



Snapper Grouper Advisory Panel April 2022 Meeting Summary

**June 2022 Council Meeting
Bob Lorenz, AP Chair**



Amendment 35: Release Mortality Reduction and Red Snapper

Recommendation:

- Overriding opinion of the AP is that red snapper are recovered, highly abundant, and not in need of further restrictions. Instead, the Council should be exploring ways to increase retention of red snapper without reducing access.

Requested Feedback

- Snapper grouper fishery seasonality and depths
 - Area-, sector-, and target species-specific
 - Generally, deeper fishing in summer and shallower fishing in winter
 - Depths considered “deep water” ranged from >100 feet to >200 feet
- Targeted species when red snapper encountered
 - Area- and sector-specific
 - Common target species for multiple areas: black sea bass, gray triggerfish, vermilion snapper, greater amberjack





Amendment 35: Release Mortality Reduction and Red Snapper

Requested Feedback:

- Critical times of year for target species
 - Area-, sector-, and target species-specific
 - Winter (Dec-February) is critical for black sea bass in multiple areas
 - AP expressed little interest in reducing access to target species to increase retention of red snapper
- Critical areas/depths
 - Many AP members felt area or depth-based closures should not be considered
 - Stated critical areas:
 - Shallow water access needed in S Florida during winter
 - Some suggestion of bottom closures at depths >120 feet during the Shallow Water Grouper Closure (Jan-April)





Amendment 35: Release Mortality Reduction and Red Snapper

Additional comments:

- Investigate how effort would be expected to change if bag limit were increased during open season
- Possible consideration of different timing of the red snapper recreational season
 - Current season in peak spawning
 - Earlier season could reduce population before the summer SG fishery, reducing out of season encounters when rec effort is highest
- Gear modifications
 - Single hook rigs (seasonal) (Priority: 1)
 - Jigs (with size or no live bait requirements) (Priority: 2)
 - Weak hooks, large hooks, short leaders
 - Consider best “bang for buck” and possibly coupling gear restriction with hot spot rather than complete closure
- **Exclude commercial fishery from discard-reducing measures and exclude recreational for-hire component from seasonal or spatial closures**





Amendment 53: Gag

Recommendations

- **Action 1 (Rebuilding Plan):** Private sector needs to be defined for gag to have a better chance of rebuilding.
- **Sub-Action 4a (Commercial Trip Limit):** Preferred either Alt. 3 (300 lbs) or Alt. 4 (400 lbs)
- **Sub-Action 4b (Commercial Spawning Season Closure):** Some members were in favor of an additional spring month
- **Sub-Action 5a (Recreational Vessel Limit):** Recommends Alt. 3 (4 fish per vessel) or Alt. 4 (6 fish per vessel)
- **Sub-Action 5b (Recreational Spawning Season Closure):** Some members were in favor of an additional spring month, however other others noted that it's crucial for the charter boats to have access May 1.





Amendment 52: Golden Tilefish and Blueline Tilefish

Recommendations

Action 1 (Golden Tilefish ABC and Catch Levels)

Action 2 (Golden Tilefish Sector Allocations and ACLs):

- Clarify that catch levels are dependent on when the amendment is implemented.
- Continued concern about uncertainty of recreational data, especially for deepwater species, and improving technology that allows more people to access them.





Amendment 52: Golden Tilefish and Blueline Tilefish

Recommendations

Action 3 (Golden Tilefish Commercial Fishing Year):

- Important for the market when Shallow Water Grouper are closed.
- Longline endorsement holders may benefit from a January 15 opening.
- Social benefits to families at the start of the year
- Extend fishing closer to Easter
- January 1 start date for the HL sector allows “head start” for the year.
- Consider HL endorsement in the future to address increased participation.

MOTION: RECOMMEND THAT THE COMMERCIAL LONGLINE SECTOR OPEN ON JANUARY 15 (SUB-ALTERNATIVE 3A).





Amendment 52: Golden Tilefish and Blueline Tilefish

Recommendations

Action 4 (Golden Tilefish Incidental Trip Limit):

- LL fishermen would like consideration of a bycatch allowance
- After LL fishing is over, there is bycatch of golden tilefish while fishing for yellow-edge grouper, sharks and wreckfish.
- Consider subtracting the bycatch allowance from the following year's LL quota
- Consider possible regional inequality in access (NC vs. FL)

MOTION: RECOMMEND THAT THE COUNCIL CONSIDER CONVENING A MEETING OF THE LONGLINE ENDORSMENT HOLDERS TO EXPLORE WAYS TO ADDRESS THE BYCATCH ISSUE.





Amendment 52: Golden Tilefish and Blueline Tilefish

Recommendations

Action 5 (Golden Tilefish Post-Season Recreational AMs)

MOTION: RECOMMEND ALTERNATIVE 2 AS PREFERRED.

	Trigger	Accountability Measure
Alternative 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Recreational landings exceed the recreational ACL	Recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings and if deemed necessary, reduce the length of the recreational fishing season and the recreational ACL by the amount of the recreational ACL overage





Amendment 52: Golden Tilefish and Blueline Tilefish

Recommendations

Action 6 (Blueline Tilefish Recreational Bag Limit):

- Abundant North of Cape Hatteras in shallow water
- Eliminating possession by captain and crew is appropriate if needed and considering economic conditions or wait until after the stock assessment.
- Important species for the for-hire sector in northeastern NC when dolphin or tuna are not available.
- 3 per person with a maximum (18?)





Amendment 52: Golden Tilefish and Blueline Tilefish

Recommendations

Action 7 (Blueline Tilefish Recreational Season):

- Continue to make the season coincide with the snowy grouper recreational season (alternative 4: May 1-June 30)

MOTION: RECOMMEND THE COUNCIL SELECT ALTERNATIVE 1 AS PREFERRED.

Alternative 1 (No Action). Do not modify the blueline tilefish recreational season. The current recreational season is May 1-August 31.





Amendment 52: Golden Tilefish and Blueline Tilefish

Recommendations

Action 8 (Blueline Tilefish Post-Season Recreational AMs):

MOTION: RECOMMEND THE COUNCIL SELECT ALTERNATIVE 2 AS PREFERRED. APPROVE BY AP (UNANIMOUS)

	Trigger	Accountability Measure
Alternative 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Recreational landings exceed the recreational ACL	Recreational landings will be monitored for a persistence in increased landings and if deemed necessary, reduce the length of the recreational fishing season and the recreational ACL by the amount of the recreational ACL overage



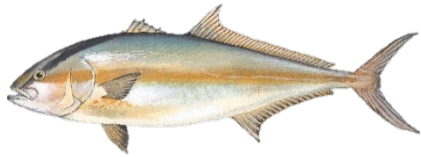


Amendment 51: Snowy Grouper

Recommendations

- **Action 3 (Commercial Trip Limit):**
 - Prefers Alt. 1 (No Action, 200 lbs)
 - Suggests the Council consider a higher trip limit
- **Action 4 (Recreational Season):**
 - Possible habitat overlap with golden and blueline tilefish
 - Prefer snowy grouper to be open during the rec golden tilefish season
 - 100% mortality rate used in assessment was inaccurate
 - Increase deepwater best fishing practices education
- **Action 5 (Recreational AMs):** approved motion to add an alternative that would retain the in-season AM while removing the stock status trigger from the post-season AM





Amendment 49 (Greater Amberjack)

Recommendations

- **Action 1** – Total ACL: 2,669,000 lbs (2026/2027+ ABC)
- **Action 2** – Keep current sector allocation: 59.34% recreational and 40.66% commercial (**Alternative 1**)
- **Action 3** – Keep current recreational minimum size limit: 28 inches (**Alternative 1**)
- **Action 4** – Change the commercial minimum size limit to 34 inches
- **Action 5** – Keep the current commercial trip limits for both commercial seasons (**Alternative 1**)
- **Action 6** – Keep the April Spawning Closure as it currently is (**Alternative 1**)

- General consensus among the AP that the stock is not as healthy as the assessment indicates; maintain sustainability rather than increase harvest



Other Items

- **Amendment 46 (Recreational Permitting/Reporting)**
 - AP was updated on progress of development
 - A private recreational permit is greatly needed and should be highly prioritized
 - The need for a permit was raised multiple times during discussions of other amendments as a necessary part of future management
- **Barrelfish** – Concern over a growing fishery; recommend adding barrelfish to the Snapper Grouper FMP
- **NMFS Observer and Commercial Discard Logbook Programs**
 - Will there be an expense associated with carrying an observer?
 - Concern about liability and insurance associated with carrying observers

