

DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY

Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Wildlife and Fisheries Commission

2023 Commercial Greater Amberjack Season Closure Modification

Louisiana's commercial Greater Amberjack season was previously opened on January 1, 2023. The regional administrator of NOAA Fisheries has informed the secretary that the 2023 commercial season for the harvest of Greater Amberjack in the federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico closed on June 18, 2023 and will remain closed until January 1, 2024. Action by the Gulf of Mexico Fisheries Management Council established new catch limits in order to prevent overfishing of greater amberjack and data indicate those catch limits have been met. Compatible season regulations in state waters are preferable to provide effective rules and efficient enforcement for the fishery, and to prevent overfishing of the species in the long term.

In accordance with the emergency provisions of R.S. 49:962, which allows the Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission to use emergency rules to set finfish seasons, R.S. 56:326.3 which provides that the Wildlife and Fisheries Commission may set seasons for saltwater finfish, and the authority given to the secretary by the commission in LAC 76:VII.335.G.5 to modify opening and closing dates of any commercial or recreational reef fish seasons in Louisiana state waters when he is informed by the regional administrator of NOAA Fisheries that the seasons have been modified in adjacent federal waters, the secretary hereby declares:

The season for the commercial harvest of Greater Amberjack in Louisiana state waters shall close at 11:59 p.m. on June 23, 2023 and remain closed until the start of the 2024 commercial season, currently expected to open on January 1, 2024. Effective with this closure, no person shall commercially harvest, possess, purchase, barter, trade, sell or attempt to purchase, barter, trade, or sell Greater Amberjack whether within or without Louisiana waters. Nothing shall prohibit the possession or sale of fish legally taken prior to the closure providing that all commercial dealers possessing Greater Amberjack taken legally prior to the closure shall maintain appropriate records in accordance with R.S. 56:306.5 and R.S. 56:306.6.

Robert E. Shadoin
Secretary

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