



PUBLIC HEARING GUIDE

5/9/16

Reef Fish Amendment 45: Red Snapper Sector Separation Sunset Provision



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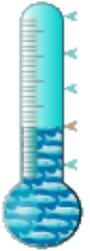
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What is a Public Hearing?

A public hearing gives you an opportunity to comment on a fishery management plan or amendment that the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council is developing. Public hearings are conducted later in the amendment development process, after the Council has begun selecting preferred alternatives for proposed actions, but before taking final action. Suggestions, issues, and concerns expressed during the public hearings will be presented to the Council for review and consideration before final action is taken.

Focusing your comments on the pros and cons of specific alternatives in each action provides the most useful guidance to the Council. If you are unable to attend a public hearing in person, you are encouraged to submit your comments online. For online comment forms, video presentations, and full Amendment documents, visit our website at www.gulfcouncil.org and click the thermometer icon at the center of the homepage.



How does a public hearing affect fisheries management?

Comments provided during the public hearing process are reported to the full Council prior to final action. Your input is considered as the Council deliberates and chooses the most appropriate management measures to address the issue(s) at hand.

How else can I get involved?

There are many ways you can help the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council identify fishery management needs and develop reasonable management alternatives, each dependent on how actively involved you want to become. The first step to becoming involved is to educate yourself about the management process by visiting our website at www.gulfcouncil.org, signing up to receive our communications, and contacting Council members and staff to discuss management concerns. You can attend meetings, serve on panels and committees that advise the Council on fishery issues, and even apply to become a Council member.

Introduction to Amendment 45

In 2015, Reef Fish Amendment 40: Sector Separation partitioned the red snapper recreational sector into two separate components. The private angling component of the recreational sector, which includes private anglers fishing from privately owned vessels and operators of state-permitted for-hire vessels that do not have federal permits, was allocated 57.7% of the recreational red snapper annual catch limit. The federal for-hire component of the sector, which includes operators of federally-permitted for-hire vessels, was allocated 42.3% of the red snapper recreational annual catch limit.

The season length for each component is based on the annual catch target and determined using projections that rely on previous years' landings information. Federally permitted for-hire vessels are not allowed to fish in state water seasons when the federal waters are closed. Private anglers have had additional fishing opportunities in state waters and the red snapper harvested in non-compatible state seasons count against the private recreational red snapper annual catch limit so the federal season is adjusted to compensate.

Year	For-Hire ACT	Season	Private ACT	Season
2015	2,371,000 Pounds	44 Days	3,234,000 Pounds	10 Days
2016	2,315,000 Pounds	46 Days	3,158,000 Pounds	9 Days

Note: Values shown for 2016 season length are projections.

Sector separation allows the Council to explore different management plans for the components of the recreational sector. Under Amendment 40, sector separation expires at the end of 2017. The Council is considering whether or not the division of private anglers and federal for-hire vessels should be extended, ended, or permanently put into place.

Action: Revise the Provision that Sunsets Sector Separation

Alternative 1: No Action. The separate management of the federal for-hire and private angling components will be effective through the end of the 2017 fishing year under the existing sunset provision.

Preferred Alternative 2: Extend the separate management of the federal for-hire and private angling components for an additional:

Preferred Option 2a: 3 calendar years (through 2020)

Option 2b: 5 calendar years (through 2022)

Option 2c: 10 calendar years (though 2027)

Alternative 3: Remove the sunset provision for sector separation and continue the separate management of the federal for-hire and private angling components.



Public Hearing Dates and Locations

Meetings begin at 6 p.m.

Monday, May 23, 2016

Hilton
950 Lake Carillon Drive
St. Petersburg, FL 33716

Monday, May 23, 2016

IP Casino Resort
850 Bayview Avenue
Biloxi, MS 39530

Tuesday May 24, 2016

Courtyard Marriott
905 East 23rd Place
Panama City, FL 32405

Wednesday, May 25, 2016

Renaissance Hotel
64 South Water Street
Mobile, AL 36602

Wednesday, May 25, 2016

Hampton Inn and Suites
2320 Gulf Freeway South
League City, TX 77573

Thursday, May 26, 2016

Holiday Inn
275 Whitney Ave
Gretna, LA 70053

Thursday, May 26

Hilton Garden Inn
6717 South Padre Island Drive
Corpus Christi, TX 77573

Tuesday, May 31, 2016

Webinar

<https://attendeegotowebinar.com/register/5872853717338664961>

Send Us Your Comments

If you are unable to attend a public hearing, your input is still important. Submit your comments online by visiting: http://gulfcouncil.org/council_meetings/comment_forms/Amendment_45.php, or click on the thermometer icon on our homepage www.gulfcouncil.org.





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