



Contact: Scott Smullen
202-482-6090

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NOAA Charges Multiple Vessels for Exceeding Scallop Trip Limits

NOAA today announced that it is issuing notices of violation proposing civil administrative penalties against four scallop vessel owners and operators for landing significantly more scallops than were allowed by law and for making false statements to investigators and filing false trip reports to cover their actions. The proposed penalties in these cases range between \$5,000 and \$20,000

“We are taking vigorous action today to protect fishermen who are playing by the rules and to protect the resource from those who break the law,” said Lois Schiffer, NOAA General Counsel.

In addition, to reduce its backlog of cases, NOAA will over the next few weeks issue written warnings in 18 cases and send letters that it will not pursue enforcement of another 61 cases, all of which meet a set of criteria: they are older violations that involved limited or no potential harm to the resource or regulatory program or involved individuals abandoning their catch or otherwise significantly cooperating in the investigation; or the referral has insufficient evidence to prove a violation occurred. Letters are being mailed to those involved.

NOAA’s mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth’s environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources. Visit us at <http://www.noaa.gov> or on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/usnoaa.gov>.