



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Silver Spring, MD 20910

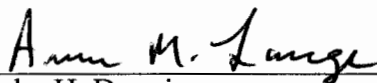
**NMFS ANNOUNCES
THE DRAFT CONSOLIDATED HMS FMP
AND PROPOSED RULE
COMMENT PERIOD CLOSURES ON OCTOBER 18, 2005**

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) announces the availability of the proposed rule and Draft Consolidated Atlantic Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Fishery Management Plan (FMP). The proposed rule and draft HMS FMP describe a range of management measures that could impact fishermen and dealers for all HMS fisheries. These management measures include those to: establish mandatory workshops for fishermen and dealers; consider methods of modifying and establishing time/area closures; address rebuilding and/or overfishing of northern albacore tuna, finetooth sharks, and Atlantic billfish; simplify the management process of bluefin tuna; change the fishing year for tunas, swordfish, and billfish back to a calendar year; authorize additional fishing gears; and clarify existing regulations. In addition to these management measures, NMFS also announces its decision: to not include the no sale provision for the artisanal handline fishery in Puerto Rico, as outlined in the 1988 Atlantic Billfish FMP in the HMS FMP; to formally withdraw the proposed rule to establish an annual domestic recreational landing limit of 250 Atlantic blue and white marlin, combined (September 17, 2003, 68 FR 54410); and to consider a Petition for Rulemaking regarding a closure of bluefin tuna spawning grounds within the draft HMS FMP.

As outlined in the table below, NMFS is holding 24 public hearings and an Advisory Panel meeting for both the proposed rule and the draft HMS FMP along the Atlantic Coast, including the Caribbean, and in the Gulf of Mexico. NMFS considered a number of factors when scheduling meetings including moon phase, regional fishing interests, fishing seasons, and known scheduled meetings of constituents. Additionally, NMFS hopes to present the proposed rule and draft HMS FMP to the five Atlantic Regional Fishery Management Councils. Please talk to your the Councils representatives if you have questions regarding their agenda.

The proposed rule and draft HMS FMP are available on the HMS Management Division's webpage at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/>. Hard copies are available at the Highly Migratory Species Management Division, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910, (301) 713-2347 or fax to (301) 427-2592 (*please note that this is a different fax number than usual*). Comments can be submitted to the above address or via email to SF1.060303D@noaa.gov. For further information contact Karyl Brewster-Geisz, Margo Schulze-Haugen, or Heather Stirratt at (301) 713-2347; Russell Dunn at (727) 824-5399; or Mark Murray-Brown at (978) 281-9260.

This FAX notice is a courtesy to HMS fishery participants to help keep you informed about your fishery. Official notice of Federal fishing actions is made through filing such notice with the Office of the Federal Register.



for John H. Dunnigan
Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries

AUG 10 2005

Date



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Public Hearing Schedule for Draft HMS FMP and Proposed Rule

Date	Time	Location	Address
9/6/05	5:30-8:30 p.m.	New Bedford, MA	New Bedford Library, 613 Pleasant St., New Bedford, MA 02740
9/6/05	7-10 p.m.	Orange Beach, AL	Orange Beach Senior Center, 26251 Canal Rd., Orange Beach, AL 36561
9/7/05	7-10 p.m.	Narragansett, RI	Narragansett Town Hall, 25 5 th Ave., Narragansett, RI 02882
9/7/05	7-10 p.m.	Port Aransas, TX	University of Texas Marine Science Institute Visitor's Center (located on Cotter St. near beach), 750 Channel View Dr., Port Aransas, TX 78373
9/8/05	7-10 p.m.	New Orleans, LA	VIET Community Center, 4655 Michoud Boulevard, Suite 17, New Orleans, LA 70129
9/8/05	7-10 p.m.	Portland, ME	Howard Johnson Plaza, 155 Riverside Street/I-95, Portland, ME, 04103
9/13/05	7-10 p.m.	West Islip, NY	West Islip Public Library, 3 Higbie Ln., West Islip, NY 11795
9/14/05	7-10 p.m.	Montauk, NY	Montauk Fire House, 12 Flamingo Avenue, Montauk, NY 11954
9/15/05	6-9 p.m.	Gloucester, MA	Gloucester Lyceum and Sawyer Free Library, 2 Dale Ave., Gloucester, MA 01930
9/20/05	7-10 p.m.	Fort Pierce, FL	Fort Pierce Library, 101 Melody Ln., Fort Pierce, FL
9/21/05	7-10 p.m.	Key West, FL	Doubletree Grand Key Resort, 3990 S. Roosevelt Blvd., Key West, FL 33040

Date	Time	Location	Address
9/22/05	7-10 p.m.	St. Thomas, USVI	Frenchman's Reef & Morning Star, St. Thomas, USVI 00801
9/26/05	7-10 p.m.	Virginia Beach, VA	Virginia Beach Pavilion Convention Center, 1000 19th Street, Virginia Beach, VA 23451-5674
9/28/05	7-10 p.m.	Charleston, SC	CCEHBR Jane's Island, 219 Fort Johnson Rd., Charleston, SC 29412
9/28/05	7-10 p.m.	Ocean City, MD	North Side Parks and Rec, 200 125 th St., Ocean City, MD 21842
9/29/05	7-10 p.m.	Villas, NJ	Cape May Township Hall, 2600 Bayshore Road, Villas, NJ 082511
9/29/05	7-10 p.m.	Manteo, NC	North Carolina Aquarium Roanoke Island, PO Box 967, Airport Road, Manteo, NC 27954
10/3/05	6:30-9 p.m.	Fort Lauderdale, FL	African American Arts and Cultural Center Research Library, 2650 Sistrunk Blvd., Fort Lauderdale, FL 33311
10/3/05	7-10 p.m.	Mayaguez, PR	Mayaguez Resort and Casino, Road 104 km 0.3 Barrio Algarrobo, Mayaguez PR 00681
10/4/05	7-10 p.m.	Panama City, FL	NMFS Panama City Laboratory, 3500 Delwood Beach Rd., Panama City, FL 32408
10/4/05	5:30-8:30 p.m.	San Juan, PR	Carnegie Library (Biblioteca Carnegie), Ponce De Leon Ave. #7, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00901
10/5/05	7-10 p.m.	Madeira Beach, FL	City of Madeira Beach, 300 Municipal Dr., Madeira Beach, FL 33708

Date	Time	Location	Address
10/6/05	7-10 p.m.	Atlantic Beach, FL	City of Atlantic Beach, Atlantic Beach City Chambers, 800 Seminole Rd., Atlantic Beach, FL 32233
10/6/05	7-9 p.m.	Barnegat Light, NJ	Barnegat Light First Aid Squad West 10th Street Barnegat Light, NJ 08006
10/11-13 ?		Silver Spring, MD	Advisory Panel Meeting Tentative date, Actual date to be published soon