

Recreational Initiative

Recreational Initiative Working Group Meeting 3 February 19-20, 2025

*Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council
4107 West Spruce Street, Suite 200
Tampa, Florida 33607*

AGENDA

Meeting Purpose

Explore innovative management strategies for reef species in the Gulf of Mexico, using the five focal species to illustrate potential approaches (Recreational Initiative Item 7):

- Evaluate the tradeoffs between current management measures (season length, possession limits, etc.)
- Evaluate and consider the application of Harvest Control Rules and other alternative management approaches for recreational reef fish management
- Develop consensus on actions for the Council to consider on long term management goals and priority action items identified by the Working Group

****Times are Eastern Time and approximate****

DAY 1: Wednesday, February 19

9:00 am: Welcome (Carrie Simmons, Gulf Council, and Andy Strelcheck, NOAA Fisheries)

9:05 am: Recap of Working Group meetings 1 and 2 and Council feedback, and review Working Group meeting 3 purpose and agenda (Willy Goldsmith and Andy Loftus, consultants)

9:15 am: Overview of public engagement since Working Group meeting 2 (Max Birdsong, Gulf Council)

9:30 am: Overview of Working Group homework responses on season and possession limits (Council staff)

9:45 am: Breakout Session—discuss homework assignment for preferred species-specific management measures (e.g., seasons, possession limits)

-----**10:15-10:30 am: BREAK**-----

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10:30 am: Breakout Group report out—preferred season overlap for the 5 focal species and possession limit considerations

11:00 am: Lessons from the Mid-Atlantic—alternative approaches to management of federally managed recreational fisheries, including engagement of the recreational sector and application of Harvest Control Rules (Julia Beaty, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council)

11:30 am: Questions and discussion on the application of Harvest Control Rules

-----**12:00 pm - 12:30 pm: WORKING LUNCH**-----

12:30 pm: Alternative management strategies proposed in previous efforts—potential benefits and challenges

- Harvest Rate Management
- Harvest Tags/Days at Sea
- Depth/Distance-Based Management
- Conservation Equivalency
- Permits/Endorsements/Stamps (e.g., Federal Reef Fish Permit)
- Voluntary/Mandatory Catch Reporting
- Release Mortality Reduction
- Other – Working Group Member Ideas

-----**2:00-2:15 pm: BREAK**-----

2:15 pm: Continue presentation and discussion of alternative management strategies proposed in previous efforts

3:00 pm: Breakout group exercise—pros and cons and feasibility of each alternative management strategy discussed, including Harvest Control Rule case studies

-----**3:45-4:00 pm: BREAK**-----

4:00 pm: Breakout group report out—pros and cons and feasibility of each alternative management strategy including Harvest Control Rule case studies

4:30 pm: Wrap-up—homework, discuss agenda for Day 2, and any remaining logistics (Willy Goldsmith and Andy Loftus, consultants)

5:00 pm: Adjourn

DAY 2: Thursday, February 20

9:00 am: Review Agenda for Day 2 (Willy Goldsmith and Andy Loftus, consultants)

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9:15 am: Recap key elements of Working Group meetings 1, 2 & 3 for consensus recommendations (Willy Goldsmith and Andy Loftus, consultants)

9:45 am: Working Group thoughts and observations

-----**10:45-11:00 am: BREAK**-----

11:00 am: Identify commonalities identified by Working Group members on developing:

- Trusted Data
- Establishing Trust with the Recreational Community
- Developing Predictable and Reliable Recreational Access
- Allowing for Regional Flexibility in Management
- Increasing Recreational Community Engagement in the Management Process
- Maximizing Angler Satisfaction and Accommodating Growth

-----**11:30 am - 1:00 pm: LUNCH**-----

1:00 pm: Pulling it all together—consensus recommendations on Goals and Objectives for recreational fisheries management in the Gulf of Mexico reef fish fisheries for future management approaches that:

- Prevent Overfishing
- Address Discards and/or Discard Mortality
- Address Uncertainty in Recreational Data
- Provide Innovative New Management Approaches

-----**2:30-2:45 pm: BREAK**-----

2:45 pm: Wrapping it up—finalize consensus recommendations

3:45 pm: Closing remarks and logistics (Council staff)

4:00 pm: Adjourn