

MEMORANDUM



To: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commissioners
From: Jessica McCawley, Director, Marine Fisheries Management
Date: June 20, 2018
Subject: South Atlantic Fishery Management Council Report

Purpose:

Update Commissioners on actions from the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council's (SAFMC's) June 11-15 meeting in Ft. Lauderdale, FL.

Summary:

The SAFMC is scheduled to meet the week prior to the Commission's June meeting. Therefore, Commission briefing documents will be updated as soon as possible following the SAFMC meeting. Anticipated SAFMC discussions include:

- Red snapper: Discussion of 2017 season catches and 2018 season length. Update on development of a new method to establish an acceptable biological catch for red snapper. Consideration of requiring best fishing practices (e.g., requiring a descending device or venting tool, limiting anglers to single-hook rigs, and modifying the current circle hook requirement) to reduce discard mortality for red snapper and other snapper grouper species.
- Yellowtail snapper: Potential revisions to the accountability measures to reduce the likelihood of in-season closures of the commercial yellowtail snapper fishery.
- Limited-entry program for federal snapper grouper for-hire permits: Continued discussion about a program to limit the number of vessels allowed to operate for-hire trips targeting snapper grouper species in federal waters, otherwise known as limited-entry.
- Various potential commercial and recreational snapper grouper regulation changes: Review of public comment on potential management changes for several snapper grouper species, including revisions to minimum size limits; recreational aggregates and aggregate bag limits; and commercial fishing seasons and trip limits.
- Golden tilefish: Final action expected to reduce annual catch limits (ACLs) and to change the start date for the commercial hook-and-line golden tilefish fishery.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff may request direction on items following the SAFMC meeting.

Staff Contact and/or Presenter:

Jessica McCawley, Director, Division of Marine Fisheries Management