

Gulf Council Motions Report
April 7 – 9, 2026
Mobile, Alabama

CLOSED SESSION

Selection of 2025 Law Enforcement Officer/Team of the Year

The Council selected FWC’s Kyle Yurewitch, Officer Specialist and Matthew Rubenstein, Officer Specialist as the 2025 Law Enforcement Team of the year.

DATA COLLECTION

Exploring Alternative Methods for Estimating Recreational Landings for Rarely Encountered Species

Motion: To direct staff to begin a white paper exploring the feasibility of identifying the universe of recreational anglers targeting deepwater grouper using a permit.

Motion carried with no opposition.

GULF SEDAR

No motions.

MIGRATORY SPECIES

No motions.

REEF FISH

FINAL ACTION – Abbreviated Framework Action: Modification of Gulf Lane Snapper Catch Limits

Motion: To select **Option 2** as preferred.

Option 2: Modify the OFL for the Gulf lane snapper stock to be 1,336,443 lb ww, and the ABC to be 1,304,917 lb ww, for 2026 – 2028 and subsequent years. The stock ACL is set equal to the ABC.

Motion carried with no opposition.

Motion: To approve the Abbreviated Framework Action: Modification of Gulf Lane Snapper Catch Limits and that it be forwarded to the Secretary of Commerce for review and implementation, and deem the codified text as necessary and appropriate, giving staff editorial

license to make the necessary changes in the document. The Council Chair is given the authority to deem any changes to the codified text as necessary and appropriate.

Names	Vote		
Capt. Walker	yes	Row Labels	Count of Vote
Mr. Geeslin	yes	yes	17
Ms. Ballard	yes	Grand Total	17
Mr. Schieble	yes		
Capt. Frady	yes		
Mr. Strelcheck	yes		
Dr. Banks	yes		
Mr. Marquez	yes		
Mr. Broussard	yes		
Dr. Overton	yes		
Gen. Spraggins	yes		
Mr. Sanchez	yes		
Mr. Osborne	yes		
Dr. Allen	yes		
Mr. Anson	yes		
Dr. Sweetman	yes		
Mr. Dugas	yes		

Motion carried 17 to 0.

Public Hearing Draft – Reef Fish Amendment 63: Modifications to Gulf Red Grouper IFQ Program

Motion: In Action 1, to add an **Alternative 4**.

Alternative 4. Establish a three-year commercial quota pool for Gulf red grouper beginning in 2027. If the commercial quota (ACT) is at or below 4.28 million pounds gutted weight, the quota pool is set at zero percent of the commercial quota (zero pounds). If the commercial quota is above 4.28 million pounds gutted weight, the quota pool would hold:

- Option 4a:** 15% of the commercial red grouper quota increase above 4.28 mp gw
- Option 4b:** 20% of the commercial red grouper quota increase above 4.28 mp gw
- Option 4c:** 25% of the commercial red grouper quota increase above 4.28 mp gw
- Option 4d:** 30% of the commercial red grouper quota increase above 4.28 mp gw

Motion carried with no opposition.

Motion: In Action 2, to make **Alternative 2, Option 2b** the preferred.

Alternative 2: To receive annual allocation from the quota pool, IFQ account holders must possess a valid or renewable federal commercial reef fish permit and have minimum red grouper landings during a two-year reference period of at least:

Option 2b: 500 lb gw

Motion carried with no opposition.

Motion: In Action 1, to make **Alternative 3, Option 3b** the preferred.

Alternative 3. Establish a three-year commercial quota pool for Gulf red grouper beginning in 2027. If the commercial quota (ACT) is at or below 4.28 million pounds gutted weight, the quota pool is set at zero percent of the commercial quota (zero pounds). If the commercial quota is above 4.28 million pounds gutted weight, the quota pool would hold:

Option 3b: 20% of the commercial red grouper quota increase above 2.79 mp gw

Motion carried with no opposition.

Motion: In Action 3, to make **Alternative 3** the preferred.

Alternative 3: Distribute 50% of the quota pool quota among active IFQ accounts with a valid or renewable commercial reef fish permit and red grouper landings within the reference period, but with no red grouper shares. Distribute 50% of the quota pool quota among active IFQ accounts with a valid or renewable commercial reef fish permit, red grouper landings within the reference period, and with red grouper shares. 10% of the quota pool would initially be set aside for appeals.

Option 3a: Quota would be distributed to qualifying participants with no red grouper shares:

- (i) equally
- (ii) proportionally based on red grouper landings

Option 3b: Quota would be distributed to qualifying participants with red grouper shares:

- (i) equally
- (ii) proportionally based on red grouper landings

Motion withdrawn.

Motion: In Action 3, to make **Alternative 3, Option 3a(ii) and 3b(ii)** the preferred.

Alternative 3: Distribute **50%** of the quota pool quota among active IFQ accounts with a valid or renewable commercial reef fish permit and red grouper landings within the reference period, but with **no red grouper shares**. Distribute **50%** of the quota pool quota among active IFQ reference period, and with **red grouper shares**. 10% of the quota pool would initially be set aside for appeals.

Option 3a: Quota would be distributed to qualifying participants with **no red grouper shares:**

(ii) proportionally based on red grouper landings

Option 3b: Quota would be distributed to qualifying participants with **red grouper shares:**

(ii) proportionally based on red grouper landings

Motion carried with no opposition.

Motion: To approve *Draft – Reef Fish Amendment 63: Modifications to Gulf Red Grouper IFQ Program* for virtual public hearings.

Motion carried with no opposition.

FINAL ACTION – Abbreviated Framework Action: Red Grouper IFQ Set Aside Quota Holdback

Motion: To add an **Option 3** that reads as follows:

Option 3: Provide the NMFS Regional Administrator the authority to withhold the percentage of the red grouper commercial quota necessary to implement Amendment 63 during the 2027 fishing year. If Amendment 63 is not implemented by May 1, 2027, the withheld quota would be distributed to shareholders.

Motion carried with no opposition.

Motion: To make **Option 3** the preferred.

Option 3: Provide the NMFS Regional Administrator the authority to withhold the percentage of the red grouper commercial quota necessary to implement Amendment 63 during the 2027 fishing year. If Amendment 63 is not implemented by May 1, 2027, the withheld quota would be distributed to shareholders.

Motion carried with no opposition.

Motion: To approve *Abbreviated Framework Action: Red Grouper Commercial Quota Retention for 2027* and that it be forwarded to the Secretary of Commerce for review and implementation, and deem the codified text as necessary and appropriate, giving staff editorial license to make the necessary changes in the document. The Council Chair is given the authority to deem any changes to the codified text as necessary and appropriate.

Names	Vote		
Mr. Osborne	yes		
Capt. Walker	yes	yes	17
Mr. Schieble	yes	Grand Total	17
Dr. Sweetman	yes		
Mr. Sanchez	yes		
Ms. Ballard	yes		
Dr. Allen	yes		
Mr. Strelcheck	yes		
Mr. Broussard	yes		
Capt. Frady	yes		
Dr. Overton	yes		
Mr. Marquez	yes		
Mr. Anson	yes		
Gen. Spraggins	yes		
Mr. Geeslin	yes		
Dr. Banks	yes		
Mr. Dugas	yes		

Motion carried 17 to 0.

Draft Options – Document to consider changes to private recreational red snapper management such as carryover and transfer provisions

Motion: In Draft Action 1, Draft **Alternative 2**, add Draft **Options 2c** and **2d**.

Draft Action 1: Establish a carryover provision for private recreational red snapper

Draft Alternative 2: Establish a carryover provision for private angling component of the red snapper ACL on a state-by-state basis. For states that did not land its state-specific ACL, the unused portion of would be carried over to the next fishing year in the amount of unused portion of the ACL not greater than Options 2a-2d of the previous year’s state-specific private angling ACL.

Draft Option 2a: 100% of unused state-specific private angling ACL can be carried over to the next year

Draft Option 2b: 75% of unused state-specific private angling ACL can be carried over to the next year

Draft Option 2c: 50% of unused state-specific private angling ACL can be carried over to the next year

Draft Option 2d: 25% of unused state-specific private angling ACL can be carried over to the next year

Motion carried with no opposition.

Motion: In Action 1: Establish a carryover provision for private recreational red snapper, add Draft **Alternative 3**.

Draft **Alternative 3**: Establish a carryover provision for private angling component of the red snapper ACL on a state-by-state basis. For a state that did not land its state-specific ACL in a fishing year, that unused portion would be carried over to the following fishing year. The amount carried over would be capped equal to no more than a percentage of that state's ACL, based on Options 3a-3d below:

Draft **Option 3a**: up to 2.5% of the state-specific private angling ACL can be carried over to the next year

Draft **Option 3b**: up to 5% of the state-specific private angling ACL can be carried over to the next year

Draft **Option 3c**: up to 7.5% of the state-specific private angling ACL can be carried over to the next year

Draft **Option 3d**: up to 10% of the state-specific private angling ACL can be carried over to the next year

Motion carried with 1 in opposition.

Modify the Private Recreational Red Snapper Post-Season Accountability Measures

Motion: To direct staff to develop a document to modify the private recreational red snapper post-season accountability measure.

Alternative 1: (No Action): If a state's red snapper private angling component landings exceed the applicable state's component ACL, the AA will file a notification with the Office of the Federal Register, at or near the beginning of the following fishing year, reducing that state's private angling ACL by the amount of the ACL overage in the prior fishing year, unless the best scientific information available determines that a greater, lesser, or no overage adjustment is necessary.

Alternative 2: If a state's red snapper private angling component landings exceed the applicable state's component ACL, NMFS will reduce, at or near the beginning of the following fishing year, that state's private angling ACL by the amount of the ACL overage in the prior fishing year, unless the overage is less than Options 2a-2d percentage of the state's specific ACL and the total private angling component quota specified in [50 CFR 622.39\(2\)\(i\)\(A\)](#) is not exceeded.

Option 2a: 2.5% of the state-specific private angling ACL

Option 2b: 5% of the state-specific private angling ACL

Option 2c: 7.5% of the state-specific private angling ACL

Option 2d: 10% of the state-specific private angling ACL

Motion carried with no opposition.

Draft Amendment 64 Delegate Federal For-Hire Red Snapper Management to Gulf States

Motion: To add an **Alternative 4** in Action 2 to allocate the federal for-hire red snapper quota between the Gulf States based on the Amendment 40 Sector Separation Formula (50%*1986-2005, 2007-2009, 2011-2013) + (50%*2007-2009, 2011-2013).

Alternative 4

Amendment 40 Calculation	FLW	AL	MS	LA	TX
For Hire Landings:	36.73%	26.29%	0.80%	11.08%	25.09%

Motion carried 11 to 5 with 1 abstention.

Motion: In Action 2, to add an **Alternative 5** to allocate the federal for-hire red snapper quota between the Gulf States based on 50% of Amendment 40 Sector Separation Formula (50%*1986-2005, 2007-2009, 2011-2013)+(50%*2007-2009, 2011-2013) and 50% of each state's average red snapper landings between 2021 and 2024 +(50%*2021-2024) in Alternative 3.

Alternative 5

Amendment 40 with Alt. 3 Calculation	FLW	AL	MS	LA	TX
For Hire Landings:	38.96%	25.69%	0.76%	10.27%	24.32%

Motion carried 10 to 6 with 1 abstention.

Motion: In Action 1, to make **Alternative 1** the preferred.
Action 1 – Delegation of the Federal Red Snapper For-hire Component Management Authority to Gulf of America (Gulf) States.

Alternative 1. No Action. Do not delegate the federal management authority for the red snapper federal for-hire component to the respective Gulf states.

Motion failed 6 to 10 with 1 abstention.

Motion: To include a sunset provision for the Delegation of the Federal Red Snapper For-hire Component Management Authority to Gulf States.

- Option a:** 2 years
- Option b:** 3 years
- Option c:** 4 years
- Option d:** 5 years

Motion carried 10 to 5 with 2 abstentions.

Motion: To add an Action with an Alternative to include post-season AMs for managing overages of the respective Federal For-Hire sector State specific allocated ACL, by reducing the state specific Federal For-Hire ACL in the following year by the full amount of any overage.

Motion carried 16 to 0 with 1 abstention.

SHRIMP

Review of SEDAR 87 Gulf Penaeid Shrimp Stock Assessments and SSC Recommendations

Motion: To direct staff to develop a document that updates status determination criteria and considers modifying the permit threshold of penaeid shrimp.

Motion carried with no opposition.

Review of the Texas Closure

Motion: To request NMFS continue with the Texas Federal Closure in the coming year in conjunction with the state of Texas Closure in 2026.

Motion carried with no opposition.

Remaining Items from Summary of the March 9, 2026, Shrimp Advisory Panel Meeting

Motion: To request that NMFS fully utilize up to the FY26 \$600,000 appropriation for implementation and enforcement of the Section 609 program to ensure foreign fisheries are maintaining the same standard for sea turtle conservation as our domestic fisheries are required to uphold. To request that NMFS provide a presentation, at a future Shrimp AP meeting, on how the funding will be spent to carry out the implementation and enforcement of the Section 609 TED program.

Motion carried with no opposition.

Update on Early Adopter Program

Motion: To request that NMFS adopts the following priorities for utilizing the FY26 \$850,000 appropriation for ELB development and implementation:

- 1) Ensure the NMFS server has sufficient capacity to receive and store shrimp fishery vessel position data.
- 2) Develop a statistically robust design for distributing units to a representative portion of the fleet that would be equal to or greater than the last 10 years.
- 3) Cover the cost of providing units and cellular service to those shrimp vessels, pursuant to the Early Adopter Program.

Motion carried with no opposition.

Presentation: Update on Working Group for Shrimp Bycatch Methodology for Finfish Species

Motion: To request that SEFSC staff and contractors make the Shrimp Bycatch of Finfish Working Group's recommendations and requests from its March 2026 meeting a priority for the next meeting of the Working Group. The recommendations for finfish bycatch will need to be completed prior to and presented at the July 2026 SSC meeting.

Motion carried with no opposition.