

**STATE OF FLORIDA
FLORIDA FISH AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

Order No. EO 19-14

**Temporary Modification of Regulations for
Red Drum, Snook, and Spotted Seatrout in
Southwest Florida**

The Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission of the State of Florida, acting under the authority of Article IV, Section 9, of the Florida Constitution, and acting through its Executive Director under Paragraph 22 of the Delegations of Authority, and due to the prolonged natural red tide event in southwest Florida that has caused widespread mortality of saltwater fish, hereby temporarily modifies the red drum, snook, and spotted seatrout fisheries to be catch-and-release only within specified waters of southwest Florida. Such actions are only authorized as follows:

1. The provisions of this order apply in and on all Florida waters of the following geographic areas:
 - a. All Florida waters of Pasco, Pinellas, Hillsborough, Manatee, Sarasota, Charlotte, and Lee counties; and
 - b. All Florida waters of Collier County north of a line extending due east and due west from the south bank at the mouth of Gordon Pass (26°05.52' North Latitude).
2. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in Chapters 68B-22, 68B-21, or 68B-37, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.), and except as provided in paragraph 3 below, a person must immediately release any red drum (*Sciaenops ocellatus*), snook (*Centropomus* spp.), or spotted seatrout (*Cynoscion nebulosus*) caught in or on the described region during the term of this order and may not possess or land a red drum, a snook, or a spotted seatrout in the described region.
3. During the term of this order, a person may temporarily possess a red drum (*Sciaenops ocellatus*), snook (*Centropomus* spp.) or a spotted seatrout (*Cynoscion nebulosus*) in or on the described region, only for the purpose of photographing, measuring, or weighing (with a hand-held scale) such red drum, snook, or spotted seatrout. A person who temporarily possesses a red drum, a snook, or a spotted seatrout pursuant to this paragraph must release such red drum, snook, or spotted seatrout alive and unharmed in the immediate area where it was caught, immediately after it has been photographed, measured, or weighed.
4. During the term of this order, no Red Drum Catch-Hold-and-Release Tournament Exemption Permits will be issued for activities conducted within the described region.
5. All other rules or orders of the Commission relating to red drum, snook, and spotted seatrout shall remain in effect.
6. This order shall take effect at 12:00 a.m. on May 11, 2019 and shall expire at 11:59 p.m. on May 31, 2020, unless rescinded or extended by subsequent order.

Specific Authority:

Article IV, Section 9, Florida Constitution

Law Implemented:

Article IV, Section 9, Florida Constitution and subsection 120.81(5), Florida Statutes



Given under my hand and seal of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission on this 1st day of May, 2019.

Eric Sutton
Executive Director

Attest
Agency Clerk

Kirsten Butler

**APPROVED AS TO FORM
AND LEGAL SUFFICIENCY**

Bridget K. McDermott
Commission Attorney