



**NOAA
FISHERIES**



Enforcement Highlights

Gulf Council Fishery Management Meeting
Biloxi, MS. August 2026
Compliance Liaison Matt Walia





2026 Mini Season





Closed Area

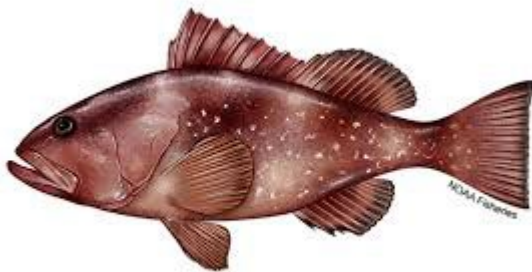
Reef fish Longline & Buoy Restricted Area

Multiple hauls

Verbal/Written Admission

Landed Early/Vessel ID Too Small

NOVA- Owner and Operator



This is a message from the VMS Department at NOAA. This is a notice to ensure that vessels are aware of restricted/prohibited areas for this gear type. ****NOTE**** These are only two of the restricted areas.

It is the permit holder's and captain's responsibility to ensure the chart plotter on the vessel is updated for each area.

- Reef fish longline and buoy gear restricted area
 - [50 CFR 622.35\(c\)](#)
- Seasonal prohibitions applicable to bottom longline fishing for Gulf reef fish
 - [50 CFR 622.35\(b\)](#)

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

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NOAA OFFICE OF LAW ENFORCEMENT
VESSEL MONITORING SYSTEM PROGRAM
727-314-2862 (PHONE)



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Observer Refusal

Selected Vessel Notified

- Fishing Activity (under selected permit)
- Failed to Meet Observer Program Requirements

Conflicting Statements

Fine Contested

NOVA- Owner and Operator

If Selected for Coverage

- Contact Program BEFORE Every Trip (Advanced Notice)
- Valid USCG Safety Decal
- Provide Reasonable Accommodations/Access





Charter Enforcement

Joint Investigations

- 75nm offshore LA
- Conflicting Statements
- Reef Fish Cut as Bait
- State and Federal Charges



- Pensacola Area
- Undersize Triggerfish
- Held Other Open-Access Permits



Galveston Area

- 40nm offshore
- Held Other Open-Access Permits



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REMINDERS

Federal Recreational Gag

- **OPEN September 1-October 1**
- Be aware of Bag Limits
- **Federally permitted for-hire Not allowed retention during closure**

Be Aware of Fishing Area Requirements

- Permits
- Bag Limits





Report A Violation

NOAA's Law Enforcement Hotline,
available 24/7 at
(800) 853-1964
contact.nmfs.ole.sed@noaa.gov

- Location, time, and date of the activity.
- Description of the activity.
- Name(s) of the vessel, owner/operator, captain, crew, or additional witnesses.



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QUESTIONS



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