



FWC Division of Marine Fisheries Management

Contact for more info:
850-487-0554 or
marine@myfwc.com

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HOT SHEET – FEBRUARY 2012

(Valid through February 29, 2012)

Issues covered in this posting:

[Marine Fishery Management Changes](#), [Gag Grouper](#), [Commission Meeting](#), [Season Updates](#)

Issue: UPCOMING MARINE FISHERY MANAGEMENT CHANGES

Information: Listed below are upcoming marine fishery management changes that were approved by the FWC Commission during the Nov. 16, 2011, Commission meeting. These rules go into effect **Feb. 1, 2012**.

- **Red drum:**
 - Recreational bag limit **increases** from one to two fish in the Northeast and Northwest regions of the state
 - Statewide vessel limit of 8 red drum (the maximum number of red drum allowed on a boat while on the water) established
 - An off-water transportation limit of 6 red drum per person (the number of fish allowed in a vehicle on land being transported away from a fishing site) established.
- **Spotted seatrout:**
 - Recreational season open year-round
 - Recreational bag limit increased from 5 to 6 fish in Northeast region
 - Commercial season extended to 5 months in the Southeast, Southwest and Northwest areas of the state and to 6 months in the Northeast
 - Sale of spotted seatrout allowed 30 days after season closure
 - A commercial vessel limit of 150 fish when at least two licensed commercial fishermen are on board

Links for more information:

[FWC November Commission Meeting Agenda](#) [MyFWC.com]

[FWC Commission Meeting Press Releases](#) [MyFWC.com]

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Issue: GAG GROUPE

→ Gulf of Mexico

Action: Gag grouper recreational harvest closed in state and federal waters of the Gulf

Information: Gag grouper has been closed in **state** waters of the Gulf of Mexico (excluding Monroe County) since **Nov. 15, 2011**. In **federal** waters of the Gulf, gag grouper is also closed.

Federal fishery managers approved long-term management measures for gag grouper that would set the recreational season in Gulf of Mexico federal waters to July 1 through Oct. 31 and reduce the commercial minimum size limit from 24 to 22 inches. These measures have been approved by the U.S. Secretary of Commerce although the new management changes will not be implemented until the final rule is printed in the Federal Register.

The FWC will discuss consistency with the July 1 through Oct. 31 federal season at the February [Commission Meeting](#).

Links for more information:

[FWC February Commission Meeting Agenda](#) [MyFWC.com]

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[FWC News Release](#) – Gulf grouper closure [MyFWC.com]

[Southeast Fishery Bulletin](#) [sero.nmfs.noaa.gov]

[Gulf Grouper Information](#) [MyFWC.com]

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Issue: FEBRUARY COMMISSION MEETING

Action: Marine Fisheries agenda items February 7-8, 2012

Information: The next FWC Commission meeting will take place **Feb. 7-9** at the Florida Public Safety Institute Pat Thomas Law Enforcement Academy, 215 Academy Dr., Havana. A workshop on marine fisheries stock assessments will be on Feb. 7 and all other marine fisheries agenda items will be presented Feb. 8. Items on the agenda include king mackerel, roundscale spearfish, Gulf of Mexico gag grouper, Apalachicola Bay oyster harvest and Tampa Bay commercial shrimp permits. Visit MyFWC.com for more information.

Links for more information:

[FWC Commission Meeting](#) [MyFWC.com]

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Issue: SEASON UPDATES

Action: Upcoming and continuing season openings and closures

Information: The following species have upcoming season openings/closures:

- **Grouper:**
 - **Gulf:** The recreational harvest of red, black, scamp, rock hind, red hind, yellowfin and yellowmouth grouper **closes Feb. 1, 2012**, in **state** waters of the Gulf (excluding Monroe County). The season will reopen April 1, 2012. Gag grouper also remains closed in the Gulf. Management efforts for gag grouper will be discussed at the February FWC Commission meeting.
- **Spotted seatrout:**
 - The recreational harvest of spotted seatrout **opened Jan. 1, 2012**, in the southern region of Florida (south of the Flagler-Volusia county line in the Atlantic and south of the Fred Howard Park Causeway in the Gulf of Mexico). The recreational season is open in the northeast and northwest regions. Due to management changes, spotted seatrout will no longer have closed seasons.
- **Snook:**
 - **Atlantic:** The recreational harvest of snook **opens Feb. 1, 2012**, in Atlantic state waters (excluding Monroe County). The season will close June 1, 2012.

Other current recreational closures in state waters:

(May not include all harvest closures. Visit regulations online at MyFWC.com for more.)

Grouper (several Atlantic species including gag, red and black) through April 30, 2012

Red Snapper (Gulf) through May 31, 2012

Snook (Gulf) through Aug. 31, 2012

Vermilion Snapper (Atlantic) through March 31, 2012

Bay Scallop through June 30, 2012

Links for more information:

[FWC Grouper Information](#) [MyFWC.com]

[FWC Spotted Seatrout Recreational Rules](#) [MyFWC.com]

[FWC Snook Information](#) [MyFWC.com]

[FWC Snook News Release](#) [MyFWC.com]

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