



MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF MARINE RESOURCES

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News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MDMR begins voluntary snapper reporting program

BILOXI, Miss. – The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources will begin a voluntary red snapper reporting program for recreational fishermen on June 1.

This program will allow agency officials to better track how many red snapper are being harvested and landed in Mississippi.

The program received unanimous approval by the Commission on Marine Resources at its meeting on May 20.

The idea for a reporting program came from the MDMR Red Snapper Summit that the agency hosted May 6. More than 100 recreational and for-hire (charter boat) fishermen attended and shared their ideas for improving data collection.

Recreational and for-hire (charter boat) fishermen will be able to go to dmr.ms.gov to submit their information about red snapper. The agency also will soon release a mobile phone app that fishermen can use to submit information.

On May 14, NOAA Fisheries announced that red snapper season would be nine days, beginning at 12:01 a.m. June 1 and closing at 12:01 a.m. June 10. Before that the season was set at 11 days. The number of days allowed for red snapper has decreased over the past few years.

At the MDMR Red Snapper Summit, anglers also said they would support development and implementation of sampling that would directly affect accuracy of red snapper stock assessment; mandatory reporting for all for-hire (charter) vessels; harvest of multiple species during red snapper season; federal legislation that would allow all Gulf states to manage red snapper out nine nautical miles; state authority to manage red snapper throughout the Gulf of Mexico.

Based on the input at the summit, MDMR officials will develop formal recommendations for the Gulf Council to consider; continue to work with congressional delegates on granting authority to manage selected fisheries out to the proposed nine-mile state boundary; develop a comprehensive report from the summit that can be reviewed and considered by those at the federal level who are developing management alternatives.

"We are working at the council level and the agency level," said Jamie Miller, executive director of the MDMR. "We're looking at all options. We're having open and constant conversation about what we can do."

The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources is dedicated to enhancing, protecting and conserving marine interests of the state by managing all marine life, public trust wetlands, adjacent

uplands and waterfront areas to provide for the optimal commercial, recreational, educational and economic uses of these resources consistent with environmental concerns and social changes. Visit the DMR online at www.dmr.ms.gov.

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