



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

National Marine Fisheries Service, Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701

FOR INFORMATION CONTACT:

Bill Arnold or bill.arnold@noaa.gov

727-824-5305, FAX 727-824-5308

June 2, 2016

FB16-038

Reduced Fishing Season Lengths for Several Species and Species Groups in Federal Waters around Puerto Rico for the 2016 Fishing Year

NOAA Fisheries has determined that the annual catch limits for several species and species groups in federal waters around Puerto Rico were exceeded based on average landings during the 2012-2014 fishing years. Therefore, NOAA Fisheries applies accountability measures, reducing the length of the 2016 fishing season for each of these species and species groups by the amount necessary to ensure landings do not exceed the applicable annual catch limit in 2016.

U.S. Caribbean federal waters around Puerto Rico consist of those waters extending from the nine nautical mile seaward boundary of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico out to 200 nautical miles offshore.

2016 Commercial Fishing Closures in Puerto Rico Federal Waters

The 2016 fishing season for the commercial harvest of the following species groups in federal waters around Puerto Rico will be reduced during 2016:

- Triggerfish and Filefish, including ocean (*Canthidermis sufflamen*), queen (*Balistes vetula*), and sargassum triggerfish (*Xanthichthys ringens*); scrawled (*Aluterus scriptus*) and whitespotted filefish (*Cantherhines macrocerus*); and black durgon (*Melichthys niger*), will close at **12:01 a.m. (local time) on October 16, 2016.**
- Wrasses, including hogfish (*Lachnolaimus maximus*), puddingwife (*Halichoeres radiatus*), and Spanish hogfish (*Bodianus rufus*), will close at **12:01 a.m. (local time) on November 16, 2016.**
- Snapper Unit 2, including queen (*Etelis oculatus*) and cardinal snapper (*Pristipomoides macrophthalmus*), will close at **12:01 a.m. (local time) on November 26, 2016.**
- Parrotfishes, including queen (*Scarus vetula*), princess (*Scarus taeniopterus*), striped (*Scarus iseri*), redband (*Sparisoma aurofrenatum*), redfin (*Sparisoma rubripinne*), redtail (*Sparisoma chrysopterum*), and stoplight (*Sparisoma viride*), will close at **12:01 a.m. (local time) on December 19, 2016.**

During the applicable closure, species included in that closure that are caught in federal waters of Puerto Rico

may not be purchased or sold. The fishing season for each of these species or species groups will reopen at 12:01 a.m. (local time) on January 1, 2017.

2016 Recreational Fishing Closures in Puerto Rico Federal Waters

The 2016 fishing season for the recreational harvest of the Jacks species group in federal waters around Puerto Rico will close at **12:01 am (local time) on November 4, 2016.** Managed jacks include horse-eye (*Caranx latus*), black (*Caranx lugubris*), almaco (*Seriola rivoliana*), bar (*Caranx ruber*), and yellow (*Caranx bartholomaei*); greater amberjack (*Seriola dumerili*); and blue runner (*Caranx crysos*).

During the closure, the bag and possession limits for the recreational harvest of jacks is zero. The fishing season for the recreational harvest of jacks in federal waters will reopen at 12:01 a.m. (local time) on January 1, 2017.

2016 Commercial and Recreational Closure in Puerto Rico Federal Waters

The 2016 fishing season for all harvest of spiny lobster (*Panulirus argus*) in federal waters around Puerto Rico will close at **12:01 a.m. (local time) on December 10, 2016.**

During the closure, spiny lobster in or from Puerto Rico federal waters may not be harvested, possessed, purchased, or sold and the bag and possession limits for the recreational harvest is zero. The 2017 fishing season for spiny lobster will reopen at 12:01 a.m. (local time) on January 1, 2017.

This action complies with regulations implemented under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, and is necessary to protect these resources.

This bulletin provides only a summary of the information regarding the existing regulations. Any discrepancies between this bulletin and the regulations as published in the *Federal Register* will be resolved in favor of the *Federal Register*.