



NMFS Establishes the 2011 Commercial Quotas and Opening Dates for the Atlantic Shark Fisheries

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) announces a final rule that establishes quota levels and opening dates for the 2010 Atlantic commercial shark fisheries. Based in part on public comments and implementation of adaptive management measures, NMFS changed the opening date for the non-sandbar large coastal shark fishery in the Gulf of Mexico region from the proposed opening date. The final opening dates and quotas are:

Species Group	Region	2011 Annual Quota	Season Opening Dates
Non-Sandbar Large Coastal Sharks	Gulf of Mexico	351.9 (775,740 lb dw)	March 1, 2011*
	Atlantic	190.4 (419,756 lb dw)	July 15, 2011
Non-Sandbar LCS Research Quota	No regional quotas	37.5 (82,673 lb dw)	January 1, 2011
Sandbar Research Quota		87.9 (193,784 lb dw)	January 1, 2011
Non-Blacknose Small Coastal Sharks		314.4 (693,257 lb dw)	January 1, 2011
Blacknose Sharks		19.9 (43,872 lb dw)	January 1, 2011
Blue Sharks		273 (601,856 lb dw)	January 1, 2011
Porbeagle Sharks		1.6 (3,479 lb dw)	January 1, 2011
Pelagic Sharks Other Than Porbeagle or Blue		488 (1,075,856 lb dw)	January 1, 2011

*Change from proposed rule

In addition, NMFS implemented criteria to establish fishery opening dates and adjust the trip limits for the shark fisheries through inseason actions to provide fishermen more equitable access to the resource throughout the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic regions. At this time, the shark trip limit of 33 non-SB LCS remains in effect and will not change at the start of the fishing season.

All of the shark fisheries will remain open until December 31, 2011, unless NMFS calculates that the fishing season landings has reached, or is 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.

This notice is a courtesy to the HMS fishery participants to help keep you informed about your fishery. More details on the reasons regarding the decisions and responses to the public comments received are provided in the final rule and Final Environmental Assessment 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: 301-713-2347, 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 Guy DuBeck at 301-713-2347 or Jackie Wilson at 240-338-3936. This email notice is intended to provide a plain-language summary of how to comply with only the new regulations and is produced in compliance with Section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act.

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Date