

Commercial Fishing Regulations for Gulf of Mexico Federal Waters

For Species Managed by the Gulf of Mexico
Fishery Management Council

January 4, 2016





This publication was prepared for general informational purposes and has no legal force or effect. Fishing regulations are subject to change. Check for updates by visiting www.gulfcouncil.org.

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council
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About the

Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council is one of eight regional Fishery Management Councils established by the Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976. The Council prepares fishery management plans, which are designed to manage fishery resources within the federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

The Council consists of 17 voting members: the Southeast Regional Administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Southeast Regional Office (or his designee), the directors of the five Gulf state marine resource management agencies (or their designees), and 11 members who are nominated by the state governors and appointed by the Secretary of Commerce. There are also four non-voting members representing the U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of State, and the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission.

The Council meets five times a year at various locations around the Gulf coast. When reviewing potential rule changes, the Council draws upon the services of knowledgeable people from other state and federal agencies, universities, and the public to balance competing interests and achieve the greatest overall benefit to the nation.

Scoping workshops and public hearings are also held throughout the Gulf coast, and virtual meetings are available online. Testimony, oral or written, is considered by the Council before it takes final action on proposed rule changes. Public testimony is also heard during each Council meeting. Proposed rule changes are then submitted to National Marine Fisheries Service for further review and approval before implementation by the Secretary of Commerce.

Commercial Fishing Regulations

Coastal Migratory Pelagics

Species	Minimum Size Limit	Trip Limit	Quota/Closed Seasons
Cobia (ling)	33" fork length	Daily possession limit of 2 per person	NOTE: Drift gill nets prohibited
Spanish Mackerel	12" fork length	None	Quota: 11.3 mp Gulf group Season opens 4/1
King Mackerel	24" fork length Maximum of 5% by weight may be undersized	Eastern Zone: FL east coast subzone 11/1 to 3/31 - 50 fish per trip until quota is filled. If 75% of quota is not harvested by 2/1, trip limit increases to 75 fish. 4/1 to 10/31 South Atlantic regulations apply. FL West Coast Southern subzone: Gillnet 6:00 a.m. day after the Martin Luther King Jr. Federal holiday until gear quota reached - 45,000 lbs/trip whole weight. FL West Coast Southern subzone: Hook & Line 7/1 - 6/30 - 1,250 lbs/trip limit until quota is filled. FL West Coast Northern subzone: Hook & Line 10/1 - 9/30 - 1,250 lbs/trip limit until quota is filled. Western Zone: 7/1 - 6/30 3,000 lbs/trip until quota filled.	Eastern Zone: FL east coast subzone 1,102,896 lbs whole weight FL West Coast Southern subzone: Gillnet 551,448 lbs whole weight FL West Coast Southern subzone: Hook & Line 551,448 lbs whole weight FL West Coast Northern subzone: Hook & Line 178,848 lbs whole weight Western Zone: 1,071,360 lbs whole weight
<p>NOTE: The use of gillnets is permitted only in the southern Florida west coast subzone. The gillnet fishery for Gulf group king mackerel in or from the Gulf EEZ is closed each year from July 1 until 6:00 a.m. on the day after the Martin Luther King Jr. federal holiday. The gillnet fishery is also closed during all subsequent weekends and observed federal holidays, except for the first weekend following the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday, which will remain open to the gillnet fishery provided that a notification of closure has not been filed. Weekend closures are effective from 6:00 a.m. Saturday to 6:00 a.m. Monday. Holiday closures are effective from 6:00 a.m. on the observed federal holiday to 6:00 a.m. the following day.</p>			



Reef Fish

Snappers

Species	Minimum Size Limit	Trip Limit	Quotas/Closed Seasons
Red Snapper	13" total length	Red snapper is managed under an IFQ program. Anyone commercially fishing for red snapper must possess IFQ allocation and follow established protocols.	6,768,000 gutted weight Includes withholding of 4.9% of the quota in anticipation of an allocation shift.
Vermilion Lane Gray (Mangrove) Mutton Yellowtail Cubera Blackfin Queen Silk Wenchman	10" total length 8" total length 12" total length 16" total length 12" total length 12" total length None None None None	None None None None None None None None None None	NOTE: The Gulf Council has set a control date of December 31, 2008, for the commercial reef fish fishery.



Reef Fish

Groupers

Species	Minimum Size Limit	Trip Limit	Quotas/Closed Seasons
Shallow-Water Groupers Gag Red Black Yellowfin Scamp* Yellowmouth	22" total length 18" total length 24" total length 20" total length 16" total length None	Grouper are managed under an IFQ program. Anyone commercially fishing for grouper or tilefish must possess IFQ allocation and follow established protocols	Gag: 0.939 mp gutted weight Red Grouper: 5.72 mp gutted weight Other shallow water grouper: 0.525 mp gutted weight *For the purposes of the IFQ, DWG allocation may be used to land and sell scamp once an IFQ account holder's other SWG allocation has been landed and sold or transferred.
Deep-Water Groupers Yellowedge Snowy	None None		DWG quota 1.024 mp gutted weight
Speckled Hind** Warsaw**	None None		**For purposes of the IFQ, these species are also included as SWG.

Protected Groupers

Goliath (Jewfish) harvest and possession is prohibited.

Other Species

It is illegal to harvest or possess **Red Drum** in federal waters.



Other Reef Fish

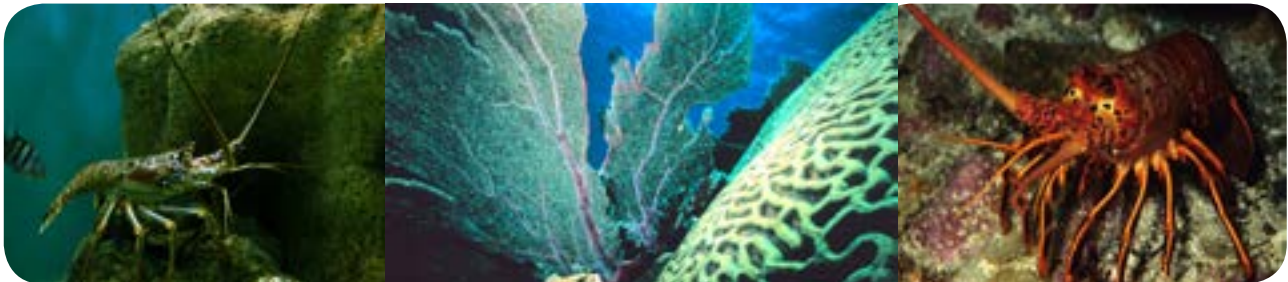
Species	Minimum Size Limit	Trip Limit	Quota/Closed Seasons
Tilefish (Golden) Blueline Tilefish Goldface Tilefish	None	Tilefish is managed under an IFQ program. Anyone commercially fishing for tilefish must possess IFQ allocation and follow established protocols.	Overall tilefish Quota: 582,000 lbs gutted weight
Hogfish	12" fork length	None	None
Gray Triggerfish	14" fork length	12 fish	60,900 lbs whole weight Closed June 1 through July 31
Greater Amberjack	36" fork length	1,500 lbs gutted weight	394,740 lbs whole weight Closed March 1 through May 31
Lesser Amberjack Banded Rudderfish Almaco Jack	14" - 22" fork length 14" - 22" fork length None	None None None	None (NOTE: Combined ACL of 189,422 lbs round weight) None None



Coral and Shellfish

Corals and Coral Reefs

Species	Notes
Allowable Octocorals	Octocorals (soft corals) were removed from the Coral and Coral Reefs Fishery Management Plan and are now managed by Florida FWC in state and federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico. See Florida Fish Wildlife & Conservation Commission regulations.
Live Rock	Harvest or possession of wild live rock is prohibited. Harvest and possession of aquacultured live rock requires a permit.
Other Marine Life Organisms	Marine life organisms from the EEZ harvested or possessed by Florida residents or landed in Florida are subject to Florida's Marine Life Rule. Contact Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission for more information 850-488-4676.



Shellfish

Species	Size Limit	Trip Limit	Quotas/Closed Seasons
Spiny Lobster	Carapace more than 3" or tail more than 5-1/2". Divers must measure in water. See page 14.	None	Closed 4/1 through 8/5
Shrimp	None, but white shrimp taken in the EEZ and transported to Louisiana must comply with minimum size limit of that state.	None	Royal red shrimp is exempt. Royal red annual catch limit - 337,000 lbs. tail weight. Royal red season opens 1/1 and closes when the quota is reached or projected to be reached.

Commercial Permit Requirements

Applications for permits (except for tuna) may be obtained from the National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Avenue S., St. Petersburg, Florida 33701, or by calling 877-376-4877. Tuna permits may be obtained by calling 888-872-8862 or 978-281-9260.

Permit	Required for:
Spiny lobster federal vessel permit or Florida commercial harvester license and certificates	Florida commercial harvester license and certificates required for harvest or possession in excess of the bag limits in the EEZ off Florida or to land or sell in Florida. Federal vessel permit required for harvest or possession in excess of the bag limits in the EEZ other than off Florida or sale other than Florida. May retain up to 50 spiny lobsters under the minimum size limit, and one per trap.
Spiny lobster tail separation permit	Possession of a separated spiny lobster tail in or from the EEZ aboard a vessel. Also requires a spiny lobster federal vessel permit or Florida state license and certificates. Fishermen with tailing permits must land spiny lobster all whole or all tailed.
Shrimp	Permit required for all vessels that intend to fish for shrimp in EEZ waters of the Gulf of Mexico. Permit moratorium in effect. Shrimp trawlers must have a bycatch reduction device (BRD) installed on each net rigged for fishing. Additionally, shrimp trawlers must have an approved turtle excluder device (TED) installed in each net that is rigged for fishing.
Mackerel vessel permit	Harvest of king or Spanish mackerel under quota and in excess of the bag limits. Issuance of new king mackerel permits is under moratorium, but existing permits are transferable. There is no moratorium on Spanish mackerel permits, but these permits are not transferable.
King mackerel gillnet endorsement	Harvest of king mackerel in the Florida west coast subzone using a gillnet. Also requires a mackerel vessel permit. Permit moratorium, area restrictions, and restrictions on permit transfer are in effect.
Reef fish vessel permit	Harvest and sale of all reef fish listed in the Reef Fish Fishery Management Plan under quota (where applicable) and in excess of the bag limits (where applicable), except goliath grouper and Nassau grouper (for which all harvest is prohibited). Issuance of new reef fish permits is under moratorium. Existing permits are transferable.

Commercial Permit Requirements *continued*

Permit	Required for:
Aquacultured live rock permit	Possession or harvest of cultivated live rock. Florida state permits are also required to land live rock in Florida. Wild live rock possession/harvest prohibited.
Allowable octocoral permit	Octocorals (soft corals) were removed from the Coral and Coral Reefs Fishery Management Plan and are now managed by Florida FWC in state and federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico. See Florida Fish Wildlife & Conservation Commission regulations.
Commercial tuna categories: General, longline, purse seine, harpoon, charter/headboat	Vessels must have one of these permits to sell Atlantic bluefin tuna, albacore, Atlantic bonito, bigeye tuna, skipjack tuna, or yellowfin tuna. Separate Atlantic bluefin quota and gear restrictions apply to each category. For more information contact the Atlantic tunas information hotline at 888-872-8862 or the NMFS HMS Division at 978-281-9260.
Swordfish vessel permit	Commercial harvest and sale of swordfish under quota.
Shark vessel permit	Harvest and sale of sharks listed in the management unit of the Atlantic Sharks Fishery Management Plan under quota and in excess of bag limits.
Dealer permits	A dealer to receive Gulf reef fish harvested from federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico. A Gulf IFQ dealer endorsement is also required. Call 1-866-425-7627 for more information.










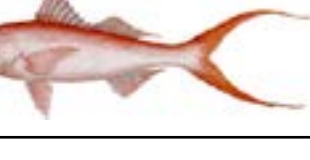



Additional Rules

Vessel Monitoring Systems are required onboard all vessels with federal commercial permits for Gulf reef fish, including charter vessels/headboats that also have a commercial reef fish permit.
Entangling nets may not be used for directed harvest of reef fish.
Reef Fish taken under recreational bag limit may not be sold.
Commercial vessels are prohibited from retaining reef fish caught under the recreational size and bag/possession limit when commercial quantities of Gulf reef fish are on board.
Reef fish as bait, except sand perch or dwarf sand perch, is prohibited.
Reef fish gear is limited to no more than 3 hooks in a special management zone off Alabama. Nonconforming gear is restricted to bag limits, or for reef fish without a bag limit, to 5% by weight of all fish onboard.
Vessels with shrimp trawls or entangling net gear onboard may not exceed the recreational reef fish bag limits.
Stressed areas for reef fish begin at the shoreward boundary of federal waters and generally follow the 10 fathom contour from the Dry Tortugas to Sanibel Island; the 20 fathom contour to Tarpon Springs; the 10 fathom contour to Cape San Blas; the 25 fathom contour to south of Mobile Bay; the 13 fathom contour to Ship Island, Mississippi; the 10 fathom contour off Louisiana; and the 30 fathom contour off Texas. In designated "stressed areas" use of roller trawls and power heads is prohibited.
All fish except for bait and oceanic migratory species taken from federal waters must have heads and fins intact through landing. Legal size fish within bag limit may be consumed at sea.
Pelagic longlining for highly migratory pelagics is prohibited from the DeSoto Canyon area. Contact NMFS at 301-713-2347 for detailed coordinates.
A state may regulate vessels that are registered in that state and that are fishing in federal waters for species for which there are no federal fishery management plans or applicable federal regulations.
Vessels participating in the reef fish fishery must possess dehooking devices and use non-stainless steel circle hooks when using natural baits.
Operators of vessels with Gulf of Mexico reef fish commercial or charter vessel/headboat permits must comply with guidelines for proper care and release of incidentally caught smalltooth sawfish and sea turtles and possess onboard specific gear to ensure proper release of such species.













Species Identification

Artwork © Diane Rome Peebles

Red Snapper		Silk Snapper	
Vermilion Snapper		Yellowtail Snapper	
Lane Snapper		Blackfin Snapper	
Gray-Mangrove Snapper		Mutton Snapper	
Cubera Snapper		Queen Snapper	
Hogfish			

Species Identification *continued*

Artwork © Diane Rome Peebles

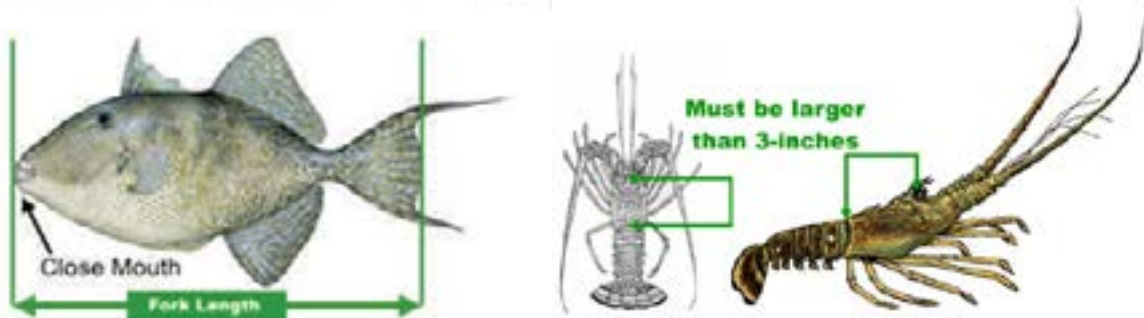
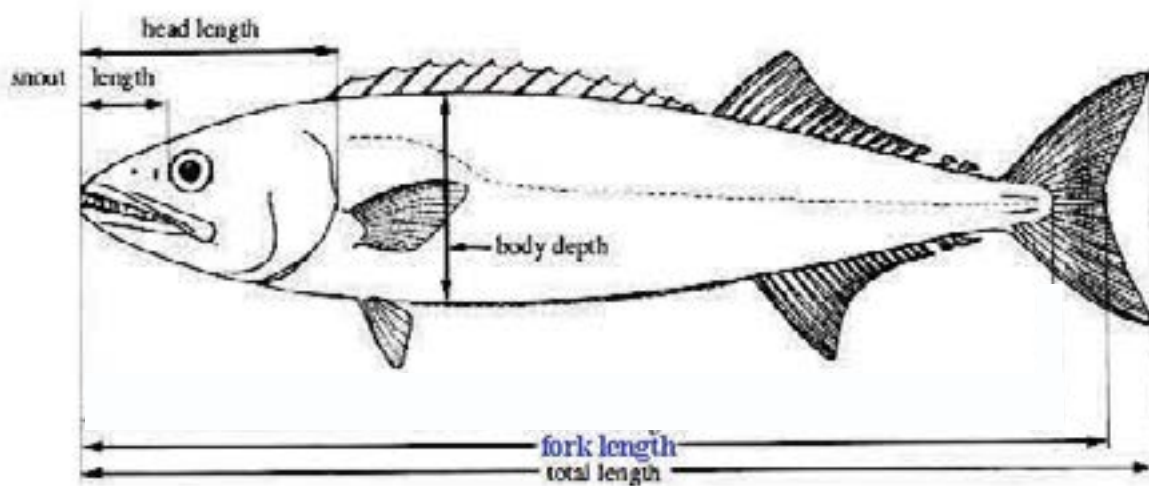
Black Grouper		Greater Amberjack	
Gag Grouper		Lesser Amberjack	
Red Grouper		Banded Rudderfish	
Yellowmouth		Cobia (ling)	
Yellowfin		Spanish Mackerel	
Scamp		King Mackerel	

Measurement Guidelines

Fork length: the straight-line distance from the tip of the head (snout) to the rear center edge of the tail (caudal fin).

Total length: the straight-line distance from the tip of the snout to the tip of the tail (caudal fin), excluding any caudal filament, while the fish is lying on its side. The mouth of the fish may be closed and/or the tail may be squeezed together to give the greatest overall measurement.

Carapace length: The carapace is measured beginning at the forward edge between the rostral horns, excluding any soft tissue, and proceeding along the middle to the rear edge of the carapace.



Marine Sanctuaries and Area Closures

Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary

Below is a summary of regulated activity within the FGBNMS. For the full text, contact the Sanctuary office at 409-621-5151 or visit www.flowergarden.noaa.gov.

Fishing and Related Activities

The following activities are generally prohibited:

- Injuring, catching, harvesting, collecting or feeding, or attempting to injure, catch, harvest, collect or feed, any fish within the sanctuary by use of any gear, device, equipment or means (e.g. spear guns, nets) except by use of conventional hook and line gear.
- Possessing (except while passing through the sanctuary without interruption) any fishing gear, device, equipment, or means except conventional hook and line gear.
- Possessing or using explosives or releasing electrical charges within the sanctuary.

Conventional hook and line gear means any fishing apparatus operated aboard a vessel and composed of a single line terminated by a combination of sinkers and hooks or lures and spooled upon a reel that may be hand or electrically operated, hand-held or mounted.

Anchoring and Mooring

The following activities are prohibited:

- Anchoring any vessel within the Sanctuary.
- Mooring a vessel over 100 feet in registered length on a Sanctuary mooring buoy.

Discharges

Discharging or depositing any material or other matter within the Sanctuary is prohibited, with the following exceptions:

- Fish, fish parts, chumming materials or bait used in or resulting from fishing with conventional hook and line gear in the sanctuary.
- Clean effluent from an operable Type I or Type II marine sanitation devise (MSD).
- Clean water generated by routine vessel operations (e.g. engine exhaust, cooling water, deck wash down, and gray water), excluding oily wastes from bilge pumping.

Injury to or Possession of Sanctuary Resources

The following activities are generally prohibited:

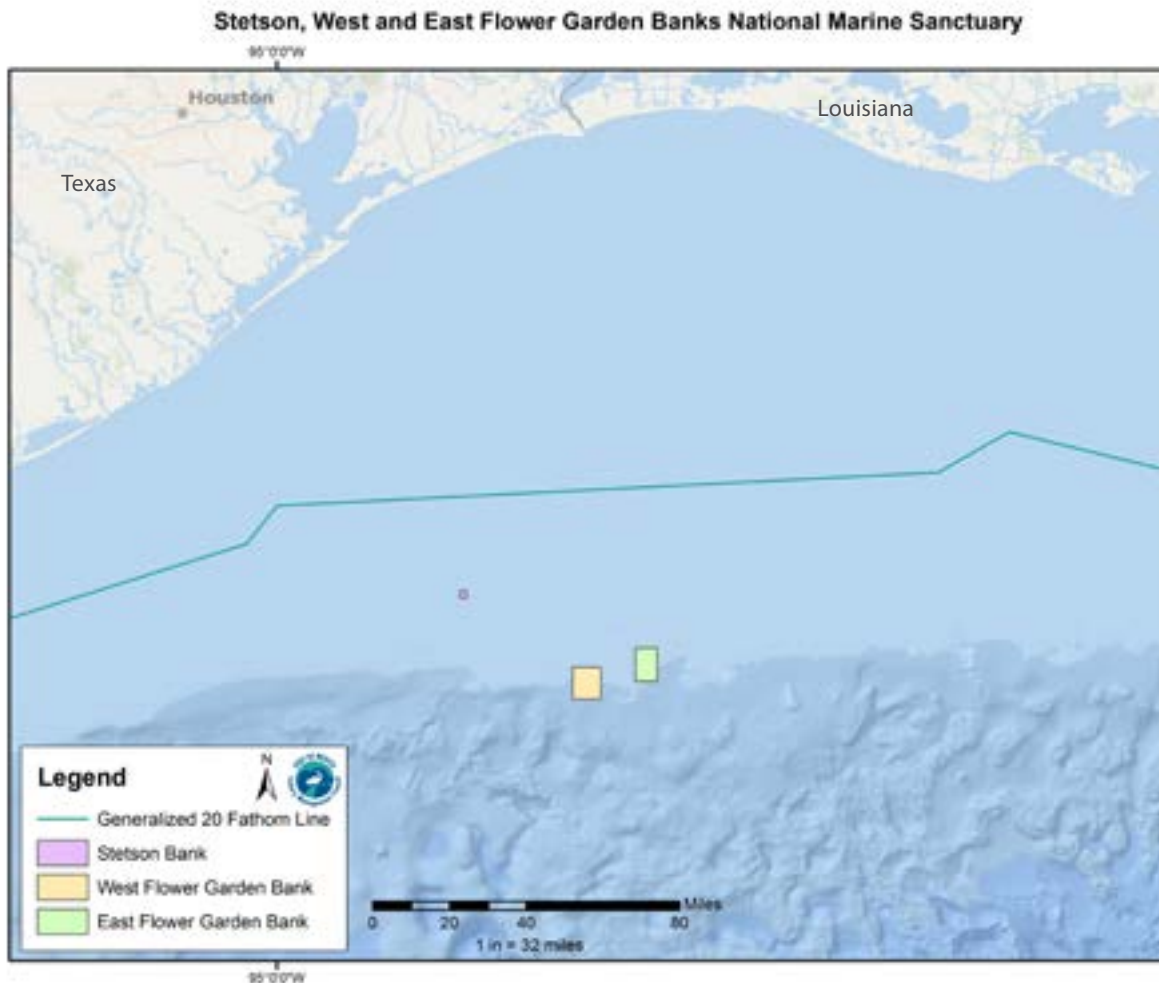
- Injuring or removing, or attempting to injure or remove, any coral or other bottom formation, coralline algae or other plant, marine invertebrate (e.g., *spiny lobster*, *queen conch*, *shell*, *sea urchin*), brine-seep biota or carbonate rock.
- Possessing within the Sanctuary (regardless of where collected), any coral or other bottom formation, coralline algae or other plant, or fish (except for fish caught by use of conventional hook and line gear).
- Drilling into, dredging, or otherwise altering the seabed of the sanctuary; or constructing, placing, or abandoning any structure, material, or other matter on the seabed of the Sanctuary.

Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary

50 CFR: Wildlife and Fisheries - PART 622 FISHERIES OF THE CARIBBEAN, GULF OF MEXICO, AND SOUTH ATLANTIC
§622.34 - Gulf EEZ seasonal and/or area closures.

(j) West and East Flower Garden Banks HAPC. Fishing with a bottom longline, bottom trawl, buoy gear, dredge, pot, or trap and bottom anchoring by fishing vessels are prohibited year-round.

(s) Stetson Bank HAPC. Fishing with a bottom longline, bottom trawl, buoy gear, pot, or trap and bottom anchoring by fishing vessels are prohibited year-round.



Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary

Stetson Bank		
Position	Latitude	Longitude
A	28°10'38.3" N	94°18'36.5" W
B	28°10'38.3" N	94°17'06.3" W
C	28°09'18.6" N	94°17'06.3" W
D	28°09'18.6" N	94°18'36.5" W
A	28°10'38.3" N	94°18'36.5" W

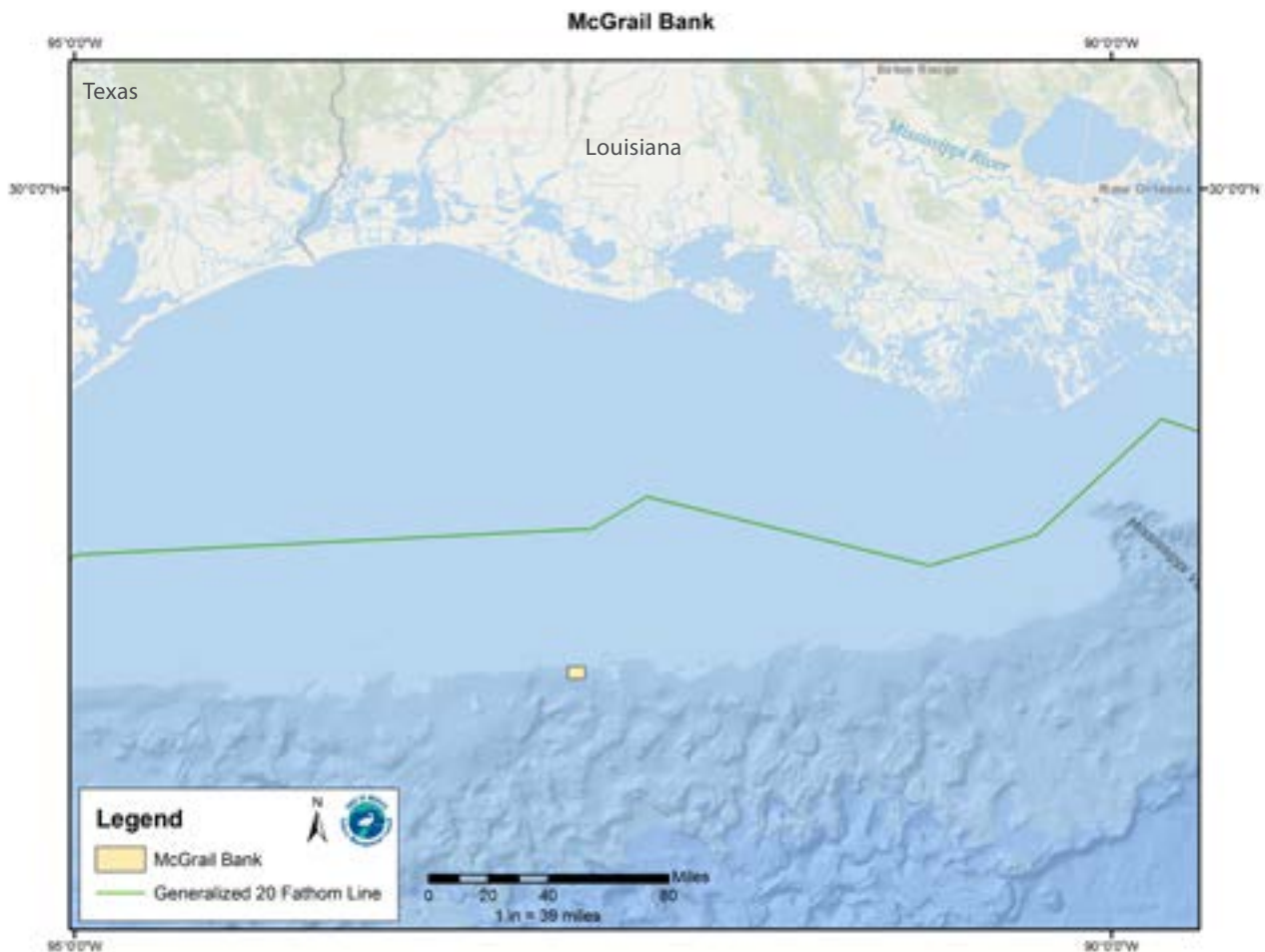
East Flower Garden Bank		
Position	Latitude	Longitude
A	27°59'14.4" N	93°38'58.2" W
B	27°59'14.4" N	93°34'03.5" W
C	27°52'36.5" N	93°34'03.5" W
D	27°52'36.5" N	93°38'58.2" W
A	27°59'14.4" N	93°38'58.2" W

West Flower Garden Bank		
Position	Latitude	Longitude
A	27°55'22.8" N	93°53'09.6" W
B	27°55'22.8" N	93°46'46.0" W
C	27°49'03.0" N	93°46'46.0" W
D	27°49'03.0" N	93°53'09.6" W
A	27°55'22.8" N	93°53'09.6" W

McGrail Bank

50 CFR: Wildlife and Fisheries - PART 622 FISHERIES OF THE CARIBBEAN, GULF OF MEXICO, AND SOUTH ATLANTIC
§622.34 - Gulf EEZ seasonal and/or area closures.

(t) McGrail Bank HAPC. Fishing with a bottom longline, bottom trawl, buoy gear, pot, or trap and bottom anchoring by fishing vessels are prohibited year-round.



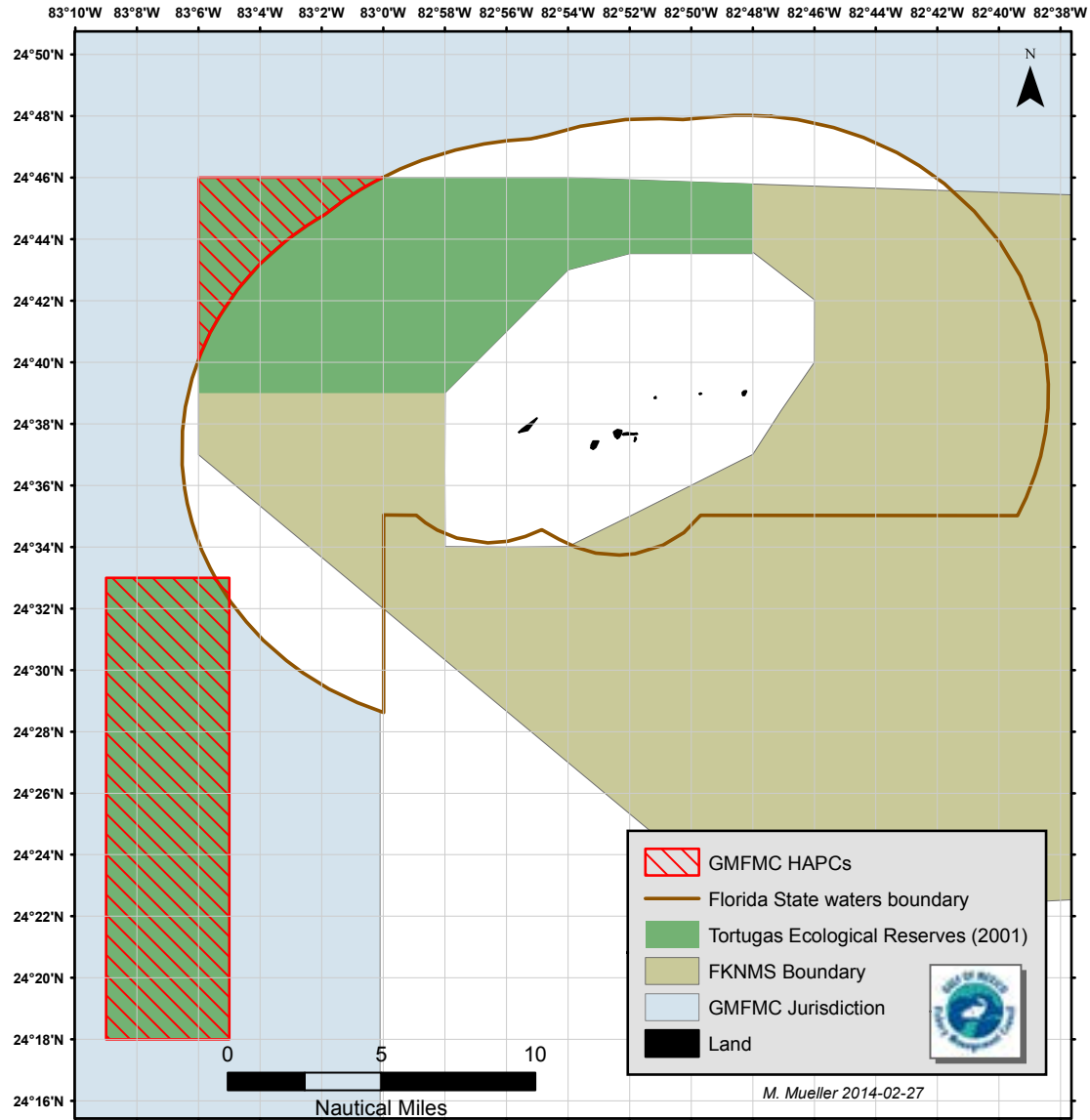
McGrail Bank

Fishing with a bottom longline, bottom trawl, buoy gear, pot, or trap and bottom anchoring by fishing vessels are prohibited year-round.

McGrail Bank		
Position	Latitude	Longitude
A	27°59'06.0"N	92°37'19.2"W
B	27°59'06.0"N	92°32'17.4"W
C	27°55'55.5"N	92°32'17.4"W
D	27°55'55.5"N	92°37'19.2"W
A	27°59'06.0"N	92°37'19.2"W

Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

Tortugas North and South Ecological Reserves



Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary

The following locations are closed to all fishing. Anchoring of fishing vessels is also not allowed. The boundaries of the areas are as follows:

Tortugas North Ecological Reserve		
Point	Latitude	Longitude
A	24°46'00" N	83°06'00" W
B	24°46'00" N	82°54'00" W
C	24°45'80" N	82°48'00" W
D	24°43'53" N	82°48'00" W
E	24°43'53" N	82°52'00" W
F	24°43'00" N	82°54'00" W
G	24°39'00" N	82°58'00" W
H	24°39'00" N	83°06'00" W
A	24°46'00" N	83°06'00" W

Tortugas South Ecological Reserve		
Point	Latitude	Longitude
A	24°33'00" N	83°09'00" W
B	24°33'00" N	83°05'00" W
C	24°18'00" N	83°05'00" W
D	24°18'00" N	83°09'00" W
A	24°33'00" N	83°09'00" W

Longline Closure

50 CFR: Wildlife and Fisheries - PART 622 FISHERIES OF THE CARIBBEAN, GULF OF MEXICO, AND SOUTH ATLANTIC §622.34 - Gulf EEZ seasonal and/or area closures.

(q) Prohibitions applicable to bottom longline fishing for Gulf reef fish.

(1) From June through August each year, bottom longlining for Gulf reef fish is prohibited in the portion of the Gulf EEZ east of 85°30' W. longitude

(2) Within the prohibited area and time period specified in paragraph (q)(1) of this section, a vessel with bottom longline gear on board may not possess Gulf reef fish unless the bottom longline gear is appropriately stowed, and a vessel that is using bottom longline gear to fish for species other than Gulf reef fish may not possess Gulf reef fish. For the purposes of paragraph (q) of this section, appropriately stowed means that a longline may be left on the drum if all gangions and hooks are disconnected and stowed below deck; hooks cannot be baited; and all buoys must be disconnected from the gear but may remain on deck.

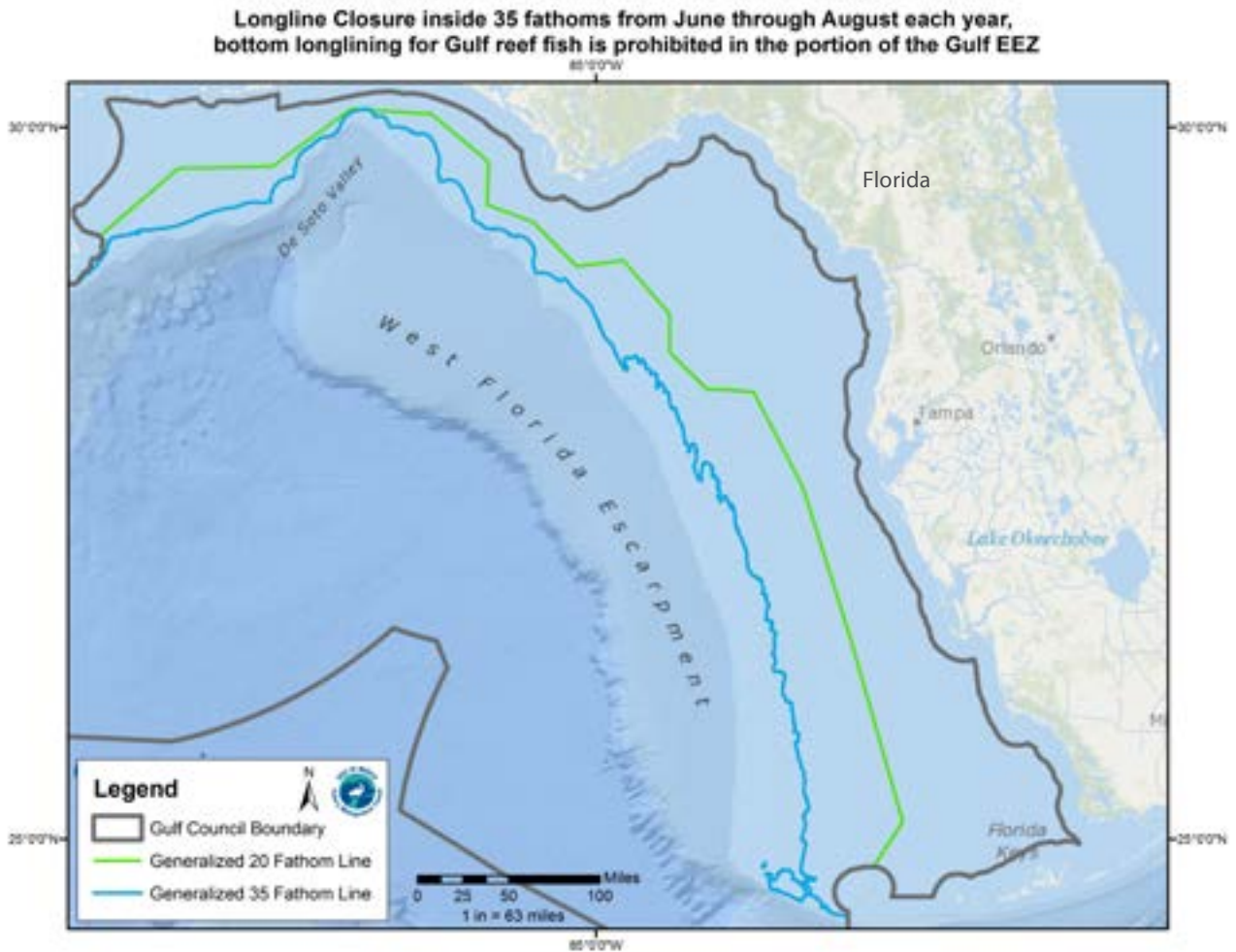
(3) Within the Gulf EEZ east of 85°30' W. longitude, a vessel for which a valid eastern Gulf reef fish bottom longline endorsement has been issued that is fishing bottom longline gear or has bottom longline gear on board cannot possess more than a total of 1000 hooks including hooks on board the vessel and hooks being fished and cannot possess more than 750 hooks rigged for fishing at any given time. For the purpose of this paragraph, "hooks rigged for fishing" means hooks attached to a line or other device capable of attaching to the mainline of the longline.

(c) Reef fish longline and buoy gear restricted area. A person aboard a vessel that uses, on any trip, longline or buoy gear in the longline and buoy gear restricted area is limited on that trip to the bag limits for Gulf reef fish specified in §622.38(b) and, for Gulf reef fish for which no bag limit is specified in §622.38(b), the vessel is limited to 5 percent, by weight, of all fish on board or landed.

NOTE: A bottom longline endorsement is required to fish for reef fish east of Cape San Blas, Florida. The use of longlines and buoy gear for reef fish is prohibited inside of 50 fathoms west of Cape San Blas, Florida. East of Cape San Blas, the use of longlines and buoy gear for reef fish is prohibited inside of 20 fathoms year round and 35 fathoms during June - August (see next page). Vessels fishing within this zone and possessing longlines or buoy gear may not exceed the recreational bag limits, and for reef fish without a bag limit, 5% by weight of all fish aboard.

Longline Closure

From June through August each year, bottom longlining for Gulf reef fish is prohibited in the portion of the Gulf EEZ east of 85°30'W. longitude (Cape San Blas).



Longline Closure

From June through August each year, bottom longlining for Gulf reef fish is prohibited in the portion of the Gulf EEZ east of 85°30'W. longitude (Cape San Blas).

Longline Closure		
Position	Latitude	Longitude
A	28°58.70' N	85°30.00' W
B	28°59.25' N	85°26.70' W
C	28°57.00' N	85°13.80' W
D	28°47.40' N	85°3.90' W
E	28°19.50' N	84°43.00' W
F	28°00.80' N	84°20.00' W
G	26°48.80' N	83°40.00' W
H	25°17.00' N	83°19.00' W
I	24°54.00' N	83°21.00' W
J	24°29.50' N	83°12.30' W
K	24°29.50' N	83°00.00' W

Madison Swanson, Steamboat Lumps, and the Edges

50 CFR: Wildlife and Fisheries - PART 622 FISHERIES OF THE CARIBBEAN, GULF OF MEXICO, AND SOUTH ATLANTIC §622.34 - Gulf EEZ seasonal and/or area closures.

(k) Closure provisions applicable to the Madison and Swanson sites, Steamboat Lumps, and the Edges.

(2) Within the Madison and Swanson sites and Steamboat Lumps, possession of Gulf reef fish is prohibited, except for such possession aboard a vessel in transit with fishing gear stowed as specified in paragraph (k)(4) of this section.

(3) Within the Madison and Swanson sites and Steamboat Lumps during November through April, and within the Edges during January through April, all fishing is prohibited, and possession of any fish species is prohibited, except for such possession aboard a vessel in transit with fishing gear stowed as specified in paragraph (k)(4) of this section. The provisions of this paragraph, (k)(3), do not apply to highly migratory species.

(4) For the purpose of paragraph (k) of this section, transit means non-stop progression through the area; fishing gear appropriately stowed means -

(i) A longline may be left on the drum if all gangions and hooks are disconnected and stowed below deck. Hooks cannot be baited. All buoys must be disconnected from the gear; however, buoys may remain on deck.

(ii) A trawl net may remain on deck, but trawl doors must be disconnected from the trawl gear and must be secured.

(iii) A gillnet must be left on the drum. Any additional gillnets not attached to the drum must be stowed below deck.

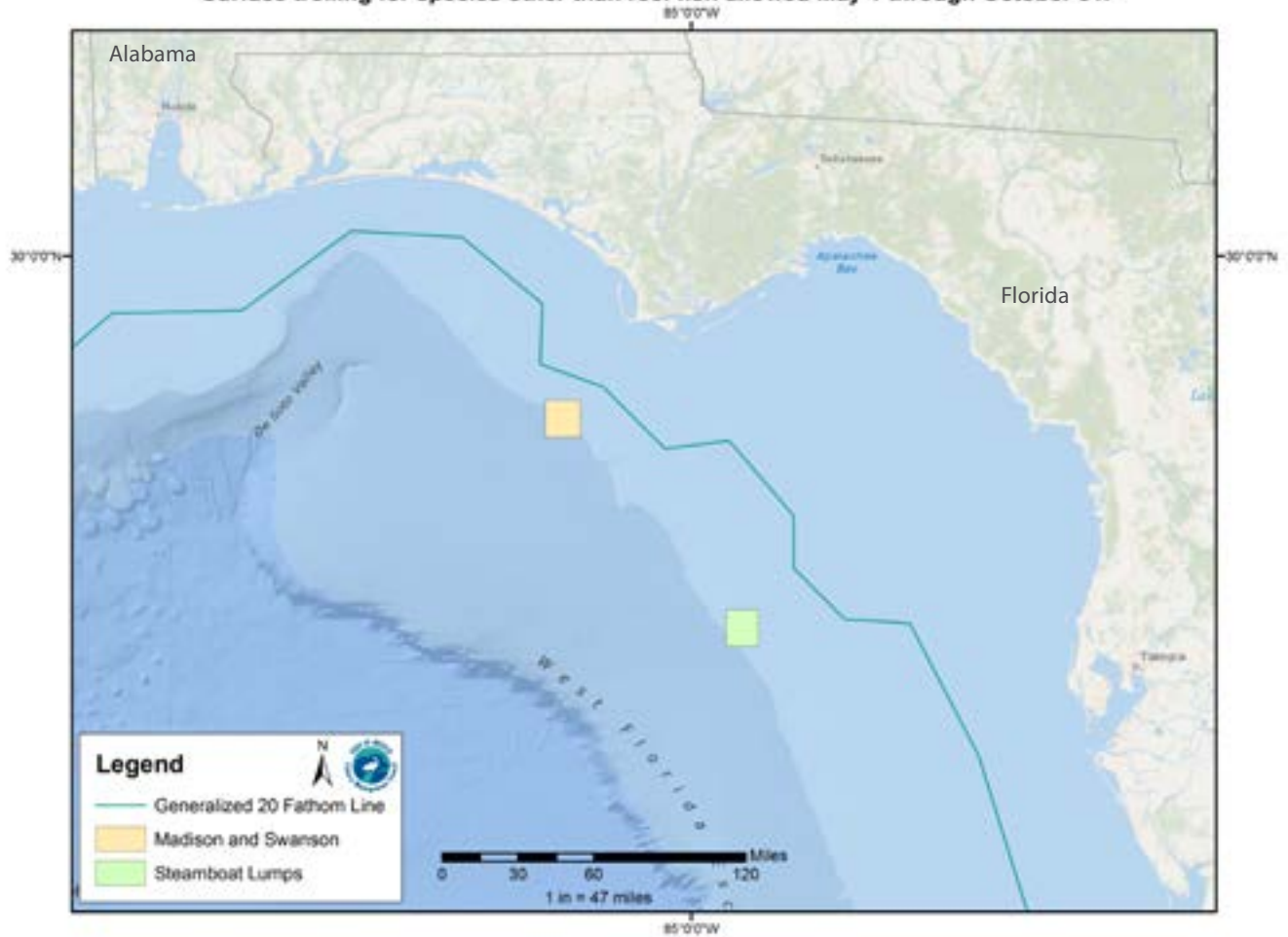
(iv) A rod and reel must be removed from the rod holder and stowed securely on or below deck. Terminal gear (i.e., hook, leader, sinker, flasher, or bait) must be disconnected and stowed separately from the rod and reel. Sinkers must be disconnected from the down rigger and stowed separately.

(5) Within the Madison and Swanson sites and Steamboat Lumps, during May through October, surface trolling is the only allowable fishing activity. For the purpose of this paragraph (k)(5), surface trolling is defined as fishing with lines trailing behind a vessel which is in constant motion at speeds in excess of four knots with a visible wake. Such trolling may not involve the use of down riggers, wire lines, planers, or similar devices.

(6) For the purpose of paragraph (k) of this section, fish means finfish, mollusks, crustaceans, and all other forms of marine animal and plant life other than marine mammals and birds. Highly migratory species means tuna species, marlin (*Tetrapturus* spp. and *Makaira* spp.), oceanic sharks, sailfishes (*Istiophorus* spp.), and swordfish (*Xiphias gladius*).

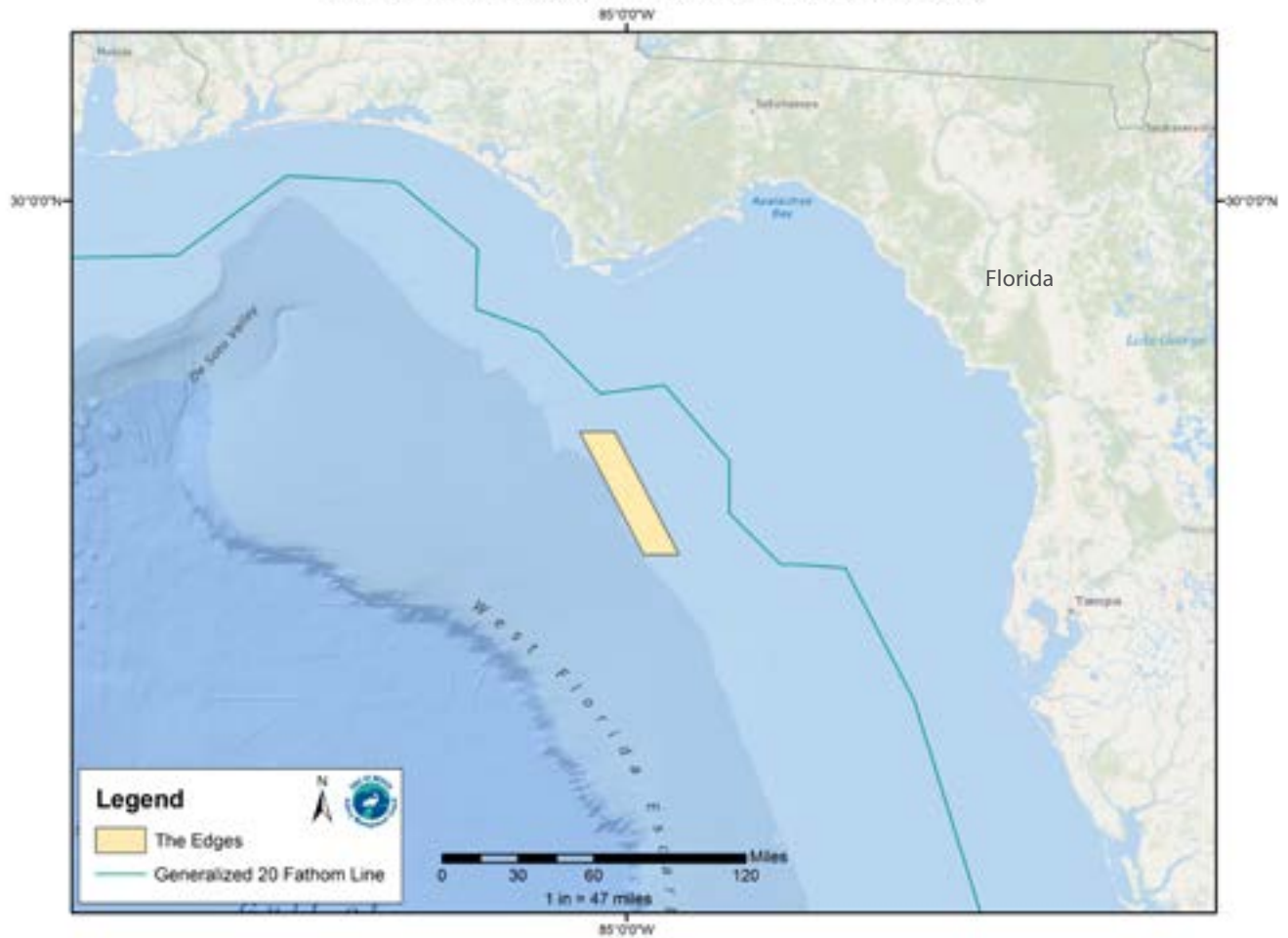
Madison Swanson and Steamboat Lumps

Madison-Swanson and Steamboat Lumps Marine Reserves closed year round to reef-fish fishing. Surface trolling for species other than reef fish allowed May 1 through October 31.



The Edges (40 fathom contour)

The Edges is closed to all fishing January 1 through April 30



Madison-Swanson and Steamboat Lumps Reserves are closed to reef-fish fishing year round. Surface trolling for species other than reef fish is allowed May 1 through October 31.

Madison-Swanson Marine Reserve		
Position	Latitude	Longitude
A	29°17' N	85°50' W
B	29°17' N	85°38' W
C	29°06' N	85°38' W
D	29°06' N	85°50' W
A	29°17' N	85°50' W

Steamboat Lumps Marine Reserve		
Position	Latitude	Longitude
A	28°14' N	84°48' W
B	28°14' N	84°37' W
C	28°03' N	84°37' W
D	28°03' N	84°48' W
A	28°14' N	84°48' W

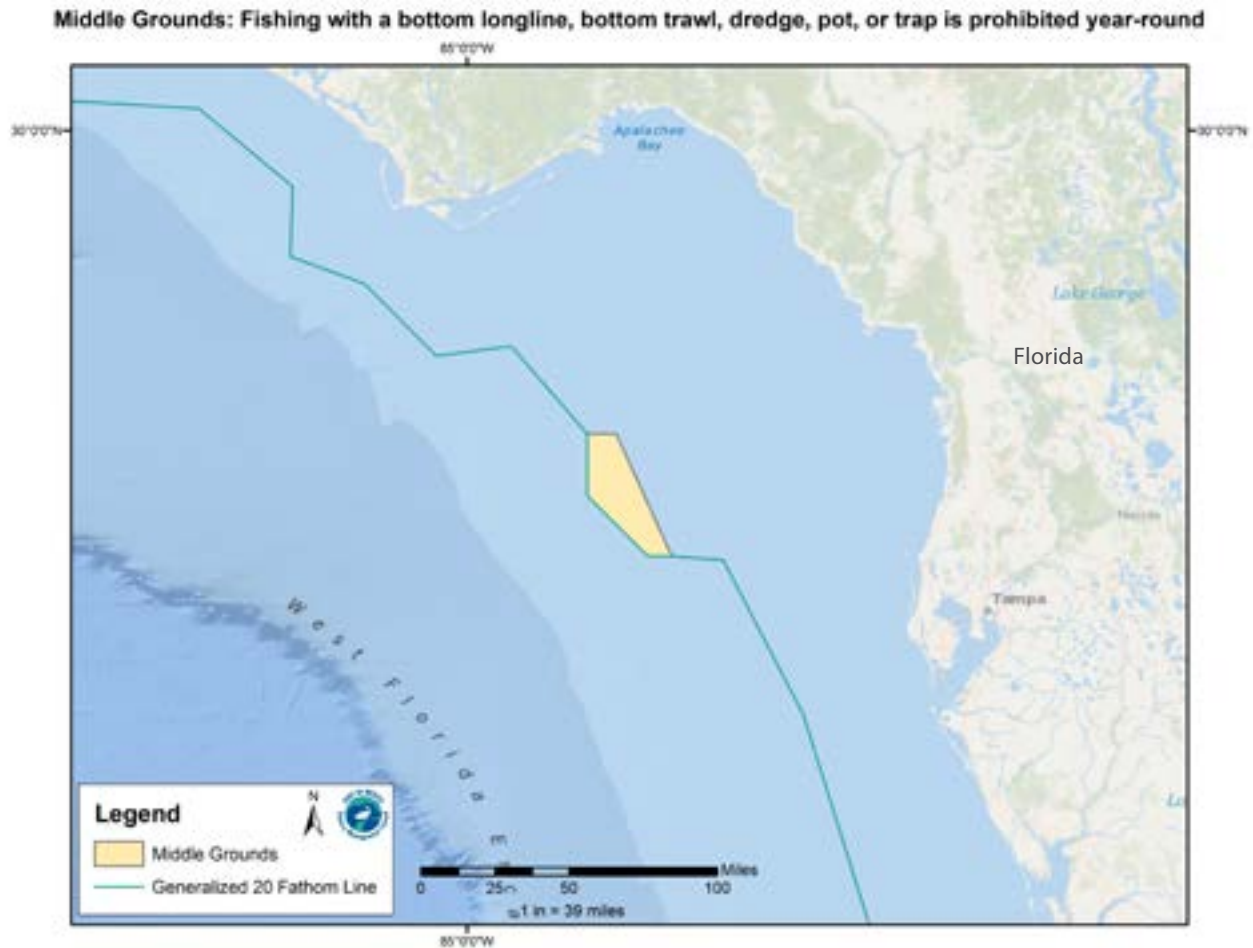
The Edges (40 fathom contour) is closed January 1 through April 30 to all fishing. The Edges is a 390 nautical square mile region northwest of Steamboat Lumps.

The Edges		
Position	Latitude	Longitude
A	28°51'00" N	85°16'00" W
B	28°51'00" N	85°04'00" W
C	28°14'00" N	84°42'00" W
D	28°14'00" N	84°54'00" W
A	28°51'00" N	85°16'00" W

The Middle Grounds

50 CFR: Wildlife and Fisheries - PART 622 FISHERIES OF THE CARIBBEAN, GULF OF MEXICO, AND SOUTH ATLANTIC
§622.34 - Gulf EEZ seasonal and/or area closures.

(b) Florida middle grounds HAPC. Fishing with a bottom longline, bottom trawl, dredge, pot, or trap is prohibited year round.



The Middle Grounds

Fishing with a bottom longline, bottom trawl, dredge, pot, or trap is prohibited year-round.

Middle Grounds		
Position	Latitude	Longitude
A	28°42.5' N	84°24.8' W
B	28°42.5' N	84°16.3' W
C	28°11.0' N	84°00.0' W
D	28°11.0' N	84°07.0' W
E	28°26.6' N	84°24.8' W
A	28°42.5' N	84°24.8' W

Pulley Ridge

50 CFR: Wildlife and Fisheries - PART 622 FISHERIES OF THE CARIBBEAN, GULF OF MEXICO, AND SOUTH ATLANTIC
§622.34 - Gulf EEZ seasonal and/or area closures.

(r) Pulley Ridge HAPC. Fishing with a bottom longline, bottom trawl, buoy gear, pot, or trap and bottom anchoring by fishing vessels are prohibited year-round in the HAPC.



Pulley Ridge

Fishing with a bottom longline, bottom trawl, buoy gear, pot, or trap and bottom anchoring by fishing vessels are prohibited year-round in the HAPC.

Pulley Ridge		
Position	Latitude	Longitude
A	24°58'18" N	83°38'33" W
B	24°58'18" N	83°37'00" W
C	24°41'11" N	83°37'00" W
D	24°40'00" N	83°41'22" W
E	24°43'55" N	83°47'15" W
A	24°58'18" N	83°38'33" W

Gulf of Mexico Federal Waters

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council manages fisheries in the federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico Exclusive Economic Zone. Federal waters begin where state waters end and extend to the 200-mile limit of the Gulf of Mexico.

Title 50: Wildlife and Fisheries

Part 600 - Magnuson-Stevens Act Provisions
Subpart B - Regional Fishery Management Councils

§ 600.105 Intercouncil boundaries.

(c) South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico Councils. The Boundary coincides with the line of demarcation between the Atlantic Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico, which begins at the intersection of the outer boundary of the EEZ, as specified in the Magnuson-Stevens Act, and 83°00' W long., proceeds northward along that meridian to 24° 35' N lat. (near the Dry Tortugas Islands), thence eastward along that parallel, through Rebecca Shoal and the Quicksand Shoal, to the Marquesas Keys, and then through the Florida Keys to the mainland at the eastern end of Florida Bay, the line so running that the narrow waters within the Dry Tortugas Islands, the Marquesas Keys and the Florida Keys, and between the Florida Keys and the mainland are within the Gulf of Mexico.

State Authority in Federal Waters

A state may regulate vessels that are registered in that state and fishing in federal waters for species for which there are no federal fishery management plans or applicable federal regulations, or for which the appropriate fishery management plan has delegated management of the state and the state rules are consistent with federal regulations.

NOTE: Federally permitted for-hire reef fish vessels must comply with the more restrictive of federal or state reef fish regulations when fishing for reef fish in state waters.

Important Phone Numbers

NMFS Operations Branch	727-824-5305
NMFS Permits and Regulations Branch (see below for tuna permit applications)	877-376-4877
To apply for permits online visit www.nmfspermits.com	
NMFS nationwide federal fishing violations hotline	800-853-1964
NMFS 24-hour tuna information line (also for tuna permits)	888-872-8862
NMFS Highly Migratory Species Division	301-713-2347
NMFS Swordfish/Billfish Recreational Reporting	800-894-5528
Flower Garden Banks National Marine Sanctuary	409-621-5151
Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary	305-809-4700
South Atlantic Fishery Management Council	843-571-4366
Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission	228-875-5912
U.S. Coast Guard, 7th District (Florida east of St. Marks)	305-415-6781
U.S. Coast Guard, 8th District (St. Marks, Florida to Texas)	504-671-2245
Regional NMFS Office for Law Enforcement	727-824-5344
NMFS Enforcement Field Offices:	
St. Petersburg, Florida	727-893-3616
Marathon, Florida	305-743-3110
Niceville, Florida	850-729-8628
Slidell, Louisiana	985-643-6232
Galveston, Texas	409-770-0812
Harlingen, Texas	956-423-3450

Important Phone Numbers *continued*

State Agencies	
Alabama Department of Conservation & Marine Resources	251-861-2882
Information or to report state fishing violations	251-986-7576
24-Hour voice mail to report state fishing violations	251-476-1256
Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission Information	850-488-4676
To report state fishing violations	850-488-9924
	888-404-3922
Cellular phone	*FWC
Louisiana Department of Wildlife & Fisheries Information	225-765-2800
To report state fishing violations	800-442-2511
Mississippi Department of Marine Resources Information and to report state fishing violations	228-374-5000
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department Information	800-792-1112
To report state fishing violations	800-792-game

Regulation Changes and Updates

Supplemental “update sheets” will be published periodically to reflect changes in fishing regulations implemented since this pamphlet was published. For up-to-date regulations visit www.gulfcouncil.org or download our free regulations app. Just visit the Android Market or iTunes and search for “Gulf Council”.

NOTE: The Official Electronic Code of Federal Regulations for 50 CFR 622 for Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic is available online. Please visit www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html.

Notes:

