

## **SC Regulatory History of Selected Finfish Species**

### **SC Managed Species**

**Sheepshead** (*Archosargus probatocephalus*) – SC adopted, by state statute, all federal regulations in place for sheepshead while part of the SAFMC's Snapper Grouper management unit since 1983 (20 fish aggregate bag limit – no minimum size). When sheepshead was removed from federal management, and new state laws in 2012 SC established the current state level regulations through SC State Code Sections (50-5-1705; 50-5-1710).

Currently – 10 fish/person/day limit; 30 fish boat limit; 14 inch (FL) minimum size

**Southern Flounder** (*Paralichthys lethostigma*) – SC regulates the harvest of three species of flounder collectively through common bag and size limits (Southern, summer and Gulf flounders). However, fishery landings data show that Southern flounder represent the vast majority of what anglers catch in SC waters through hook and line or gig fisheries.

### **SC Regulatory Chronology for Flounder**

**1 July 1990** – S 1390 signed into law and immediately effective to establish a minimum size length for flounder 12 inches total length.

**29 April 1991** – H 3349 signed into law and immediately effective. Establishes a 20 fish person per day creel limit for all flounder species and applies to recreational and commercial fishermen, although by omission from the list of covered gears, trawlers are allowed to exceed this limit.

**27 June 2007** – S 0489 signed into law and immediately takes effect. Raises the minimum legal size limit for flounder species from 12 inches to 14 inches (TL).

**31 March 2010** – S 1043 becomes effective. This bill established a 5 year “flounder population study” and a 10-fish personal daily limit and a 20-fish boat limit for the Murrell's Inlet/ Pawley's Island area only. It also prohibited the use of generators to be used in this area. The law lasted 5 years.

**23 April 2013** - Daylight gigging for flounder was outlawed in all state waters. For this activity, daylight is defined as official sunrise to official sunset.

**7 June 2013** – Senate Bill signed by Governor lowering the personal daily bag limit on flounder taken by means of gig, spear, hook and line, or similar device to 15 per person per day and 30 per boat per day. The bill did not take effect until July 1, 2014. The law continued to exempt trawlers and trapping from the daily limit. In addition, the law did not change the personal limit of 10 fish and boat limit of 20 fish for the area from Pawley's Island to Garden City Beach.

**1 July 2017** – SC Code 50-5-1705 and 50-5-1710 modified through legislative action to adopt a 10 flounder per person per day bag limit; a daily boat limit of 20 flounder; and a 15 inch (TL) minimum size.

## ASMFC Managed Species

**Red drum** (*Sciaenops ocellatus*) – Overarching management of red drum has been accomplished through compliance with the ASMFC Red Drum Management Plan since 2000.

<http://www.asmfc.org/species/red-drum>

### **SC Red Drum Regulatory Chronology**

- June 9, 1986 - 14-inch minimum size is set for months of June – August, along with an allowance for one fish greater than 32-inches
- June 30, 1986 - Red drum and spotted sea trout become game fish
- April 5, 1988 - 14-inch minimum size season is extended to October 1
- May 29, 1988 - 20 red drum bag set; may not gig from Jan 1 through March 1
- June 6, 1990 - 14-inch minimum size limit is extended to the entire year.
- January 29, 1991 - Bag limit is reduced from 20 to 5 fish per day, and closed gigging season is extend one month to include December
- June 11, 1993 - New maximum size of 27 inches is set – first slot limit
- August 31, 2001 - Bag reduced to two fish and slot reduced to 15-24 inches
- June 1, 2007 - Bag increased to three fish and slot changed to 15-23 inches
- July 1, 2018 – Bag reduced to 2 fish and a boat limit of 6 fish established

**Spotted seatrout** (*Cynoscion nebulosus*) – Overarching management of spotted sea trout has been accomplished through compliance with the ASMFC Spotted Sea trout Management Plan since 2000. <http://www.asmfc.org/species/spotted-seatrout>

### **SC Regulatory Chronology for Spotted Sea Trout**

- June 9, 1986 - minimum size limit of 12 set; bag limit of 20 fish/person/day
- February 17, 1987 - spotted sea trout becomes a game fish
- May 29, 1988 - spotted sea trout may not be gigged in Jan and February
- April 29, 1991 - bag reduced to 15, and December prohibition on gigging added
- May 28, 1998 - new bag limit for trout set at 10 and minimum size set at 13 inches
- June 15, 2007 - minimum size limit raised to 14 inches

**Weakfish** (*Cynoscion regalis*) - Overarching management of weakfish has been accomplished through compliance with the ASMFC Spotted Sea Trout Management Plan since 2000.

<http://www.asmfc.org/species/weakfish>

### **SC Regulatory Chronology for Weakfish**

- July 1, 2007 - Established minimum size limit of 12 inches and a bag limit of 10 fish/person/day
- July 1, 2010 – Reduced the bag limit to 1 fish/person/day

**Atlantic croaker** (*Micropogonias undulatus*) - Overarching management of Atlantic croaker has been accomplished through compliance with the ASMFC Atlantic Croaker Plan since 2000.

<http://www.asmfc.org/species/atlantic-croaker>

In July 2007 Atlantic croaker were included in an established small sciaenid aggregate bag limit of 50 fish/person/day, along with spot and whiting. No size limit applies.

**Bluefish** (*Pomatomus salatrix*) - Overarching management of bluefish has been accomplished through compliance with the ASMFC Bluefish Management Plan since 2000.

<http://www.asmfc.org/species/bluefish> and adoption of federal regulations for the species implemented by the MAFMC for federal waters.

Although bluefish are not commonly caught in SC waters, the state had imposed a recreational bag limit of 15 fish/person/day since at least 1992 as required under federal management and subsequently through the ASMFC Management Plan. This was changed in 2020 following adoption of the new federal regulations which required a recreational limit of 3 per person/day and 5 per person/day in the for hire fishery.

#### SAFMC Managed Species

**(Coastal Migratory Management Plan)** - <http://safmc.net/fishery-management-plans-amendments/coastal-migratory-pelagics/>

**Spanish mackerel** (*Scomberomorus maculatus*)

Current regulations -15 per person per day; 12 inch minimum length (FL)

#### **SC Regulatory History**

**1987:** SC Code of Laws Section 50-17-55(2) and (3) adopted the federal closed season, legal fishing gear requirements and 12 inch minimum length (FL) for Spanish mackerel.

**1992:** SC Code of Laws Section 50-17-510(B) and (C) maintained the federal closed season, legal fishing gear requirements and 12 inch minimum length (FL) for Spanish mackerel; and Section 50-17-510(F) adopted the federal catch and possession limits for a number of listed species managed under the Fishery Conservation and Management Act (PL94-265) as the Law of the State of SC, with Spanish mackerel specifically mentioned.

**2001:** SC Marine-related Laws reorganized under SC Code of Laws Title 50 Chapter 5.

SC Code of Laws Section 50-5-2730 reads – “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 Spanish mackerel–related regulation is pulled directly from the federal regulations as promulgated under Magnuson. No changes have been made to this approach in covering Spanish mackerel since the Chapter 5 rewrite in 2001.

### **King mackerel** (*Scomberomorus cavalla*)

Current regulations – 3 per person per day; 24 inch minimum length (FL)

#### **SC Regulatory History**

**1987:** SC Code of Laws Section 50-17-55(2) adopted the federal closed season and legal fishing gear requirements for king mackerel.

**1992:** SC Code of Laws Section 50-17-510(C) and Section 50-17-510(F) adopted the federal catch and possession limits for a number of listed species managed under the Fishery Conservation and Management Act (PL94-265) as the Law of the State of SC, with king mackerel specifically mentioned.

**2001:** SC Marine-related Laws reorganized under SC Code of Laws Title 50 Chapter 5. SC Code of Laws Section 50-5-2730 reads – “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 king mackerel–related regulation is pulled directly from the federal regulations as promulgated under Magnuson. No changes have been made to this approach in covering king mackerel since the Chapter 5 rewrite in 2001.

**(Snapper Grouper Management Plan)** - <http://safmc.net/fishery-management-plans-amendments/snapper-grouper-fishery-management-plan/>

### **Red snapper** (*Lutjanus campechanus*)

Current regulations - Possession prohibited

#### **SC Regulatory History**

**1987:** SC Code of Laws Section 50-17-55(3) adopted the federal size limits for a number of federally managed species, including red snapper. Minimum size was 12 inches (TL); fish must be landed with head and tail fins intact.

**1992:** SC Code of Laws Section 50-17-510(C) adopted the federal minimum size limits automatically for all species managed under the Fishery Conservation and Management Act (PL94-265); and Section 50-17-510(F) adopted the federal catch and possession limits for a number of listed species managed under the Fishery Conservation and Management Act (PL94-265) as the Law of the State of SC, with red snapper specifically mentioned.

**2001:** SC Marine-related Laws reorganized under SC Code of Laws Title 50 Chapter 5. SC Code of Laws Section 50-5-2730 reads – “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 red snapper-related regulation is pulled directly from the federal regulations as promulgated under Magnuson. No changes have been made to this approach in covering red snapper since the Chapter 5 rewrite in 2001.

### **Red Grouper (*Epinephelus morio*)**

Current regulations - No take 1 Jan – 30 Apr; Included in 3 grouper aggregate bag limit; 20 inch minimum length (TL)

### **SC Regulatory History**

**1987:** SC Code of Laws Section 50-17-55(3) adopted the federal size limits for a number of federally managed species, including red grouper. Minimum size was 12 inches (TL); fish must be landed with head and tail fins intact.

**1992:** SC Code of Laws Section 50-17-510(C) adopted the federal minimum size limits automatically for all species managed under the Fishery Conservation and Management Act (PL94-265); and Section 50-17-510(F) adopted the federal catch and possession limits for a number of listed species managed under the Fishery Conservation and Management Act (PL94-265) as the Law of the State of SC, with red grouper specifically mentioned.

**2001:** SC Marine-related Laws reorganized under SC Code of Laws Title 50 Chapter 5. SC Code of Laws Section 50-5-2730 reads – “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

red grouper–related regulation is pulled directly from the federal regulations as promulgated under Magnuson. No changes have been made to this approach in covering red grouper since the Chapter 5 rewrite in 2001.

**Red porgy** (*Pagrus pagrus*)

Current regulations – 3 per person/day; 14 inch minimum (TL)

### **SC Regulatory History**

**1992:** SC Code of Laws Section 50-17-510(C) adopted the federal minimum size limits automatically for all species managed under the Fishery Conservation and Management Act (PL94-265); and Section 50-17-510(F) adopted the federal catch and possession limits for a number of listed species managed under the Fishery Conservation and Management Act (PL94-265) as the Law of the State of SC, with all managed species of porgy specifically mentioned.

**2001:** SC Marine-related Laws reorganized under SC Code of Laws Title 50 Chapter 5. SC Code of Laws Section 50-5-2730 reads – “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 red porgy–related regulation is pulled directly from the federal regulations as promulgated under Magnuson. No changes have been made to this approach in covering red porgy since the Chapter 5 rewrite in 2001.

**Greater amberjack** (*Seriola dumerili*)

Current regulations – 1 fish/person/day bag limit; 28 inch minimum (FL)

### **SC Greater Amberjack Regulatory History**

**1992:** SC Code of Laws Section 50-17-510(C) adopted the federal minimum size limits automatically for all species managed under the Fishery Conservation and Management Act (PL94-265); and Section 50-17-510(F) adopted the federal catch and possession limits for a number of listed species managed under the Fishery Conservation and Management Act (PL94-265) as the Law of the State of SC, with greater amberjack specifically listed.

**2000:** SC Marine-related Laws reorganized under SC Code of Laws Title 50 Chapter 5. SC Code of Laws Section 50-5-2730 reads – “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 amberjack–related regulation is pulled directly from the federal regulations as promulgated under Magnuson. No changes have been made to this approach in covering greater amberjack since the Chapter 5 rewrite in 2001.