

**2016 South Atlantic Red Snapper Annual Catch Limits and
Recreational Season Length Projection
Southeast Regional Office
St. Petersburg, FL
May 6, 2015
SERO-LAPP-2016-05**

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 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 2016.

2016 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 is the acceptable biological catch and estCSR is the estimated closed season removals. In the formulas for the 2016 season, yr-2 represents 2014 values and yr-1 represents 2015 values.

Total removals for 2015 were obtained from the Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC; 2016). Using Equation 1, the total removals for 2015 (total removals_{yr-1}) were compared to the 2015 ABC (ABC_{yr-1}) to determine the 2016 ACL (ACL_{yr}). The 2015 ABC equaled 114,000 fish. Total removals were based on landings and discards reported from logbooks and surveys. For charter boats and private recreational boats, the Marine Recreational Information Program landings estimates were converted to Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS) equivalent estimates because the current South Atlantic red snapper ABC is based in part on the MRFSS landings. Total removals were determined to be 276,729 fish (Table 1). Since 2015 total removals exceeded the 2015 ABC, the 2016 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 2015.

Variable	Number of Fish
	2015
ABC	114,000
Commercial Landings	557
Commercial Dead Discards	22,777
Recreational Headboat Landings	750
Recreational Headboat Dead Discards	22,306
Recreational Charter Landings	904
Recreational Charter Dead Discards	45,306
Recreational Private Landings	639
Recreational Private Dead Discards	183,490
Total Removals	276,729

References

SEFSC 2016. Total removals of red snapper (*Lutjanus campechanus*) in 2015 from the U.S. South Atlantic. NOAA Fisheries, Southeast Fisheries Science Center, Sustainable Fisheries Division, Beaufort, NC. 7 pp.