



# Gulf Red Snapper and Gray Triggerfish

Final Rule

April 20, 2017

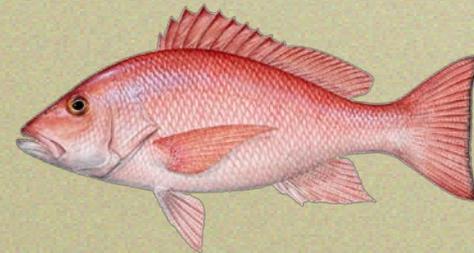
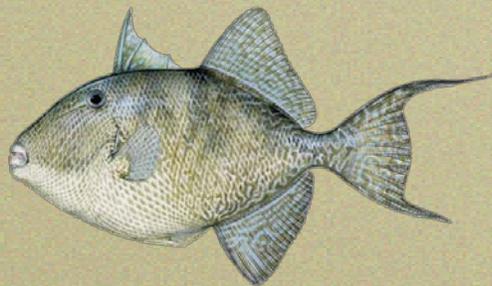
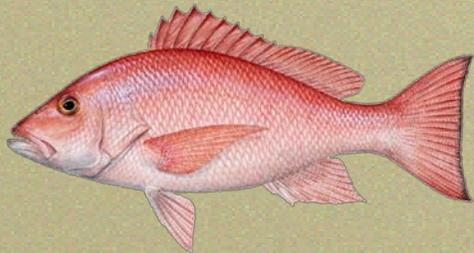
**Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission**  
Division of Marine Fisheries Management



# Outline



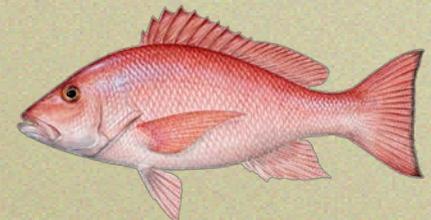
- Red snapper updates from Council meeting
- Red snapper state season final rule
- Gray triggerfish updates from Council meeting
- Gray triggerfish 2017 state season considerations



# April Council Meeting Action - Red Snapper



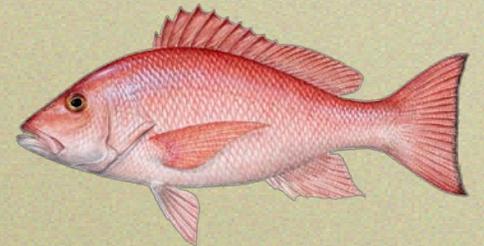
- Final action on minor changes to the red snapper and grouper/tilefish IFQ programs
- Discussion:
  - Separate, allocation-based management of charter boats and headboats for red snapper plus gag grouper, red grouper, greater amberjack, and gray triggerfish
  - Regional management of recreational fishery off LA, MS, and AL
  - Sector reallocation and recent court reversal of Council decision
  - Adjusting buffers on private recreational and for-hire components



# Red Snapper – 2016 Preliminary Recreational Landings



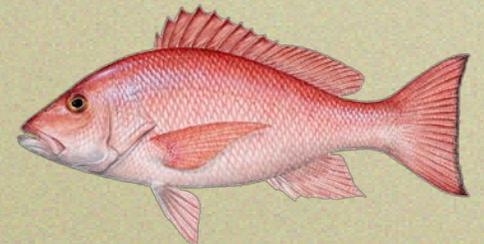
- Landings are incomplete but include preliminary data that indicate 102% of overall recreational ACL harvested
  - Private anglers harvested 125% of ACL
  - Federally-permitted for-hire harvested 70% of ACL
- Due to 2016 overage, there will be a private angler payback in 2017
- 2017 federal private angler season expected to be shorter and for-hire season expected to be longer than last year



# Proposed Final Rule

## 68B-14.0038 Recreational Snapper Seasons

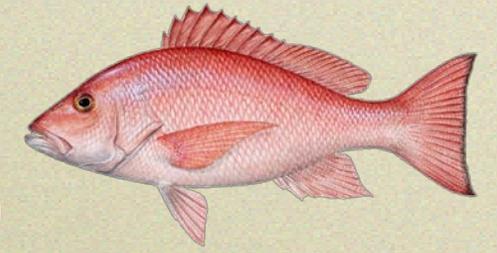
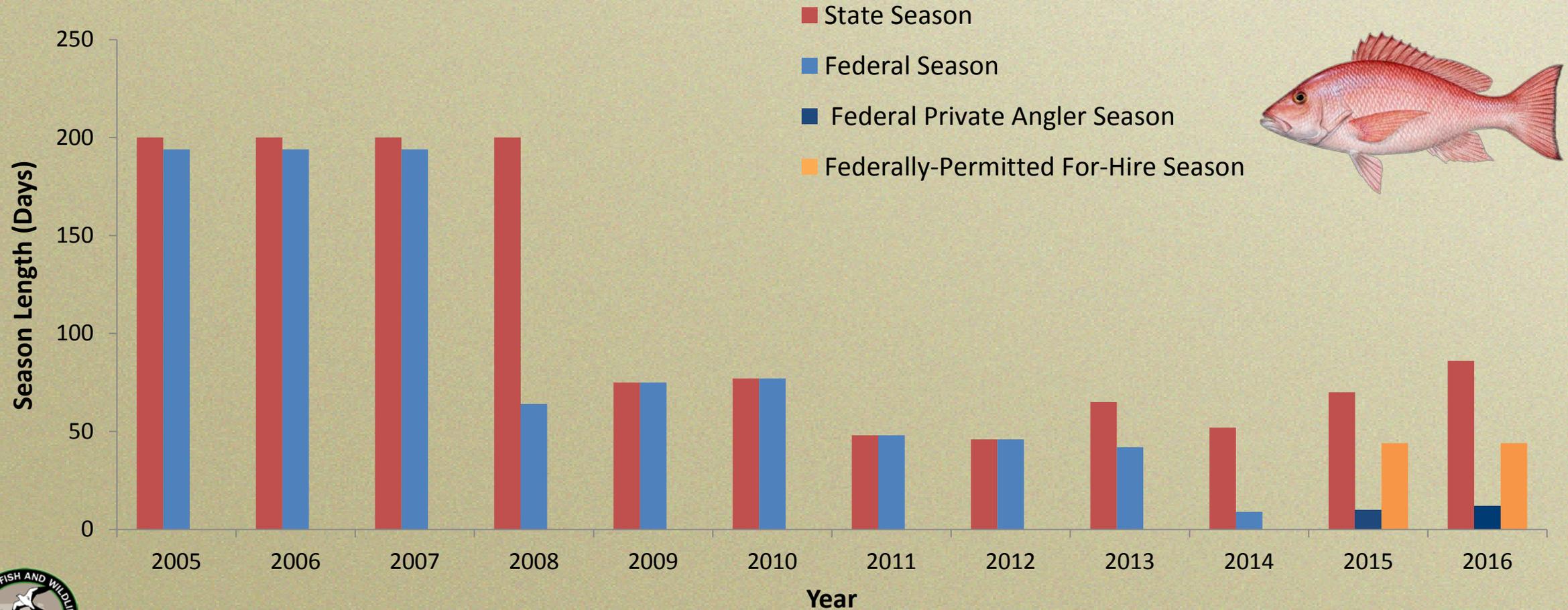
- Set the recreational harvest season for red snapper in all state waters of the Gulf of Mexico to be open:
  - May weekends (Saturday and Sundays) starting the first Saturday in May
  - Open each day beginning the Saturday before Memorial Day through the Sunday following July 4
  - Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays in September and October, plus Labor Day



*Results in a 78-day season for 2017*



# Florida State and Federal Recreational Gulf Red Snapper Season Lengths, 2005-2016



# State Season Considerations



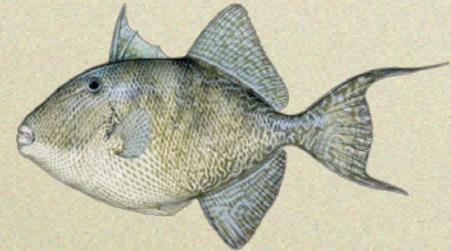
- Large proportion of Gulf recreational red snapper harvested off Florida
  - State waters harvest primarily occurs in the Panhandle
- All season days are not created equal
- State season landings are counted toward private angler allocation
- Federally-permitted for-hire may only fish in state waters when both state and federal waters are open
- Federal season may be shortened to account for inconsistent state seasons
- 2016 landings data incomplete, but 102% of total ACL caught
  - 125% of private angler ACL harvested
  - Due to overall ACL overage, 2017 private angler ACL will be reduced



# Final Council Action - Gray Triggerfish



- In 2016, 220% of gray triggerfish ACL was caught
- Final Action and Rebuilding Plan
  - Decrease recreational bag limit from 2 to 1 fish
  - Increase recreational size limit from 14 to 15 inches
  - Annual recreational closures: January – February, June – July
  - Increase commercial trip limit from 12 to 16 fish



*At the July Commission meeting, consider consistency with federal Gulf gray triggerfish rules and a limited state season for fall 2017*



# Staff Recommendation

- Set the Gulf of Mexico state waters recreational red snapper season as:
  - Saturdays and Sundays in May, starting first Saturday in May
  - Open every day, from Saturday before Memorial Day through Sunday following July 4
  - Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays in September and October, plus Labor Day
- At the July Commission meeting, consider consistency with federal Gulf gray triggerfish rules and a limited state season for fall 2017.

