

Public Reporting

The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council

Public Comment Form



Meeting

Jan. 2023 Public Hearings for Snapper Grouper Amendment 53

Submit Date	Submitted By	Location	Affiliation	Comment
1/7/2023	First Name: Chris Last Name: McCaffity Email: freefish7@hotmail.com	City: morehead city State: North Carolina	Commercial	Please manage adjusted commercial Gag Grouper quota with appropriate trip limits to avoid extended closures and excessive discards. Please keep the current 8 month season in place so consumers can continue accessing a dependable supply of our public resources. Please reward fishermen with lower dead discard deductions for following circle hook and descending device requirements. Please consider options for regionally stocking Gag Grouper and creating Hatchery Supported Quotas based on a percentage of stocked fry. It is time we started focusing more on enhancing our fisheries and food supply than restricting our freedom to access our public resources. I am happy to answer any questions and/or provide more detail. Thank you.
1/9/2023	First Name: Ron Last Name: Rincones Email: FISHRICO@AOL.COM	City: GRANT VALKARIA State: Florida	Private Recreational, For-Hire	THE MAJOR PROBLEM IN THE SN/GP FISHERY IS SANDBAR SHARKS. WHAT USE TO OCCUR RARELY NOT OCCURS SEVERAL TIMES ON EVERY TRIP. REGARDLESS OF THE DEPTH, SANDBAR & OCCASIONALLY BULL SHARKS TAKE OUR FISH. MOVE TO ANOTHER SPOT AND THE SAME THING OCCURS. I BOUGHT A SHARK DETERRENT DEVICE, AND MADE THE MISTAKE OF NOT USING WIRE OR CABLE AND SOMETHING TOOK IT!!! (CAPS USED FOR EASE OF READING)
1/9/2023	First Name: Wells Last Name: Barker Email: wbarker1@ec.rr.com	City: Beaufort State: North Carolina	Commercial, Wholesale/Dealer /Retail	"I have been a small scale commercial S/G fisherman and dealer operating out of Beaufort, N.C for the past 30+ years. I've been thru many amendments and never have I seen one with so many recreational data ""contradictions"". The gag sector allocations should not be changed, regardless of which set of landings data is correct because NOAA/S.A. Council have worked hard to create a very uneven comm./rec. playing field by their actions. They have, over the years, steadily reduced the number of S/G fishermen thru their 2 for 1 permit regulation and this regulation, unbelievably, is still in effect today. During the same time period, the rec. sector has had no restrictions on their numbers. From the fisheries.noaa.gov website the computed average of rec. gag landings for the 5 years period (2015-2019) mentioned in the Amendment 35 Document (53 Doc) is 109K lbs.. From the SEDAR 72, the average for the same 5 years is computed to be 255K lbs.. From the 53 Doc the given average is 297K lbs.. All data was supposedly collected through ""valid"" methodology and even with some tweaking due to different collection methods, there should not be this much discrepancy. When looking at the 3 years (17-19) rec. gag landings data one can determine that NOAA reported landings averaged 112K lbs.. The SEDAR shows a 269K lbs, and the 53 Doc. shows a 364 K lbs. If the 53 Doc data is correct, then the rec. sector exceeded their sector allotted ACL in both 17 and 19 and did not encounter any accountability measures. On top of that, to propose increasing the rec. sector allocation based on landings that exceeded their ACL is borderline ""criminal"". I urge you to keep the sector allocations that are currently in effect (51% Comm./49% Rec.). To decrease the Comm. sector allocation on top of the proposed overall ACL reduction will have a greater economic effect on N.C. and S.C. Comm. S/G fishermen since this is the area where the gag landings are concentrated. At my age and with my small boat, I can't make the trip 35-40 miles offshore to get to other species in deeper water. In your 53 Doc. you quote a \$6+ price for gag per pound. F.Y.I., this past year it was \$8+ per pound. As to the assertion that gag grouper are over-fished and under-going over-fishing, I remind you that in 2014 SEDAR, NOAA declared gags as not being over-fished nor was over-fishing occurring. Since that assessment, the total gag ACL that you put in place has not been exceeded and yet somehow, here we are ""over-fished/fishing"". I urge you to leave the sector allocations as they are and please let this rebuilding process be as painless as possible for all involved (fishermen, dealers, and the public that has a great demand for local, fresh caught seafood). Thank you for your time."
1/10/2023	First Name: Thomas Last Name: Bramhall Email: tom@tombramhall.com	City: Mooresville State: North Carolina	Private Recreational	Im a spear fisherman requesting that one per person per boat 6 fish maximum boat limit in the new year for GAG grouper and 3 red snapper per person with a 9 fish limit during a close captioned red Snapper season outside of the spawning period.
1/10/2023	First Name: Harrison Last Name: Hernandez Email: Gator7578@me.com	City: Cocoa State: Florida	Private Recreational, For-Hire	If you morons would get your heads out of your asses and look at the real problem in the south Atlantic, which is the out of control red snapper and sand bar shark population which is overtaking the ocean. The grouper have a tough time foraging for food and competing with the overly abundant red snapper population. And for fisherman as soon as you finally get past the red snapper to hook a grouper many times the sandbar sharks eat them.
1/10/2023	First Name: Tony Last Name: Golub Email: Boarlife78@gmail.com	City: St. Augustine State: Florida	Private Recreational	Hello! Why don't we all look at fish management like deer hunting. How do we help a deer heard? Improve the habitat and food sources. If this works for deer, why wouldn't it work for Grouper and Snapper? Why not create more reefs all over for the fish? There is tons of open space offshore. More wrecks means more spots for fish to hide. More hiding spots means more fish and hence improved stocks. Instead of creating reactive restrictions, why not be proactive to help the fish?
1/11/2023	First Name: Last Name: Email:	City: State: Florida	Private Recreational	Please update your tracking ability/tech. Shark population is out of control and this can be better managed. Thanks!
1/17/2023	First Name: Chris Last Name: Shultz Email: Chris@fishjax.org	City: Jacksonville State: Florida	Private Recreational, For-Hire, Non-Govt Org (NGO)	The management of Red Snapper in our region is a complete travesty. Stocks are at record levels yet we now face additional restrictions and lower catch totals. It's a complete sham. The snapper population is now our competing the Black Sea Bass, Porgy's, Grouper, any relief or structure inside 130 foot is overrun with them. The complete failure in managing this fishery has driven a wedge between anglers and the government that will take years to repair, the agency should halt any continued action in this fishery until the congressionally funded stock assessment is completed.
1/31/2023	First Name: Nick Last Name: Pursglove Email: Advisor369@yahoo.com	City: Orlando State: Florida	Private Recreational	Stop restrictions on red snapper. They are everywhere and over populated out of port canaveral. They eat everything else and you keep restricting them. I don't know about other regions but this is crazy look at videos and videos or go out of port canaveral yourself.
1/31/2023	First Name: Nick Last Name: Stanczyk Email: Bnmcharters@gmail.com	City: Islamorada State: Florida	Private Recreational, For-Hire	If we have to use a single hook rig for deep dropping in 500-1000' of water it will make fishing out there completely impractical.

1/31/2023	First Name: Stone Last Name: Lyons Email: stonelions1212@gmail.com	City: Fort Lauderdale State: Florida	Private Recreational	This will be absolutely ridiculous to ban this for recreational anglers, stop blaming recreational people enjoying their weekends, look at the commercial fishery numbers. I am a fisheries science major and I'm sick of this corruption within our regulations and punishing people who follow limits vs. those who rape the ocean. We already have seasons in place that ban fish all year round. Stop with this idiocracy and look at the facts. PUNISH THE COMMERCIAL FISHERY!
1/31/2023	First Name: Last Name: Email:	City: State: Florida	Private Recreational	The banning of chicken rigs/deep drops rigs is the most ridiculous thing I have ever heard of. The south Atlantic fishery management needs to get a grip on things and collect real data. Not Abunch of bull shit data. All they wanna do is limit fishing as much as they can until we can't fish anymore. All I have to say is good luck with your stupid admenments.
1/31/2023	First Name: Charles Last Name: King Email: Captaincharlesking@gmail.com	City: Cocoa State: Florida	Private Recreational, For-Hire	This is ridiculous, as a recreational fisherman and now a charter captain thus should not be passed.
1/31/2023	First Name: Kurt Last Name: Boyken Email: kurtboyken@gmail.com	City: Merritt Island State: Florida	Private Recreational	<p>Hello, SAFMC Staff,</p> <p>I would like to comment on the proposal to ban multiple hook rigs.</p> <p>My name is Kurt Boyken. I am a resident of Merritt Island, FL. I have fished offshore in federal waters off Port Canaveral for the past ten years. I am studying environmental studies at the University of Central Florida.</p> <p>I do not support prohibiting multiple hook rigs because it interferes with other types of fishing where red snapper either never existed or did not occur in numbers. In Gulf Stream waters ranging from 450-800 ft, I target tilefish and yellowedge grouper on mud burrows. It requires several pounds of lead, and it takes a few minutes to get the baits down and up. I need to use multiple hooks because unwanted small benthic species will unhook my baits.</p> <p>I do not catch many red snapper over hard bottom spots deeper than 200 ft. In this depth, I strongly prefer to use two hooks when I target gray triggerfish, vermillion snapper, and red porgy (when season is open).</p> <p>I am intentionally bottom fishing this far offshore to avoid red snapper, so please do not prohibit multiple hook rigs or electric reels in depths greater than 200 ft. If your agency decides to prohibit multiple hook rigs anyways, please make it only apply to bait pieces larger than four inches. Except for targeting grouper, I am using small pieces of bait to catch species other than red snapper in the aforementioned depths.</p> <p>If multiple hook rigs or electric fishing reels are prohibited, more people will fish shallower spots where red snapper are far more abundant. Electric reels and multiple hooks are less essential in less than 200 ft because less weight is needed, and less current is present. More people fishing in shallower would inevitably increase red snapper mortality.</p> <p>That said, my observations about red snapper do not indicate the need for prohibiting harvest in federal waters out of Port Canaveral, Florida.</p> <p>Please do not prohibit multiple hook rigs. I am all for sustainable fisheries, but all my experience from 100+ days on the water per year indicates this is not the solution. I am someone who has advocated with FWC for stricter regulations where I saw necessary, but I do not support prohibiting multiple hook rigs.</p> <p>Thank you for taking the time to read my comment. ~Kurt Boyken</p> <p>kurtboyken@gmail.com 321-795-1019</p>
1/31/2023	First Name: Leah Last Name: Alvarez Email: Leahlv23@gmail.com	City: Merritt island State: Florida	Private Recreational	Regulations for fishing are already very strict. We have permits required for saltwater fishing, freshwater fishing. To further restrict, there now is requirement for a permit to bottom fish. Data collection practices are not reliable. As a fisherman who fishes the very short and restricted red snapper season every year, it is hard to believe there is a decline in American red snapper. When fishing the reef and not targeting red snapper, it is hard to get past the red snapper. Two hook rigs can be used for bait fishing, not solely snapper fishing. It would be wrong to ban a classic practice that many anglers use everyday in freshwater and near shore fishing. Our fisheries play a huge part in tourism for the state. It is sad to see the requirements become more strict when the people fishing everyday know that data collection practices need to be revised.
1/31/2023	First Name: Robert Last Name: Buzaki Email: Rbuzaki@gmail.com	City: Hollywood State: Florida	Private Recreational	I think personally a single hook rig would cause more mortality for red snapper because you would have to catch so many more to find the few fish we are allowed to keep from stuart up. I believe there needs to be a more accurate way to assess the stock in florida because from central florida up has been overrun with red smapper to the point where it is affecting other game fish species
1/31/2023	First Name: Matt Last Name: Ullrich Email: Matthewjullrich@live.com	City: Casper State: Wyoming	Private Recreational	I believe this would really be detrimental to an entire group or anglers seeking to use deep drop rigs and not change mortality rates. Decent devices are already required and their increased use should be the key to this not limiting hooks.
1/31/2023	First Name: Tanner Last Name: Wilcox Email: Tanwilcox5@gmail.com	City: Cape Canaveral State: Florida	Private Recreational	If you ban multi hook rigs that will essentially shut down the deep drop fishery. Why don't we put common sense regulations on deep drop fishing?
1/31/2023	First Name: Zak Last Name: Kauss Email: Zkauss@yahoo.com	City: Jupiter State: Florida	Private Recreational	I live in jupiter florida and 60% of the time the current is was to strong to even get down for gokden tile and groupers. When you can get down the commercial fisherman literally fill their entire boat and a recreational fisherman can harvest a single fish. Why are you limiting recreational fisherman when the issue is the commercial fisheries
1/31/2023	First Name: Ryan Last Name: Hountz Email: rhountz717@gmail.com	City: Jupiter State: Florida	Private Recreational	Deep drop rig outlawing would crush recreational fishing and related industry in a number of facets from gear, electronics, boating you name it... this would be a horrible decision for recreational fisherman/outdoorsman. I pay extensive federal and local taxes and do not support this (Amendment 35) in any way.

1/31/2023	First Name: Brandon Last Name: Sebree Email: Brandonroxs101@aol.com	City: Jacksonville State: Florida	Private Recreational	As a avid fisherman. I first hand see the numbers the American red snapper in the Atlantic and believe the numbers and the days allowed to harvest them are drastically skewed. I can't even fish a spot anymore without having multiple red snapper caught before any other fish. Almost every spot I go to has hundreds and hundreds of red snapper. The population count on them is very very wrong. As recreational anglers, we should have more days to harvest this species. Making a very short or mini season for them is ridiculous for the amount of fish there is. Not to mention it puts lives at risk because everyone and their mother decides they need to partake in the season regardless of the weather and experience because they are so easy to catch.... That people are getting seriously hurt or sinking vessels trying to fish for them in the small window. Open the season up longer.
1/31/2023	First Name: Matt Last Name: Wilson Email: Mwilson5858@yahoo.com	City: Merritt Island State: Florida	Private Recreational	Absolutely no reason to ban any form of bottom fishing for recreational anglers- we are responsible and respectful.
1/31/2023	First Name: Trevor Last Name: Seits Email: trevorseits@gmail.com	City: Stuart State: Florida	Private Recreational, Other	Do not make rigs with multiple hooks illegal!
1/31/2023	First Name: Grayson Last Name: Stack Email: GraysonRStack@Gmail.com	City: Merritt island State: Florida	Private Recreational, Wholesale/Dealer /Retail	Special consideration needs to be given to depth of water and how it factors into species preservation. If the aim of Amendment 35 is to reduce mortality of Red Snapper by eliminating use of multi hook systems such as chicken rigs, then depth of water needs to be addressed. Fishing for tilefish and other deep water species is a chore, but is one of the only bottom fishing activities that anglers can engage in and not spend all their bait and time catching Red Snapper(the species is in an extreme abundance) and deep water bottom fishing is done almost exclusively with a multi hook rig to ensure that if you miss a bite you can continue to fish without having to reel All the way back to the surface and start all over again. Deeper than 300' of water it is uncommon to encounter red snapper, and deeper than 400' is practically unheard of. Disallowing anglers use of multi hook rigs while attempting to fish water at these depths and greater would have zero bearing on red snapper populations and should therefore be exempt form additional regulation. Furthermore, A reassessment of data and data collection on American Red Snapper as a species needs to be addressed. I've fished the east coast of florida for 20+ years, and in the last decade the population of red snapper has not only exploded, I believe it's become overpopulated. I fail to see how it's possible that this species is still considered in danger of over harvest. It is practically the only thing you catch while bottom fishing anymore. How is this data collected, by who, and when?