

Georgia Red Snapper Catch & Effort Data Collection During Mini-Seasons, 2012-2014

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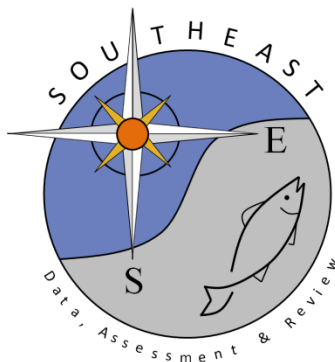
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***Addendum added to update document with 2014 data. Please see Addendum for complete information (PDF page 6).**



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Georgia Red Snapper Catch & Effort Data Collection during Mini-Seasons, 2012-2013

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SEDAR 41, South Atlantic Red Snapper Data Workshop, August 2014

Sampling during the 2012 mini-season (recreational/for-hire September 14-16, and 21-23):

- Dockside biological sampling - During every day in which trips occurred, staff collected biological data, as well as general fishing location, from fish landed at one dock at which two for-hire captains had previously participated extensively in voluntary red snapper research. Data elements included centerline length, whole weight, sex and otoliths.
- Carcass program – As part of the existing GADNR carcass program, anglers could donate filleted red snapper carcasses to any of the 11 freezers throughout Georgia’s six coastal counties. Additionally, three private marinas agreed to freeze carcasses, and a freezer which could be accessed by anglers was added to the Brunswick DNR campus. Data elements included trip date and general fishing location, as well as biological data (centerline length, sex and otoliths).
- Telephone survey of federally permitted for-hire captains - Staff conducted telephone interviews with the Georgia for-hire captains who actively fished with and possessed the federal snapper-grouper CH/HB permit to collect catch and effort data. Calls were placed on the Mondays following the fishing weekend, and repeated attempts were made throughout the week until the captains were reached. Data elements included whether the trip did or did not target red snapper, number of anglers, and number of fish released and harvested.
- Voluntary angler electronic catch survey (via Survey Monkey) – Anglers were asked to complete a voluntary electronic catch survey for any fishing trips that targeted red snapper (including trips that targeted but did not catch red snapper). Each completion of a survey represented one vessel trip targeting red snapper. Data elements included trip date and duration, trip departure location, depth fished, number of anglers, number and size of harvested and released fish, and whether the harvested fish were donated to a GADNR carcass freezer.
- Publicity – Anglers were invited to participate in the carcass program and electronic survey via email (for those licensed anglers that indicated participation in saltwater fishing, or had asked to be notified about issues related to saltwater fishing) as well as notification through a press release and posting on the CRD website. As incentive to participate, a gift card to Bass Pro Shops was given to one angler from each data collection program (donated a carcass or completed a voluntary angler survey). Temporary decals were also placed on the carcass freezers to increase awareness of the red snapper fishing mini-season and request for angler participation.
- No biological data were collected from the commercial fishery.

Biological samples (including otoliths) from 64 fish via dockside and carcass program sampling:

- 40 whole for-hire fish (1HB and 5 CH vessel trips)
- 24 carcasses

Telephone survey interviewing 20 active federally permitted captains:

- 16 for-hire trips (2 HB and 14 CH)

- 100 angler trips (24 HB and 76 CH)
- 57 harvested (5 HB and 52 CH)
- 25 released (all 25 CH) (most trips with released fish also had full harvest bag limit)

Voluntary angler electronic catch survey data collection:

- 8 private boat mode vessel trips
- 31 angler trips
- 22 harvested (14 with reported lengths)
- 6 released (length ranges reported on all released fish; most trips with released fish also had full harvest bag limit)
- Average depth ~105 feet

Total PR harvest = 37 = 22 voluntary angler survey + 15 carcasses NOT also reported through the angler survey (i.e., of the total 24 collected through the carcass program, anglers reported through the voluntary survey that they had donated 9 to carcass freezers, leaving 15 additional carcasses as known harvest in addition to the 22 reported through the angler survey)

From the for-hire dockside sampling, carcass program, telephone calls to permitted captains, and recreational anglers reporting via Survey Monkey, no fishing trips occurred on 9/14/12 and one occurred on 9/15/14 due to high wind conditions.

Sampling during the 2013 mini-season (recreational/for-hire August 23-25; commercial August 26-October 8):

Unless otherwise noted, data collection programs in 2013 were identical to those in 2012:

- Dockside biological sampling – In addition to sampling at one for-hire fishing dock, sampling also occurred at one commercial fishing dock. The commercial dock is the only one in coastal GA at which offshore finfish are unloaded/sold. During the 2013 season, six (6) of the nine (9) total commercial snapper-grouper vessel trips were sampled for biological data by GADNR staff at the dock.
- Publicity – Letters were mailed to federally permitted for-hire captains prior to the opening of the mini-season to notify them of the various data collection methods through which they could volunteer to participate. In addition to the established carcass freezer locations, we offered to have DNR staff meet them at their marina if an alternate cooler or freezer was available in which additional carcasses could be collected. As an incentive to participate, a gift card to Bass Pro Shops was given to one angler and one for-hire captain who donated a carcass.

Biological samples (including otoliths) from 91 fish via dockside and carcass program sampling:

- 28 whole for-hire fish (2 HB and 2 CH vessel trips)
- 21 gutted commercial fish (6 vessel trips)
- 42 carcasses

Telephone survey interviewing 22 active federally permitted captains:

- 11 for-hire trips (2 HB and 9 CH)
- 70 angler trips (23 HB and 47 CH)
- 42 harvested (14HB and 28 CH)

- 9 released (4HB and 5 CH)(most trips with released fish also had full harvest bag limit)

Voluntary angler electronic catch survey data collection:

- 13 private boat mode vessel trips
- 53 angler trips
- 41 harvested (37 with reported lengths)
- 13 released (length ranges reported on all 13 released fish; most trips with released fish also had full harvest bag limit)
- Average depth ~95 feet

Total PR harvest = 55 = 41 voluntary angler survey + 14 carcasses NOT also reported through the angler survey (i.e., of the total 42 collected through the carcass program, anglers reported through the voluntary survey that they had donated 28 to carcass freezers, leaving 14 additional carcasses as known harvest in addition to the 41 reported through the angler survey)

From the for-hire dockside sampling, carcass program, telephone calls to permitted captains, and recreational anglers reporting via Survey Monkey, no fishing trips occurred on 8/25 due to high wind conditions.

ADDENDUM

Georgia Red Snapper Catch & Effort Data Collection during Mini-Seasons, 2012-2014

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Sampling during the 2012 mini-season (recreational/for-hire September 14-16, and 21-23):

- Dockside biological sampling - During every day in which trips occurred, staff collected biological data, as well as general fishing location, from fish landed at one dock at which two for-hire captains (one headboat & one charter vessel) that had previously participated extensively in voluntary red snapper research. The headboat at this dock also participates in the Southeast Region Headboat Survey (SRHS). Data elements included centerline length, whole weight, sex and otoliths.
- Carcass program – As part of the existing GADNR carcass program, anglers and charter captains could donate filleted red snapper carcasses to any of the 11 freezers throughout Georgia's six coastal counties. Additionally, three private marinas agreed to freeze carcasses, and a freezer which could be accessed by anglers was added to the Brunswick DNR campus. Data elements included trip date and general fishing location, as well as biological data (centerline length, sex and otoliths). Upon workup, any carcasses from known charter trips were indicated as occurring in the charter fishing mode.
- Telephone survey of federally permitted for-hire captains - Staff conducted telephone interviews with the Georgia for-hire captains who actively fished with and possessed the federal snapper-grouper CH/HB permit to collect catch and effort data. Calls were placed on the Mondays following the fishing weekend, and repeated attempts were made throughout the week until the captains were reached. Data elements included whether the trip did or did not target red snapper, number of anglers, and number of fish released and harvested.
- Voluntary angler electronic catch survey (via Survey Monkey) – Anglers were asked to complete a voluntary electronic catch survey for any fishing trips that targeted red snapper (including trips that targeted but did not catch red snapper). Each completion of a survey represented one vessel trip targeting red snapper. Data elements included trip date and duration, trip departure location, depth fished, number of anglers, number and size of harvested and released fish, and whether the harvested fish were donated to a GADNR carcass freezer.
- Publicity – Anglers were invited to participate in the carcass program and electronic survey via email (for those licensed anglers that indicated participation in saltwater fishing, or had asked to be notified about issues related to saltwater fishing) as well as notification through a press release and posting on the CRD website. As incentive to participate, a gift card to Bass Pro Shops was given to one angler from each data collection program (donated a carcass or completed a voluntary angler survey). Temporary decals were also placed on the carcass freezers to increase awareness of the red snapper fishing mini-season and request for angler participation.
- No biological data were collected from the commercial fishery.

Biological samples (including otoliths) from 64 fish via dockside and carcass program sampling:

- 40 whole for-hire fish (1HB and 5 CH vessel trips)

- 24 carcasses

Telephone survey interviewing 20 active federally permitted captains:

- 16 for-hire trips (2 HB and 14 CH)
- 100 angler trips (24 HB and 76 CH)
- 57 harvested (5 HB and 52 CH)
- 25 released (all 25 CH) (most trips with released fish also had full harvest bag limit)

Voluntary angler electronic catch survey data collection:

- 8 private boat mode vessel trips
- 31 angler trips
- 22 harvested (14 with reported lengths)
- 6 released (length ranges reported on all released fish; most trips with released fish also had full harvest bag limit)
- Average depth ~105 feet

Total PR harvest = 37 = 22 voluntary angler survey + 15 carcasses NOT also reported through the angler survey (i.e., of the total 24 collected through the carcass program, anglers reported through the voluntary survey that they had donated 9 to carcass freezers, leaving 15 additional carcasses as known harvest in addition to the 22 reported through the angler survey)

From the for-hire dockside sampling, carcass program, telephone calls to permitted captains, and recreational anglers reporting via Survey Monkey, no fishing trips occurred on 9/14/12 and one occurred on 9/15/12 due to high wind conditions.

Sampling during the 2013 mini-season (recreational/for-hire August 23-25; commercial August 26-October 8):

Unless otherwise noted, data collection programs in 2013 were identical to those in 2012:

- Dockside biological sampling – In addition to sampling at one for-hire fishing dock, sampling also occurred at one commercial fishing dock. The commercial dock is the only one in coastal GA at which offshore finfish are unloaded/sold. During the 2013 season, six (6) of the nine (9) total commercial snapper-grouper vessel trips were sampled for biological data by GADNR staff at the dock.
- Carcass program – identical to 2012 process
- Telephone survey of federally permitted for-hire captains – identical to 2012 process
- Voluntary angler electronic catch survey (via Survey Monkey) – identical to 2012 process
- Publicity – Letters were mailed to federally permitted for-hire captains prior to the opening of the mini-season to notify them of the various data collection methods through which they could volunteer to participate. In addition to the established carcass freezer locations, DNR offered to have DNR staff meet them at their marina if an alternate cooler or freezer was available in which additional carcasses could be collected. As an incentive to participate, a gift card to Bass Pro Shops was given to one angler and one for-hire captain who donated a carcass.

Biological samples (including otoliths) from 91 fish via dockside and carcass program sampling:

- 28 whole for-hire fish (2 HB and 2 CH vessel trips)

- 21 gutted commercial fish (6 vessel trips)
- 42 carcasses

Telephone survey interviewing 22 active federally permitted captains:

- 11 for-hire trips (2 HB and 9 CH)
- 70 angler trips (23 HB and 47 CH)
- 42 harvested (14HB and 28 CH)
- 9 released (4HB and 5 CH)(most trips with released fish also had full harvest bag limit)

Voluntary angler electronic catch survey data collection:

- 13 private boat mode vessel trips
- 53 angler trips
- 41 harvested (37 with reported lengths)
- 13 released (length ranges reported on all 13 released fish; most trips with released fish also had full harvest bag limit)
- Average depth ~95 feet

Total PR harvest = 55 = 41 voluntary angler survey + 14 carcasses NOT also reported through the angler survey (i.e., of the total 42 collected through the carcass program, anglers reported through the voluntary survey that they had donated 28 to carcass freezers, leaving 14 additional carcasses as known harvest in addition to the 41 reported through the angler survey)

From the for-hire dockside sampling, carcass program, telephone calls to permitted captains, and recreational anglers reporting via Survey Monkey, no fishing trips occurred on 8/25/13 due to high wind conditions.

Sampling during the 2014 mini-season (recreational/for-hire July 11-13, 18-20, 25-26; commercial July 14-September 8):

Unless otherwise noted, data collection programs in 2014 were identical to those in 2013:

- Dockside biological sampling – Dockside biological sampling (including otolith removal) from for-hire vessels was limited to two locations (2 vessels at each dock). One dock was sampled opportunistically when staff were onsite for routine MRIP charter assignments (including staying at dock after the MRIP time interval was complete to sample red snapper). The other dock was sampled on every day in which trips occurred for two for-hire captains (one headboat & one charter vessel) that had previously participated extensively in voluntary red snapper research. The headboat at this dock also participates in the Southeast Region Headboat Survey (SRHS). Commercial samples were obtained from one dealer location which had purchased the red snapper from the only commercial dock in coastal GA at which offshore finfish are unloaded/sold. The total weight (in pounds) was noted by staff at the dealer location, and reported on paper in the mouth of each fish. These weights were converted to kilograms when the fish were processed by DNR staff for length and otolith removal. During the 2014 season, three (3) of the four (4) commercial snapper-grouper vessel trips that landed red snapper during the open season were sampled for biological data by GADNR staff (n = 13 fish; 7 commercial trips during the season did not land any red snapper).
- Carcass program – As part of the existing GADNR carcass program, anglers and charter captains could donate filleted red snapper carcasses to any of the 12 freezers throughout Georgia's six

coastal counties, including one which was added to the Brunswick DNR campus. Upon workup, any carcasses from known charter trips were indicated as occurring in the charter fishing mode.

- Telephone survey of federally permitted for-hire captains – Same protocol as 2013 except there was a longer recall period. Calls to charter captains began Monday, July 28th (as opposed to calls each Monday following each fishing weekend).
- Voluntary angler electronic catch survey (via Survey Monkey) – identical to 2012 process
- Publicity – Anglers were invited to participate in the carcass program and electronic survey via email, as well as notification through a press release and posting on the CRD website. The emails were sent to those licensed anglers that indicated participation in saltwater fishing, or had asked to be notified about issues related to saltwater fishing. Temporary decals were also placed on the carcass freezers to increase awareness of the red snapper fishing mini-season and request for angler participation. Letters were mailed to federally permitted for-hire captains (that were actively fishing) prior to the opening of the mini-season to notify them of the various data collection methods through which they could volunteer to participate. In addition to the established carcass freezer locations, DNR staff offered to meet them at their marina if an alternate cooler or freezer was available in which additional carcasses could be saved for later pickup. Emails were sent to non-federally permitted charter captains to increase their awareness of the season and ask for their participation in data collection. As an incentive to anglers and for-hire captains to participate, a gift card to Bass Pro Shops was given to one person who donated a carcass.

Biological samples (most including otoliths) from 283 fish via dockside and carcass program sampling:

- 146 whole for-hire fish (6 HB and 10 CH vessel trips)
- 13 gutted commercial fish (3 vessel trips)
- 124 carcasses (50 vessel trips)

Telephone survey interviewing 27 active federally permitted captains:

- 45 for-hire trips (10 HB and 35 CH)
- 312 angler trips (132 HB and 180 CH)
- 280 harvested (130 HB and 150 CH)
- 123 released (48 HB and 75 CH)

Voluntary angler electronic catch survey data collection:

- 20 private boat and 1 CH mode vessel trips
- 120 angler trips (PR = 116, CH = 4)
- 106 harvested (PR = 102, CH = 4; 87 total with reported lengths PR = 83, CH = 4)
- 265 released (PR = 257, CH = 8; length ranges reported on almost all released fish; all trips with released fish also had full harvest bag limit)
- Average depth ~90 feet

Unlike 2012 and 2013, where all voluntary angler electronic catch survey data were private trips, there was one charter trip reported in 2014. This entry did not have a matching report from the telephone survey of charter captains, so this does not appear to be a duplicate from an active federally permitted captain. There is no way to verify the trip information because the angler's contact information was not provided. It was listed as returning to a private location, and CH trips typically end at a public locations (e.g. marina or ramp) so there may have been a data entry mistake and this was actually a private boat trip. We recommend that this information remain in the electronic catch survey data and not added to

the numbers generated through the telephone survey due to the fact that it cannot be verified as a CH trip.

Total PR mode harvest = 195 = 106 voluntary angler survey + 89 carcasses NOT also reported through the angler survey (i.e., of the total 124 collected through the carcass program, anglers reported through the voluntary survey that they had donated 35 to carcass freezers, leaving 89 additional carcasses as known harvest in addition to the 109 reported through the angler survey).

From the for-hire dockside sampling, carcass program, telephone calls to permitted captains, and recreational anglers reporting via Survey Monkey, very few fishing trips occurred on 7/25/14 due to rough weather conditions offshore.