



Gulf Council Issues

Review and Discussion

November 17, 2016

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Division of Marine Fisheries Management

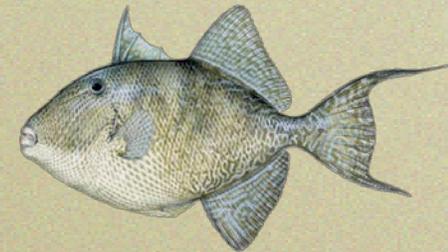
Gray Triggerfish – 2017 Federal Season Closure



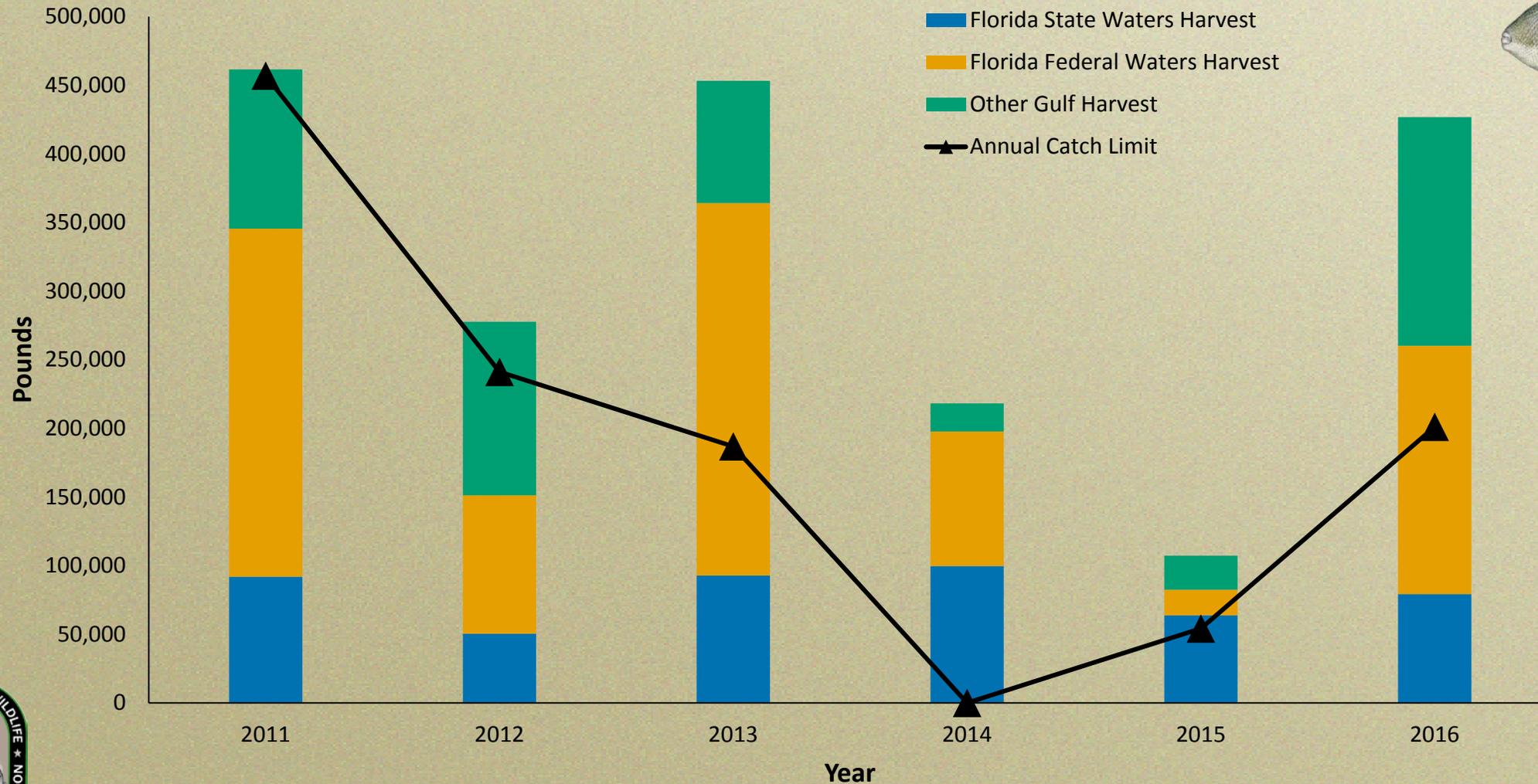
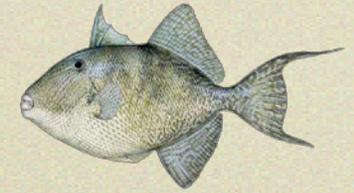
- Preliminary recreational landings indicate 212% of 2016 ACL harvested
 - 2016 overage must be paid back in 2017
 - Resulting 2017 ACT = 0 pounds and ACL = 19,987 pounds
- No harvest of recreational gray triggerfish in Gulf federal waters during 2017
- 2016 overage due to larger than anticipated harvest
- For 2016, FWC directed staff to close state waters when federal waters close
 - Scheduled annual season closure from June 1 – July 31
 - In late July, NOAA Fisheries announced federal season would remain closed through Dec. 31, 2016



NOAA Fisheries requesting FWC close state waters for all of 2017



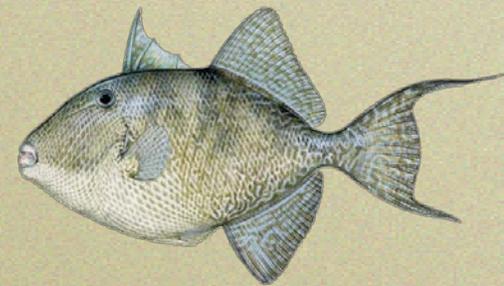
Gray Triggerfish Recreational Harvest off Florida



Gray Triggerfish – Points to Consider



- Off Florida, large portion of recreational harvest occurs in state waters
 - State waters harvest ranges from 25% - 73% over past 15 years
- Most Gulf landings from the Florida Panhandle and Alabama
- Stock has been overfished since 2006, but recently fishermen report seeing more and bigger gray triggerfish
- Gray triggerfish have unique spawning behavior
 - Spawning occurs May through August with peak in June and July
- Harvest tends to be highest during warm weather months but occurs year round
- Discard mortality is low (5%)



Direction requested on 2017 recreational closure

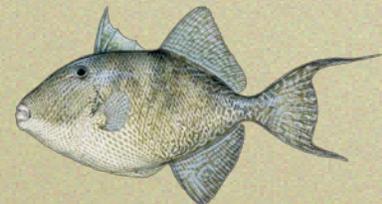
Recreational Gray Triggerfish State Season Considerations

If state waters open are in 2017

- Maintains state waters fishing opportunities
- Responsive to stakeholders who believe stock is improving and fishery should be open
- Federally permitted for-hire vessels must follow federal rules even when fishing in state waters

If state waters are closed in 2017

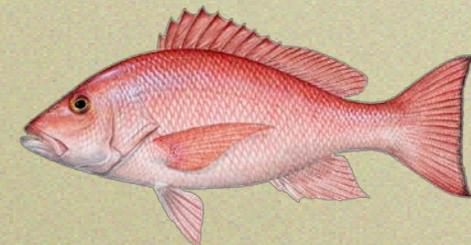
- Helps break cycle of quota overages
 - All harvest in excess of ACL (19,987 pounds) will be deducted from 2018 quota
- Preserve federal waters fishing opportunities for 2018
- Contributes to stock rebuilding



Red Snapper – 2016 Preliminary Recreational Landings



- Landings are incomplete but include preliminary data from:
 - MRIP (FL, AL, MS), LA, and headboat data through Aug. 30
 - TX data through May 15
- 92% of overall recreational ACL harvested
 - Private anglers harvested 138% of ACT, 111% of ACL
 - Federally-permitted for-hire harvested 83% of ACT, 66% of ACL
- If overall recreational ACL is exceeded, the component that triggered the overage would have to pay back overage next year



For-Hire Electronic Reporting – Final Action Anticipated in January



- All Gulf federally-permitted for-hire vessels would be required to use electronic logbooks to report trip data
 - Widely supported by industry
- Current Council-preferred options
 - Submit report at end of each trip before arriving at the dock
 - **Update**: Require reports to be made using devices that record location (i.e., smartphones, tablets, or VMS)
 - Allows most flexibility for captains
 - Technical committee recommended option



Allocation-Based Management of For-Hire Industry



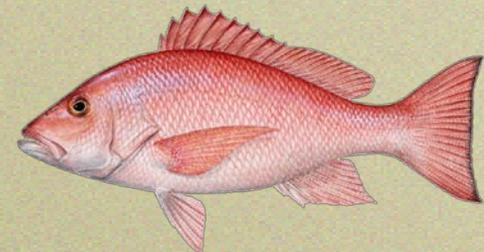
- Headboats – Council considering IFQ or permit fishing quota (PFQ) program for red snapper, gag grouper, red grouper, greater amberjack, and gray triggerfish
- Charter boats – Council considering allocation-based management program for red snapper only
- Council slowing down development of these amendments based on industry concerns including
 - Differences in programs
 - Potential vessel allocations
 - Interest in single program for headboats and charter boats



Private Recreational Red Snapper Advisory Panel



- Group will meet in spring 2017
- Charged with providing recommendations on private recreational red snapper management measures that would
 - Provide more quality access to the resource in federal waters
 - Reduce discards
 - Improve fisheries data collection





Items Being Developed For Public Input

- [King mackerel allocation sharing](#) – public hearings next month
- [Potential deep-water coral protection areas](#) – scoping meetings in spring 2017
 - Could limit fishing in some offshore areas off Florida
- [Gray triggerfish rebuilding plan](#) – public hearings in spring 2017
 - Recreational season, size limit, and bag limit
 - Commercial trip limit
- [Commercial IFQ updates](#) – public hearing webinar in spring 2017
- [Commercial shrimp permits](#) – public hearings in spring 2017



Direction Requested

- Close recreational harvest of gray triggerfish in Gulf state waters for 2017 to match federal closure
- Input on other Council items is welcome
- Next Gulf Council meeting is Jan. 30 – Feb. 3 in New Orleans, LA

