



NOAA NATIONAL OCEANIC AND
ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



Contact: Jim Milbury
562-980-4006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Aug. 10, 2009

Joint Federal and State Investigation Stops Illegal Fishing in Channel Islands Sanctuary
Commercial Fishermen to Pay \$10,000 Fine

The owners and operators of the commercial fishing vessel *Risa Lynn* will pay a \$10,000 civil penalty as a settlement for illegally fishing in a marine protected area off the Santa Barbara coastline in the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary.

Over a two-week period in March 2008, federal and state investigators detected the *Risa Lynn* setting fishing gear in the Footprint Marine Reserve, south of Anacapa and Santa Cruz islands. The reserve is one of several federally designated no-take fishing zones for commercial or recreational fishermen.

"This was a well coordinated enforcement effort between the NOAA Office of Law Enforcement, California State Department of Fish and Game, and U.S. Coast Guard," said William J. Douros, west coast regional director for NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries. "This operation clearly demonstrates our collaborative approach in protecting California's vital marine resources."

"This case is a primary example of what can be achieved through cooperative law enforcement efforts to protect our nation's natural marine resources," said Don Masters, special agent in charge of NOAA's Office of Law Enforcement southwest division. NOAA's Office of Law Enforcement is the primary agency responsible for marine enforcement within national marine sanctuaries.

The fishermen fined in the case are Shane and Jason Robinson of Santa Barbara and Joseph Campopiano of Morro Bay, Calif.

"The Channel Islands marine reserves are designated a protected area to benefit everyone," said Chris Mobley, superintendent of Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary. "All of us must play by the rules so that we can continue to protect our marine heritage for future generations."

The Footprint Marine Reserve is part of the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Marine Protected Areas Network and also part of the Essential Fish Habitat Closed Area under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. The fish habitat program protects more than 130,000 square miles of marine waters off the West Coast from long term damage to seafloor habitat by banning the use of certain types of fishing gear. The goal of the program is to protect essential habitat areas for groundfish stocks, and was developed with support and advice from both environmental and fishing industry groups.

Managed by NOAA's Office of National Marine Sanctuaries, the Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary was designated in 1980 to protect marine resources surrounding San Miguel, Santa Rosa, Santa Cruz, Anacapa and Santa Barbara islands. The sanctuary spans approximately 1,470 square miles, extending from island shorelines to six miles offshore, and encompasses a rich diversity of marine life, habitats and historical and cultural resources.

NOAA understands and predicts changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and conserves and manages our coastal and marine resources. Visit <http://www.noaa.gov>.

On the Web:

Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary Marine Protected Areas Network:
http://channelislands.noaa.gov/marineres/images/Official_CI_MPA.jpg