

DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY

Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Wildlife and Fisheries Commission

Closure of the 2018 Commercial Gray Triggerfish Season

Louisiana's commercial gray triggerfish season was previously open from January 1, 2018 through April 30, 2018 and closed from June 1 through July 31, 2018 for a seasonal closure. The season then re-opened on August 1, 2018. The regional administrator of NOAA Fisheries has informed the secretary that the commercial season for gray triggerfish in the federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico closed on October 7, 2018. Data indicate that the 2018 commercial annual catch target of 60,900 pounds has been met and a closure is necessary to prevent overfishing.

In accordance with the emergency provisions of R.S. 49:953, 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 closed in adjacent federal waters, the secretary hereby declares:

The season for the commercial harvest of gray triggerfish in Louisiana state waters shall close at 11:59 p.m. on Wednesday, October 10, 2018 and remain closed through December 31, 2018.

Effective with this closure, no person shall commercially harvest, possess, purchase, barter, trade, sell or attempt to purchase, barter, trade or sell gray triggerfish within or without Louisiana waters. The prohibition on sale/purchase of commercially harvested gray triggerfish during the closure does not apply to gray triggerfish that were legally harvested, landed ashore, and sold prior to the effective date of the closure and were held in cold storage by a dealer or processor provided appropriate records in accordance with R.S. 56:306.5 and 56:306.6 are properly maintained.

Jack Montoucet
Secretary