

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Special Commission Meeting, June 9, 2017
Agenda Item 2
Recreational Red Snapper Season for 2017

Recent discussion between the Department of Commerce and the Gulf states indicate that there may be a way to add additional red snapper fishing days in federal waters in summer 2017 if Gulf States can agree on a season framework that would align additional federal red snapper days with fishing days in state waters. Removal of some existing red snapper fishing days in state waters would be required by each Gulf state to align with additional federal waters fishing days.

Staff will be requesting Commission direction and guidance regarding removal of state waters fishing days for alignment with an expanded federal waters season under two basic frameworks as described below. These frameworks would apply only to private recreational anglers. No changes to the commercial or recreational for-hire seasons are proposed. For NOAA to consider changes in the federal season framework, Gulf States would need to come to agreement on options that would align state and federal seasons throughout the summer months.

During this meeting, the Commission will discuss these frameworks and provide direction to the Executive Director for working with the Department of Commerce and other Gulf States to reach agreement in this regard. The following two frameworks are being discussed, but may be subject to modification as consideration by Gulf States moves forward.

Framework 1: 2-day weekend – This framework would establish 27 weekend days in summer 2017 for red snapper fishing in state and federal waters beginning Saturday June 17 and running through the first weekend in September. The open days each week would be Saturday and Sunday, with additional open days on Monday July 3, Tuesday July 4, and Monday September 4. Red snapper harvest would be closed in state and federal waters Monday through Friday each week with the exception of July 3, 4, and September 4. Further discussion with the Department of Commerce and Gulf states will be required to determine how much fall red snapper seasons in state waters would be affected under this framework.

Framework 2: 3-day weekend – This framework would establish 39 weekend days in summer 2017 for red snapper fishing in state and federal waters beginning Friday June 16 and running through the first weekend in September. The open days each week would be Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, with additional open days on Monday July 3, Tuesday July 4, and Monday September 4. Red snapper harvest would be closed in state and federal waters Monday through Thursday each week with the exception of July 3, 4, and September 4. Further discussion with the Department of Commerce and Gulf states will be required to determine how much fall red snapper seasons in state waters would be affected under this framework.