



# **Summary Presentation of White Paper (Attachment 7b) on Limited Entry For-Hire Permits for the Snapper Grouper Fishery**

***Kari MacLauchlin***

***South Atlantic Fishery Management Council***

***March 2017***

***Jekyll Island, GA***

# Presentation Outline

- Introduction
- How limited entry could address issues in the for-hire sector of the Snapper Grouper fishery
- Summary of public input
- Design options for a limited entry program



# Introduction- Snapper Grouper Federal Charter/Headboat Permits

- Open access
- Must be obtained from NMFS each year

**Table 1.** South Atlantic federal snapper grouper for-hire permits by homeport 1/9/17

State	# Permits
North Carolina	285
South Carolina	164
Georgia	50
Florida- East Coast	352
Florida- Keys	326
Florida- West Coast	220
AL/MS/LA/TX	51
Mid-Atlantic	72
New England	8
TOTAL	1,528



# Introduction- Snapper Grouper Federal Charter/Headboat Permits

- Approximately 4-6 % of vessels (~60-70) with SG for-hire permits are headboats
- Headboat “hotspots”: Calabash NC, Little River SC
- Other HB locations:
  - NC: MHC, Hatteras, Nags Head, Swansboro NC
  - SC: Hilton Head, N. Myrtle Beach, Mt Pleasant/Charleston, Murrells Inlet
  - GA: Savannah
  - FLE: Jax, St. Augustine, Canaveral, Jupiter, Stuart, Ft. Lauderdale, Ft. Pierce, Hollywood, Riviera Beach
  - FL Keys: Key Largo, Islamorada, Marathon, Key West
  - Few in Destin, PCB Florida, Pt Aransas TX
- Charter boat “hotspots”:
  - NC: MHC, Hatteras, Manteo, Wanchese
  - SC: Charleston, Murrells Inlet, Little River, Hilton Head
  - GA: Savannah
  - FLE: Canaveral, Miami, St Augustine, Sebastien, Ponce Inlet, Ft Pierce
  - FLK: Key West, Islamorada, Marathon
  - FLW: Marco Island, Naples



# Limited Entry to address issues in the for-hire component of the SG fishery

## Data quality and reporting compliance

- Proposed requirements for electronic weekly reporting for all charter boats and headboats, but an open access permit would allow non-compliant permit holders to just obtain a new permit
- More information about vessels participating in the for-hire component

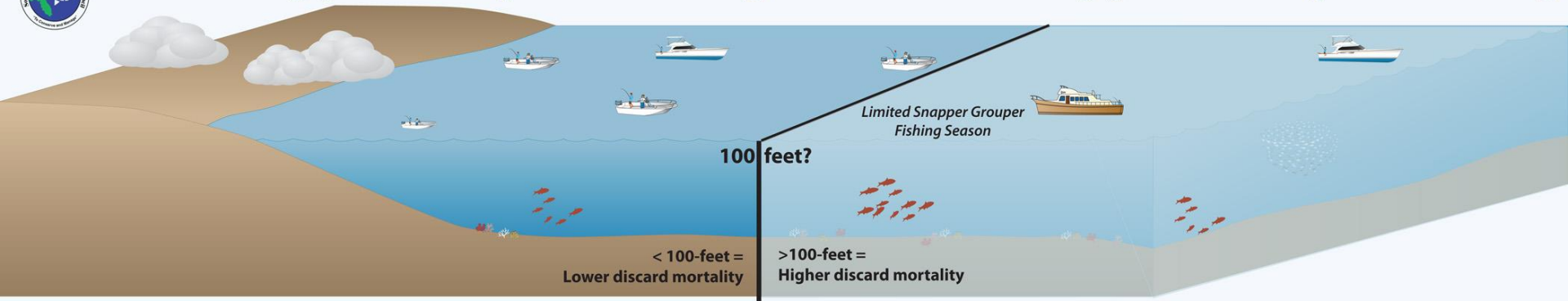
## Limiting the Number of Vessels Interacting with Red Snapper

- Prevent an increase in vessels fishing for and having bycatch of red snapper
- Open access permits would allow anyone to obtain a permit





# Red Snapper Adaptive Management for Snapper Grouper Fishing



## Fishing less than 100-feet - Options

### PRIVATE RECREATIONAL FISHERMEN\*

Allowed to Fish for Snapper Grouper Species Shoreward of 100-feet Year-Round With Conditions:

- Fish Within Annual Catch Limits and Size and Bag Limits
- No Red Snapper Retention Except During Short Open Season
- Catch & Release Allowed After Any ACL Closure (Since Mortality is Lower)

**\*Required Electronic Permit & Electronic Logbook Reporting (Better Catch Data, Length of Discards, & Depth of Released Fish)**

**NOTE:** Pilot project during 2017 to design the reporting system in partnership with SAFMC, NMFS, ACCSP, and the Snook and Gamefish Foundation; Electronic reporting will contribute better data to improve future stock assessment.

### FOR-HIRE FISHERMEN

#### Open Access Fishery

(No limit on # of Headboats & # of Charterboats)

Allowed to Fish for Snapper Grouper Species Shoreward of 100-feet Year-Round With Conditions:

- Fish Within Annual Catch Limits and Size and Bag Limits
- No Red Snapper Retention Except During Short Open Season
- Catch & Release Allowed After Any ACL Closure (Since Mortality is Lower)

### SHORT RED SNAPPER OPEN SEASON - OPTIONS

1-month season (Differ by state/region?)

Low Bag/Trip Limit (1/person; 2-3/vessel?)

Possible Size Limit?

Require Use of Descending Devices in > 100-feet

### FOR-HIRE FISHERMEN

#### Limited Access Fishery

(Cap on # of Headboats & # of Charterboats)

Allowed to Fish for Snapper Grouper Species in All Depths (Longer Fishing Season) With Conditions:

- Fish Within Annual Catch Limits and Size and Bag Limits
- No Red Snapper Retention Except During Short Open Season
- Longer Fishing Season in Deeper Water Because of Cap on Effort
- Required to Use Descending Device in > 100-feet

### COMMERCIAL FISHERMEN

Allowed to Fish for Snapper Grouper Species in All Depths With Conditions:

- Fish Within ACLs and Size and Trip Limits
- No Red Snapper Retention Except During Short Open Season
- Required to Use Descending Device in > 100-feet

Open  
vs.  
Limited  
Access

## Fishing greater than 100-feet - Options

### PRIVATE RECREATIONAL FISHERMEN\*

Only Allowed to Fish for Snapper Grouper Species in Greater Than 100-feet During Red Snapper Open Season With Conditions:

- Fish Within Annual Catch Limits and Size and Bag Limits
- Retain Red Snapper and Other Species within Bag Limits

**\*Required Electronic Permit & Electronic Logbook Reporting (Better Catch Data, Length of Discards, & Depth of Released Fish)**  
Required to Use Descending Device

### FOR-HIRE FISHERMEN

#### Open Access Fishery

(No limit on # of Headboats & # of Charterboats)

Only Allowed to Fish for Snapper Grouper Species in Greater Than 100-feet During Red Snapper Open Season With Conditions:

- Fish Within Annual Catch Limits and Size and Bag Limits
- Retain Red Snapper and Other Species within Bag Limits
- Required to Use Descending Device

Open  
vs.  
Limited  
Access

# Limited Entry to address issues in the for-hire component of the SG fishery

## Overcapacity in the for-hire sector

- Overcapacity and excess capacity → more boats than needed to reach the ACLs, or more boats than needed to meet demand for charter and HB services
- Localized increases in different areas in the region
- Cap or reduce the number of vessels

## Professionalize the For-Hire Fleet

- Unlicensed operators are a concern for permit holders/full-time operators
- Limited entry would result in a more professionalized fishery because there would be more investment.
- Cap or reduce the number of potential vessels offering charter/headboat services to fish for SG species in the EEZ





# Public Input

## Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel

- The AP has discussed limited entry in the for-hire sector at several meetings
  - Approved (with some opposed) motions to recommend limited entry for SG for-hire permits in Apr 2011, Nov 2012, Apr 2013, and Oct 2014
- Oct/Nov 2016 discussion:
  - Concern that limited entry could lead to sector separation, but there was also some support for sector separation
  - Opposition due to allowing free markets
  - Main concern is data collection and management
  - Concern about red snapper management and open access for-hire permits
  - For-hire sector should be held accountable
  - MRIP is not appropriate for managing the for-hire sector
  - Limited entry necessary for reporting compliance
  - Permits will be more expensive
  - Approved Motion to support limited entry for the SG For-Hire permit (13 in favor, 3 opposed)





# Public Input

## Snapper Grouper Visioning

- Limited entry for SG For-Hire permits came up during NC/FL port meetings in 2014 and the visioning public input sessions.

Visioning comments:

- Make for-hire permits 2-for-1 like they are with the snapper grouper unlimited commercial permits,
- Establish a control date for for-hire permits
- Establish a moratorium for new for-hire permits,
- Entities getting a for-hire permit must show evidence of landings history in for-hire fisheries,
- Establish an income requirement from for-hire fisheries to be eligible to get a for-hire permit,
- Require education or training as a prerequisite to renewing a permit, and
- Establish a maximum limit of for-hire permits and when a permit is retired, it would go back into the pool of eligible permits



# Public Input

## Public Comments

- Most comments received in the last 12-18 months have been in opposition to limited entry.
  - No sharp increase in the number of permits
  - Alternatives to improving reporting compliance
  - Concern that limited entry would lead to sector separation or IFQs
- Comments in support of limited entry
  - Cap growth in the fishery
  - Improve compliance
  - Reduce loopholes of vessels without a federal permit being exempt from federal requirements



# Considerations for Limited Entry

Different features and provisions of a limited entry system will address different management goals.

★ **The Council will need to first develop clear and specific goals for a limited entry system** before considering the features best suited to reach the desired outcomes. ★

- Moratorium
- Different types of permits
- Eligibility requirements
- Transferability provisions
- Other Design Features



# Moratorium on Permits

- No new permits issued after a specified date
- In place for a designated time period or until a permanent limited entry system in place
- Allow time to collect information and evaluate the fleet
- King mackerel commercial permits and Gulf reef fish charter/headboat and Gulf CMP charter/headboat permits – moratorium first, then a permanent limited entry



# Permit Type(s)

- **One limited entry permit** for charter/headboat to fish for SG species in the EEZ
- **One for headboats, one for charter boats**
- **Separate permits** associated with specific areas or species, in addition to general for-hire SG permit
- Limited entry permit **with conditions** (e.g., trip limits, etc)
  - Would be complicated to implement and enforce



# Eligibility

- Criteria for who would get a permit, and/or who could maintain a permit
- Eligibility will affect # permits → directly tied to **management goals**

## Examples

- Moratorium date- would cap # permits but not reduce
- Control date- would cap # permits but not reduce
- Double control date- help prevent “rush on permits”.



# Eligibility

## Examples

- Number of years with a permit- would likely reduce the # permits from the current level
- Level of Involvement (effort or landings requirement)- could be used for initial eligibility or renewal eligibility
- Reporting compliance- e.g., maximum number of late reports
- Other requirements- USCG certification, captain's license, education/training





# Transferability

## No transfers:

- Could result in reduced # permits (if that is a goal)
- Would remove the “exchange value”

## Retirement Options when permit is not renewed:

- Permanently retired (passive reduction) OR
- Goes into a pool make available at a specified interval, and distributed by waiting list or lottery

Family transfers- if no transfers allowed, Council could define “family” and allow family transfers



# Transferability

Delayed transferability- no transfers the first one/two/three years of the limited entry

Open transfers- can transfer permits to anyone or to US citizens only

2-for-1 requirement- must obtain two permits to trade in for one permit (SG Commercial Unlimited permit)- can be expensive and reduces the number of permits over time

Passenger capacity- cannot transfer permit to a vessel with a higher assigned passenger capacity

- Gulf Reef Fish and CMP Charter/HB permits
- caps fleet size and limits growth



# Other Design Features

Limited entry can be designed to meet mgmt goals and mitigate potential negative effects

- Renewal requirements- Landings, reporting compliance, etc.
- Mechanism/trigger to make additional permits available – flexibility to adapt
  - Minimum threshold of permits
  - Specific biological status of stock(s)



# Questions?

