

III. GENERAL RESTRICTIONS

Recreational fishermen who receive or renew an Atlantic HMS permit may fish recreationally for Atlantic HMS in open areas. Please note that the following areas are closed to recreational Atlantic HMS fishing:

CLOSED AREAS

- The Tortugas Marine Reserves: Closed year-round to all fishing and anchoring in the EEZ. The Tortugas North area is bounded by 24° 40'00" N. lat., 83° 06'00" W. long.; 24° 46'00" N. lat., 83° 06'00" W. long.; 24° 46'00" N. lat., 83° 00'00" W. long.; thence along the line denoting the seaward limit of Florida's waters, as shown on the current edition of NOAA chart 11438 to 24° 40'00" N. lat., 83° 06'00" W. long. Tortugas South is bounded by 24° 33'00" N. lat., 83° 09'00" W. long.; 24° 33'00" N. lat., 83° 05'00" W. long.; 24° 18'00" N. lat., 83° 05'00" W. long.; 24° 18'00" N. lat., 83° 09'00" W. long.; 24° 33'00" N. lat., 83° 09'00" W. long. (50 CFR 622.34(d)).
- Madison-Swanson and Steamboat Lumps closed areas: Surface trolling is allowed from May-October, consistent with the recommendations of the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council, but fishing by any other method is prohibited year-round. The coordinates for the Madison-Swanson closed area are: 29° 17' N. lat., 85° 50' W. long.; 29° 17' N. lat., 85° 38' W. long.; 29° 06' N. lat., 85° 38' W. long.; 29° 06' N. lat., 85° 50' W. long. The coordinates for the Steamboat Lumps closed area are: 28° 14' N. lat., 84° 48' W. long.; 28° 14' N. lat., 84° 37' W. long.; 28° 03' N. lat., 84° 37' W. long.; 28° 03' N. lat., 84° 48' W. long. Surface trolling is defined as fishing with lines trailing behind a vessel which is in constant motion at speeds in excess of four knots with a visible wake. Such trolling may not involve the use of downriggers, wire lines, planers, or similar devices.
- Other Marine Protected Areas: There are a number of marine protected areas (MPAs) throughout U.S. waters that may restrict recreational fishing activities. For more information on MPAs and their restrictions, please visit www.mpa.gov.
- TARGETING BLUEFIN TUNA IN THE GULF OF MEXICO IS PROHIBITED YEAR-ROUND: This area has been designated as bluefin tuna spawning grounds, thus, targeting bluefin tuna is prohibited. However, HMS Angling or HMS Charter/Headboat permit holders may retain one "trophy" bluefin tuna (>73") per vessel per year from the Gulf of Mexico caught incidentally while targeting other species.