

For the reasons set out in the preamble, 50 CFR part 622 is proposed to be amended as follows:

PART 622--FISHERIES OF THE CARIBBEAN, GULF OF MEXICO, AND SOUTH ATLANTIC

1. The authority citation for part 622 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

2. In § 622.183, revise paragraph (b) (8) to read as follows:

§ 622.183 Area and seasonal closures.

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(b) * * *

(8) Snowy grouper recreational sector closure. The recreational sector for snowy grouper in the South Atlantic EEZ is closed each year from January 1 through April 30, and July 1 through December 31. During a recreational closure, the bag and possession limits for snowy grouper harvested in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

3. In § 622.190, revise paragraphs (a) (1) (i) and (ii) to read as follows:

§ 622.190 Quotas.

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(a) * * *

(1) Snowy grouper. (i) From January 1 through June 30 each year.

(A) 2023 - 73,330 lb (33,262 kg).

(B) 2024 - 74,322 lb (33,712 kg).

(C) 2025 and subsequent fishing years - 75,312 lb (34,161 kg).

(ii) From July 1 through December 31 each year.

(A) 2023 - 31,427 lb (14,255 kg).

(B) 2024 - 31,852 lb (14,448 kg).

(C) 2025 and subsequent fishing years - 32,277 lb (14,641 kg).

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4. In § 622.193, revise paragraph (b) to read as follows:

§ 622.193 Annual catch limits (ACLs), annual catch targets (ACTs), and accountability measures (AMs).

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(b) *Snowy grouper* - (1) *Commercial sector*. (i) If commercial landings of snowy grouper, as estimated by the SRD, reach or are projected to reach the commercial ACL that is equal to the commercial quota specified in § 622.190(a)(1), the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to close the commercial sector for the remainder of the fishing year. Applicable

restrictions after a commercial quota closure are specified in § 622.190(c).

(ii) If commercial landings of snowy grouper, as estimated by the SRD, exceed the commercial ACL, and the combined commercial and recreational ACL specified in paragraph (b)(1)(iii) of this section is exceeded, and snowy grouper are overfished based on the most recent Status of U.S. Fisheries Report to Congress, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register to reduce the commercial ACL for that following fishing year by the amount of the commercial ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

(2) *Recreational sector.* (i) The recreational ACL for snowy grouper is 1,668 fish for 2023; 1,691 fish for 2024; and 1,713 fish for 2025 and subsequent fishing years.

(i) If recreational landings for snowy grouper exceed the recreational ACL specified in paragraph (b)(2)(i) of this section, then during the following fishing year NMFS will reduce the length of the recreational fishing season by the amount necessary to prevent recreational landings from exceeding the recreational ACL in the following fishing year. NMFS will use the best scientific information available to determine if reducing the length of the recreational fishing season is necessary. When the

recreational sector for snowy grouper is closed as a result of NMFS reducing the length of the recreational fishing season, the bag and possession limits for snowy grouper harvested in or from the South Atlantic EEZ are zero.

(3) *Total ACL.* The combined commercial and recreational ACL for snowy grouper in gutted weight is 119,654 lb (54,274 kg) for 2023; 121,272 lb (55,008 kg) for 2024; and 122,889 lb (55,741 kg) for 2025 and subsequent fishing years.

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