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NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION • US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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NOAA Releases List of Fisheries that Interact with Marine Mammals

NOAA Fisheries Service today published its annual List of Fisheries that classifies each U.S. commercial fishery based on its level of interaction with marine mammals.

Every fishery is placed into one of three categories according to whether it has a frequent (Category I), occasional (Category II), or remote likelihood (Category III) of incidental mortality and serious injury to marine mammals. The list is required by the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

After reviewing Marine Mammal Stock Assessment Reports and other new information -- such as observer and marine mammal stranding data -- NOAA Fisheries Service determined that no fisheries needed to be reclassified.

However, the Georgia Cannonball Jellyfish Trawl Fishery was added to the list as a Category III fishery based on the remote likelihood its fishermen would seriously injure or kill marine mammals. This is an experimental mid-water trawl fishery that has caused no known marine mammal injuries or deaths.

NOAA Fisheries removed the Oregon Blue Shark Floating Longline Fishery and the Oregon Swordfish Floating Longline Fishery because new regulations prohibit using this type of gear to target highly migratory species in U.S. Pacific waters. As a result, these fisheries are no longer operating. In addition, the U.S. Mid-Atlantic Hand Seine Fishery was removed because the fishery no longer exists.

Commercial fishers who participate in fisheries placed in Category I or II must register with the Marine Mammal Authorization Program and submit a \$25 fee, unless registration has been integrated with an existing state or federal registration program. The MMPA requires that all commercial fishers, regardless of category, submit a report NOAA's Fisheries Service within 48 hours of the end of each fishing trip if a marine mammal is injured or killed incidental to fishing operations.

The 2008 List of Fisheries was published today in the Federal Register, and is available on the Web at: http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/PR2/Fisheries_Interactions/list_of_fisheries.html or by contacting the Office of Protected Resources at 301-713-2322 or writing NOAA Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, Md. 20910.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is celebrating 200 years of science and service to the nation. From the establishment of the Survey of the Coast in 1807 by Thomas Jefferson to the formation of the Weather Bureau and the Commission of Fish and Fisheries in the 1870s, much of America's scientific heritage is rooted in NOAA.

NOAA is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and information service delivery for transportation, and by providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners, more than 70 countries and the European

Commission to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes, predicts and protects.

On the Web:

NOAA: <http://www.noaa.gov>

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