



NMFS Announces a Final Rule Regarding the 2013 Atlantic Shark Commercial Fishing Season

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) announces a final rule that establishes quotas and opening dates for the 2013 Atlantic commercial shark fisheries. Based on updated landings data, changes from the proposed rule include adjustments to account for additional landings reported as of November 26, 2012. The final quotas and opening dates are:

Species Group	Region	2013 Annual Quota	Season Opening Dates	
Non-Sandbar Large Coastal Sharks	Gulf of Mexico	439.5 (968,922 lb dw)	January 1, 2013	
	Atlantic	188.3 (415,126 lb dw)		
Non-Sandbar LCS Research	No regional quotas	50.0 (110,230 lb dw)		
Sandbar Shark Research		116.6 (257,056 lb dw)		
Non-Blacknose Small Coastal Sharks		329.2* (725,645 lb dw)		
Blacknose Sharks		19.9 (43,872 lb dw)		
Blue Sharks		273.0 (601,856 lb dw)		
Porbeagle Sharks		-0.4* (874 lb dw)		Closed for 2013
Pelagic Sharks Other Than Porbeagle or Blue		488.0 (1,075,856 lb dw)		January 1, 2013

*Change from proposed rule

All of the shark fisheries will remain open until December 31, 2013, unless NMFS calculates that the fishing season landings have reached, or are projected to reach, 80 percent of the available quota. In that case, NMFS will publish a notice in the Federal Register of the closure for that shark species group that will be effective no fewer than 5 days from the date of filing.

At this time, we are implementing the quotas based on current regulations. Other future actions, such as those proposed in draft Amendment 5 to the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP (77 FR 70552; November 26, 2012) to address several recent shark stock assessments could affect the

quotas implemented here in this 2013 shark season rule. Any such changes to the quotas would be addressed in the final Amendment 5, as appropriate.

This notice is a courtesy to the HMS fishery participants to help keep you informed about the fishery. More details on the reasons regarding the decisions and responses to the public comments received are provided in the final rule for this action. Copies of these documents are available upon request from the Highly Migratory Species Management Division, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 (phone: 301-427-8503, fax: 301-713-1917) or on the HMS website at: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/>. For further information on this final rule and its requirements, contact Karyl Brewster-Geisz or Guý DuBeck at 301-427-8503.

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