

Public Reporting

The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

Public Comment Form



Meeting

April 2023 Snapper Grouper AP Meeting

Submit Date	Submitted By	Location	Affiliation	Comment
4/24/2023	First Name: Chris Last Name: McCaffity Email: freefish7@hotmail.com	City: morehead city State: North Carolina	Commercial	Please send an official letter to the National Marine Fisheries Service and Sec. of Commerce asking them not to approve Amendment 35 because it jeopardizes the health of Red Snapper and other co-occurring species. The data shows our Red Snapper population at an all-time high thanks to the sacrifices fishermen and seafood consumers have made for over a decade. Fishermen are using circle hooks and descending devices to ensure most of the Red Snapper we are required to discard survive. It is not right to punish us for our compliance with stricter laws that will keep our fishery closed most of the time for the foreseeable future because the council wants a few more snapper to be slightly older, so reproductive levels are a little higher. This logic is completely flawed. Why do Red Snapper need to reproduce more if the stock is already beyond historically high levels? The overabundance of younger snapper is out-competing other species for food causing their numbers to decline and threatening the Red Snapper stock with starvation along with the potential for fin-rot and other overpopulation problems. Planning ahead to mandate the needless waste of millions of pounds of seafood is wrong on every level. The council should encourage fishermen to target smaller snapper rather than forcing us to discard almost all of them we can't help but catch because they are so plentiful. Culling some of the smaller fish allows those that are left to grow faster with less competition. Prices for snapper harvested by commercial fishermen are about the same regardless of size so targeting fish mostly under tens pounds is feasible and much more profitable than discarding them. Recreational fishermen could be encouraged to keep smaller snapper with a two-fish limit for reds under 20 inches or one fish over during the extremely short season. Please advise the SAFMC to ask NMFS and Dept. of Commerce to send Amendment 35 back for further review while they work on setting up a recreational fishing license that will define the universe of anglers while providing much better data on effort and snapper interactions. Making wild assumptions using the precautionary principle is not a wise management strategy and undermines any confidence fishermen have left in the process. I am happy to answer any questions and/or provide more details. Thank you!
4/24/2023	First Name: Robert Last Name: Hallett Email: Fhallett@hallettins.com	City: St augustine State: Florida	Private Recreational, Non-Govt Org (NGO)	Would like to see more discussion about a small boat limit and maybe a max size allowed for Red Snapper. Data shows they have higher abundance levels than ever before. Fisheries management requires your constituents to buy in. We see less and less buy in every week that the red snapper fishery is closed down. An easy fix to this would be to allow, for instance, 24inch max and one per boat.
4/24/2023	First Name: James Last Name: Erdman Email: Jterdman1992@aol.com	City: Mims State: Florida	Private Recreational	Keep the snapper and grouper open this is a direct attack on the fishing community with made up data and no real facts. It is not about saving a the fish but to try to stop all fishing
4/24/2023	First Name: Mike Last Name: Schaler Email: Msschaler@gmail.com	City: South Daytona State: Florida	Private Recreational	Over protecting Red Snapper is destroying the grouper population. The Snapper out compete every other species on the reef due to the fact that they outnumber all the other species. They eat juvenile grouper .
4/24/2023	First Name: Ty Last Name: Blake Email: Tblake521@gmail.com	City: Ponte Vedra State: Florida	Private Recreational, For-Hire	Please open Red Snapper to public fishery. They have taken over every reef from 0-65 miles offshore and eat all of the young of the other reef fish!
4/24/2023	First Name: Daniel Last Name: Fico Email: Dfico1@gmail.com	City: Neptune beach State: Florida	Private Recreational	Remove the limitations on recreation grouper harvest for black grouper and gag grouper. There is no data that supports the recreation harvest of grouper has a statistically significant negative impact on the grouper population. The recreational sector supports the most amount of participants in the sport, so this rule is negative to participants and doesn't improve the grouper population in a beneficial manner. Commercial harvest is where the damage is done and should be regulated to improve fish populations.
4/24/2023	First Name: Jacob Last Name: Nolan Email: Jacob4960@gmail.com	City: Waverly State: Georgia	Private Recreational	There are plenty of snapper We should have tags like deer hunting
4/24/2023	First Name: Shawn Last Name: Upson Email: Upsonbuilds@gmail.com	City: Jacksonville State: Florida	Private Recreational	I would like to see decisions made on real data regarding red snapper populations. It seems like they have out competed all other species and better management measures need to be taken. Possibly add a size limit as red snapper are more productive in reproducing as they age to a cerise point.
4/24/2023	First Name: Anthony Last Name: Thompson Email: Minvik292@gmail.com	City: Jacksonville State: Florida	Private Recreational	Please allow the privet sector more than one weekend to fish let alone just one day. Consider open and closed season,s just like Groupers. Thanks
4/24/2023	First Name: Ian Last Name: Schurman Email: Schurman116@hotmail.com	City: St Augustine beach State: Florida	Private Recreational	It is painfully obvious that our red snapper population is out of control in the NE Florida region. We need a longer season for recreational anglers! Don't have to be a biologist to see how overpopulated the red snapper are! Open your eyes!

4/24/2023	First Name: Last Name: Email:	City: State: Florida	Private Recreational	I have been fishing and diving offshore for nearly 25 years. The Red Snapper population has rebounded incredibly yet fisherman are getting less and less access to it. As someone with a background in mathematics I can see how the fishery is growing throw random sampling but what doesn't make since it's the data the government is using. If fish were not surviving the release methods fisherman were using we would see the population decrease. Since the population is growing they must be surviving. I've witness fish safely swinging back down and I've caught many fish with venting marks showing these fish are surviving. The limits are much less strict in areas such as the gulf. Atlantic fish are not any weaker than Gulf fish of the same species. Yes certain areas can promote greater populations but what the SAMFC is doing in the Atlantic is illogical. Please use accurate data and lesson to all the fisherman and diver who are giving you facts about the growth of the Snapper population. We care for the ocean and working suggest more harvesting if we didn't believe it was best for the balance of all the fish species sharing the habitat.
4/24/2023	First Name: Joshua Last Name: Jones Email: Jonesjoshua0923@gmail.com	City: Yulee State: Florida	Private Recreational	It's about time to open up snapper and grouper season longer then a weekend or day. The population has grown u can go offshore fishing with catching a handful of large snappers and grouper.
4/24/2023	First Name: George Last Name: Thrift Email: Georgethrift4444@gmail.com	City: Fernandina State: Florida	Private Recreational	The snapper are flourishing in north east Florida as a former mate part time charter capt and someone who wants conservation the snapper have taken over our reefs making it hard to catch gag grouper inside 20 miles please extend the season for the NE Fl region!
4/24/2023	First Name: Daniel Last Name: Smith Email: Dantheman3838@gmail.com	City: Jacksonville State: Florida	Private Recreational	You cant catch anything from 10 to 40 miles offshore orher than red Snapper! Give us a real red snapper season! Dan Smith Jax FL
4/24/2023	First Name: James Last Name: Greenwalt Email: Fatandhappy@comcast.net	City: Jacksonville State: Florida	Private Recreational	The snapper population out of Nassau Duval and St John's county's for the last five years that I have been fishing has been so abundant that I often have to go to 10 or more spots so I can catch anything else. Also the current super small season lead to a massive attack on the reefs when anyone with a boat hits the water to get a big one and kill many small ones. We would be much better served with a 3 or four month season with a decent min size one fish bag limit.
4/24/2023	First Name: Brendan Last Name: Email:	City: Jacksonville State: Florida	Private Recreational	The way in which the Atlantic Red snapper population is studied needs to be reevaluated or changed. There is not one angler recreational, commercial, or charter who has not witnessed the issues with their exploding population. Every reef or wreck outside of 10 miles has a healthy population of red snapper, if not overpopulated. We catch red snapper when we fish for sheephead on nearshore reefs. We catch red snapper when we troll for kingfish. We catch red snapper when we fish for seabass. We catch them fishing for muttons, grouper, vermilions, and mangroves. Red snapper have become a nuisance to anglers in the Atlantic, they are now one of the most common bycatch. Not just because of their sheer numbers but because they prey on the fish we are actually allowed to harvest. In the Atlantic we catch larger Red Snapper and in greater numbers than the Gulf yet we never get more than 2 weekends to harvest them. The gulf gets almost 3 months, there is an obvious issue with those in charge of these regulations and they need to be removed their positions or forced to make a change that reflects the reality of the red snapper population.
4/24/2023	First Name: Lane Last Name: Wimberly Email: midgaaviation@yahoo.com	City: Cochran State: Georgja	Private Recreational	Red snapper and sharks are out of control off the GA Coast. The SAFMC's mismanagement of our fisheries has taken a lot of the joy out of offshore fishing. This mismanagement started with the appointees from the Obama administration. An even well balanced fisheries stock went downhill from there due to the ridiculous red snapper, Black Sea bass, and shark regulations. I hope to see common sense return to the SAFMC soon or better yet be abolished and let the states take over management out to 125 miles before I'm too old to make the offshore trips. It's getting really frustrating catching nothing but snapper or mutilated snapper due to the multitude of sharks. Quit making excuses and do your job.
4/25/2023	First Name: Lenny Last Name: Lee Email: Peshewa720@gmail.com	City: Port orange State: Florida	Private Recreational	Living and being out on the water and fishing 2 or 3 days a week I assure you that the red snapper population off our east central Florida coast is not only healthy but more so out of control...Its typical to catch a dozen or more red snapper from 5 to 25 lbs on each day we fish . They are the predominant fish species we catch in waters from 60 to 140 ft depths There needs to be a far more liberal season for these fish to harvest more of that surplus... Realizing there yet needs to be managed seasons and limits..A far longer season here of perhaps 3 to 5 months with a 2 fish per day (over "16) limit makes far more sense .. As of now red snapper have overpopulated most reefs and squeezed out (or devoured) most other species... Sincerely, Lenny Lee
4/25/2023	First Name: Eric Last Name: Simmons Email: Ericdustinlane@bellsouth.net	City: Oak Hill State: Florida	Private Recreational	I thought the continual closure of red snapper was one of the most ridiculous decisions I have seen until the latest Red Porgy closure. You literally can't get away from either species fishing, this regulations need to narrowed down to region if there is a issue somewhere but there are no issues in East Central Florida. Has anybody researched the overabundance of red snapper have on other species...sea bass all the other snapper species? These regulations show zero real world science and what fisherman experience daily in this region.
4/25/2023	First Name: Reid Last Name: Stack Email: Reid.stack@icloud.com	City: Jacksonville State: Florida	Private Recreational	Most areas are unfishable for anything within 35 miles of shore because they are so over run with red snapper. The bag limit should be increased. The crowd and rush during short red snapper seasons is dangerous. The state should issue tags and allow fisherman to use them anytime during the year.
4/25/2023	First Name: bobby Last Name: riggins Email: bobrjaxfl@gmail.com	City: Jacksonville Beach State: Florida	Private Recreational	It is time to allow recreational fishermen should be allowed to keep a couple of Red Snapper. This extended protection is over done. No fisherman wants to out fish the stock. We do want to fish and eat a couple of Red Snapper especially when they are every where. The one or two weekend red snapper weekend is really an over kill. We should be able to fish every where all summer long and keep a couple each trip per person.
4/25/2023	First Name: Matthew Last Name: Troy Email: matthew.troyiv@gmail.com	City: Mt. Pleasant State: South Carolina	Private Recreational	Virtual attendees are muted by the meeting organizer. Attendees will not be able to ask questions unless they are unmuted.
4/26/2023	First Name: Tim Last Name: Guididas Email: Tguididas@gmail.com	City: Jacksonville State: Florida	Private Recreational	Please realize how invasive Atlantic red snapper have become and act accordingly. They are devastating competition and the natural balance has been tipped way over, in the wrong direction. This fish is not in danger. This fish is extremely abundant. Please do the right thing

4/27/2023	First Name: JT Last Name: Kenney Email: jtkenney@luckymail.com	City: Grant-Valkaria State: Florida	Private Recreational	<p>Both scientists and fishermen believe the stock of South Atlantic red snapper has rebounded to a level so great that they are more abundant today than any living person has ever seen. Despite this success, I understand that NOAA Fisheries has informed the South Atlantic Council that bottom fishing closures, in which fishing for 55 species of snapper grouper would be prohibited, are necessary to reduce releases of red snapper. Large area and/or seasonal closures to all bottom fishing would be devastating to the recreational fishing industry and offshore anglers from North Carolina to Florida.</p> <p>As an angler who is passionate about conservation, I urge the Council to pause consideration of bottom fishing closures until the results of the South Atlantic Great Red Snapper Count are incorporated into the next stock assessment and can be used to inform management moving forward.</p> <p>Also, implementing a federal reef fish permit under Amendment 46 will be unnecessarily redundant to Florida's State Reef Fish Survey and will do little to benefit the overall management of the Snapper Grouper complex. Regulatory Amendment 35 to the Snapper Grouper fisheries management plan (FMP), in part, seeks to implement management measures to reduce release mortality for the South Atlantic red snapper fishery.</p> <p>While a federal permit would assist in identifying the universe of anglers targeting fish in the complex, the timeliness of the data would still be limited. There is a critical need for more accurate and timely estimates of the recreational catch and discards. However, a better alternative would be for the development of state-based permit and data collection programs in Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina that could also provide the universe of anglers targeting snapper and grouper while significantly improving the timeliness of the data. Florida already has a state-based recreational harvest program in their State Reef Fish Survey (SRFS), and a federal permit would be unnecessarily redundant and burdensome.</p>