

# MEMORANDUM



**To:** Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commissioners  
**From:** Jessica McCawley, Director, Marine Fisheries Management  
**Date:** June 13, 2019  
**Subject:** Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council (GMFMC) Report

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**Purpose:**

To report on actions from the GMFMC's June 3-6 meeting in Miramar Beach, FL.

**Summary:**

At its June meeting, the Council took final action to reduce the commercial greater amberjack trip limit from 1,500 to 1,000 pounds, with a reduction to 250 pounds once 75% of the annual catch target (ACT) is projected to be met. Over the past several years, the commercial fishery has closed early, and some fishermen have asked for reduced trip limits to help ensure longer seasons and reduce dead discards of greater amberjack on trips targeting other reef fish. This action is pending approval by the U.S. Secretary of Commerce.

The Council also discussed the following items.

- Carryover of Unused Quota: Further discussion on developing a plan to allow quota that goes unharvested in one year to be carried over to the next year was postponed until interim stock assessment analyses are complete.
- Recreational Greater Amberjack: The Council will consider changes to regulations that would increase the likelihood of having both a May and fall recreational season.
- Two-Day For-Hire Possession Limit: Currently, under limited circumstances, customers on for-hire vessels on a trip longer than 24 hours can possess two daily bag limits of reef fish and mackerel. Based on industry requests, the Council decided to begin an amendment to clarify exactly when on these trips customers can possess two bag limits.
- Gray (Mangrove) Snapper: The Council discussed and will hold a public hearing on potential changes to quotas and management thresholds for gray snapper before its August meeting.
- Almaco Jack: The Council expressed interest in establishing a minimum size limit for almaco jack. This was a request from stakeholders at the May FWC meeting.

The Council will continue to discuss these topics at future Council meetings.

Lastly, the Council awarded FWC's Lieutenant Jason Marlow with the 2018 Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award for his and his team's work on offshore patrols in the Gulf of Mexico.

**Staff Recommendation:**

No direction requested at this time. However, input on GMFMC items is always welcome.

**Staff Contact and/or Presenter:**

Martha Guyas, Division of Marine Fisheries Management