

Protect Georgia's Red Drum

Georgia's Red Drum fishery is at a critical decision point.

RESOURCE: Georgia's Red Drum needs regulation change or we will be forced into a moratorium by ASMFC.

THREAT: weak regulations

SUMMARY: Current projections suggest it could take 5 years to exit overfishing status and more than +25 years to rebuild to a healthy SPR 40% (F40) target. Managing only to F30-F35 slows recovery and prolongs stock vulnerability. Choosing a lower standard effectively trades long-term biological resilience for short-term harvest opportunity. If our goal is timely rebuilding and long-term stability, we should support the option that reflects the highest reduction in fishing mortality.

TAKE ACTION: Vote



By March 12

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

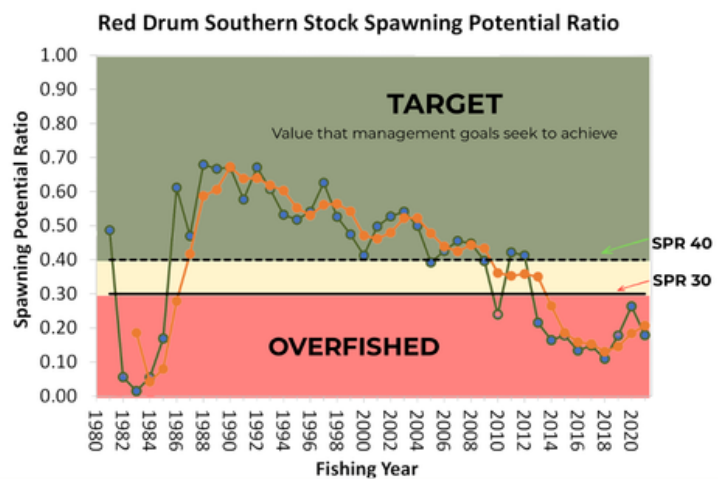
Contact:

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What's At Stake: If Georgia does not reduce its red drum catch, it risks undermining the long-term sustainability of coastal fisheries and the broader marine ecosystem. Red Drum (*Sciaenops ocellatus*) is a key nearshore predator and valuable recreational species; overharvest can lower spawning stock, reduce recruitment, and destabilize population structure. Economically, overharvest could trigger stricter federal rules, limit angler access, and harm charter, tackle, and tourism businesses. In short, failing to adjust catch limits now raises the likelihood of stock decline, regulatory action, and lasting ecological and economic costs.



Why We Care: If it takes 5 years to end overfishing and +25 years to rebuild to a healthy F40 stock, managing only to F30-F35 slows the recovery of Red Drum. While anything below F40 reduces fishing pressure, it does not rebuild spawning biomass or age structure as effectively as the full target. Choosing the stronger rebuilding goal supports faster recovery, greater long-term resilience, and more stable economic opportunity for coastal communities.



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What happens when decision-makers ignore the concerns of their constituents?

WHAT CAN I DO?

1. Vote by March 12th

coastalgadnr.org/reddrum



2. Call your legislator

◦ legis.ga.gov/find-my-legislator

HOW WILL THIS AFFECT ME?

If we do not make a change in Georgia, a change will be made for us by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC). ASMFC has the right to report any state in violation of not reaching the SPR target in a reasonable amount of time. Which could lead to a moratorium/ fishery closure/ Red Drum being 'catch & release' only. Let's make the fastest change to SPR 40.

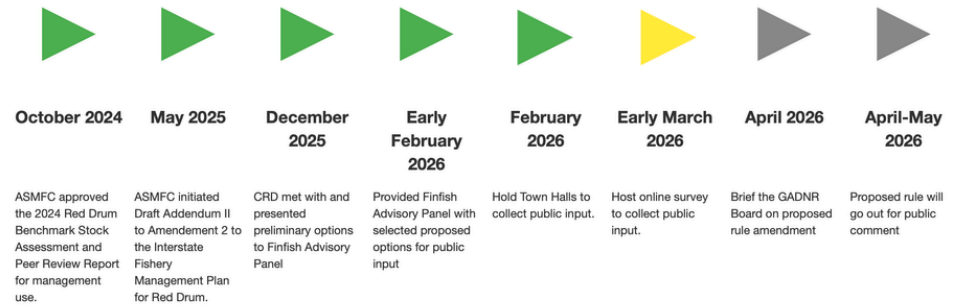
HOW CAN I LEARN MORE?

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Timeline

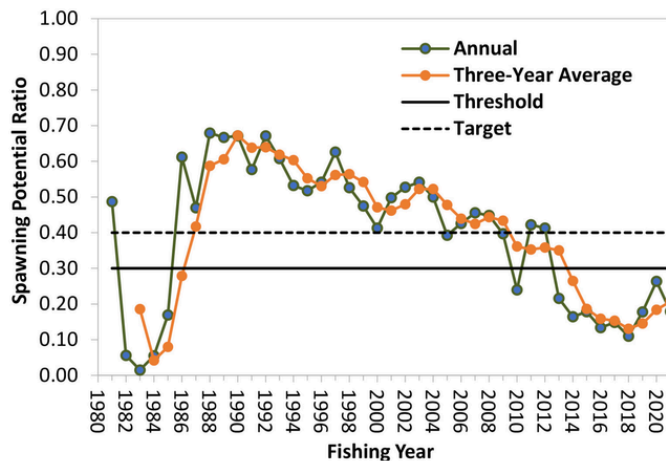


We have until March 12th to vote on the best option to get the Red Drum population to SPR 40 the fastest. Our best option within the survey is

Option B: 16"-25"/ 3 bag/ vessel limit

Slot Limit (inches)	Bag Limit	Fishing Mortality Reduction (%)	F Level	Years to reach 30% SPR at F Level
16-25	4	31.9	F40%	5
	3	36.5	F40%	5
15-24	3	22.5	F35%	6
	2	30.6	F40%	5
14-23	2	25.5	F35%	6

Red Drum Southern Stock Spawning Potential Ratio



How long will it take to move out of overfishing?
5 yrs

How long will it take to reach target (management goals)?

+25 yrs only if you manage to SPR 40%.
If you manage to SPR 35%, you will fall short of the target for a sustainable wild population.

Additional Resources:

- **Presentation from CRD:**
 - coastalgadnr.org/RedDrum
- **Georgia Saltwater Angler Association:**
 - GeorgiaSaltwaterAnglersAssociation.org/get-involved
- **Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission:**
 - Red Drum Benchmark Stock Assessment and Peer Review Report — 2024
 - asmfc.org/resources/stock-assessment/red-drum-benchmark-stock-assessment-and-peer-review-report-2024/

LEARN MORE: Georgiasaltwater.org/get-involved

