



## Caribbean Fishery Bulletin

*Bringing Fishing News to You*

**FB17-072**

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### Reminder of Seasonal Fishing Restrictions in U.S. Caribbean Federal Waters

*Beginning December 1, 2017, at 12:01 a.m., Local Time*

#### WHAT/WHEN:

##### Annual Seasonal Red Hind Closure

NOAA Fisheries reminds fishermen and the public of the annual seasonal closure on fishing for, or possession of, red hind grouper in federal waters west of 67° 10' W longitude. This area is located off the west coast of Puerto Rico.

- The closure begins at 12:01 a.m., local time, on **December 1, 2017**, and extends through 11:59 p.m., local time, **February 28, 2018**.

##### Fishing Prohibitions in Red Hind Spawning Areas

From **December 1 through February 28** each year, fishing for any species is prohibited in federal waters of the following red hind spawning aggregation areas:

- The Lang Bank red hind spawning aggregation area, east of St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands, bounded by the following coordinates:

A	17°50.2' N	64°27.9' W
B	17°50.1' N	64°26.1' W
C	17°49.2' N	64°25.8' W
D	17°48.6' N	64°25.8' W
E	17°48.1' N	64°26.1' W
F	17°47.5' N	64°26.9' W
A	17°50.2' N	64°27.9' W

- The Tourmaline Bank area closure off western Puerto Rico, bounded by the following coordinates:

A	18°11.2' N	67°22.4' W
B	18°11.2' N	67°19.2' W
C	18°08.2' N	67°19.2' W
D	18°08.2' N	67°22.4' W
A	18°11.2' N	67°22.4' W

Regulations only apply to the portion of Tourmaline Bank in federal waters.

- The Abrir La Sierra Bank area closure off western Puerto Rico, which lies completely within federal waters, and is bounded by the following coordinates:

A	18°06.5' N	67°26.9' W
B	18°06.5' N	67°23.9' W
C	18°03.5' N	67°23.9' W
D	18°03.5' N	67°26.9' W
A	18°06.5' N	67°26.9' W

##### Bajo de Sico Area Closure

Federal waters of the Bajo de Sico area off western Puerto Rico continue to be closed to fishing for and possession of reef fish managed by the Caribbean Fishery Management Council until March 31, 2018. Anchoring by fishing vessels is prohibited year-round.

##### Fishing and Anchoring Prohibitions within Hind Bank

Fishing for any species and anchoring by fishing vessels within the Hind Bank Marine Conservation District, south of St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands, is prohibited year round. The Hind Bank Marine Conservation District is bounded by the following coordinates:

A	18°13.2' N	65°06.0' W
B	18°13.2' N	64°59.0' W
C	18°11.8' N	64°59.0' W
D	18°10.7' N	65°06.0' W
A	18°13.2' N	65°06.0' W

#### WHY ARE THESE CLOSURES HAPPENING:

These restrictions were developed to provide further protection for red hind spawning aggregations and large snappers and groupers, and to better protect the essential fish habitat where these species reside.

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Text alerts you may receive include:

- Immediate fishery openings and closures
- Any significant changes to fishing regulations that happen quickly

Sign up for one or more of the following groups:

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- **Gulf of Mexico Commercial Fisheries Related Alerts**
  - Text GULFCOMMFISH to 888777
- **South Atlantic Recreational Fisheries Related Alerts**
  - Text SATLRECFISH to 888777
- **South Atlantic Commercial Fisheries Related Alerts**
  - Text SATLCOMMFISH to 888777
- **Caribbean Fisheries Related Alerts**
  - Text CARIBFISH to 888777

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