



Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

Managing Fishery Resources in the U.S. Federal Waters of the Gulf of Mexico

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For Immediate Release

August 21, 2011

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Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council Receives Information on 2011 Recreational Red Snapper Landings

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council this week received a report from NOAA Fisheries Service on the 2011 recreational red snapper landings data. Estimates show that the total landings will likely exceed the recreational red snapper quota. This includes the 345,000 pounds that was added to the recreational quota through an emergency rule. So far the preliminary data, which does not include July landings data or data from Texas, show that at least 80% of the quota has been caught. NOAA Fisheries predicts that landings will exceed the quota by 10% - 20% once the Texas data and the July landings data are added to the landings estimates.

What does this mean?

In June, the Council requested NOAA Fisheries implement an emergency rule that would increase the recreational red snapper quota by 345,000 pounds for the 2011 fishing year, as well as give the Regional Administrator authority to reopen the recreational red snapper season later in the year if quota remains. But because there is no quota leftover from the summer season, there is no opportunity for a 2011 fall season.

Other Red Snapper News

The Council directed staff to begin developing an options paper that examines sector specific payback provisions to address overages that may occur in the red snapper fishery. Currently, if the Total Allowable Catch is exceeded then the following years total allowable catch cannot be increased as scheduled. In this situation, if one sector (commercial or recreational) exceeds its annual quota and causes the total allowable catch to be exceeded, both sectors experience the consequences when the following years total allowable catch is not increased. Sector specific payback options will look at ways to assign responsibility to each sector for any overages incurred. In other words, if only one sector goes over its quota then the other sector would not be held responsible for that overage.

In the red snapper fishery the recreational sector is at the most risk of exceeding its quota, so this amendment will also include alternatives for annual catch targets and buffers for the recreational fishery designed to reduce the likelihood of the quota being exceeded.

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