

## **I. PERMITS**

In order to fish recreationally for Atlantic HMS in federal waters, fishermen must have a valid federal fishing permit for their vessel. There are a variety of different permits available. The required permit will depend upon the species being fished for, what type of gear is being used, and how recreational fishing activities are being conducted. There are three types of permits that can be used to recreationally fish for Atlantic HMS: HMS Angling, HMS Charter/Headboat, and Atlantic Tunas General category. All passengers on board a vessel with a valid recreational HMS permit, may recreationally fish for Atlantic HMS while on board the vessel. **Please note that only one type of permit can be issued to a vessel, and that permit holders may only change permit category within 10 days of the permit issuance date.** Please refer to each species section for specific restrictions regarding target species and gear use.

**HMS Angling:** This permit is strictly for recreational fishing (*i.e.*, no sale) and is issued to the owner for a specific vessel.

**HMS Charter/Headboat:** This permit is required for vessels taking for-hire passengers recreational fishing for Atlantic HMS. See Section XII for detailed information.

**Atlantic Tunas General category:** This permit is a commercial fishing permit for Atlantic tunas, but can be used for fishing recreationally for all HMS **only** when participating in a registered HMS tournament. See Section XII for more information.

To acquire or renew an HMS recreational fishing permit, fishermen must complete either an initial or permit renewal application. Applications can be completed online at [www.hmspermits.gov](http://www.hmspermits.gov) or obtained via fax or mail by calling (888) 872-8862.

### **Where do the Federal regulations apply?**

Federal recreational fishing regulations apply in federal waters, and may also apply to recreational fishing in state waters. Fishermen possessing a federal HMS fishing permit who are fishing in state waters should note that the federal regulations apply, unless the state regulations are more restrictive. Therefore, fishermen who are planning on fishing in state waters should familiarize themselves with the appropriate state regulations, as the appropriate regulations (federal or state) may be species and situation-specific. A list of state agency contacts can be found in Section XV.