

**NMFS Announces a Public Outreach Meeting  
to provide information on  
the Atlantic Pelagic Longline Take Reduction Plan,  
Final Rule, and regulatory requirements to  
reduce serious injury and mortality of pilot whales and Risso's dolphins**

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**September 15, 2009  
1:00pm  
Roanoke Island Festival Park- Manteo, NC**

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The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) established the Atlantic Pelagic Longline Take Reduction Team in June 2005 to address incidental serious injuries and mortalities of short- and long-finned pilot whales in the Atlantic pelagic longline fishery, as required by the Marine Mammal Protection Act. The team met multiple times over an 11 month period and submitted a consensus draft Take Reduction Plan to NMFS in June 2006.

A final rule implementing the regulatory and non-regulatory components of the plan became effective on June 18, 2009 (see 50 CFR 229.36). The purpose of the plan and regulations are to reduce serious injuries and mortalities of both pilot whales and Risso's dolphins in the Mid-Atlantic Bight, as well as recommendations for additional research and data collections.

This meeting will provide an opportunity for NMFS staff to meet with longline fishermen to review and answer questions about the Take Reduction Plan's regulatory requirements, non-regulatory requirements, and research and monitoring efforts. For example:

- The Cape Hatteras Special Research Area;
- The 20 nmi limit on mainline length;
- The importance of daily communications between captains to avoid bycatch of marine mammals; and,
- The increase in observer coverage to collect information on marine mammal interactions.

**The outreach meeting will be held Tuesday, September 15, 2009, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m., at the Roanoke Island Festival Park, 1 Festival Park, Manteo, North Carolina, 252-475-1500.**

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