

# *Snowy Grouper Management History*

## *February 18, 2020*

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### **1. Snowy Grouper Management Overview**

#### **1.1 Fishery Management Plan and Amendments**

The following summary describes only those management actions that likely affect the snowy grouper fishery and harvest.

##### *Original SAMFC FMP*

The Fishery Management Plan (FMP), Regulatory Impact Review, and Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Snapper Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region, approved in 1983 and implemented in August of 1983, established a management regime for the fishery for snappers, groupers, and related demersal species of the continental shelf of the southeastern United States in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) under the area of authority of the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council and the territorial seas of the states, extending from the North Carolina/Virginia border through the Atlantic side of the Florida Keys to 83° W longitude. In the case of the sea basses (black sea bass, bank sea bass, and rock sea bass), the fishery management unit/management regime applies only from Cape Hatteras, North Carolina south. Regulations apply only to federal waters.

##### *SAFMC FMP Amendments affecting snowy grouper*

Description of Action	FMP/Amendment	Effective Date
Prohibit trawls (roller rig trawls) from Cape Hatteras, NC to Cape Canaveral, FL.	Amendment 1	1/12/89

Prohibited fish traps, entanglement nets and longlines within 50 fathoms; established a 5-grouper aggregate bag limit, defined overfishing/overfished and established rebuilding timeframe: red snapper and groupers $\leq 15$ years (year 1 = 1991).	Amendment 4	1/1/92
Snowy grouper commercial quota phased in: 1994: 540,314 pounds whole weight (ww) or gutted weight (gw) 1995: 442,448 pounds 1996 onwards: 344,508 pounds Commercial trip limit = 2,500 pounds; Commercial bycatch limit = 300 pounds; Established Oculina Experimental Closed Area; Snowy grouper or golden tilefish may not be transferred at sea regardless of where the fish was taken (state or federal waters)	Amendment 6	6/27/94
Established a limited entry program for the snapper grouper fishery: unlimited transferable permits and 225-lb non-transferable permits.	Amendment 8	12/14/98
Vessels with longlines may only possess deepwater species, including snowy grouper	Amendment 9	2/24/99
Established MSY proxy = 30% static SPR except for goliath and Nassau grouper OY: hermaphroditic groupers = 45% static SPR; all other species = 40% static SPR Specified overfished/overfishing evaluations - Snowy grouper: overfished (static SPR = 5=15%) Specified overfishing level: goliath and Nassau grouper = $F > F_{40\%}$ static SPR; all other species: = $F > F_{30\%}$ static SPR Approved definitions for overfished and overfishing. $MSST = [(1-M) \text{ or } 0.5 \text{ whichever is greater}] * B_{MSY}$ . $MFMT = F_{MSY}$	Amendment 11	12/02/99
Extended for an indefinite period the regulation prohibiting fishing for and possessing snapper grouper species within the Oculina Experimental Closed Area.	Amendment 13A	04/26/04
Reduced the annual commercial quota from 344,508 pounds gw to 151,000 pounds gw in Year 1; to 118,000 pounds gw in Year 2; and to 84,000 pounds gw in Year 3 onwards until modified.	Amendment 13C	10/23/06

<p>Specified a commercial trip limit of 275 pounds gw in Year 1; 175 pounds gw in Year 2; and 100 pounds gw in Year 3 onwards until modified.</p> <p>After the commercial quota is met, all purchase and sale is prohibited and harvest and/or possession is limited to the bag limit.</p> <p>Limited possession of snowy grouper to one per person per day within the 5-grouper per person per day aggregate recreational bag limit.</p>		
<p>Established eight deepwater Type II marine protected areas (MPAs) to protect a portion of the population and habitat of long-lived deepwater snapper grouper species.</p>	Amendment 14	2/12/09
<p>Updated management reference points for snowy grouper: MSY equals the yield produced by <math>F_{MSY}</math>. MSY and <math>F_{MSY}</math> are defined by the most recent SEDAR. For snowy grouper: <math>F_{MSY} = 0.05</math> and MSY = 313,056 pounds ww. <math>OY = 75\%F_{MSY} = 303,871</math> pounds ww. MSST equals <math>SSB_{MSY}(0.75) = 3,498,735</math> lbs ww.</p> <p>Define a rebuilding schedule as the maximum recommended period to rebuild if <math>T_{MIN} &gt; 10</math> years. The maximum recommended period equals <math>T_{MIN} + \text{one generation time} = 34</math> years for snowy grouper. 2006 was Year 1.</p> <p>Defined a rebuilding strategy for snowy grouper that maintains a modified/constant fishing mortality rate throughout the rebuilding timeframe. The TAC specified for 2009 would remain in effect beyond 2009 until modified = 102,960 pounds ww; 82,900 lbs gw</p>	Amendment 15A	3/20/08
<p>Prohibited the sale of bag-limit caught snapper grouper species.</p> <p>Changed the commercial permit renewal period and transferability requirements.</p> <p>Implemented a plan to monitor and address bycatch.</p> <p>Established allocations for snowy grouper (95% commercial &amp; 5% recreational)</p>	Amendment 15B	12/16/09
<p>Reduced 5-fish aggregate grouper bag limit, including snowy grouper, to a 3-fish aggregate. Captain and crew on for-hire trips cannot retain the bag limit of species within the 3-fish grouper aggregate.</p>	Amendment 16	7/29/09
<p>Specified annual catch limits (ACLs), annual catch targets, and accountability measures (AMs), where necessary, for 9 species undergoing overfishing, including snowy grouper: Commercial ACL = 82,900 lbs gw Recreational ACL = 523 fish</p> <p>Established a recreational daily bag limit of 1 snowy grouper per vessel per day within the 3-grouper aggregate.</p>	Amendment 17B	1/31/11

<p>Implemented AMs for the recreational sector: If the recreational ACL is exceeded, the length of the following fishing season would be reduced by the amount necessary to ensure landings do not exceed the recreational ACL for the following fishing season. Compare the recreational ACL with projected recreational landings over a range of years. For 2010, use only 2010 landings. For 2011, use the average landings of 2010 and 2011. For 2012 and beyond, use the most recent three-year running average.</p> <p>Updated the framework procedure for specification of total allowable catch.</p> <p>Prohibited harvest of 6 deepwater species, including snowy grouper, seaward of 240 feet to curb bycatch of speckled hind and warsaw grouper.</p> <p>Specified ACL=0 (landings only) for speckled hind and warsaw grouper.</p>		
<p>Eliminated the 240' harvest prohibition for 6 deepwater species, including snowy grouper, that was established in Amendment 17B.</p>	<p>Regulatory Amendment 11</p>	<p>5/10/12</p>
<p>-Adjusted the recreational and commercial ACLs for snowy grouper (specified that <math>ACL=ABC=OY</math> and applied the Council's existing allocation formula as it applies to snowy grouper (average of landings from 1986-2005) using the SEDAR landings data. The resulting allocation changed from 95% commercial/5% recreational to 83% commercial/17% recreational):</p> <p>2015 Commercial ACL = 115,451 lbs gw  2015 Recreational ACL = 4,152 fish  2016 Commercial ACL = 125,760 lbs gw  2016 Recreational ACL = 4,483 fish  2017 Commercial ACL = 135,380 lbs gw  2017 Recreational ACL = 4,819 fish  2018 Commercial ACL = 144,315 lbs gw  2018 Recreational ACL = 4,983 fish  2019 Commercial ACL = 153,935 lbs gw  2019 Recreational ACL = 5,315 fish</p> <p>-Adjusted the rebuilding strategy: defined the rebuilding strategy that maintains a constant fishing mortality rate (<math>F=F_{current}</math>) throughout the rebuilding timeframe. Year 1 remains 2006 and the yield at <math>F_{current}</math> and ABC projections will change with each assessment. ABC would change each year until 2019; the ABC for 2019 would remain in effect until</p>	<p>Regulatory Amendment 20</p>	<p>8/20/2015</p>

modified. -Increased the commercial trip limit to 200 pounds gw; -Established a recreational fishing season from May 1 through August 31; retained the 1 fish per vessel per day.		
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**1.2 Emergency and Interim Rules**

None for snowy grouper.

**1.3 Secretarial Amendments**

None for snowy grouper.

**1.4 Control Date Notices**

1. Notice of Control Date (56 FR 36052) - Anyone entering **federal snapper grouper fishery (other than for wreckfish)** in the EEZ off S. Atlantic states after 07/30/91 was not assured of future access if limited entry program developed.
2. Notice of Control Date (70 FR 60058) - Anyone entering **federal snapper grouper fishery** off S. Atlantic states after 10/14/05 was not assured of future access if limited entry program developed.
3. Notice of Control Date (76 FR 5325) - Anyone entering **federal snapper grouper fishery** off S. Atlantic states after 09/17/10 was not assured of future access if limited entry program developed.
4. Notice of Control Date (81 FR 66244) - Fishermen entering the **federal for-hire recreational sector** for the Snapper Grouper fishery after June 15, 2016, will not be assured of future access should a management regime that limits participation in the sector be prepared and implemented.

**1.5 . Management Program Specifications**

**Table 1.5.1 General Management Information**

**South Atlantic**

Species	Snowy Grouper
Management Unit	Southeastern US
Management Unit Definition	NC/VA boundary southward to the SAFMC/GMFMC boundary
Management Entity	South Atlantic Fishery Management Council
Management Contacts	SAFMC: Myra Brouwer SERO: Rick DeVictor
Current stock exploitation status*	Not overfishing
Current stock biomass status*	Overfished

\*As determined in SEDAR 36 (2013).

**Table 1.5.2. Management Parameters**

Criteria	South Atlantic Current (values from SEDAR 36)			
	Definition	Units	Base Run Values	Median of Base Run MCBs
MSST <sup>1</sup>	$0.75 * SSB_{MSY}$	Total mature biomass, mt	654.2	882.7
MFMT	$F_{MSY}$	yr <sup>-1</sup>	0.14	0.12
$F_{MSY}$	$F_{MSY}$	yr <sup>-1</sup>	0.14	0.12
MSY	Yield at $F_{MSY}$ , landings and discards, pounds and numbers	1,000 lbs.	418.6	441.4
$B_{MSY}$	Total biomass at MSY	mt	2,091.7	2,590.2
$SSB_{MSY}$	Total mature biomass at MSY	mt	872.3	1,177.0
$R_{MSY}$	Recruits at MSY	1,000 age-1 fish	308	361
F Target	75% $F_{MSY}$	yr <sup>-1</sup>	0.11	0.09
Yield at $F_{TARGET}$ (equilibrium)	Landings and discards, pounds and numbers	1,000 lbs.	407.3	427.6
M	Natural mortality, used to scale Charnov	yr <sup>-1</sup>	0.12	
Terminal F	Exploitation in 2012	yr <sup>-1</sup>	0.18	
$F_{Current}$	Geometric mean of F for 2010 to 2012	yr <sup>-1</sup>	0.083	0.084
Terminal Biomass <sup>1</sup>	SSB in 2012	mt	427.4	447.3
Exploitation Status	$F_{Current}/MFMT$		0.59	0.70
Biomass Status <sup>1</sup>	$SSB_{2012}/MSST$		0.65	0.50
	$SSB_{2012}/SSB_{MSY}$		0.49	0.38
Generation Time				
$T_{REBUILD}$ (if appropriate)	34Y; start 2003, end 2039			

1. Biomass values reported for management parameters and status determinations should be based on biomass metric recommended through the Assessment process and SSC. This may be total, spawning stock or some measure thereof, and should be applied consistently in this table.

In 2013, the snowy grouper stock was assessed through SEDAR as a standard assessment (SEDAR 36 2013). That assessment (SEDAR 36) applied a statistical catch-age model to data through 2012. Recreational landings from the Florida Keys were included using a post-stratification methodology to separate Florida West Coast landings into those from the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico areas. The results were reviewed by the South Atlantic Council’s Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) in April 2014, and their report was presented to the South Atlantic Council in June 2014. The SSC determined that the snowy grouper stock is not undergoing overfishing, is rebuilding, and remains overfished. The SSC recommended an acceptable biological catch equal to the yield at 75% $F_{MSY}$ , and an overfishing limit equal to the yield at  $F_{MSY}$ . The following is taken directly from the SEDAR 36 assessment report (page 8):

“Results suggest that spawning stock declined until the mid-1990s and then increased gradually over the last decade. The terminal (2012) base-run estimate of spawning stock was below  $SSB_{MSY}$  ( $SSB_{2012}/SSB_{MSY} = 0.49$ ), as was the median estimate ( $SSB_{2012}/SSB_{MSY} = 0.38$ ), indicating that the **stock remains overfished**. The estimated fishing rate has exceeded the MFMT (represented by  $F_{MSY}$ ) for most of the assessment period, but only once in the last six years. This one overage occurred in 2012, when the recreational fleet exceeded its quota. Still, the terminal estimate, which is based on a three-year geometric mean, is below  $F_{MSY}$  in the case of the base run ( $F_{2010-2012}/F_{MSY} = 0.59$ ) and the median ( $F_{2010-2012}/F_{MSY} = 0.70$ ). Thus, this assessment indicates that the stock has not yet recovered to its biomass target but is **no longer experiencing overfishing**.”

### Stock Rebuilding Information

Snowy grouper is in a 34-year rebuilding schedule

**Table 1.5.3. General Projection Specifications**

#### *South Atlantic*

First Year of Management	20XX
Interim basis	ACL, if ACL is met Average exploitation, if ACL is not met
Projection Outputs	
Landings	Pounds and numbers
Discards	Pounds and numbers
Exploitation	F & Probability $F > MFMT$
Biomass (total or SSB, as appropriate)	B & Probability $B > MSST$ (and Prob. $B > B_{MSY}$ if under rebuilding plan)
Recruits	Number



**Table 1.5.4. Base Run Projections Specifications. Long Term and Equilibrium conditions.**

Criteria	Definition	If overfished	If overfishing	Neither overfished nor overfishing
Projection Span	Years	to 2039	10	10
Projection Values	$F_{CURRENT}$	X	X	X
	$F_{MSY}$		X	X
	75% $F_{MSY}$	X	X	X
	$F_{REBUILD} = 75\%F_{MSY}^1$	X		

NOTE: Exploitation rates for projections may be based upon point estimates from the base run (current process) or upon the median of such values from the MCBs evaluation of uncertainty. The critical point is that the projections be based on the same criteria as the management specifications.

<sup>1</sup> Snapper Grouper Regulatory Amendment 20 defined a rebuilding strategy that maintains a constant fishing mortality rate ( $F=75\%F_{MSY}$ ) throughout the rebuilding timeframe. Year 1 remains 2006 and the yield at  $75\%F_{MSY}$  and ABC projections will change with each assessment. ABC would change each year until 2019; the ABC for 2019 would remain in effect until modified.

**Table 1.5.5. P-star projections. Short term specifications for OFL and ABC recommendations. NOTE: The SSC recommended a P\* of 30% during initial ABC control rule consideration.**

Criteria		Overfished	Not overfished
Projection Span	Years	to 2039	5
Probability Values	50%	Probability of stock rebuild	Probability of overfishing
	30%		

**Table 1.5.6. Quota Calculation Details**

	Commercial	Recreational	Total
Current ACL	153,935 lbs gw	5,315 fish	185,464 lbs gw
Next Scheduled ACL Change	?	?	?
Annual or averaged quota?	annual	annual	annual
If averaged, number of years to average	NA	NA	NA
Does the quota account for bycatch/discard?	No	No	No

*How is the quota calculated - conditioned upon exploitation or average landings?*

Allowable catch was allocated based on average landings from the years 1986-2005.

*Does the quota include bycatch/discard estimates? If so, what is the source of the bycatch/discard values? What are the bycatch/discard allowances?*

The quota does not require monitoring of discards and is based on landed catch. Assessment takes into consideration bycatch and provides estimate of yield at  $F_{MSY}$  and  $F_{OY}$  as landed catch rather than landed catch and dead discards.

*Are there additional details of which the analysts should be aware to properly determine quotas for this stock?*

The ABC generated from SEDAR 36 (2013) is in pounds; however, the recreational ACL is in numbers of fish. Therefore, the recreational ACL in pounds needs to be converted to numbers of fish. This was done by first determining snowy grouper average weight by year. As the stock rebuilds the average weight is expected to change each year. SEDAR 36 (2013) provided the annual projected removals both by numbers and weight when fishing mortality is fixed at 75%FMSY (Table 22 of SEDAR 36 final report). This fishing mortality rate was chosen because the yield generated from 75%FMSY was the ABC recommended by the South Atlantic Council's SSC. For each year, the weights are divided by the numbers of fish to determine the annual average weight of individual fish. The average weight used for the current ACL was 7 lbs ww.

## **1.6 . Management and Regulatory Timeline**

The following tables provide a timeline of federal management actions by fishery.



**Table 1.6.2. Annual Recreational Snowy Grouper Regulatory Summary Prepared by Myra Brower**

Year	Quota (# fish)	ACL (# fish)	Days Open	fishing season	reason for closure	season start date (first day implemented)	season end date (last day effective)	Size limit	size limit start date	size limit end date	Retention Limit (# fish)	Retention Limit Start Date	Retention Limit End Date	Aggregate Retention Limit <sup>1</sup> (# fish)	Aggregate Retention Limit Start Date	Aggregate Retention Limit End Date
1983	N/A	N/A	123	open	N/A	31-Aug	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1984	N/A	N/A	366	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1985	N/A	N/A	365	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1986	N/A	N/A	365	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1987	N/A	N/A	365	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1988	N/A	N/A	366	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1989	N/A	N/A	365	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1990	N/A	N/A	365	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1991	N/A	N/A	365	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
1992	N/A	N/A	366	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
1993	N/A	N/A	365	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
1994	N/A	N/A	365	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
1995	N/A	N/A	365	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
1996	N/A	N/A	366	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
1997	N/A	N/A	365	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
1998	N/A	N/A	365	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
1999	N/A	N/A	365	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
2000	N/A	N/A	366	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
2001	N/A	N/A	365	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
2002	N/A	N/A	365	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
2003	N/A	N/A	365	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
2004	N/A	N/A	366	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
2005	N/A	N/A	365	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
2006	N/A	N/A	295	open	N/A	1-Jan	22-Oct	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	5 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
			70	open	N/A	23-Oct	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 per person per day	23-Oct	31-Dec	5 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
2007	N/A	N/A	365	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 per person per day	1-Jan	31-Dec	5 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
2008	N/A	N/A	366	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 per person per day	1-Jan	31-Dec	5 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
2009	N/A	N/A	365	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 per person per day	1-Jan	31-Dec	5 fish	1-Jan	28-Jul
				open							1 per person per day			3 fish	29-Jul	31-Dec
2010	N/A	N/A	365	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 per person per day	1-Jan	31-Dec	3 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
2011	N/A	N/A	30	open	N/A	1-Jan	30-Jan	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 per person per day	1-Jan	30-Jan	3 fish	1-Jan	30-Jan
		523 fish <sup>A</sup>	335	open	N/A	31-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 per vessel per day	31-Jan	31-Dec	3 fish	31-Jan	31-Dec
2012		523 fish	366	open	N/A	1-Jan	31-Dec	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 per vessel per day	1-Jan	31-Dec	3 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
2013		523 fish	150	open	N/A	1-Jan	30-May	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 per vessel per day	1-Jan	31-Dec	3 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
			215	closed	ACL met	31-May	31-Dec									
2014		523 fish	157	open	N/A	1-Jan	6-Jun	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 per vessel per day	1-Jan	31-Dec	3 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
				closed	ACL met	7-Jun	31-Dec									
2015		523 fish	231	open	N/A	1-Jan	19-Aug	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 per vessel per day	1-Jan	31-Dec	3 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
		4,152 fish <sup>B</sup>	12	open	N/A	20-Aug	31-Aug									
			122	closed	seasonal	1-Sep	31-Dec									
2016		4,483 fish	121	closed	seasonal	1-Jan	30-Apr									
			123	open	seasonal	1-May	31-Aug	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 per vessel per day	1-Jan	31-Dec	3 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
			122	closed	seasonal	1-Sep	31-Dec							3 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
2017		4,819 fish	120	closed	seasonal	1-Jan	30-Apr									
			123	open	seasonal	1-May	31-Aug	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 per vessel per day	1-Jan	31-Dec	3 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
			122	closed	seasonal	1-Sep	31-Dec									
2018		4,983 fish	120	closed	seasonal	1-Jan	30-Apr									
			123	open	seasonal	1-May	31-Aug	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 per vessel per day	1-Jan	31-Dec	3 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
			122	closed	seasonal	1-Sep	31-Dec									
2019		5,315 fish	120	closed	seasonal	1-Jan	30-Apr									
			123	open	seasonal	1-May	31-Aug	N/A	N/A	N/A	1 per vessel per day	1-Jan	31-Dec	3 fish	1-Jan	31-Dec
			122	closed	seasonal	1-Sep	31-Dec									

Notes:

<sup>A</sup> Amendment 17B adopted the commercial TAC as the commercial ACL and established the recreational ACL. The amendment was effective on 1/31/2011.

<sup>B</sup> Regulatory Amendment 20 adjusted fishing levels based on SEDAR 36. The amendment also implemented a May through August recreational season. The amendment was effective on 8/20/15

## 1.7 Closures Due to Meeting Commercial Quota or Commercial/Recreational ACL

Commercial: October 23, 2006; December 19, 2012; August 10, 2013; July 25, 2014; September 22, 2015; June 14, 2016; June 22, 2017; July 24, 2018; August 3, 2019.

Recreational: May 31, 2013; June 7, 2014; September 1, 2015.

## 1.8 State Regulatory History

### 1.8.1 North Carolina

There are no NC state regulations for snowy grouper. NC complements the federal regulations via proclamation authority based on NC code sections: 15A NCAC 03M .0506 and 15A NCAC 03M .0512 (see below). All current snapper grouper regulations are contained in a single proclamation, which gets updated anytime there is an opening/closing of a particular species in the complex, as well as any changes in allowable gear, etc. The most current Snapper Grouper proclamation (and all previous versions) can be found using this link:

<http://portal.ncdenr.org/web/mf/proclamations>.

### 15A NCAC 03M .0506 SNAPPER-GROUPER COMPLEX

(a) In the Atlantic Ocean, it is unlawful for an individual fishing under a Recreational Commercial Gear License with seines, shrimp trawls, pots, trotlines or gill nets to take any species of the Snapper-Grouper complex.

(b) The species of the snapper-grouper complex listed in the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council Fishery

Management Plan for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region are hereby incorporated by reference and copies are available via the Federal Register posted on the Internet at [www.safmc.net](http://www.safmc.net) and at the Division of Marine Fisheries, P.O. Box 769, Morehead City, North Carolina 28557 at no cost.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 113-134; 113-182; 113-221; 143B-289.52;*

*Eff. January 1, 1991;*

*Amended Eff. April 1, 1997; March 1, 1996; September 1, 1991;*

*Temporary Amendment Eff. December 23, 1996;*

*Amended Eff. August 1, 1998; April 1, 1997;*

*Temporary Amendment Eff. January 1, 2002; August 29, 2000; January 1, 2000; May 24, 1999;*

*Amended Eff. October 1, 2008; May 1, 2004; July 1, 2003; April 1, 2003; August 1, 2002.*

### 15A NCAC 03M .0512 COMPLIANCE WITH FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLANS

(a) In order to comply with management requirements incorporated in Federal Fishery Management Council Management Plans or Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Management Plans or to implement state management measures, the Fisheries Director may, by proclamation, take any or all of the following actions for species listed in the Interjurisdictional Fisheries Management Plan:

- (1) Specify size;
- (2) Specify seasons;
- (3) Specify areas;
- (4) Specify quantity;
- (5) Specify means and methods; and

(6) Require submission of statistical and biological data.

(b) Proclamations issued under this Rule shall be subject to approval, cancellation, or modification by the Marine Fisheries Commission at its next regularly scheduled meeting or an emergency meeting held pursuant to G.S. 113-221.1.

*History Note: Authority G.S. 113-134; 113-182; 113-221; 113-221.1; 143B-289.4;*

*Eff. March 1, 1996;*

*Amended Eff. October 1, 2008.*

### **1.8.2SC**

Sec. 50-5-2730 of the SC Code states:

“Unless otherwise provided by law, any regulations promulgated by the federal government under the Fishery Conservation and Management Act (PL94-265) or the Atlantic Tuna Conservation Act (PL 94-70) which establishes seasons, fishing periods, gear restrictions, sales restrictions, or bag, catch, size, or possession limits on fish are declared to be the law of this State and apply statewide including in state waters.”

As such, SC snowy grouper regulations are (and have been) pulled directly from the federal regulations as promulgated under Magnuson. I am not aware of any separate snowy grouper regulations that have been codified in the SC Code.

### **1.8.3GA**

There are currently no GA state regulations for snowy grouper. However, the authority rests with the GA Board of Natural Resources to regulate this species if deemed necessary in the future.”

### **1.8.4 Florida**

Table 2.8.4.1 Florida Atlantic and Monroe County Snowy Grouper Regulation History

<u>Year</u>	<u>Minimum Size Limit</u>	<u>Recreational Daily Harvest Limits</u>	<u>Commercial Daily Harvest Limits</u>	<u>Regulation Changes</u>	<u>Rule Change Effective Date</u>
1980	None	None	None		
1981	None	None	None		
1982	None	None	None		
1983	None	None	None		
1984	None	None	None		
1985	None	None	None		

<u>Year</u>	<u>Minimum Size Limit</u>	<u>Recreational Daily Harvest Limits</u>	<u>Commercial Daily Harvest Limits</u>	<u>Regulation Changes</u>	<u>Rule Change Effective Date</u>
1986	None	5 per person within the 5-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	None	<p>Established a five-fish daily recreational bag limit for grouper (excluded Red Hind and Rock Hind).</p> <p>Prohibited commercial harvest of snapper and grouper by longline gear and established a bycatch allowance of 5% for harvesters using longline gear to target other species.</p> <p>Prohibited use of stab nets (or sink nets) to harvest snapper and grouper in Atlantic state waters of Monroe County.</p> <p>Required snapper and grouper to be landed in whole condition (head and tail intact).</p>	Dec. 11, 1986
1987	None	5 per person within the 5-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	None		
1988	None	5 per person within the 5-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	None		
1989	None	5 per person within the 5-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	None		

<u>Year</u>	<u>Minimum Size Limit</u>	<u>Recreational Daily Harvest Limits</u>	<u>Commercial Daily Harvest Limits</u>	<u>Regulation Changes</u>	<u>Rule Change Effective Date</u>
1990	None	5 per person within the 5-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	None	<p>Designated all snapper and grouper “restricted species” and required commercial harvesters to possess a Restricted Species endorsement on their Saltwater Products License.</p> <p>Set allowable gear as hook and line, black sea bass trap, spear, gig, or lance (except powerheads, bangsticks, or explosive devices) for snapper and grouper.</p> <p>Prohibited commercial harvest in state waters when harvest is prohibited in adjacent federal waters.</p> <p>Established a five-fish daily recreational bag limit for any combination of grouper.</p> <p>Required snapper and grouper to be landed in whole condition.</p>	Feb. 1, 1990
1991	None	5 per person within the 5-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	None		
1992	None	5 per person within the 5-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	None		



<u>Year</u>	<u>Minimum Size Limit</u>	<u>Recreational Daily Harvest Limits</u>	<u>Commercial Daily Harvest Limits</u>	<u>Regulation Changes</u>	<u>Rule Change Effective Date</u>
1993	None	5 per person within the 5-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	None	Allowed persons with either a Gulf of Mexico or South Atlantic federal commercial reef fish permit to commercially harvest snappers and groupers (except red snapper) in all state waters, until July 1, 1995.	Oct. 18, 1993
1994	None	5 per person within the 5-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	None	Allowed a two-day possession limit for reef fish for persons aboard charter and headboats on trips exceeding 24 hours, provided the vessel is equipped with a permanent berth for each passenger, and each passenger has a receipt verifying the trip length.  Modified rule language to provide the same state and federal definitions of Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Ocean regions.	March 1, 1994
1995	None	5 per person within the 5-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	None	Continued allowing persons with either a South Atlantic or Gulf federal commercial reef fish permit to commercially harvest reef fish in all state waters through Dec. 31, 1995.	July 1, 1995

<u>Year</u>	<u>Minimum Size Limit</u>	<u>Recreational Daily Harvest Limits</u>	<u>Commercial Daily Harvest Limits</u>	<u>Regulation Changes</u>	<u>Rule Change Effective Date</u>
1996	None	5 per person within the 5-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	None	(1) Continued allowing persons with either a South Atlantic or Gulf federal commercial reef fish permit to commercially harvest reef fish in all state waters through Dec. 31, 1996.  (2) Continued allowing persons with either a South Atlantic or Gulf federal commercial reef fish permit to commercially harvest reef fish in all state waters through Dec. 31, 1997.	(1) Jan. 1, 1996  (2) Nov. 27, 1996
1997	None	5 per person within the 5-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	None		
1998	None	5 per person within the 5-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	None		
1999	None	5 per person within the 5-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	None		
2000	None	5 per person within the 5-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	None		
2001	None	5 per person within the 5-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	None		

<u>Year</u>	<u>Minimum Size Limit</u>	<u>Recreational Daily Harvest Limits</u>	<u>Commercial Daily Harvest Limits</u>	<u>Regulation Changes</u>	<u>Rule Change Effective Date</u>
2002	None	5 per person within the 5-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	None		
2003	None	5 per person within the 5-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	None		
2004	None	5 per person within the 5-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	None		
2005	None	5 per person within the 5-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	None		
2006	None	5 per person within the 5-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	None	Specified that “total length” means the straight-line distance from the most forward point of the head with the mouth closed, to the farthest tip of the tail with the tail compressed or squeezed, while the fish is lying on its side.	July 1, 2006

<u>Year</u>	<u>Minimum Size Limit</u>	<u>Recreational Daily Harvest Limits</u>	<u>Commercial Daily Harvest Limits</u>	<u>Regulation Changes</u>	<u>Rule Change Effective Date</u>
2007	None	1 Snowy Grouper per person within the within the 5-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	Same as federal waters	<p>Modified the recreational bag limit to allow only 1 Snowy Grouper within the 5-grouper aggregate bag limit.</p> <p>Set commercial trip limits in the Atlantic to be the same as adjacent federal waters.</p> <p>Prohibited commercial fishermen from harvesting or possessing the recreational bag limit on commercial trips.</p>	July 1, 2007
2008	None	1 Snowy Grouper per person within the within the 5-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	Same as federal waters		
2009	None	1 Snowy Grouper per person within the within the 5-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	Same as federal waters		

<u>Year</u>	<u>Minimum Size Limit</u>	<u>Recreational Daily Harvest Limits</u>	<u>Commercial Daily Harvest Limits</u>	<u>Regulation Changes</u>	<u>Rule Change Effective Date</u>
2010	None	1 Snowy Grouper per person within the 3-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	Same as federal waters	<p>Reduced the recreational grouper aggregate to three fish per day in Atlantic and Monroe County state waters and allowed no more than one Snowy Grouper.</p> <p>Prohibited the captain and crew of for-hire vessels from retaining any species in the aggregate grouper bag limit.</p> <p>Required dehooking tools be aboard commercial and recreational vessels for use as needed to remove hooks from Atlantic reef fish.</p>	Jan. 19, 2010
2011	None	1 Snowy Grouper per person within the 3-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	Same as federal waters		
2012	None	1 Snowy Grouper per person within the 3-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	Same as federal waters		
2013	None	1 Snowy Grouper per person within the 3-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	Same as federal waters		

<u>Year</u>	<u>Minimum Size Limit</u>	<u>Recreational Daily Harvest Limits</u>	<u>Commercial Daily Harvest Limits</u>	<u>Regulation Changes</u>	<u>Rule Change Effective Date</u>
2014	None	1 Snowy Grouper per person within the 3-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	Same as federal waters	Removed prohibition on captain and crew of for-hire vessels from retaining recreational bag limits of Vermilion Snappers, groupers and Golden Tilefish on for-hire trips in state waters of the Atlantic (including Monroe County for grouper and Golden Tilefish).	March 13, 2014
2015	None	1 Snowy Grouper per person within the 3-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	Same as federal waters		
2016	None	1 Snowy Grouper per person within the 3-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	Same as federal waters	Created an exception allowing recreational anglers to land reef fish as fillets instead of as whole fish, provided the reef fish were recreationally harvested in The Bahamas and specific conditions are met.	Sept. 13, 2016
2017	None	1 Snowy Grouper per person within the 3-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	Same as federal waters		
2018	None	1 Snowy Grouper per person within the 3-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	Same as federal waters		
2019	None	1 Snowy Grouper per person within the 3-fish grouper aggregate bag limit	Same as federal waters		

## **Florida Atlantic and Monroe County Snowy Grouper Regulation Changes by Date**

### **December 31, 1986**

- Established a daily recreational bag limit of five fish for any combination of groupers, excluding Red Hind and Rock Hind.
- Prohibited use of longline gear by commercial fishermen for harvest of snapper and groupers, and created a bycatch allowance of 5% for commercial harvesters using longline gear to legally target other species.
- Prohibited the use of stab nets (or sink nets) to take snapper or grouper in Atlantic waters of Monroe County.
- Required snappers and groupers to be landed in whole condition (head and tail intact).

### **February 1, 1990**

- Designated all snapper and grouper as “restricted species.”
- Established a daily recreational bag limit of five fish for any combination of groupers.
- Set the allowable gear as hook and line, black sea bass trap, spear, gig, or lance (except powerheads, bangsticks, or explosive devices).
- Prohibited commercial harvest of any species of snapper, grouper or sea bass in state waters whenever harvest of that species is prohibited in adjacent federal waters.

### **October 18, 1993**

- Allowed persons who possess wither a Gulf of Mexico or South Atlantic federal reef fish permit to commercially harvest snappers and groupers (except red snapper) in all state waters, until July 1, 1995.

### **March 1, 1994**

- Allowed a two-day possession limit for reef fish statewide for persons aboard charter and headboats on trips exceeding 24 hours, provided the vessel is equipped with a permanent berth for each passenger aboard, and each passenger has a receipt verifying the trip length.
- Modified rule language to provide the same state and federal definitions of Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Ocean regions.

### **July 1, 1995**

- Allowed persons who possess wither a Gulf of Mexico or South Atlantic federal reef fish permit to commercially harvest snappers and groupers (except red snapper) in all state waters, until December 31, 1995.

### **January 1, 1996**

- Allowed persons who possess wither a Gulf of Mexico or South Atlantic federal reef fish permit to commercially harvest snappers and groupers (except red snapper) in all state waters, until December 31, 1996.

### **November 27, 1996**

- Allowed persons who possess wither a Gulf of Mexico or South Atlantic federal reef fish permit to commercially harvest snappers and groupers (except red snapper) in all state waters, until December 31, 1997.

### **July 1, 2006**

- Specified that, for purposes of determining the legal size of reef fish species, “total length” means the straight line distance from the most forward point of the head with the mouth closed to the farthest tip of the tail with the tail compressed or squeezed while the fish is lying on its side.

### **July 1, 2007**

- Allowed the Atlantic recreational harvest of one Snowy Grouper within the five-grouper aggregate bag limit.
- Set commercial trip limits in the Atlantic that are the same as trip limits in adjacent federal waters.
- Prohibited commercial fishermen from harvesting or possessing the recreational bag limit of reef fish species on commercial trips.

### **January 19, 2010**

- Reduced recreational aggregate grouper bag limit to 3 fish per person per day in all Atlantic and Monroe County state waters and retained that only one fish may be a Snowy Grouper.
- Prohibited the captain and crew of for-hire vessels from retaining any species in the aggregate grouper bag limit.
- Required dehooking tools to be aboard commercial and recreational vessels for anglers to use as needed to remove hooks from Atlantic reef fish.

### **March 13, 2014**

- Eliminated prohibition on captain and crew of for-hire vessels from retaining recreational bag limits of Vermilion Snappers, groupers and Golden Tilefish on for-hire trips in state waters of the Atlantic (including Monroe County for grouper and Golden Tilefish).

### **September 13, 2016**

- Created an exception allowing recreational anglers to land reef fish as fillets instead of as whole fish, provided the reef fish were recreationally harvested in The Bahamas and specific conditions are met.