



## NMFS Announces the Closure of All Commercial Non-Sandbar Large Coastal Shark Fisheries

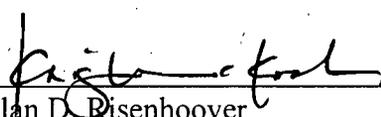
The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) estimates that the landings for the commercial non-sandbar large coastal shark (LCS) fisheries in both the shark research and the Atlantic region could exceed 80 percent of the available quota within the 2009 fishing season. **As required by NMFS regulations, NMFS is closing the commercial non-sandbar LCS fisheries in both the shark research fishery and Atlantic region as of 11:30 p.m. local time July 1, 2009.** From the effective date and time of the closure until NMFS announces, via a notice in the Federal Register, that additional quota is available and the season is reopened, the fishery for that specific quota is closed, even across fishing years.

On December 24, 2008 (73 FR 79005), NMFS announced that the non-sandbar LCS quotas for the shark research fishery and Atlantic region for the 2009 fishing year would be 37.5 metric tons (mt) dressed weight (dw) (82,673 lb dw) and 187.8 mt dw (414,024 lb dw), respectively. Scientific observer reports through June 15, 2009, indicate that 34.9 mt dw or 93 percent of the available quota for non-sandbar LCS Atlantic in the shark research fishery has been taken. Dealer reports through June 15, 2009, indicate that 138.9 mt dw or 74 percent of the available quota for non-sandbar LCS has been taken. Based on dealer reports in April and May, NMFS expects that approximately 19 percent of the quota could be taken in June. Based on this projection, the non-sandbar LCS fishery in the Atlantic region could reach 92 percent of the quota, which exceeds the 80 percent limit specified in the regulations. Accordingly, NMFS is closing these fisheries. NMFS closed the commercial non-sandbar LCS fishery in the Gulf of Mexico region on June 6, 2009.

During this closure, a fishing vessel, issued an Atlantic Shark Limited Access Permit (LAP) and a valid shark research permit with a NMFS-approved observer onboard, pursuant to §635.4, may not possess or sell a non-sandbar LCS. A shark dealer, issued a permit pursuant to §635.4, may not purchase or receive non-sandbar LCS from a vessel issued an Atlantic Shark LAP and a valid shark research permit with a NMFS-approved observer onboard, except that a permitted shark dealer or processor may possess sharks that were harvested, off-loaded, and sold, traded, or bartered, prior to the effective date of the closure and were held in storage. Additionally, a shark dealer issued a federal shark dealer permit, pursuant to §635.4, may in accordance with state regulations, purchase or receive a non-sandbar LCS if the shark was harvested, off-loaded, and sold, traded, or bartered from a vessel that fishes only in state waters and had not been issued a Shark LAP, HMS Angling permit, or HMS CHB permit under §635.4.



This notice is a courtesy to the HMS fishery participants to help keep you informed about your fishery. For further information on this landings update or the closure, contact Karyl Brewster-Geisz or Guy` DuBeck at 301-713-2347. The information will also be posted on the HMS website at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms>.

*for*   
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Alan D. Risenhoover  
Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries

**JUN 26 2009**

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Date

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