



Bob Lorenz,
AP Chair

THE SOUTH ATLANTIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel

October 2023 Meeting Summary





Amendment 46 (Rec Permit)

APPROVED MOTION: REGARDLESS OF VESSEL OR ANGLER BASED PERMITTING, THE AP ADVISES THE COUNCIL TO INCLUDE REPORTING, PERMITTING, AND EDUCATION.

- Unanimous support for creating a private recreational permit of some kind
- Split opinion among AP members with 11 members preferring a vessel-based permit and 7 members preferring an angler-based permit
- Vessel-based permit:
 - Easier logistical implementation due to fewer issued permits
 - Consistency with other federal permits in the SE
 - Easier enforcement than an angler-based permit
- Angler-based permit:
 - More thorough identification of the number of fishery participants
 - Broadened reach of the education requirement
- The AP also noted support for including a reporting requirement for private recreational anglers in Amendment 46

Amendment 46 (Rec Permit)

APPROVED MOTION: RECOMMEND THAT THE COUNCIL SELECTS ALTERNATIVE 2 [UNDER ACTION 2 – SPECIES INCLUDED] (ALL SPECIES WITHIN THE SNAPPER GROUPER COMPLEX).

- Some important snapper grouper species are not included in the Florida State Reef Fish Survey species list; better to be more comprehensive for coverage of the entire region
- Choosing all species in the snapper grouper complex could make for easier compliance and less confusion about which of the species do/don't fall under the permit



Amendment 46 (Rec Permit)

Action 3. Establish a mechanism for states to opt out of the federal permit

- Funding will be an issue for states; would be beneficial for states to receive federal funding in support of a state-issued private recreational snapper grouper permit
- What would a federal permit requirement look like in the state of Florida given the existing State Reef Fish Angler designation?
 - If the federal requirements do not align with the current state requirements, would anglers still need to get both a federal and state permit?

Education Requirement:

- The AP reiterated support for establishing an education requirement as soon as possible
- Development of the requirement should get underway soon, as the education materials need to be streamlined and working when the permit requirement goes into place

Amendment 55

(Scamp/Yellowmouth)

The Council requested AP input on additional management measures to consider for scamp and yellowmouth grouper; AP members provided the following suggestions and comments:

- Reduced trip limit, in line with gag and red grouper
 - Gag (AM 53): 300 lbs gw
 - Red Grouper currently: 200 lbs gw
- Establishing a commercial trip limit may be difficult before the new complex is established and catch levels are put in place
- Scamp are hard to catch and are notoriously picky; fewer scamp doesn't seem to be caused by fishing pressure
- Commercially, scamp and yellowmouth are often lumped together as a single species; supports combining the two as a complex

Other AP Activities & Discussions

- Additional input for the Snapper Grouper Management Strategy Evaluation (outlined in AP Report)
- Completed Fishery Performance Reports for Golden and Blueline Tilefish
- Received presentation on offshore wind developments occurring off North Carolina

Other AP Activities & Discussions

For-Hire Limited Entry

APPROVED MOTION: THE ADVISORY PANEL RECOMMENDS THE COUNCIL CONSIDER LIMITED ENTRY FOR THE RECREATIONAL FOR-HIRE COMPONENT OF THE SNAPPER GROUPER FISHERY, WITH INFORMATION ON THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

- NUMBER OF PERMITS TO BE CONSIDERED**
- WILL THERE BE A DISTINCTION BETWEEN 6 OR FEWER OR MORE THAN 6 PASSENGERS?**
- CONTROL DATE ON OR AROUND THE TIME OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FOR-HIRE REPORTING REQUIREMENT**
- WILL THIS APPLY TO FISHERIES OUTSIDE OF SNAPPER GROUPER?**

Other AP Activities & Discussions

For-Hire Limited Entry

- The AP recommends that the Council consider both a private recreational permit (leading to reporting) and recreational for-hire limited entry to be of similar, high priority. Both of these should be implemented as soon as possible.
- Most of the AP supported re-consideration of limiting entry for the recreational for-hire component of the snapper grouper fishery
- The AP provided several points of rationale/discussion (included in AP Report) that should be further explored if the Council moves forward in considering for-hire limited entry through an amendment



Other AP Activities & Discussions

Vermilion Snapper Commercial Trip Limit

APPROVED MOTION: RECOMMEND THE COUNCIL DISCUSS INCREASING THE COMMERCIAL TRIP LIMIT FOR VERMILION SNAPPER WITH OPTIONS UP TO 1500 POUNDS IN THE SOUTH ATLANTIC.

- Commercial harvest has not approached ACL recently (since 2016); restrictions on other species have impacted commercial fishermen
- Consider a step down

Other AP Activities & Discussions

Commercial 2 for 1 Policy

- Define date or number of participants that would end the 2 for 1 policy
- Clarification from the Council/NMFS on the long-term intent for allowing the leasing of commercial vessels

Spearfishing Commercial Endorsement

- Consideration of historical landings provision and possibly a control date to limit entry

225-Pound Commercial Permit Transfers

- 225-Pound Commercial Permits are only transferable to a vessel owned or leased by the same permit holder. They:
 - Can not be sold to a new owner
 - Can not be transferred to immediate family
- Under current rules, permits can be transferred between individuals by permit ownership under a corporation and transferal of corporation ownership to another individual
- One AP member proposed revising regulations to disallow this type of transfer

QUESTIONS?

