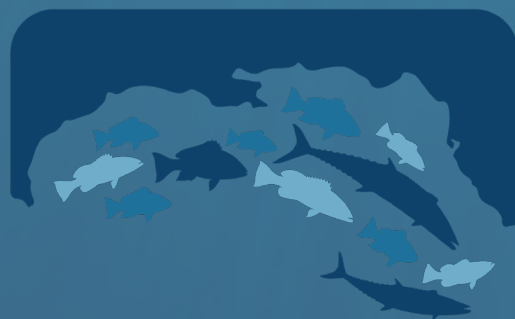


Red Grouper Plan Amendment

Presentation - June 2025 Council Meeting



GULF
COUNCIL

Background

- As with Reef Fish Amendment 53, where red grouper allocation between the commercial and recreational sectors was revised using BSIA and allowable harvest was modified based on results of the most recent stock assessment, this draft amendment would do the same.
- The stock assessment used in conjunction with Reef Fish Amendment 53 was based on MRIP-FES, whereas the catch information prior was based on CHTS and the sector allocations were based on MRFSS. The preferred alternative in RF 53 used MRIP-FES to modify the sector allocations.
- SEDAR 88, to be used in conjunction with this draft amendment, uses SRFSS data for the private angling component. So, the Council may consider using SRFSS data to modify the sector allocations.

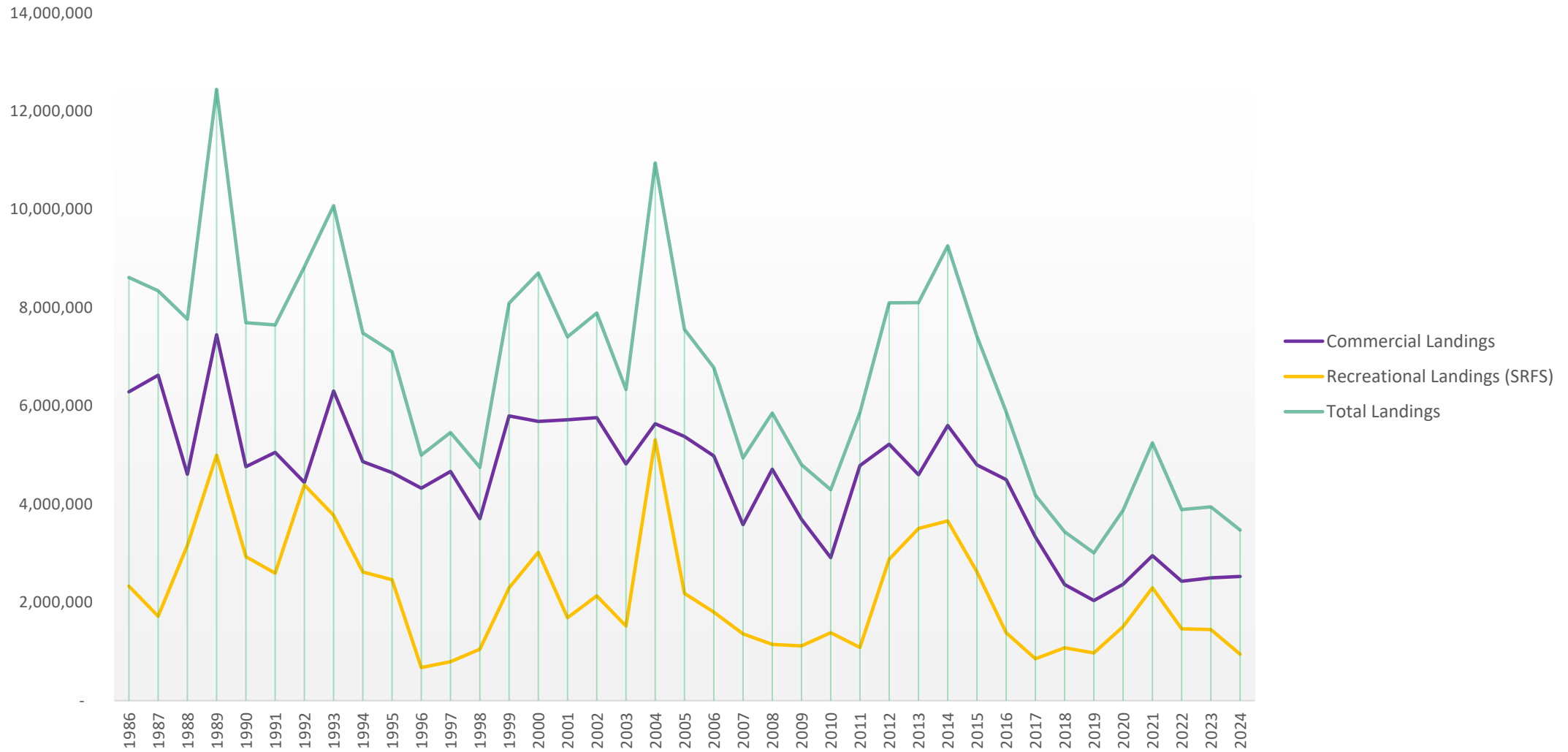


Background

- Current recreational accountability measures:
 - Both in-season and post-season AMs apply to harvest by the recreational sector.
- The in-season AM for red grouper requires NMFS to close the recreational sector when red grouper landings reach or are projected to reach the ACL.
- If landings exceed the red grouper ACL in a fishing year, the post-season AM requires NMFS to shorten the length of the following fishing year by the amount necessary to ensure landings do not exceed the ACT. If the red grouper stock is overfished, NMFS must also reduce the ACL and ACT by the amount of the overage in the prior year.



Red Grouper Landings (lb gw) from 1986 to 2024



Action 1: Modify the Sector Allocations, OFL, ABC, ACLs, and ACTs for Red Grouper

Alternative 1: No Action – Maintain the sector allocations of the total ACL for red grouper between the commercial and recreational sectors. The allocations for red grouper are 59.3% commercial and 40.7% recreational. Established in Reef Fish Amendment 53, the allocation was derived from the average landings using Fishing Effort Survey (FES)-adjusted Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP-FES) data using the years 1986 through 2005, based on the Southeast Fisheries Science Center (SEFSC) ACL monitoring datasets. Maintain the current OFL, ABC, and ACLs.

Alternative 2: Maintain the sector allocations of the total ACL as 59.3% commercial and 40.7% recreational. Revise the OFL and ABC as recommended by the Scientific and Statistical Committee based on the Southeast Data Assessment and Review (SEDAR) 88 stock assessment. Set the stock ACL equal to the stock ABC.



Action 1: Modify the Sector Allocations, OFL, ABC, ACLs, and ACTs for Red Grouper

Alternative 3: Revise the sector allocations of the total ACL between the recreational and commercial sectors as the average landings using the State of Florida's State Reef Fish Survey (SRFS) data during the years 1986 through 2005. The allocations for red grouper are 67.4% commercial and 32.6% recreational. Revise the OFL, ABC, ACLs, and ACTs as seen below (*table forthcoming*). Set the stock ACL equal to the stock ABC.

Alternative 4: Revise the sector allocations of the total ACL between the recreational and commercial sectors as the average landings using SRFS data during the years 1986 through 2009. The allocations for red grouper are 68.4% commercial and 31.6% recreational. Revise the OFL, ABC, ACLs, and ACTs as seen below (*table forthcoming*). Set the stock ACL equal to the stock ABC.



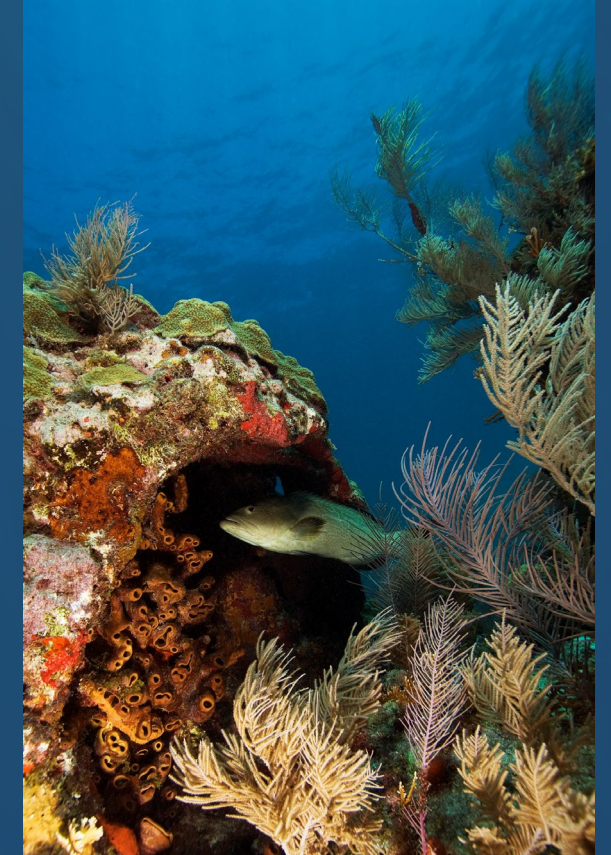
Action 1: Modify the Sector Allocations, OFL, ABC, ACLs, and ACTs for Red Grouper

Alternative 5: Revise the sector allocations of the total ACL between the recreational and commercial sectors as the average landings using SRFS data during the years 1986 through 2024, excluding 2020. The allocations for red grouper are 67.8% commercial and 32.2% recreational. Revise the OFL, ABC, ACLs, and ACTs as seen below (*table forthcoming*). Set the stock ACL equal to the stock ABC.



Summary Table of Sector Allocations for Red Grouper Based on SEDAR 88

	Comm Sector	Rec Sector
Alt 1 (MRIP-FES*)	59.3%	40.7%
Alt 2 (SRFS)	59.3%	40.7%
Alt 3 (SRFS)	67.4%	32.6%
Alt 4 (SRFS)	68.4%	31.6%
Alt 5 (SRFS)	67.8%	32.2%



*Data units in parentheses represent the currency that would be used for monitoring the recreational harvest.

Current and Proposed Red Grouper Catch Limits

	OFL*	ABC	Total ACL	Comm ACL	Rec ACL	Comm ACT	Rec ACT
Alt 1 (MRIP-FES)	5.99	4.96	4.96	2.94	2.02	2.79	1.84
Alt 1 (SRFS equivalent)	5.40	5.02	5.02	2.98	2.04	2.83	1.86
Alt 2 (SRFS)	10.64	8.28	8.28	4.91	3.37	4.66	3.07
Alt 3 (SRFS)	TBD	TBD					
Alt 4 (SRFS)	TBD	TBD					
Alt 5 (SRFS)	TBD	TBD					

*All values in the table are in mp gw. TBD values are expected to be available for the August 2025 meeting pending review by the SSC of the projections.

Action 2: Modify the February-March Recreational Shallow-water Grouper Closure

Alternative 1: No Action – Retain the February 1 through March 31 recreational closed season on shallow-water grouper in federal waters seaward of the 20-fathom boundary.

Alternative 2: Eliminate the February 1 through March 31 recreational closed season on shallow-water grouper in federal waters seaward of the 20-fathom boundary.

*This was last modified in a 2012 Reef Fish Framework Action.



Possible Action for Consideration

- August 2025 Council meeting: Will have recreational season projections based on the catch limits in Action 1.
- The Council may consider an action to modify the recreational fishing season, if it is projected to be less than a full year.



Tentative Timeline

- August 2025: Draft Amendment
- November 2025: Public Hearing Draft
- January 2025: Final Action

