

**2015 South Atlantic Red Snapper Annual Catch Limits and
Recreational Season Length Projection
Southeast Regional Office
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Introduction

The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council approved Amendment 28 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region (Amendment 28) in September 2012. Amendment 28 established: (1) a process to determine if a red snapper fishing season will occur each year, which would include specification of the allowable harvest and season lengths for the commercial and recreational sectors; (2) an equation to determine the annual catch limit (ACL) amount for each sector; and (3) management measures if fishing is allowed. The purpose of this analysis is to determine the recreational and commercial ACLs for 2015.

2015 Annual Catch Limit

Amendment 28 specified the following formulas for calculating the ACL for red snapper each fishing year:

$$\text{If total removals}_{yr-1} > ABC_{yr-1}, \text{ then } ACL_{yr} = 0 \quad (1)$$

$$\text{If total removals}_{yr-1} < ABC_{yr-1}, \text{ then} \quad (2)$$

$$ACL_{yr} = \left(\frac{ABC_{yr-2} - estCSR_{yr-2}}{ABC_{yr-2}} + \frac{ABC_{yr-1} - estCSR_{yr-1}}{ABC_{yr-1}} \right) / 2 \times ABC_{yr}$$

where ABC equals the acceptable biological catch in 2013 (ABC_{yr-2}) or 2014 (ABC_{yr-1}) and estCSR equals the estimated closed season removals in 2013 ($estCSR_{yr-2}$) or 2014 ($estCSR_{yr-1}$).

Total removals for 2014 were obtained from the Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC; 2015). Using Equation 1, the total removals for 2014 (total removals_{yr-1}) were compared to the 2014 ABC (ABC_{yr-1}) to determine the 2015 ACL (ACL_{yr}). The 2014 ABC equaled 106,000 fish. Total removals were based on landings and discards reported from logbooks and surveys. Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS) landings were used instead of Marine Recreational Information Program landings because the current South Atlantic red snapper ACL is based on MRFSS landings. Total removals were determined to be 205,859 fish (Table 1). Since 2014 total removals exceeded the 2014 ABC, the 2015 ACL will be set to zero.

Table 1. ABC, estimated landings and dead discards by sector and total removals for South Atlantic red snapper in 2014.

Variable	Number of Fish
	2014
ABC	106,000
Commercial Landings	10,827
Commercial Dead Discards	14,000
Recreational Headboat Landings	2,952
Recreational Headboat Dead Discards	19,111
Recreational Charter Landings	2,749
Recreational Charter Dead Discards	17,870
Recreational Private Landings	25,982
Recreational Private Dead Discards	112,369
Total Removals	205,859

References

SEFSC; 2015. Total removals of red snapper (*Lutjanus campechanus*) in 2014 from the U.S. South Atlantic. NOAA Fisheries, Southeast Fisheries Science Center, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Beaufort, NC. 11 pp.