gulf of Maine Research Institute (GMRI) has collaborated with members of the New England fishing industry to deliver the Marine Resource Education Program (MREP) fisheries science and management workshops. As word of the program spread, applications arrived from far away places such as Texas, Maryland, and even Puerto Rico. Because of its popularity, MREP was extended into the Southeast region, complete with a new steering committee and locally tailored program. The new MREP Southeast serves three fishery management regions; the Gulf of Mexico, the South Atlantic, and the Caribbean.



To kick off the Southeast effort, GRMI convened a local steering committee consisting of a diverse group of industry stakeholders from around the region. After a planning and development phase, the group hosted an inaugural science workshop in April 2013 for 32 fishery stakeholders at the Florida Fish & Wildlife Institute in St. Petersburg, Florida. A management workshop followed in September and was held in Tampa, Florida. The fundamental approach for both workshops stayed true to the New England programs mantra "by fishermen for fishermen," and, according to fishermen reports, the workshops provided an opportunity for dialogue and knowledge exchange.

The science workshop featured a series of hands-on stations and a tour through the Florida Fish & Wildlife Research Institute, including an age and growth lab and a visit aboard research vessels. Discussion topics focused on species protections, including barotrauma reduction, turtle excluder device compliance, and habitat restoration. When it came to the stock assessment process, fishermen were eager to take part in collaborative research discussions as a way to help build future data collection.

The management workshop, largely designed around a newly developed mock Council scenario, allowed everyone to try their hand at decision-making and negotiations within the fishery management process. Council staff from the Gulf of Mexico, South Atlantic, and Caribbean offered tips on participating effectively in the Council forum and provided resources for fishermen to access ongoing Council developments. The executive directors from each of the three Councils concluded the workshop with presentations on current challenges and candid discussions with participants.

Attendees at the inaugural MREP Southeast workshop noted the value of the networking opportunities and neutrality of the workshop forum, and they expressed gratitude to fishing industry members Bob Gill and Duane Harris for their leadership throughout the development and implementation phases.

MREP Southeast will be offered again in 2014. For more information on workshop dates and the application process, visit [www.gmri.org/mrepsoutheast](http://www.gmri.org/mrepsoutheast).



## New Reporting Requirements for Gulf of Mexico Headboats

New reporting requirements for headboats operating in the Gulf of Mexico become effective March 5, 2014. The new requirements are part of an effort by fishery managers to better monitor annual catch limits to ensure they are not exceeded.

What are the reporting requirement changes?

The rule requires federally permitted headboats, or vessels that are selected to participate in the Southeast Region Headboat Survey, submit fishing records to the Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) on a weekly basis, or at intervals shorter than a week if notified by the SEFSC Research Director. The current requirement is to submit fishing records on a monthly basis.

The rule changes the current method and frequency of submitting reports. Previously reports were submitted via paper form, now they must be submitted electronically (i.e., via the internet by computer or mobile app).

Headboat owners and operators who are delinquent in submitting reports are not allowed to fish until all required reports have been submitted. This requirement should help to improve compliance with data reporting within the recreational sector.

"The majority of operators have been reporting electronically for the past year," said Ken Brennan, Coordinator of the Southeast Regional Headboat Survey for NOAA Fisheries. "The biggest change is the weekly reporting requirement and the consequences of non-compliance."

Headboat owners and operators who submit delinquent reports are prohibited from harvesting or possessing reef fish and coastal migratory pelagic species until they become compliant.

For a list of frequently asked questions visit [http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable\\_fisheries/gulf\\_fisheries/generic/2013/headboat\\_reporting/documents/pdfs/gulf\\_headboat\\_reporting\\_faqs.pdf](http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sustainable_fisheries/gulf_fisheries/generic/2013/headboat_reporting/documents/pdfs/gulf_headboat_reporting_faqs.pdf)



Photo from NOAA Fisheries Photo Library

## Stay in the loop with *Gulf Currents*

Stay up to date on Gulf of Mexico Fishery issues - visit our blog - *Gulf Currents*.

*Gulf Currents* will keep you in the loop and prepare you to participate effectively in the fishery management process by educating you about current events, possible management considerations, regulatory changes, the fisheries management process, and more.

Check it out at:  
<http://gulfcouncil.blogspot.com/>



## April Council Meeting Reminder

The next Council meeting is scheduled for the week of April 7 - 11, 2014, at the Embassy Suites, Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Please make your reservation under the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council room block to receive the special discounted room rate.

Note that all written comments will be posted on the Council's web site for viewing by Council members and the public.

To help ensure that Council members have sufficient time to consider your written testimony for a specific Council meeting, please submit your comments at least seven business days prior to the start of the Council meeting.

Comments can be submitted online by clicking the thermometer on the Council's homepage - [www.gulfcouncil.org](http://www.gulfcouncil.org). Find your topic of interest and click on the "Submit Your Comments here" link.

Materials submitted to Council members or staff for distribution prior to or during a Council meeting will be treated as all other written comments and will be posted to the web site.

Oral or written communications provided to the Council, its members, or its staff that relate to matters within the Council's purview are public in nature. These communications will be made available to the public in their entirety and will be maintained by the Council as part of the permanent record. Further, knowingly and willfully submitting false information to the Council is a violation of Federal Law.

A draft agenda will be posted on the Gulf Council web site at [www.gulfcouncil.org](http://www.gulfcouncil.org).



## Quick Guide to Submitting Online Comments

The Gulf Council wants your input on the many issues under consideration. You can give your input by attending scoping workshops and public hearings held around the Gulf of Mexico. But it's impossible for the Council to hold workshops or hearings in every coastal community, so if you can't make a meeting because it's too far away or because of other commitments, you can watch online presentations and submit comments electronically for each amendment.

Check it out! Go to [www.gulfcouncil.org](http://www.gulfcouncil.org) and click on the thermometer in the middle of the page. From there you can read up on all the pending actions, watch the video presentations, read comments, and submit your own. All comments submitted through the online form are automatically posted on our web site for Council review. Other comments are manually posted every couple of days.

There is also a thermometer for each issue that lets you know where the Council is in the process for that particular amendment, whether its the scoping phase, final action, or implementation.

Let us hear from you!

### MANAGEMENT PLANS

Click on the thermometer to:

- review pending fishery management plans and amendments
- review available amendment guides
- review public comments
- submit public comments



Photo: Jason Descant

## Send us Your Fishing Photos

We want to see your favorite fishing photos! Whether from a spear fishing adventure, a charter trip, or a commercial effort, we'd like to see your photos and possibly use them on our web site or in our publications.

Send us your photos and help us build a photo library! To submit your photos, send an e-mail with "Photo Library" in the subject line to [gulfcouncil@gulfcouncil.org](mailto:gulfcouncil@gulfcouncil.org). Be sure to include your name, address, and phone number, along with a description and proper photo credit, then simply attach the image and send.

Photo descriptions may be edited for grammar, clarity, and/or length. Photos must be in jpeg format and cannot exceed 1.5 MB (200 ppi).

NOTE: By submitting photos, you understand that your photo may be used on our web site, in our newsletter, or in other publications. Photo credit will be given.

## South Florida Management Issues Discussed

In January, representatives from the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils met in Key Largo, Florida, to discuss management issues in South Florida.

One of many issues discussed was conflicting fishing regulations. Regulations in South Florida can be particularly confusing because the area is managed by Florida FWC, the Gulf Council, and the South Atlantic Council.

The committee also discussed potential options for creating a separate South Florida management area and possible management boundaries. Species-specific options for mutton snapper, yellowtail snapper, hogfish and other species were also discussed.

This joint committee will continue to meet and provide recommendations to Council members. The next meeting is scheduled for July 22-24, 2014 - location to be announced. For more information contact the Gulf Council at 813-348-1630.



Photo by Florida Sea Grant

## Council to Hold Public Hearings on Red Snapper Allocation

During its February 2014 meeting, the Gulf Council discussed a draft public hearing document for Reef Fish Amendment 28 - Red Snapper Allocation and chose Alternative 5 as its preferred alternative. Alternative 5 maintains the commercial/recreational red snapper allocations at 51%/49% if the red snapper quota is less than or equal to 9.12 million pounds (mp). If the quota is greater than 9.12 mp, then 75% of the amount in excess of 9.12 mp would go to the recreational sector and 25% would go to the commercial sector. Based on the current total quota of 11 mp, this would result in 5.121 mp for the commercial sector and 5.879 mp for the recreational sector.

The Council also added a new alternative, Alternative 7, that would allocate 75% of red snapper quota amounts in excess of 10 mp to the recreational sector and 25% to the commercial sector.

Public hearings on Amendment 28 will be held around the Gulf coast in March. A separate call-in session/webinar will also be scheduled for those who are unable to participate in person. Dates and locations are listed below. The Council is also planning a brief meeting in New Orleans May 28-29, during which they will hold a final public hearing and take final action on Amendment 28.

The purpose of Amendment 28 is to allocate red snapper resources between the commercial and recreational sectors to increase the net benefits from red snapper fishing and improve the stability of the red snapper component of the reef fish fishery, particularly for the recreational sector.



Photo by Jeff Berman



Photo: Mark Miller

### Red Snapper Allocation Public Hearing Schedule

All hearings begin at 6 pm local time and will conclude after public input has ended, but no later than 9 pm.

#### March 10, 2014

Fairfield Inn & Suites  
3111 Loop Road  
Orange Beach, AL 36561

#### March 11, 2014

Renaissance Riverview Plaza  
64 South Water Street  
Mobile, AL 36602

#### March 12, 2014

Holiday Inn Select  
2001 N. Cove Boulevard  
Panama City, FL 32405

Courtyard Marriott Gulfport  
1600 East Beach Boulevard  
Gulfport, MS 39501

#### March 13, 2014

La Quinta Inn & Suites  
2610 Williams Boulevard  
Kenner, LA 70062

#### March 17, 2014

Hilton Garden Inn  
6717 South Padre Island Drive  
Corpus Christi, TX 78412

#### March 18, 2014

Embassy Suites San Antonio  
10110 US Highway 281 N  
San Antonio, TX 78216

#### March 19, 2014

Hilton Garden Inn  
750 W. Texas Avenue  
Webster, TX 77598

#### March 20, 2014

Call-in Session/Webinar  
<https://www4.gotomeeting.com/register/670076495>

#### March 24, 2014

Hilton Carillon St. Petersburg  
950 Lake Carillon Drive  
St. Petersburg, FL 33716

### Can't make one of our meetings?

Don't worry, you can watch the virtual presentation on Gulf Council TV. Simply visit [http://www.gulfcouncil.org/resources/gulf\\_council\\_tv.php](http://www.gulfcouncil.org/resources/gulf_council_tv.php) and scroll down to the presentation section.

Then submit your comments online at [http://gulfcouncil.org/fishery\\_management\\_plans/scoping-thru-implementation.php](http://gulfcouncil.org/fishery_management_plans/scoping-thru-implementation.php)

A [Public Hearing Guide](#) will be available soon!

## Recipe Rewind

Here's another blast from the past. This recipe was taken from *Weight Watchers* vintage recipe cards, circa 1974.

### Shrimp-Salmon Mold

#### Ingredients

Cooking spray	1/4 teaspoon grated lemon rind
1 envelope unflavored gelatin	3 drops yellow food coloring
1/4 cup cold water	3/4 cups crushed ice
1 cup buttermilk	6 ounces cooked shrimp
8 tablespoons lemon juice	6 ounces drained canned salmon
1 teaspoon imitation butter flavoring	Salad greens
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract	



#### Instructions

In saucepan sprinkle gelatin over cold water to soften. Stir over low heat until gelatin dissolves. Combined dissolved gelatin, buttermilk, lemon juice, butter flavoring, vanilla, lemon rind and food coloring in blender container; process at high speed until blended. Add crushed ice; process at high speed for 30 seconds. Pour in large bowl. Refrigerate 5 minutes. Combine with shrimp and salmon. Chill in 2 individual molds until firmly set. Unmold on a bed of salad greens. Divide evenly. Makes 2 dinner servings.

Or, you could try this recipe:



### Amberjack with Mango-Banana Salsa

#### Ingredients

1-1/2 cups pineapple-orange juice	1-1/2 teaspoons crushed red pepper
6 tablespoons brown sugar	4 (6 oz) amberjack fillets
6 tablespoons dark rum	1/4 teaspoon salt
3 tablespoons low-sodium soy sauce	cooking spray
1-1/2 tablespoons lime juice	mango-banana salsa*
1-1/2 tablespoons canola oil	

#### Instructions

Combine first 7 ingredients in a medium bowl, stirring until sugar dissolves. Pour half of juice mixture into a large heavy-duty zip-top plastic bag; add fish. Seal and marinate in refrigerator 2 hours, turning bag once.

Place remaining juice mixture in a small saucepan; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium; cook 20 minutes or until mixture is reduced to 1/4 cup. Set aside.

Prepare grill. Remove fish from marinade, sprinkle with salt. Place fish on grill rack coated with cooking spray; grill 5 minutes on each side or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. Drizzle reduced juice mixture evenly over fish. Serve with Mango-Banana Salsa.

#### \*Mango-Banana Salsa Recipe

#### Ingredients

1 cup chopped mango	2 teaspoons minced jalapeno pepper
1/4 cup finely chopped red bell pepper	1-1/2 teaspoons grated peeled fresh ginger
1/4 cup finely chopped red onion	2 teaspoons honey
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro	1 cup diced banana
2 tablespoons fresh lime juice	

#### Instructions

Combine first 8 ingredients in a medium bowl. Let stand 30 minutes. Stir in banana just before serving.





## Council Seeks Input on Web Site Content & Navigation

Last August we conducted a stakeholder communications survey to help us evaluate the effectiveness of current communication efforts. The survey responses identified that the Council's website needs enhancing. We want to improve your online experience by making sure you have easy access to all the information you are looking for, so we're evaluating our website content and navigation.

Please help us improve the website by visiting [www.gulfcouncil.org](http://www.gulfcouncil.org) and providing feedback by emailing your suggestions to [gulfcouncil@gulfcouncil.org](mailto:gulfcouncil@gulfcouncil.org).

If you have any questions or need additional information please call Charlene Ponce at 888-833-1844 ext. 229, or email [charlene.ponce@gulfcouncil.org](mailto:charlene.ponce@gulfcouncil.org).



## Spanish Mackerel Proposed ACL Increase

Recent stock assessments, along with recommendations from both the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Councils' Scientific and Statistical Committees, have led the Gulf and South Atlantic Councils to initiate a joint Framework Amendment to the Coastal Migratory Pelagic Fishery Management Plan. Based on those assessments and recommendations, the framework amendment will revise the Annual Catch Limits (ACL) for Atlantic migratory group Spanish mackerel and Gulf migratory group Spanish mackerel.

There are two actions in the document. One to modify the ACL for Atlantic group Spanish mackerel, and one for Gulf group Spanish mackerel. The Councils have chosen preferred alternatives for both actions and the Gulf Council is expected to take final action during its April meeting.

For Action 1 - Modify the Annual Catch Limit for Atlantic migratory group Spanish Mackerel - the preferred alternative is Alternative 2 - which will increase the ACL as follows:



Photo by Ben Leininger

Fishing Year (March-February)	ABC ww	Sector ACL ww
2014-2015	6.063 mp	Com ACL 3.330 mp Rec ACL 2.727 mp Rec ACT 2.364 mp
2015-2016	6.063 mp	
2016-2017	6.063 mp	

And for Action 2 - Modify the Annual Catch Limit for Gulf migratory group Spanish Mackerel - the preferred alternative is also Alternative 2 - which will increase the ACL as follows:

Fishing Year (April-March)	ABC ww	Total ACL ww (No Sector ACLs)
2014-2015	12.7 mp	12.7 mp
2015-2016	11.8 mp	11.8 mp
2016-2017	11.3 mp	11.3 mp

To review the amendment, visit <http://bit.ly/1eSTQ8E>, and to submit your comments, visit <http://bit.ly/1jHXHtU>.

# The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

*Protecting our marine resources*

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The Gulf Council would like to hear from you! Please contact us regarding fishery questions, comments, or concerns you would like to see covered in the Gulf Fishery News. Anyone interested in submitting information, such as articles, editorials, or photographs pertaining to fishing or fisheries management, is encouraged to do so. Submissions may be mailed to Charlene Ponce, Public Information Officer, Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, 2203 North Lois Avenue, Suite 1100, Tampa, FL 33607. Materials can also be sent via fax to 813-348-1711, or by email to [charlene.ponce@gulfcouncil.org](mailto:charlene.ponce@gulfcouncil.org).

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council is one of eight regional Fishery Management Councils established by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The Council is responsible for the development and modification of fishery management plans (FMPs) that are designed to manage fishery resources in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of the Gulf of Mexico from state boundaries to the 200-mile limit.

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