



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

## **NMFS Announces a Final Rule to Adjust Quotas, and Establish Fishing Seasons in the Large Coastal Shark, Small Coastal Shark, and Pelagic Shark Fisheries**

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) adjusts the 2007 second and third trimester season quotas for large coastal sharks (LCS), small coastal sharks (SCS), and pelagic sharks based on over- or underharvests from the 2006 fishing season, and announces final season opening and closing dates for the second and third trimester seasons of 2007.

During the second trimester season of 2006, the South Atlantic region landed 137 percent of their LCS quota and 22.4 percent of their SCS quota, the Gulf of Mexico region landed 171 percent of their LCS quota and 206 percent of their SCS quota, while the North Atlantic region experienced underharvests for both LCS and SCS. During the third trimester season of 2006, the South Atlantic region landed 216 percent of their LCS quota and 15 percent of their SCS quota, the Gulf of Mexico region landed 156 percent of their LCS quota and 75 percent of their SCS quota, while the North Atlantic region experienced overharvests for LCS (176 percent of their quota) and underharvests for SCS.

Based on comments received during the public comment period regarding concerns over the proposed August 1 opening date in the South Atlantic region and the overlap with the August 1 opening date of the spiny lobster fishery in the South Atlantic, the final LCS action has been modified to accommodate these comments. This modified action combines the second trimester season quota (83.2 mt dw) in the South Atlantic region with the third trimester season quota (80.5 mt dw) in the South Atlantic region for a total quota of 163.7 mt dw and opens the combined season on July 15, 2007, instead of August 1, 2007. The merged season will close in the South Atlantic region on August 15, 2007 based on higher catch rates in July.

The final actions seek to address the ecological and social/economic ramifications of an extensive overharvest experienced in the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico regions by merging the LCS 2007 second and third trimester seasons to provide longer seasons and thereby increasing fishing opportunities consistent with available quotas and splitting the regional SCS quota allocation between the South Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico regions to avoid future overharvests.



LCS final season lengths and quotas for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester seasons of 2007

LCS	Final merged 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Trimester Opening Dates	Final merged 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Trimester Closing Dates	Final merged 2 <sup>nd</sup> & 3 <sup>rd</sup> Trimester Quotas
South Atlantic	July 15, 2007	August 15, 2007	163.70 mt dw 360,893 lb dw
Gulf of Mexico	September 1, 2007	September 22, 2007	83.1 mt dw 183,202 lb dw
North Atlantic	July 6, 2007	July 31, 2007	69.0 mt dw 152,117 lb dw
	Closed 3 <sup>rd</sup> Season	Closed 3 <sup>rd</sup> Season	CLOSED

SCS and Pelagic sharks final season lengths and quotas for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester seasons of 2007

2007 2 <sup>nd</sup> Trimester	Final Opening Dates	Final Closing Dates	2007 2 <sup>nd</sup> Tri. Adjusted Quota (mt dw)
SCS South Atlantic (49%)	May 1, 2007	To be determined as necessary	291.6 mt dw 642,861 lb dw
SCS Gulf of Mexico (48%)	May 1, 2007	To be determined as necessary	72.6 mt dw 160,054 lb dw
SCS North Atlantic (3%)	May 1, 2007	To be determined as necessary	36.2 mt dw 79,807 lb dw
Blue sharks	May 1, 2007	To be determined as necessary	91.0 mt dw 200,619 lb dw
Porbeagle sharks			30.7 mt dw 67,681 lb dw
Pelagic sharks other than blue or porbeagle			162.7 mt dw 358,688 lb dw
2007 3 <sup>rd</sup> Trimester	Final Opening Dates	Final Closing Dates	2007 3 <sup>rd</sup> Tri. Adjusted Quota
SCS South Atlantic (49%)	September 1, 2007	To be determined as necessary	297.5 mt dw 655,869 lb dw
SCS Gulf of Mexico (48%)	September 1, 2007	To be determined as necessary	80.4 mt dw 177,250 lb dw
SCS North Atlantic (3%)	September 1, 2007	To be determined as necessary	29.4 mt dw 64,815 lb dw
Blue sharks	September 1, 2007	To be determined as necessary	91.0 mt dw 200,619 lb dw
Porbeagle sharks			30.7 mt dw 67,681 lb dw
Pelagic sharks other than blue or porbeagle			162.7 mt dw 358,688 lb dw

This notice is a courtesy to the HMS fishery participants to help keep you informed about your fishery. Official notice of Federal fishing actions is made through filing such notice with the Office of Federal Register. For further information on this final rule and its requirements, contact LeAnn S. Hogan or Karyl Brewster-Geisz at 301-713-2347. Copies of the final rule and Final Environmental Assessment/Regulatory Impact Review/Final Regulatory Flexibility Analysis are available upon request from the Highly Migratory Species Management Division, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 (phone: 301-713-2347, fax: 301-713-1917). The information will also be posted on the HMS website at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/>.



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APR 23 2007

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