

<b><i>NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE POLICY 03-201</i></b> Effective on: December 27, 2005	
To be reviewed on: January 31, 2029	
Habitat Conservation and Restoration	
Essential Fish Habitat Policy	
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<b><i>SUMMARY OF REVISIONS:</i></b> Renewed without modifications in January 2024. This initial directive was put into effect on December 27, 2005.	

I. Introduction

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has Federal responsibility for the conservation and management of living marine resources under numerous Federal laws, including authorities under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 at seq.) (MSA). NMFS works under the MSA to conserve and enhance essential fish habitat (EFH).

II. Objective

It is NMFS' policy to use our authorities under the MSA to ensure EFH is conserved and enhanced in order to contribute to the sustainability of federally-managed fish species.

III. Authorities and Responsibilities

It is the policy of NMFS Office of Habitat Conservation to ensure the conservation and enhancement of EFH in accordance with the MSA and other relevant authorities and guidance promulgated by Congress, NOAA and other Federal agencies.

IV. Measuring Effectiveness

This policy will be reviewed and updated if necessary in accordance with the NMFS Policy Directive System.

V. References

Procedural directives will be issued to implement this policy as needed.

Signed

Janet Coit

Assistant Administrator for Fisheries

Date