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11.0 LIST OF PREPARERS

The development of this rulemaking involved input from many people within National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), NMFS contractors and input from constituent groups including the Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Advisory Panel. Staff and contractors from the HMS Management Division, in alphabetical order, who worked on this document include:

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The development of this document also involved considerable input from other staff members and Offices throughout NOAA including, but not limited to:

- Other Divisions within the Office of Sustainable Fisheries (Alan Risenhoover);
- The Southeast Fisheries Science Center (Heather Balchowsky, John Carlson, Enric Cortés, Katie Siegfried, Steve Turner, Alex Chester, Bonnie Ponwith);
- The Northeast Fisheries Science Center (Nancy Kohler, Cami McCandless, Lisa Natanson);
- The Southeast Regional Office (David Bernhart, Julie Weeder, Steve Branstetter, Jennifer Lee, Andrew Herndon, Cheryl Scannell);
- The Office of Law Enforcement (Mike Henry, Jeff Radonski, Paul Raymond)
- NOAA General Counsel (Meggan Engelke-Ros, Mark Hodor, Adam Issenberg, Caroline Park, Megan Walline, Frank Sprtel); and
- NMFS NEPA staff (Aileen Smith, Steve Kokkinakas, Cristi Reid).

11.1 List of Agencies, Organizations, and Persons Consulted and to Whom Copies of the EIS Will Be Sent

Under 304(g)(1)(A) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act), NMFS is required to consult with affected Fishery Management Councils, International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) Commissioners and advisory groups, and the Advisory Panels

(APs) established under the Magnuson-Stevens Act regarding amendments to the HMS Fishery Management Plan (FMP). As described below, NMFS provided documents and met with the consulting parties and to the Atlantic and Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commissions at various stages throughout the process. Hard copies and/or CDs of these documents were also provided to anyone who requested copies.

NMFS announced its intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on November 7, 2006 (71 FR 65086). In this notice, NMFS asked for comments on existing commercial and recreational shark management measures that would assist the Agency in determining options for conservation and management of Atlantic sharks consistent with relevant Federal statutes. On January 3, 2007 (72 FR 123), NMFS announced the availability of a scoping document and details of seven scoping meetings to be held during the month of January. During the scoping meetings, NMFS described the results of recent stock assessments, issues that need to be addressed concerning shark management, and options or alternatives that may be implemented to achieve objectives.

In March 2007, NMFS released a Predraft of Amendment 2 to the Consolidated HMS FMP and a summary of the scoping comments to the HMS consulting parties and presented the document to the HMS AP. NMFS requested that the AP and consulting parties (Atlantic, Gulf, and Caribbean Fishery Management Councils, Marine Fisheries Commissions, U.S. Coast Guard, and other State and Federal Agency representatives) submit comments by March 31, 2007, on the Predraft. While some of the options changed between the Predraft and draft stages of Amendment 2 to the Consolidated HMS FMP, the overall list of issues to be addressed has not changed. A summary of the comments received during scoping (November 7, 2006 – February 5, 2007) can be found on the HMS website: http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/sharks/2007/Comment_Summary_for_Shark_Amendment_2NOI.pdf. A summary and the transcripts of the March 2007 AP meeting can also be found on the HMS website at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/>.

On July 27, 2007, NMFS released the draft Amendment 2 to the Consolidated HMS FMP and its proposed rule (72 FR 41325; 72 FR 41392). The public comment period was originally slated to end on October 10, 2007, however, it was subsequently extended (October 3, 2007, 72 FR 56330) and reopened until December 17, 2007 (72 FR 64186), to provide Regional Fishery Management Councils, the Inter State Marine Fisheries Commissions, and the general public additional opportunities to submit comments. To collect comments on the proposed rule and draft Amendment 2 to the Consolidated HMS FMP, NMFS attended five Fishery Management Council meetings (New England, Mid-Atlantic, South Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico, and Caribbean), attended an Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission meeting, held ten public hearings between Texas and New Hampshire, held one HMS Advisory Panel meeting, and accepted public comments throughout the comment periods. The summary of the comments and NMFS' responses is provided in Appendix D of this document and will also be in the final rule.

All comments were considered when finalizing this document. NMFS also received comments from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regarding the DEIS (March 31, 2006, 71 FR 16301). The DEIS received a rating of “LO,” meaning that EPA did not object to the proposed action. NMFS responds to EPA’s specific comments in Appendix D with the other public comments received. Copies of this final document will be sent to the EPA regional offices, the HMS consulting parties (the affected Regional Fishery Management Councils, ICCAT Commissioners and advisory groups, and the Advisory Panels), the Atlantic and Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commissions, and other interested parties. An electronic version will also be placed on the HMS Management Division’s webpage at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/>.