

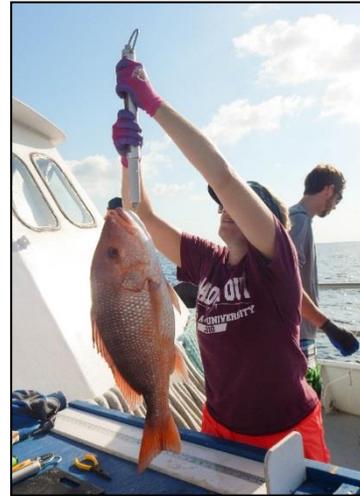
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

2018 Red Snapper Exempted Fishing Permit Report

PERMIT NO. 18-SERO-05

Background

Operating under the 2018 Exempted Fishing Permit, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) established the opening and closing of the red snapper fishery in federal waters off the Texas coast for private recreational anglers. The projected federal season length was determined by first subtracting projected state water landings during a 365 day state water season from the 241,245 lbs allotted to Texas then modeling landings during the federal season based on historical behavior patterns to determine when the state's allotted poundage would be reached for the year. In 2018, the season lasted 82 days, opening June 1st and closing August 22nd. State waters remained open year-round. In 2018, an estimated 75% of the allowable catch limit pounds were landed in state and federal waters.



Catch Monitoring

Private-boat landings were estimated by the Texas Marine Sport Harvest Monitoring Program, which has been in use since 1974. Seasonal landings of red snapper are calculated twice per year by TPWD, but these estimates are not timely enough for this EFP. Instead, private-boat red snapper intercepts from the coastwide TPWD creel survey were sent after each survey-day to the TPWD Rockport Marine Lab. From this data we generated an estimate of the aggregate number of fish intercepted. These estimates were aggregated into bi-weekly reports of estimated landings. We sampled 834 survey-days during our high-use season (May 15 – November 20). While there wasn't a fixed number of samples conducted per week, with n=834 there were surveys occurring nearly every day during the season.

Given a strong relationship between the number of red snapper intercepted and the total private-boat landings estimated (Figure 1), landings (in numbers) were projected based on the number observed to date, and poundage was calculated from a length-weight relationship.

Results

The red snapper season in Texas state waters remained open 365 days from January 1, 2018-December 31, 2018. The red snapper season in federal waters opened on June 1st. The season got off to a slow start because of the typical rough weather and high seas found offshore of Texas in June (Figure 2), with only 46,537 pounds being landed from January 1 through June 29th. However, with winds and seas subsiding in July, another 24,222 pounds were landed between June 30th and July 13th. After an 82-day federal waters season, federal waters closed at midnight on August 21st. A total of 32,330 red snapper were landed between January 1 - December 31 weighing a total of 182,020.8 lbs. (Table 1). During 2018, an estimated 15,480 anglers landed at least 1 red snapper across an estimated 4,038 trips.

Table 1. Estimated number of anglers and trips landing red snapper along with red snapper landings in numbers and pounds.

PERIOD	Anglers	Trips	# Red Snapper	Pounds
Jan 1-May 31	1287	449	3862	21910.0
June 1-June 29	2521	443	3939	24627.4
June 30-July 27	5315	1428	10794	62875.3
July 28-Aug 24	4569	1093	9502	49865.4
Aug 25-Sept 21	871	358	1449	5225.4
Sept 22-Oct 19	125	39	468	1684.4
Oct 20-Nov 16	549	152	1490	5016.8
Nov 17-Dec 14	89	25	212	1069.8
Dec 15-Dec 31	154	51	614	9746.3
TOTAL	15480	4038	32330	182020.8

Figure 1. Relationship between the number of red snapper observed from private boats intercepted by the TPWD creel survey and the landings estimates, by year, season and area, 2015-2017.

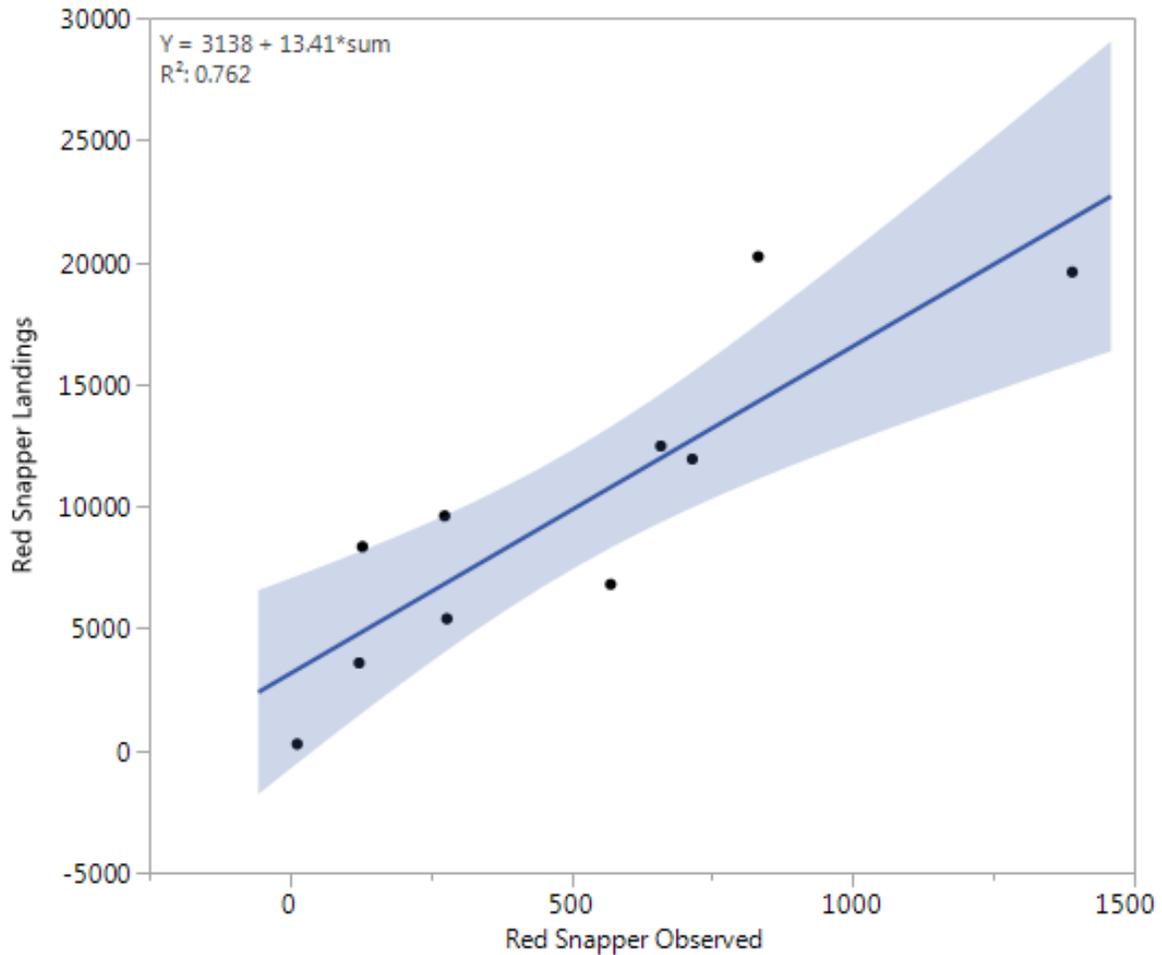


Figure 2. Mean Daily Wave Heights offshore of Texas for June and July 2018 (Data from NOAA Buoy 42002).

