

For the reasons set out in the preamble, 50 CFR part 622 is proposed to be amended as follows:

PART 622--FISHERIES OF THE CARIBBEAN, GULF OF MEXICO, AND SOUTH ATLANTIC

1. The authority citation for part 622 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

2. In § 622.183, add paragraph (b) (10) to read as follows:

§ 622.183 Area and seasonal closures.

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(b) * * *

(10) *Greater amberjack spawning season closure.* From April 1 through April 30, each year, no person may fish for, harvest, or possess in or from the South Atlantic EEZ any greater amberjack. For a person on board a vessel for which a valid Federal commercial or charter vessel/headboat permit for South Atlantic snapper-grouper has been issued, these prohibitions against fishing, harvesting, or possessing apply in the South Atlantic, *i.e.*, in state or Federal waters. Such greater amberjack are also subject to the prohibition on sale or purchase, as specified in § 622.192 (g) .

§ 622.184 [Amended]

Commented [SS1]: Action 5, Preferred Alternative 2. Comm and Rec April closure.

3. Remove and reserve § 622.184.

4. In § 622.185, revise paragraph (b) (5) to read as follows:

§ 622.185 Size limits.

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(b) * * *

(5) *Greater amberjack* - 28 inches (71.1 cm), fork length, for a fish taken by a person subject to the bag limit specified in § 622.187(b) (1) and 32 inches (81.3 cm), fork length, for a fish taken by a person not subject to the bag limit.

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5. In § 622.190, revise paragraph (a) (3) to read as follows:

§ 622.190 Quotas.

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(a) * * *

(3) *Greater amberjack*-

(i) For the period of March 1 through August 31 each year.

(A) For the 2022-2023 fishing year, 884,423 lb (401,168 kg).

(B) For the 2023-2024 fishing year, 652,817 lb (296,113 kg).

Commented [SS2]: This removes the seasonal harvest limitation for GAJ from Action 5 since the spawning season closure will be under 622.183.

Commented [SS3]: Rec size limit, no change.

Commented [SS4]: Action 3, Preferred Alt 3. Commercial minimum size limit.

Commented [SS5]: From Table 2.2.1.5. Action 2, Preferred Alt 3. Seasonal commercial quotas

Commented [SS6]: Note, all GAJ quota weights are in gutted weight.

(C) For the 2024-2025 fishing year, 569,019 lb
(258,103 kg).

(D) For the 2025-2026 fishing year, 544,990 lb
(247,203 kg).

(E) For the 2026-2027 and subsequent fishing years,
538,933 lb (244,456 kg).

(ii) For the period of September 1 through the end of
February each year.

(A) For the 2022-2023 fishing year, 589,615 lb
(267,445 kg).

(B) For the 2023-2024 fishing year, 435,212 lb
(197,409 kg).

(C) For the 2024-2025 fishing year, 379,346 lb
(172,068 kg).

(D) For the 2025-2026 fishing year, 363,327 lb
(164,802 kg).

(E) For the 2026-2027 and subsequent fishing years,
359,288 lb (162,970 kg).

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6. In § 622.191, revise paragraph (a) (5) to read as
follows:

§ 622.191 Commercial trip limits.

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(a) * * *

(5) Until the applicable commercial quota specified in § 622.190(a)(3) is reached - 1,200 lb (544 kg). See § 622.190(c)(1) for the limitations regarding greater amberjack after the applicable commercial quota is reached.

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7. In § 622.193, revise paragraphs (k) to read as follows:

§ 622.193 Annual catch limits (ACLs), annual catch targets (ACTs), and accountability measures (AMs).

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(~~k~~) *Greater amberjack* -

Commented [SS7]: Greater amberjack

(~~l~~) Commercial sector.

Commented [SS8]: commercial sector

(i) If commercial landings for greater amberjack, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the applicable commercial ACL (commercial quota) specified in § 622.190(a)(3), the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for that portion of the fishing year applicable to the respective quota. Applicable restrictions after a commercial quota closure are specified in § 622.190(c).

(ii) If commercial landings for greater amberjack, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the commercial ACL, and the combined commercial and recreational ACL as specified in paragraph (k)(3) of this section is exceeded during the

same fishing year, and the species is overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the commercial ACL in the following fishing year by the amount of the commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year. The total commercial ACL is 1,474,038 lb (668,612 kg), gutted weight, for the 2022-2023 fishing year; 1,088,029 lb (493,522 kg), gutted weight, for the 2023-2024 fishing year; 948,365 lb (430,171 kg), gutted weight, for the 2024-2025 fishing year; 908,317 lb (412,006 kg), gutted weight, for the 2025-2026 fishing year; and 898,221 lb (407,426 kg), gutted weight, for the 2026-2027 and subsequent fishing years.

(2) *Recreational sector.*

(i) If recreational landings for greater amberjack, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the recreational ACL, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the recreational sector for the remainder of the fishing year regardless if the stock is overfished, unless NMFS determines that no closure is necessary based on the best scientific information available. On and after the effective date of such a notification, the bag and possession limits for greater amberjack in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are

Commented [SS9]: Action 2, Pref Alt 3.
Commercial ACLs. Table 2.2.2.5

zero. The recreational ACL is 2,847,000 lb (1,291,377 kg), round weight, for the 2022-2023 fishing year; 2,101,450 lb (953,202 kg), round weight, for the 2023-2024 fishing year; 1,831,700 lb (830,845 kg), round weight, for the 2024-2025 fishing year; 1,754,350 lb (795,760 kg), round weight, for the 2025-2026 fishing year; and 1,734,850 lb (786,915 kg), round weight, for the 2026-2027 and subsequent fishing years.

(ii) If recreational landings for greater amberjack, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the recreational ACL, then during the following fishing year recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings, and if necessary, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the length of the recreational fishing season and recreational ACL by the amount of the recreational ACL overage, if the species is overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, and if the combined commercial and recreational ACL specified in paragraph (k) (3) of this section, is exceeded during the same fishing year. The AA will use the best scientific information available to determine if reducing the length of the recreational season and recreational ACL is necessary. When the recreational sector is closed as a result of NMFS

Commented [SS10]: Action 2, Preferred Alternative 3. Recreational ACL. Table 2.2.1.5

reducing the length of the recreational fishing season and ACL, the bag and possession limits for greater amberjack in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

(3) *Combined commercial and recreational ACLs.* The combined commercial and recreational ACL for greater amberjack is 4,380,000 lb (1,986,735 kg), round weight, for the 2022-2023 fishing year; 3,233,000 lb (1,466,464 kg), round weight, for the 2023-2024 fishing year; 2,818,000 lb (1,278,223 kg), round weight, for the 2024-2025 fishing year; 2,699,000 lb (1,224,246 kg), round weight, for the 2025-2026 fishing year; and 2,669,000 lb (1,210,638 kg), round weight, for the 2026-2027 and subsequent fishing years.

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