

The LA southern flounder fishery is governed by the Louisiana State Legislature, the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission, and the LDWF. A review of LA commercial and recreational SF regulations are presented below; full descriptions can be found in Adkins *et al.* (1998) and VanderKooy (2000).

Commercial

Commercial SF harvest regulations changed substantially from 1995 through 1999. Commercial harvest methods were restricted on August 15, 1995, when the Marine Resources Conservation Act of 1995 (Act 1316 of 1995 Regular Legislative Session) became effective. This act prohibited the use of “set” gill nets or trammel nets in saltwater areas of Louisiana, and restricted flounder harvest by "strike" nets to the period between the third Monday in October and March 1 of the following year. A "Restricted Species Permit" issued by LDWF was also required in order to harvest SF with that gear. In 1996, additional regulations became effective that outlawed the use of strike nets for SF harvest and limited the possession limit to 10 fish per person aboard a commercial vessel. In 1997, regulations were changed by Acts 1163 and 1352 of the 1997 Regular Legislative Session in which commercial shrimping vessels were limited to 100 pounds of southern flounder per trip. After March 1, 1997, all flounder harvest by gill or trammel nets was banned. These regulations substantially reduced the harvest of flounder by this segment of the commercial fishing industry. In 1999, regulations were changed by Act 220 of the 1999 Regular Legislative Session that eliminated the 100 pound harvest limit on commercial shrimping when southern flounder were harvested as incidental catch.

Current commercial regulations allow 10 fish for each licensed fisherman for each day on the water except commercial shrimping vessels may retain all SF caught incidentally. There is no size limit on commercially harvested SF.

Recreational

In 1996, recreational regulations were enacted that established a creel limit of ten SF per day per licensed angler, with only one day's limit allowed in possession. On August 15, 2004, regulations were changed by Act 460 of the 2003 Regular Legislative session, which allowed recreational harvest of SF with barbed gigs (prior to 2004 only barbless gigs were allowed). Current recreational regulations allow a 10 fish daily bag and possession limit per licensed angler with no size limit.

1.3 Trends in Harvest

Commercial