



March 20, 2015

**VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL**

Governor Robert Bentley  
State of Alabama

Governor Phil Bryant  
State of Mississippi

Governor Rick Scott  
State of Florida

Governor Greg Abbott  
State of Texas

Governor Bobby Jindal  
State of Louisiana

Dear Governor Bentley, Governor Scott, Governor Jindal, Governor Bryant and Governor Abbott:

The undersigned organizations and companies are representatives of the vast saltwater recreational angling community that generates more than \$70 billion in economic activity across the nation. Our hundreds of thousands of members and customers have been the driving force behind significant conservation victories and marine habitat programs in your state, and in every coastal state, for decades. In countless ways, these anglers have steadfastly supported the advancement of marine science and enhanced the capabilities of wildlife law enforcement agencies. Their sportsmen's ethic of stewardship and financial support through license dollars and excise taxes are the very foundation that makes the U.S. model of wildlife management unique and envied throughout the world.

As representatives of that community, we are writing you to confirm our support of the state-based Gulf red snapper management model that was recently formulated by the fisheries directors of the Gulf states. We are completely confident that this well-thought-out plan will allow for the Gulf red snapper population to continue to rebuild while allowing for reasonable public access to this public resource. The states have an outstanding track record of successful fisheries management, as evidenced by the numerous economically important and biologically sustainable marine fish stocks that are under state management, including red drum, speckled trout, snook, and many others. Gulf red snapper management has proven to be immensely challenging, exacerbated by failures of federal management, and we are appreciative of the states' willingness and capability to right the ship.

How we manage our wildlife resources is just as important as the results of that management. The means being employed by the federal government to manage this fishery are fundamentally at odds with how the states have managed their wild natural resources so successfully for both species abundance and access by the American public. It is not at all surprising that the state fisheries directors, who are extremely well versed in the machinations of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, have elected to explore alternatives to the current course of management. There is no doubt that those few who are reaping the rewards of the federal management system will protest vehemently against any idea that threatens the windfall that has been given to them.

On behalf of the hundreds of thousands of Gulf Coast citizens who willingly and selflessly take on their role as stewards of the marine environment, as well as the businesses that depend on healthy and accessible marine fisheries, we are grateful that the states are again taking a leadership role to find a management system that works for everyone.

Sincerely,

Mike Nussman, President and CEO  
American Sportfishing Association

Jeff Angers, President  
Center for Coastal Conservation

Patrick Murray, President  
Coastal Conservation Association

Jeff Crane, President  
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation

Steve Stock, President  
Guy Harvey Ocean Foundation

Rob Kramer, President  
International Game Fish Association

Thom Dammrich, President  
National Marine Manufacturers Association

Ellen Peel, President  
The Billfish Foundation