



DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 622

[Docket No. 200124-0029; RTID 0648-XF703]

Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of America, and South Atlantic; Reef Fish Fishery of the Gulf of America; Accountability Measure for Recreational Harvest of Red Snapper in Federal Waters off Louisiana

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Temporary rule, accountability measure.

SUMMARY: Recreational landings of red snapper in Louisiana during 2025 exceeded the annual catch limit (ACL) apportioned to the state for the private angling component of the recreational sector. According to the accountability measure (AM), NMFS reduces Louisiana's 2026 ACL for red snapper in the Gulf of America (Gulf) by the amount of the overage in 2025. NMFS implements this AM for the 2026 fishing year to protect the red snapper resource in the Gulf.

DATES: This temporary rule is effective from [INSERT DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER], through December 31, 2026.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kelli O'Donnell, NMFS Southeast Regional Office, 727-824-5305, kelli.odonnell@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: NMFS manages the Gulf reef fish fishery and red snapper in Federal waters under the Fishery Management Plan for the Reef Fish Resources of the Gulf (FMP). NMFS and the Gulf Fishery Management Council prepared the FMP, and NMFS implements the FMP through regulations at 50 CFR part 622 under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management

Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act).

All weights discussed in this temporary rule are in round weight. The metric conversion for the imperial measurement used in this document is 1 pound (lb) equals approximately 0.45 kilograms.

This temporary rule implements an AM for the recreational harvest of red snapper by the private angling component in Federal waters off Louisiana for the 2026 fishing year. The private angling component (private anglers) includes those who fish from private vessels and fishermen on non-federally permitted charter vessels and headboats (for-hire vessels).

Red snapper in Gulf Federal waters are harvested each year by the commercial and recreational sectors under separate catch limits. The recreational sector ACL is further divided between private anglers and federally permitted for-hire vessels. In 2020, NMFS delegated authority to the Gulf States of Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas to establish specific management measures for the harvest of red snapper by private anglers (85 FR 6819, February 6, 2020). That rule allocated a portion of the private angler ACL (private recreational ACL) to each state and each state is required to constrain landings within its allocation as part of state management. The private recreational ACL for the Louisiana regional management area is 934,587 lb (50 CFR 622.23(a)(1)(ii)(C)).

Regulations at 50 CFR 622.23(b) state that if landings from a state's private anglers exceed the state's private recreational ACL, then that ACL will be reduced in the following fishing year by the amount of the overage in the prior fishing year. On May 6, 2025, NMFS published a temporary rule in the **Federal Register** that reduced the private recreational ACL for the Louisiana regional management area in 2025 to 894,955 lb due to an overage in 2024 (90 FR 19129).

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries reported that private anglers

landed 947,103 lb of red snapper. Therefore, NMFS has determined that 2025 landings by private anglers exceeded Louisiana's 2025 ACL by 52,148 lb. In accordance with the AM, this temporary rule reduces Louisiana's 2026 ACL of 934,587 lb by the 2025 overage. This results in a 2026 Louisiana ACL of 882,439 lb.

This temporary rule does not affect the private recreational ACLs in the other Gulf state management areas.

Classification

NMFS issues this action pursuant to section 305(d) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act. This action is required by 50 CFR 622.23(b), which was issued pursuant to section 304(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

Pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 553(b)(B), there is good cause to waive prior notice and opportunity for public comment on this action. Such procedures are unnecessary because the rule implementing the authority for the post-season ACL adjustment has already been subject to notice and comment, and all that remains is to notify the public of the action. Such procedures are contrary to the public interest because a failure to implement the ACL overage adjustment immediately may confuse the public about what ACL is in effect for Louisiana during the 2026 fishing season.

For the aforementioned reasons, there is also good cause to waive the 30-day delay in the effectiveness of the action under 5 U.S.C. 553(d)(3).

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: May 4, 2026.

Kelly Denit,

Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries,

National Marine Fisheries Service.

