

Red Drum Synopsis (July 28, 2022)

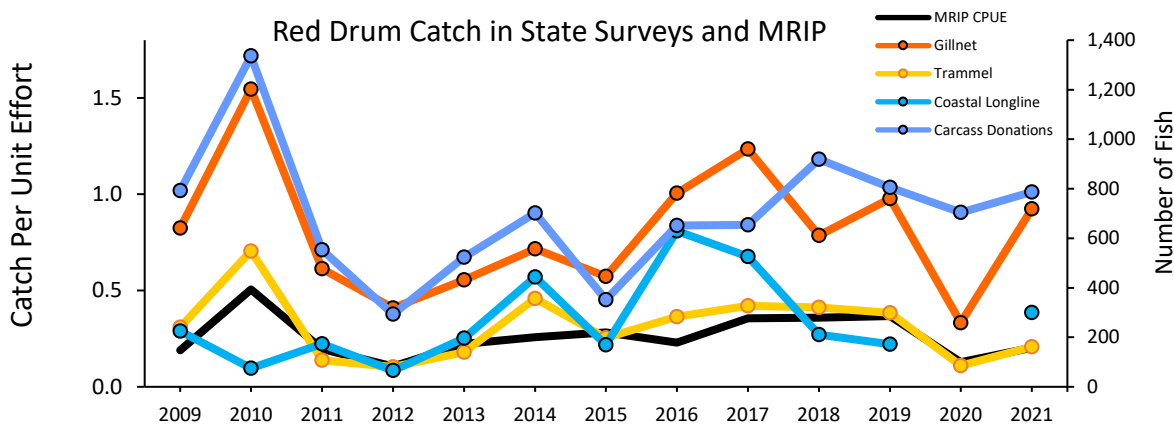


Figure 1. Data and trends from GADNR’s sampling programs suggest Red Drum numbers are variable, but stable over time.

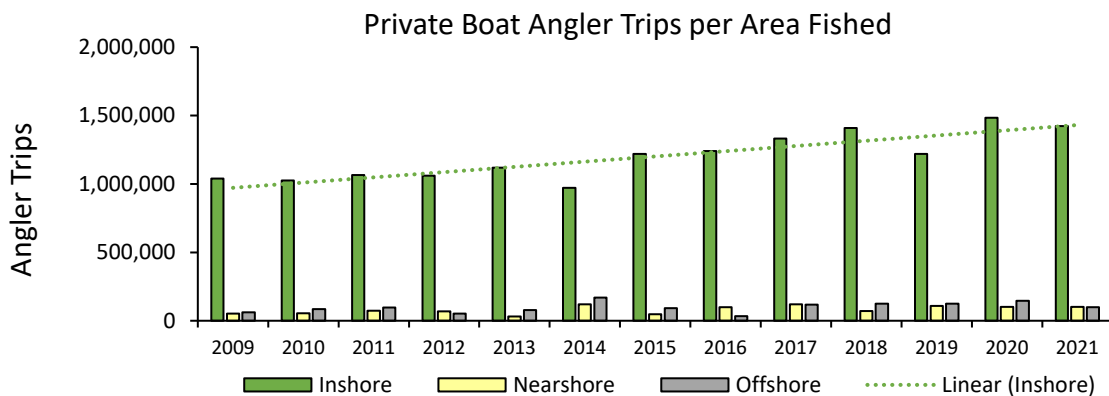


Figure 2. In the last 10 years, the estimate of angler trips in Georgia state waters (i.e., rivers and sounds) has increased 40%. This increase is statistically significant, and likely to continue.

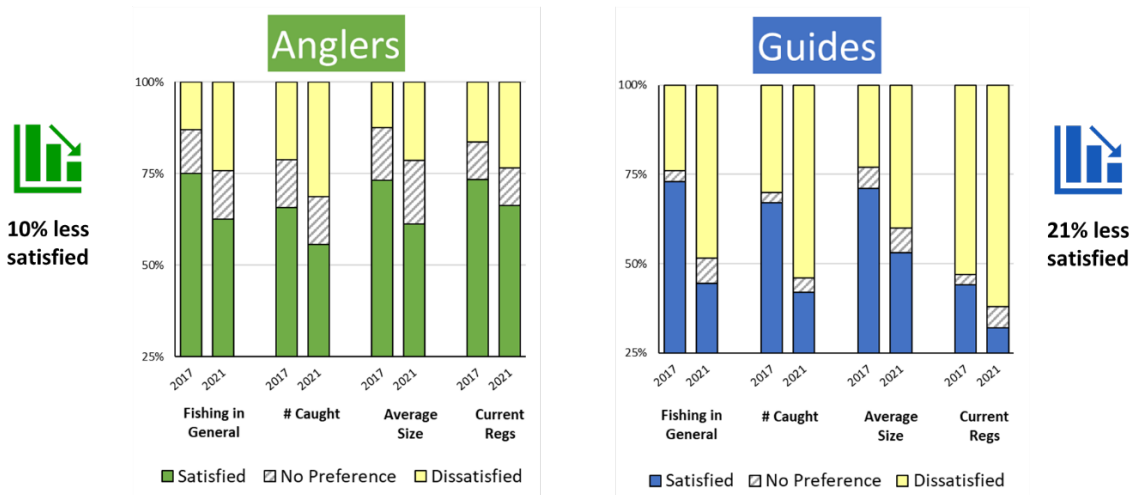


Figure 3. When compared to 2017, results of the 2021 satisfaction survey show declining satisfaction among both anglers and guides in all four satisfaction categories (Red Drum fishing in general, number caught, size caught, and current regulations).

Potential Regulatory Changes: Two Town Hall Meetings, including an online option, were held in June 2022 to discuss research and survey results. In total, 257 recreational anglers and 55 guides participated. Their opinions, along with those from the scientifically rigorous 2017 and 2021 Angler Satisfaction Surveys are included below. The Satisfaction Surveys are statistically valid to $\pm 2\%$.

***Decrease Daily Creel Limit**

Table 1. Daily Creel Limit Reduction. Percent of Anglers and Guides supporting a reduction in daily creel limit. Percent estimated harvest reduction per creel limit (MRIP).

Creel Limit	6-10 Fish	5 Fish (status quo)	4 fish	3 fish	2 fish	1 fish
2017/2021 Satisfaction Survey Results						
	2017 / 2021	2017 / 2021	2017 / 2021	2017 / 2021	2017 / 2021	2017 / 2021
Anglers	26% / 22%	56% / 46%	3% / 5%	7% / 12%	4% / 10%	1% / 3%
Guides	5% / 4%	28% / 28%	3% / 0%	26% / 21%	25% / 33%	14% / 14%
2022 Town Hall Results						
Anglers		14%	3%	14%	47%	22%
Guides		9%	2%	9%	51%	29%
Average Percent Reduction (2009-2021) calculated from the MRIP Survey.						
			-5%	-11%	-23%	-43%

***Establish a Vessel Limit**

Table 2. Vessel Limit. Percent of Anglers and Guides supporting a vessel limit. Percent estimated harvest reduction per vessel limit (MRIP).

	No Limit (status quo)	10 fish	9 fish	8 fish	7 fish	6 fish	5 fish
2021 Satisfaction Survey Results (Q not asked in 2017)							
2021 Anglers = 58% support a vessel limit							
2021 Guides = 77% support a vessel limit							
2022 Town Hall Results							
Anglers	16%	7%		12%		65%	
Guides	8%	4%		18%		71%	
Average Percent Reduction (2009-2021) calculated from the MRIP Survey.							
2009-2021		-2%	-4%	-6%	-8%	-11%	-15%
Average number of Anglers per Vessel: Private Vessel = 2.2 Guide Vessel = 2.8							

***Prohibit guides/mates from retaining daily creel limit:**

This question was asked only at the Town Hall Meetings. The majority of anglers (75%) and guides (83%) agreed that guides and their mates should not retain a creel limit.

Fishing Season and Slot Size Limit Change

Both anglers and guides opposed a fishing season for Red Drum. No change is being requested. Although both supported changing the slot size limit, currently 14"-23", the Department does not have enough information at present to analyze the effects of changing the slot size limit. A regional stock assessment is being conducted in 2024 at which time a decision can be made regarding slot size.

Table 3. Fishing Season and Slot Size. Percent of Anglers and Guides supporting each.

2017/2021 Satisfaction Survey Results				2022 Town Hall Results		
Fishing Season	2017 / 2021	2017 / 2021	2017 / 2021	Support	Oppose	
	Support	Oppose	Neutral			
	Anglers	31% / 28%	54% / 55%	12% / 13%	25%	75%
	Guides	32% / 33%	62% / 56%	5% / 8%	35%	65%
Slot Limit Change				Support	Oppose	
	Anglers			68%	32%	
	Guides			76%	24%	