

Modifications to Red Snapper Private Recreational Accountability Measures



Framework Action Under the Fishery Management Plan for the Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf

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ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THIS DOCUMENT

Abbreviation	Definition
ABC	acceptable biological catch
ACL	annual catch limit
ACT	annual catch target
AM	accountability measures
CFR	code of federal regulations
CHTS	Coastal Household Telephone Survey
Council	Gulf Council
CZMA	Coastal Zone Management Act
E.O.	Executive Order
EEZ	exclusive economic zone
EFP	exempted fishing permits
ESA	Endangered Species Act
FL	fork length
FMP	Fishery Management Plan
GFMC	Gulf Fishery Management Council
GMFMC	Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council
Gulf	Gulf of America (Formerly Gulf of Mexico)
IFQ	individual fishing quota
LA Creel	Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries' recreational creel survey
Magnuson-Stevens Act	Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act
Mp	million pounds
MRIP	Marine Recreational Information Program
NMFS	National Marine Fisheries Service
NOAA	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
OFL	overfishing limit
OY	optimum yield
Reef Fish FMP	Fishery Management Plan for the Reef Fish Resources in the Gulf
Secretary	Secretary of Commerce
SEDAR	Southeast Data, Assessment, and Review
SEFSC	Southeast Fisheries Science Center
SERO	Southeast Regional Office
SPR	spawning potential ratio
SRFS	State Reef Fish Survey
SSC	Scientific and Statistical Committee
TAC	total allowable catch
TL	total length
ww	whole weight

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The Gulf of America (Gulf) red snapper stock is managed under the Fishery Management Plan for the Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf (Reef Fish FMP). Each of the five Gulf states is allocated a portion of the red snapper private angling component annual catch limit (ACL) and delegated the authority to set the fishing season, bag limit, and size limit for the private angling component of the recreational sector (GMFMC 2019a-f). Each state-specific ACL is based on the allocation percentages determined in Amendment 50A to the Reef Fish FMP (Figure 1.1.1). Private recreational red snapper landings are monitored by each individual Gulf state in their respective state data collection currency. States then report their landings to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for monitoring, whereby NMFS calibrates the state landings into the federal equivalent, Marine Recreational Information Program - Coastal Household Telephone Survey (MRIP-CHTS) based on the calibration ratios established in GMFMC 2021a.

The current post-season accountability measure (AM)¹ provides that if a state's red snapper private angling component landings exceed the applicable state's component ACL, NMFS 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 component ACL for the following year 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 necessary². In addition, if the total recreational ACL (private angling and for-hire landings combined) is exceeded and red snapper is overfished, the amount of the overage will be deducted in the following fishing year from the applicable recreational component ACL (private angling or for-hire), unless the best scientific information available determines that a greater, lesser, or no overage adjustment is necessary³. Federal monitoring of landings and payback amounts are conducted by NMFS and are calculated in MRIP-CHTS.

In recent years, the Gulf Council (Council) has indicated a desire to provide additional flexibility in recreational red snapper state management while continuing to promote achieving optimum yield. In April 2026, the Council initiated a document to modify the current private recreational red snapper AMs to consider removing the requirement for state-specific payback provisions if landing overages were below a specified percentage of the state-specific ACL, as long as the total private recreational ACL had not been exceeded. Chapter 2.1 provides information on the frequency and extent of ACL overages, by state from 2020-2025.

¹ [50 CFR 622.23\(b\)](#)

² This flexibility was used in 2024, whereby NMFS reduced Mississippi's ACL for the 2024 season, but not in the full amount of 2023 overage ([89 FR 49104](#)).

³ [50 CFR 622.41\(q\)\(2\)\(ii\)](#)



Figure 1.1.1. Private recreational red snapper ACL allocation, as estimated in MRIP-CHTS units with state-specific ACLs calibrated to state currencies.
 Overfishing Limit = OFL; Acceptable Biological Catch = ABC; Commercial = Com.;
 Recreational = Rec.; Florida = FL; Alabama = AL; Mississippi = MS; Louisiana = LA; Texas = TX; State Reef Fish Survey = SRFS

1.2 Purpose and Need

The purpose of this framework action is to modify the current, state-specific, post-season accountability measures for the red snapper recreational private angling component.

The need for this framework action is to provide additional management flexibility in a manner that retains the integrity and effectiveness of state management, while achieving optimum yield consistent with the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, including preventing overfishing and providing sustained access for recreational participants and members of fishing communities in states across the Gulf.

1.3 History of Management

The **Reef Fish FMP** was implemented in November 1984. The original list of species included in the management unit consisted of snappers, groupers, and sea basses. This summary focuses on management actions relevant to catch limits of red snapper. A complete history of management for the Reef Fish FMP is available on the Council's website⁴ including other actions affecting red snapper management (GMFMC 1984).

In 1990, **Amendment 1 to the Reef Fish FMP** (GMFMC 1989) established the first red snapper rebuilding plan. From 1990 through 2009, red snapper harvest was managed using an annual total allowable catch (TAC), which was divided 51% to the commercial sector and 49% to the

⁴ <https://gulfcouncil.org/fishery-management/implemented-amendments/reef-fish/>

recreational sector based on the average of historical landings from 1979 through 1987. Amendment 1 also established a commercial red snapper quota of 3.1 million pounds (mp) whole weight (ww). While there was no recreational quota specified, a bag limit of seven fish and a minimum size limit of 13 inches total length (TL) was established. Based on the 51:49 commercial to recreational sector allocation, the commercial quota implied a TAC of approximately 6.1 mp ww in 1990, followed by explicit TACs of 4.0 mp ww in 1991 (GMFMC 1991) and 1992, 6.0 mp ww in 1993 through 1995, and 9.12 mp ww from 1996 through 2006. The TAC was reduced to 6.5 mp ww in 2007 and 5.0 mp ww in 2008 and 2009 (GMFMC 2007).

The **Generic Sustainable Fisheries Act Amendment** (GMFMC 1999) required the establishment of quotas for recreational and commercial fishing that, when reached, result in a prohibition on the retention of fish caught for each sector for the remainder of the fishing year. With the establishment of a recreational quota in 1997, the NMFS was authorized to close the recreational season for each species when the quota is reached, as required by the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

In 2006, **Amendment 26 to the Reef Fish FMP** (GMFMC 2006) established a red snapper individual fishing quota (IFQ) program for the commercial sector. Commercial fishermen received red snapper shares based on their catch history. Allocation of the annual commercial harvest of red snapper is distributed to red snapper IFQ shareholders each year based on the commercial ACL and the percentage of shares they hold. They are then able to fish that allocation throughout the year until they run out of allocation. Both shares and allocation are transferable, so a fisherman may purchase shares or allocation from others during the fishing year.

From 2010 through 2012, the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) recommended the red snapper acceptable biological catch (ABC) at 75% of the overfishing limit (OFL) and the Council set the ACL equal to the ABC (GMFMC 2012). In 2010, the total ACL was increased to 6.945 mp ww. This increased the commercial quota from 2.550 mp ww to 3.542 mp ww and the recreational quota from 2.450 mp ww to 3.403 mp ww. In 2011, the ACL was raised to 7.185 mp ww, resulting in a 3.664 mp ww commercial quota and a 3.525 mp ww recreational quota. On August 12, 2011, NMFS published an emergency rule that, in part, increased the recreational red snapper quota by 345,000 lb for the 2011 fishing year.

In 2012, the SSC recommended that the ABC should be set at the yield corresponding to 75% of FSPR_{26%}. The Council set the ACL equal to the ABC, which increased the ACL to 8.080 mp ww, resulting in a commercial quota of 4.121 mp ww and recreational quota of 3.96 mp ww (GMFMC 2012).

The **Generic ACLs/ AMs Amendment** (GMFMC 2011) addressed a requirement in the Magnuson-Stevens Reauthorization Act of 2006 to establish ACLs and AMs for federally managed species. As a result, the 2013 stock ACL was set to 11.00 mp ww and the commercial quota at 5.61 mp ww and the recreational quota at 5.39 mp ww. Additionally, a post-season AM that required an overage adjustment if the recreational ACL was exceeded if the stock was overfished was also implemented in 2014. The total ACL was set at 10.40 mp ww in 2014, 14.30 mp ww in 2015, 13.96 mp ww in 2016, and 13.74 mp ww in 2017 and subsequent years.

Amendment 40 to the Reef Fish FMP (GMFMC 2014) divided the recreational quota into a federal for-hire component quota (42.3%) and a private angling component quota (57.7%). In 2015, this resulted in an ACT of 2.371 mp ww for the federally permitted for-hire component and 3.234 mp ww for the private angling component. The amendment also included a 3-year sunset provision on the separation of the recreational sector into distinct components.

Amendment 45 to the Reef Fish FMP (GMFMC 2016) extended the separate management of the federal for-hire and private angling components for an additional 5 years through the 2022 red snapper fishing season.⁵ In 2018, the ACT and ACL were 2.278 mp ww and 2.848 mp ww, respectively, for the federally permitted for-hire component, and 3.108 mp ww and 3.885 mp ww, respectively, for the private angling component.

For 2018, NMFS established a 51-day red snapper fishing season for the federal for-hire component [83 FR 17623] based on the component's ACT. For the private angling component, the 2018 and 2019 red snapper fishing seasons were set by the individual states through exempted fishing permits (EFP) approved by NMFS. The EFPs allocated a portion of the private-angling ACL to each state for harvest during the 2018 and 2019 fishing years.⁶

Amendment 36A to the Reef Fish FMP (GMFMC 2017) modified the commercial IFQ programs. It included a provision that allows NMFS to withhold a portion of IFQ allocation at the start of the year equal to an anticipated quota reduction, which became effective in 2018.

A 2018 Framework Action titled **Modification of the Recreational Red Snapper Annual Catch Target Buffers** reduced the federal for-hire buffer by setting the ACT at 9% below the component's ACL for the 2019 fishing season only (GMFMC 2018a).

Amendments 50A-F to the Reef Fish FMP (GMFMC 2019a-f) became effective February 6, 2020, establishing a state management program in each Gulf state for the private angling component's harvest of red snapper. Under Amendments 50A-F, each Gulf state is responsible for managing its annual allocation of the private angling component ACL for red snapper using size limits, bag limits, and seasonal closures. If a state exceeds its allocation in a given fishing year, then the amount of the overage would be deducted from that state's private angling component quota for the following fishing year. The individual Gulf states are responsible for their own quota monitoring, and each has a data collection program in place to monitor that state's private angling landings. The individual states determine if additional catch limit buffers (e.g., an ACT set lower than an ACL, with the fishing season based on the ACT) are necessary to successfully manage that state's allocated quota. A private angling ACT remains in place in the event a state's delegation is no longer effective. The federal for-hire component's harvest of red snapper continues to be federally managed.

⁵ Amendment 50A changed this permanently. See next page.

⁶ For more information: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/southeast/state-recreational-red-snapper-management-exempted-fishing-permits>

A Framework Action implemented in 2019 titled **Modify Red Snapper and Hogfish Catch Limits** increased the ACL for red snapper for 2019 and subsequent years (GMFMC 2018b). In 2019, another Framework Action titled **Modification to the Recreational For-hire Red Snapper ACT Buffer** established a federal for-hire ACT 9% below the component's ACL, extending the buffer reduction adopted through the 2018 Framework Action (GMFMC 2019g).

Two Framework Actions titled **Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper Recreational Data Calibration and Recreational Catch Limits** (GMFMC 2021a) and **Modification of Annual Catch Limits for Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper** (GMFMC 2021b) were implemented on January 1, 2023. The Data Calibration Framework modified recreational catch limits for the state-specific private angling ACLs. The Catch Limits Framework increased red snapper catch limits for both the commercial and recreational sectors.

A Framework Action titled **Modification of Catch Limits for Gulf of Mexico Red Snapper**, which reduced the OFL but increased other catch limits for red snapper (GMFMC 2022), was implemented on July 10, 2023.

A Framework Action titled **Update to Red Snapper Calibrations and Gray Snapper Catch Limits** was implemented June 13, 2024 (GMFMC 2023). This framework action modified the ratios used to calibrate state specific red snapper private angling component ACLs for Alabama, Florida, and Mississippi and modified each of these state's private angling component ACLs based on the new calibration ratios.

CHAPTER 2. MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES

2.1 Action – Modify the private recreational red snapper accountability measures (AM).

Alternative 1 - No Action: Retain the current state-specific post-season AMs for red snapper, which require that if a state's red snapper private angling component landings exceed the applicable state's component annual catch limit (ACL) as specified in 50 CFR 622.23(a)(1)(ii), the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) 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: Unless the best scientific information available determines that a greater, lesser, or no overage adjustment is necessary, NMFS would reduce a state's private angling component ACL in the fishing year following an overage of the ACL by the amount of the overage if:

- The applicable state exceeds its ACL by more than the percentage specified in **Options 2a-2c**, or
- A state's red snapper private angling component landings exceed the applicable state's component ACL by any amount and private recreational landings from all states combined exceed the total private angling component ACL, or
- A state exceeds its ACL more than once in any three-year rolling period no matter the amount of the overage, and regardless of whether the total private recreational ACL is exceeded.

Option 2a: up to 5% of the state-specific private angling ACL

Option 2b: up to 7.5% of the state-specific private angling ACL

Option 2c: up to 10% of the state-specific private angling ACL

Discussion:

In the last five years (2020-2025) each Gulf state has exceeded its state-specific private recreational angling component ACL at least once (Table 2.1.1); although, only once during that time (2021) did this result in an overage of the total private recreational component ACL⁷. Given the uncertainty in recreational landings data, there exists the potential to exceed recreational ACLs, even in well-managed fisheries. Adding flexibility in the AMs could be a reasonable means of addressing uncertainty. This framework action would provide greater flexibility to states that exceed their ACL infrequently and in amounts that are not above the prescribed trigger (**Options 2a-2c**), except when the sum of Gulf states' private landings exceeds the total private angling ACL.

⁷ Although the private recreational component exceeded its ACL, the total recreational ACL and the total ACL were not exceeded as the for-hire component ACL and commercial ACL were not exceeded.

Alternative 1 (No Action) would keep the current post-season AMs in place for the private angling component of the red snapper fishery. Under **Alternative 1**, any overage of a state's ACL would require a reduction equal to the overage of the ACL in the following year.

Alternative 2 would modify the post-season AM by establishing the regulatory framework to allow for nominal and infrequent overages by individual states if the total private angling recreational ACL is not exceeded. Under **Alternative 2, Options 2a-2c**, if a state exceeds its ACL more than once in any three-year rolling period, the state would be required to pay back the full amount of any subsequent overages in the year following the overage. An overage would not be subject to a payback requirement if it is less than the amounts specified in **Alternative 2, Options 2a-2c**, is not preceded by an overage of any amount in the prior two years, and the total private recreational ACL is not exceeded.

Table 2.1.1 displays state overages from 2020-2025 as a percentage of the state ACL. Table 2.1.2 displays the highest overage in pounds (lb) whole weight (ww) that could occur without requiring a payback should a state exceed its ACL for **Alternative 2, Options 2a-2c** in state-specific data units. Table 2.1.3 provides the highest overage in lb ww that could occur without requiring a payback should a state exceed its ACL for **Alternative 2, Options 2a-2c** in the federal equivalent Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) - Coastal Household Telephone Survey (CHTS) units. If an individual state initially exceeds its ACL up to the Gulf Council-determined percentage, it would not be required to pay back their overage in the following year so long as the total private recreational ACL is not exceeded. For example, under **Alternative 2, Option 2a**, the overage could be up to 5% of the state-specified ACL. If a state exceeds its ACL by an amount greater than specified in **Alternative 2, Options 2a-2c**, its ACL would be reduced by the amount of the overage in the following year, regardless of whether the total private recreational ACL is exceeded. If an individual state exceeds its ACL by less than the threshold outlined in **Alternative 2, Options 2a-2c**, but the total private recreational ACL is exceeded, that state would be required to pay back the entire amount of its overage in the following fishing year.

Table 2.1.1. Private recreational red snapper overages, as a percent of the state allocated ACL from 2020-2025.

Year	AL	TX	MS	LA	FL
2020	-	2.97%	-	-	-
2021	-	-	-	0.85%	13.39%
2022	-	-	-	-	-
2023	0.83%	-	28.52%	-	0.59%
2024	-	-	-	4.24%	-
2025	-	-	-	5.83%	-

Table 2.1.2. State-specific private recreational red snapper ACLs and highest overage (state data units) that would not be subject to a payback under **Alternative 2, Options 2a-2c**, if total ACL is not exceeded.

State	State ACL (no adjusted paybacks)	Option 2a: 5%	Option 2b: 7.5%	Option 2c: 10%
AL (Snapper Check)	664,552	33,228	49,841	66,455
FL (SRFS)	2,769,631	138,482	207,722	276,963
TX (TX)	286,363	14,318	21,477	28,636
LA (LA Creel)	934,587	46,729	70,094	93,459
MS (Tails N' Scales)	82,342	4,117	6,176	8,234

Table 2.1.3. State-specific private recreational red snapper ACLs and highest overage (federal data estimated by MRIP-CHTS) that would not be subject to a payback under **Alternative 2, Options 2a-2c**, if total ACL is not exceeded.

State	Federal Equivalent (no adjusted paybacks)	Option 2a: 5%	Option 2b: 7.5%	Option 2c: 10%
AL	1,212,687	60,634	90,952	121,269
FL	2,066,889	103,344	155,017	206,689
TX	286,363	14,318	21,477	28,636
LA	881,686	44,084	66,126	88,169
MS	163,702	8,185	12,278	16,370

Based on historical landings presented in Tables 2.1.4-2.1.8, the following scenarios were developed to depict how modifying the post-season AM presented in **Alternative 2, Options 2a-2c** would be implemented. These example scenarios are intended to depict how future implementation would apply, and do not suggest that delayed paybacks could be required under any of the presented example scenarios. These tables display federal MRIP-CHTS estimated landings, calibrated to state units based on the current ratios, and percent overage in lb ww, as a percentage of each state's ACL from 2020-2025. For those years in which states did not exceed its ACL, underages are presented as negative values.

2021:

The federal equivalent MRIP-CHTS estimates for Gulf private recreational landings in 2021 were 4,284,611 lb ww, which is over the total private recreational ACL of 4,269,000 lb ww MRIP-CHTS. The total recreational ACL was not exceeded because the for-hire sector harvested less than its ACL in the 2021 fishing season. No calibration ratios were in place in 2021, so all state recreational landings were equal to MRIP-CHTS estimates. Florida exceeded its state ACL by 13.39% or 256,288 lb ww SRFS (256,288 lb ww federal equivalent MRIP-CHTS). Louisiana exceeded its state specific ACL by 0.85% or 6,943 lb ww LA Creel (6,943 lb ww federal equivalent MRIP-CHTS). Under **Alternative 2, Options 2a-2c**, both Florida and

Louisiana would be required to pay back their overages in 2022 because the total private recreational ACL was exceeded. Under **Alternative 2, Options 2a-2c**, both Florida and Louisiana would be required to pay back any overage if their ACL were exceeded again in 2022 or 2023, because such overages would be within three years of the 2021 overage.

2023:

The federal equivalent MRIP-CHTS estimates for total Gulf private recreational landings in 2023 were 4,595,543 lb ww, which is under the total private recreational ACL of 4,611,326 lb ww MRIP-CHTS. Florida exceeded its ACL by 0.59% or 12,821 lb ww SRFS (12,093 lb ww federal equivalent MRIP-CHTS). Mississippi exceeded its ACL by 28.52% or 17,930 lb ww Tails n' Scales (46,694 lb ww federal equivalent MRIP-CHTS), and Alabama exceeded its ACL by 0.83% or 4,898 lb ww Snapper Check (10,048 federal equivalent MRIP-CHTS). Under **Alternative 2, Options 2a-2c**, Alabama would not be required to pay back their overage in 2024 because the overage is less than the specified percentages, and the total private recreational ACL was not exceeded. Florida's overage also did not exceed the percentages specified in **Alternative 2, Options 2a-2c**; however, because Florida had an overage within the preceding two years in 2021, Florida would be subject to a payback for the full amount of the 2023 overage. Under **Alternative 2, Options 2a-2c**, Mississippi would have been subject to a payback for its overage (28.52%) in full in the 2024 fishing year, as the amount of overage exceeds the specified percentages of their total state-specific ACL despite the total private recreational ACL not being exceeded. Under **Alternative 2, Options 2a-2c**, Florida, Alabama, and Mississippi would have to pay back any overage that may occur during 2024 and 2025.

2024:

The MRIP-CHTS federal equivalent estimates for total Gulf private recreational landings in 2024 were 3,228,834 lb ww, which is under the total private recreational ACL of 4,611,326 lb ww MRIP-CHTS. Louisiana exceeded its ACL by 4.241% or 39,632 lb ww LA Creel (37,389 lb ww federal equivalent MRIP-CHTS). Under **Alternative 2, Options 2a-2c**, Louisiana would not be required to pay back its overage in 2025 as it is within the specified percentage of their state-specific ACL outlined in **Options 2a-2c**. However, Louisiana would be subject to a payback of future overages should one occur within three years of a previous overage.

2025:

The MRIP-CHTS federal equivalent estimates for total Gulf private landings in 2025 were 3,640,707 lb ww, which is under the total private recreational ACL of 4,611,326 lb ww MRIP-CHTS. Louisiana exceeded its ACL by 5.83% or 52,149 lb ww LA Creel (49,197 lb ww federal equivalent MRIP-CHTS). Under **Alternative 2, Options 2a-2c**, Louisiana would have to pay back the 2025 overage in full because it occurred within three years of a previous overage. Louisiana would continue to be subject to a payback of future overages should one occur within three years of a previous overage.

The four scenarios presented above based on historical landings in 2021, 2023, 2024, and 2025 exhibit how proposed **Alternative 2** would be operationalized on an annual basis as a post-season AM. **Alternative 2, Options 2a-2c** provide guardrails to the upper bound of the frequency and amount of overages that would not be subject to a pay back, while providing additional management flexibility in a manner that retains the integrity and effectiveness of state

management, consistent with the purpose and need. The proposed percentages in **Alternative 2, Options 2a-2c** are all within the reasonable range of uncertainty that can be associated with state-data collection surveys. Not imposing a payback for nominal and infrequent overages while remaining below the total private recreational red snapper ACL maximizes red snapper harvest opportunities, while the frequency limitation prohibits states from repeatedly exceeding their state allocated ACL without being subject to a payback.

Proposed **Alternative 2** would not modify how states currently manage their private recreational red snapper fishery, and is not anticipated to drastically alter season length, but provides additional flexibility to address uncertainty in state landings estimates.

Table 2.1.4. Alabama private recreational red snapper ACL and landings in MRIP-CHTS units and State Snapper Check units. Years where Alabama exceeded allocated ACL are shaded in grey, and the overage as indicated a percent of total ACL is presented, as well as total Gulf private red snapper recreational landings.

Year	Rec. ACL (CHTS)	AL ACL (CHTS)	AL ACL (Snapper Check)	AL Landings (Snapper Check)	AL Landings (CHTS)	AL Percent Overage	AL Overage lb (Snapper Check)	AL Overage lb (CHTS)	Total Gulf Recreational Landings (CHTS)
2020	4,269,000	1,113,319	1,113,319	1,106,679	1,106,679	-0.60%	-6,640	-6,640	3,768,094
2021	4,269,000	1,122,662	1,122,662	937,280	937,280	-16.51%	-185,382	-185,382	4,284,611
2022	4,269,000	1,122,662	1,122,662	423,851	423,851	-62.25%	-698,811	-698,811	3,119,070
2023 ⁸	4,611,326	1,212,687	591,185	596,083	1,222,734	0.83%	4,898	10,048	4,595,543
2024 ⁹	4,611,326	1,202,639	659,654 ¹⁰	570,856	1,041,708	-13.38%	-88,798	-160,931	3,228,834
2025	4,611,326	1,212,687	664,552	623,029	1,136,914	-6.25%	-41,523	-75,772	3,640,707

⁸ [GMFMC 2021](#) implemented the framework to apply the calibration ratios developed by NOAA Fisheries Office of Science and Technology and the Gulf states to state-specific ACLs to adjust those ACLs into the currency in which each state monitors landings. AL calibration ratio used was 0.4875.

⁹ [GMFMC 2023](#) implemented the framework to update the calibration ratios developed by NOAA Fisheries Office of Science and Technology and the Gulf states to state-specific ACLs to adjust those ACLs into the currency in which each state monitors landings. Under the revised framework, AL calibration ratio is 0.548.

¹⁰ [89 FR 49104](#) specified 2022 ACL for MS, AL, and FL based on regulations at [50 CFR 622.23\(b\)](#) require that if a state's red snapper private angling component landings exceed the applicable state's component ACL, then in the following fishing year, that state's private angling ACL will be reduced by the amount of that ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

Table 2.1.5. Texas private recreational red snapper ACL and landings MRIP-CHTS units and state Texas units. Years where Texas exceeded allocated ACL are shaded in grey, and the overage as indicated a percent of total ACL is presented, as well as total Gulf private red snapper recreational landings.

Year	Rec. ACL (CHTS)	TX ACL (CHTS)	TX Landings (TX units)	TX Percent Overage	TX Overage lb (TX units)	Total Gulf Recreational Landings (CHTS)
2020	4,269,000	223,105	229,725	2.97%	6,620	3,768,094
2021	4,269,000	258,485	211,373	-18.23%	-47,112	4,284,611
2022	4,269,000	265,105	158,452	-40.23%	-106,653	3,119,070
2023¹¹	4,611,326	286,363	267,721	-6.51%	-18,642	4,595,543
2024¹²	4,611,326	286,363	231,406	-19.19%	-54,957	3,228,834
2025	4,611,326	286,363	221,821	-22.54%	-64,542	3,640,707

¹¹ [GMFMC 2021](#) implemented the framework to apply the calibration ratios developed by NOAA Fisheries Office of Science and Technology and the Gulf states to state-specific ACLs to adjust those ACLs into the currency in which each state monitors landings. TX calibration ratio used was 1.00.

¹² [GMFMC 2023](#) implemented the framework to update the calibration ratios developed by NOAA Fisheries Office of Science and Technology and the Gulf states to state-specific ACLs to adjust those ACLs into the currency in which each state monitors landings. Under the revised framework, TX calibration ratio is 1.00.

Table 2.1.6. Mississippi private recreational red snapper ACL and landings as estimates by MS Tails N' Scales, along with the federal equivalents MRIP-CHTS. Years where Mississippi exceeded allocated ACL are shaded in grey, and the overage as indicated a percent of total ACL is presented, as well as total Gulf private red snapper recreational landings.

Year	Rec. ACL (CHTS)	MS ACL (CHTS)	MS ACL (Tails N' Scales units)	MS Landings (Tails N' Scales units)	MS Landings (CHTS)	MS Percent Overage	MS Overage lb (Tails N' Scales units)	MS Overage lb (CHTS)	Total Gulf Recreational Landings (CHTS)
2020	4,269,000	151,550	151,550	142,044	142,044	-6.27%	-9,505.50	-9,506	3,768,094
2021	4,269,000	151,550	151,550	143,043	143,043	-5.61%	-8,506.50	-8,507	4,284,611
2022	4,269,000	151,550	151,550	129,057	129,057	-14.84%	-22,492.50	-22,493	3,119,070
2023¹³	4,611,326	163,702	62,862	80,792	210,396	28.52%	17,930.40	46,694	4,595,543
2024¹⁴	4,611,326	128,288	64,529 ¹⁵	60,004	119,292	-7.01%	-4,525.00)	-8,996	3,228,834
2025	4,611,326	163,702	82,342	79,047	157,151	-4.00%	-3,295.11	-6,551	3,640,707

¹³ [GMFMC 2021](#) implemented the framework to apply the calibration ratios developed by NOAA Fisheries Office of Science and Technology and the Gulf states to state-specific ACLs to adjust those ACLs into the currency in which each state monitors landings. MS calibration ratio used was 0.3840.

¹⁴ [GMFMC 2023](#) implemented the framework to update the calibration ratios developed by NOAA Fisheries Office of Science and Technology and the Gulf states to state-specific ACLs to adjust those ACLs into the currency in which each state monitors landings. Under the revised framework, MS calibration ratio is 0.503.

¹⁵ [89 FR 49104](#) specified 2022 ACL for MS, AL, and FL based on regulations at [50 CFR 622.23\(b\)](#) require that if a state's red snapper private angling component landings exceed the applicable state's component ACL, then in the following fishing year, that state's private angling ACL will be reduced by the amount of that ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

Table 2.1.7. Louisiana private recreational red snapper ACL and landings as estimates by LA Creel, along with the federal equivalents MRIP-CHTS. Years where Louisiana exceeded allocated ACL are shaded in grey, and the overage as indicated a percent of total ACL is presented, as well as total Gulf private red snapper recreational landings.

Year	Rec. ACL (CHTS)	LA ACL (CHTS)	LA ACL (LA Creel units)	LA Landings (LA Creel units)	LA Landings (CHTS)	LA Percent Overage	LA Overage lb (LA Creel units)	LA Overage lb (CHTS)	Total Gulf Recreational Landings (CHTS)
2020	4,269,000	784,126	784,126	777,259	777,259	-0.876%	-6,867	-6,867	3,768,094
2021	4,269,000	816,233	816,233	823,176	823,176	0.851%	6,943	6,943	4,284,611
2022	4,269,000	809,315	809,315 ¹⁶	801,911	801,911	-0.915%	-7,404	-7,404	3,119,070
2023 ¹⁷	4,611,326	881,686	934,587	864,653	815,710	-7.483%	-69,934	-65,975	4,595,543
2024 ¹⁸	4,611,326	881,686	934,587	974,219	919,075	4.241%	39,632	37,389	3,228,834
2025	4,611,326	844,297	894,954 ¹⁹	947,103	893,493	5.827%	52,149	49,197	3,640,707

¹⁶ [87 FR 29236](#) specified 2022 ACL for LA and FL based on regulations at [50 CFR 622.23\(b\)](#) require that if a state's red snapper private angling component landings exceed the applicable state's component ACL, then in the following fishing year, that state's private angling ACL will be reduced by the amount of that ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

¹⁷ [GMFMC 2021](#) implemented the framework to apply the calibration ratios developed by NOAA Fisheries Office of Science and Technology and the Gulf states to state-specific ACLs to adjust those ACLs into the currency in which each state monitors landings. LA calibration ratio used was 1.06.

¹⁸ [GMFMC 2023](#) implemented the framework to update the calibration ratios developed by NOAA Fisheries Office of Science and Technology and the Gulf states to state-specific ACLs to adjust those ACLs into the currency in which each state monitors landings. Under the revised framework, LA calibration ratio is 0.1.06.

¹⁹ [90 FR 19126](#) specified 2025 ACL for LA based on regulations at [50 CFR 622.23\(b\)](#) require that if a state's red snapper private angling component landings exceed the applicable state's component ACL, then in the following fishing year, that state's private angling ACL will be reduced by the amount of that ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

Table 2.1.8. Florida private recreational red snapper ACL and landings as estimates by SRFS, along with the federal equivalents MRIP-CHTS. Years where Florida exceeded allocated ACL are shaded in grey, and the overage as indicated a percent of total ACL is presented, as well as total Gulf private red snapper recreational landings.

Year	Rec. ACL (CHTS)	FL ACL (CHTS)	FL ACL (SRFS)	FL Landings (SRFS)	FL Landings (CHTS)	FL Percent Overage	FL Overage lb (SRFS)	FL Overage lb (CHTS)	Total Gulf Recreational Landings (CHTS)
2020	4,269,000	1,913,451	1,913,451	1,512,387	1,512,387	-20.960%	-401,064	-401,064	3,768,094
2021	4,269,000	1,913,451	1,913,451	2,169,739	2,169,739	13.394%	256,288	256,288	4,284,611
2022	4,269,000	1,657,163	1,657,163 ²⁰	1,605,799	1,605,799	-3.100%	-51,364	-307,652	3,119,070
2023 ²¹	4,611,326	2,066,889	2,191,315	2,204,136	2,078,981	0.585%	12,821	12,093	4,595,543
2024 ²²	4,611,326	2,054,796	2,756,810 ²³	1,229,253	917,353	-55.356%	-1,527,557	-1,149,536	3,228,834
2025	4,611,326	2,066,889	2,769,631	1,649,979	1,231,328	-40.426%	-1,119,652	-835,561	3,640,707

²⁰ [87 FR 29236](#) specified 2022 ACL for LA and FL based on regulations at [50 CFR 622.23\(b\)](#) require that if a state's red snapper private angling component landings exceed the applicable state's component ACL, then in the following fishing year, that state's private angling ACL will be reduced by the amount of that ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

²¹ [GMFMC 2021](#) implemented the framework to apply the calibration ratios developed by NOAA Fisheries Office of Science and Technology and the Gulf states to state-specific ACLs to adjust those ACLs into the currency in which each state monitors landings. FL calibration ratio used was 1.0602.

²² [GMFMC 2023](#) implemented the framework to update the calibration ratios developed by NOAA Fisheries Office of Science and Technology and the Gulf states to state-specific ACLs to adjust those ACLs into the currency in which each state monitors landings. Under the revised framework, FL calibration ratio is 1.34.

²³ [89 FR 49104](#) specified 2022 ACL for MS, AL, and FL based on regulations at [50 CFR 622.23\(b\)](#) require that if a state's red snapper private angling component landings exceed the applicable state's component ACL, then in the following fishing year, that state's private angling ACL will be reduced by the amount of that ACL overage in the prior fishing year.

CHAPTER 3. LIST OF PREPARERS

PREPARERS

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GFMC = Gulf Fishery Management Council; NOAA GC = National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration General Counsel; SEFSC = Southeast Fisheries Science Center; SERO = Southeast Regional Office of the National Marine Fisheries Service, OLE = Office of Law Enforcement.

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APPENDIX A. OTHER APPLICABLE LAW

The Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) (16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.) provides the authority for management of stocks included in fishery management plans (FMP) in federal waters of the exclusive economic zone (EEZ). However, management decision-making is also affected by a number of other federal statutes designed to protect the biological and human components of U.S. fisheries, as well as the ecosystems that support those fisheries. Major laws affecting federal fishery management decision-making include the Endangered Species Act (Section 3.3.3) and E.O. 12866 (Regulatory Planning and Review, Chapter 5). Other applicable laws are summarized below.

Administrative Procedure Act

All federal rulemaking is governed under the provisions of the Administrative Procedure Act (5 U.S.C. Subchapter II), which establishes a “notice and comment” procedure to enable public participation in the rulemaking process. Under the Act, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is required to publish notification of proposed rules in the *Federal Register* and to solicit, consider, and respond to public comment on those rules before they are finalized. The Act also establishes a 30-day waiting period from the time a final rule is published until it takes effect, unless waived.

Coastal Zone Management Act

Section 307(c)(1) of the federal Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (CZMA), as amended, requires federal activities that affect any land or water use or natural resource of a state’s coastal zone be conducted in a manner consistent, to the maximum extent practicable, with approved state coastal management programs. The requirements for such a consistency determination are set forth in the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) regulations at 15 CFR part 930, subpart C. According to these regulations and CZMA Section 307(c)(1), when taking an action that affects any land or water use or natural resource of a state’s coastal zone, NMFS is required to provide a consistency determination to the relevant state agency at least 90 days before taking final action.

Upon submission to the Secretary of Commerce, NMFS will determine if this framework action is consistent with the Coastal Zone Management programs of the states of Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas to the maximum extent possible. Their determination will then be submitted to the responsible state agencies under Section 307 of the CZMA administering approved Coastal Zone Management programs for these states.

Data Quality Act

The Data Quality Act (Public Law 106-443) effective October 1, 2002, requires the government to set standards for the quality of scientific information and statistics used and disseminated by federal agencies. Information includes any communication or representation of knowledge such as facts or data, in any medium or form, including textual, numerical, cartographic, narrative, or

audiovisual forms (includes web dissemination, but not hyperlinks to information that others disseminate; does not include clearly stated opinions).

Specifically, the Act directs the Office of Management and Budget to issue government wide guidelines that “provide policy and procedural guidance to federal agencies for ensuring and maximizing the quality, objectivity, utility, and integrity of information disseminated by federal agencies.” Such guidelines have been issued, directing all federal agencies to create and disseminate agency-specific standards to: (1 ensure information quality and develop a pre-dissemination review process; (2 establish administrative mechanisms allowing affected persons to seek and obtain correction of information; and (3 report periodically to Office of Management and Budget on the number and nature of complaints received.

Scientific information and data are key components of FMPs and amendments, and the use of best available information is the second national standard under the Magnuson-Stevens Act. To be consistent with the Magnuson-Stevens Act, FMPs and amendments must be based on the best information available. They should also properly reference all supporting materials and data and be reviewed by technically competent individuals. With respect to original data generated for FMPs and amendments, it is important to ensure that the data are collected according to documented procedures or in a manner that reflects standard practices accepted by the relevant scientific and technical communities. Data will also undergo quality control prior to being used by the agency and a pre-dissemination review.

National Historic Preservation Act

The National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, (Public Law 89-665; 16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*) is intended to preserve historical and archaeological sites in the United States of America. Section 106 of the NHPA requires federal agencies to evaluate the impact of all federally funded or permitted projects for sites on listed on, or eligible for listing on, the National Register of Historic Places and aims to minimize damage to such places.

Historical research indicates that over 2,000 ships have sunk on the Federal Outer Continental Shelf between 1625 and 1951; thousands more have sunk closer to shore in state waters during the same period. Only a handful of these have been scientifically excavated by archaeologists for the benefit of generations to come. Further information can be found at: <http://www.boem.gov/Environmental-Stewardship/Archaeology/Shipwrecks.aspx>

The proposed action does not adversely affect districts, sites, highways, structures, or objects listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places nor is it expected to cause loss or destruction of significant scientific, cultural, or historical resources. In the Gulf, the *U.S.S. Hatteras*, located in federal waters off Texas, is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Fishing activity already occurs in the vicinity of this site, but the proposed action would have no additional adverse impacts on listed historic resources, nor would they alter any regulations intended to protect them.

Executive Orders (E.O.)

E.O. 12630: Takings

The E.O. on Government Actions and Interference with Constitutionally Protected Property Rights that became effective March 18, 1988, requires each federal agency prepare a Takings Implication Assessment for any of its administrative, regulatory, and legislative policies and actions that affect, or may affect, the use of any real or personal property. Clearance of a regulatory action must include a takings statement and, if appropriate, a Takings Implication Assessment. The NOAA Office of General Counsel will determine whether a Taking Implication Assessment is necessary for this framework action.

E.O. 12962: Recreational Fisheries

This E.O. requires federal agencies, in cooperation with states and tribes, to improve the quantity, function, sustainable productivity, and distribution of U.S. aquatic resources for increased recreational fishing opportunities through a variety of methods including, but not limited to, developing joint partnerships; promoting the restoration of recreational fishing areas that are limited by water quality and habitat degradation; fostering sound aquatic conservation and restoration endeavors; and evaluating the effects of federally-funded, permitted, or authorized actions on aquatic systems and recreational fisheries, and documenting those effects. Additionally, it establishes a seven-member National Recreational Fisheries Coordination Council (NRFCC) responsible for, among other things, ensuring that social and economic values of healthy aquatic systems that support recreational fisheries are considered by federal agencies in the course of their actions, sharing the latest resource information and management technologies, and reducing duplicative and cost-inefficient programs among federal agencies involved in conserving or managing recreational fisheries. The NRFCC also is responsible for developing, in cooperation with federal agencies, States and Tribes, a Recreational Fishery Resource Conservation Plan - to include a five-year agenda. Finally, the E.O. requires NMFS and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to develop a joint agency policy for administering the ESA.

E.O. 13089: Coral Reef Protection

The E.O. on Coral Reef Protection requires federal agencies whose actions may affect U.S. coral reef ecosystems to identify those actions, utilize their programs and authorities to protect and enhance the conditions of such ecosystems, and, to the extent permitted by law, ensure actions that they authorize, fund, or carry out do not degrade the condition of that ecosystem. By definition, a U.S. coral reef ecosystem means those species, habitats, and other national resources associated with coral reefs in all maritime areas and zones subject to the jurisdiction or control of the United States (e.g., federal, state, territorial, or commonwealth waters).

Regulations are already in place to limit or reduce habitat impacts within the Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary. Additionally, NMFS approved and implemented Generic Amendment 3 for Essential Fish Habitat (GMFMC 2005), which established additional habitat

areas of particular concern (HAPCs) and gear restrictions to protect corals throughout the Gulf. There are no implications to coral reefs by the actions proposed in this framework action.

E.O. 13132: Federalism

The E.O. on Federalism requires agencies in formulating and implementing policies, to be guided by the fundamental Federalism principles. The E.O. serves to guarantee the division of governmental responsibilities between the national government and the states that was intended by the framers of the Constitution. Federalism is rooted in the belief that issues not national in scope or significance are most appropriately addressed by the level of government closest to the people. This E.O. is relevant to FMPs and amendments given the overlapping authorities of NMFS, the states, and local authorities in managing coastal resources, including fisheries, and the need for a clear definition of responsibilities. It is important to recognize those components of the ecosystem over which fishery managers have no direct control and to develop strategies to address them in conjunction with appropriate state, tribes, and local entities (international too).

No Federalism issues were identified relative to the action to modify the management of the recreational harvest of greater amberjack. Therefore, consultation with state officials under Executive Order 12612 was not necessary. Consequently, consultation with state officials under Executive Order 12612 remains unnecessary.

E.O. 13158: Marine Protected Areas

This E.O. requires federal agencies to consider whether their proposed action(s) will affect any area of the marine environment that has been reserved by federal, state, territorial, tribal, or local laws or regulations to provide lasting protection for part or all of the natural or cultural resource within the protected area. There are several marine protected areas, HAPCs, and gear-restricted areas in the eastern and northwestern Gulf. The existing areas are entirely within federal waters of the Gulf. They do not affect any areas reserved by federal, state, territorial, tribal or local jurisdictions.