



Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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Mutton Snapper Spawning Aggregation Seasonal Area Closure in Caribbean Federal Waters Begins at 12:01 a.m., Local Time, March 1, 2012

NOAA Fisheries Service reminds the public that commercial and recreational fishing is prohibited from 12:01 a.m., local time, March 1 through June 30, each year in or from those parts of the mutton snapper spawning aggregation area that are in the exclusive economic zone. The U.S. Caribbean exclusive economic zone consists of those waters extending from the nine nautical mile seaward boundary of the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the three nautical mile seaward boundary of the territory of the U.S. Virgin Islands out to 200 nautical miles offshore.

The seasonal closure area is bounded by rhumb lines connecting, in order, the following coordinates:

A	17°37.8' N	64°53.0' W
B	17°39.0' N	64°53.0' W
C	17°39.0' N	64°50.5' W
D	17°38.1' N	64°50.5' W
E	17°37.8' N	64°52.5' W
A	17°37.8' N	64°53.0' W

In addition, anchoring and fishing with pots, traps, bottom longlines, gillnets or trammel nets is prohibited within the exclusive economic zone portion of the mutton snapper spawning aggregation area year-round.

This action complies with regulations implemented under Amendment 3 to the Fishery Management Plan for the Reef Fish Fishery of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands to address required provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, and is necessary to protect these resources. The Caribbean Fishery Management Council, in cooperation with NOAA Fisheries Service, developed the amendment to regulate fishing mortality.

This bulletin provides only a summary of the information regarding the existing regulations. Any discrepancies between this bulletin and the regulations as published in the *Federal Register* will be resolved in favor of the *Federal Register*.