



**NOAA
FISHERIES**

**Office of Law
Enforcement**

NOAA Fisheries Enforcement Programs and Operations

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Mission

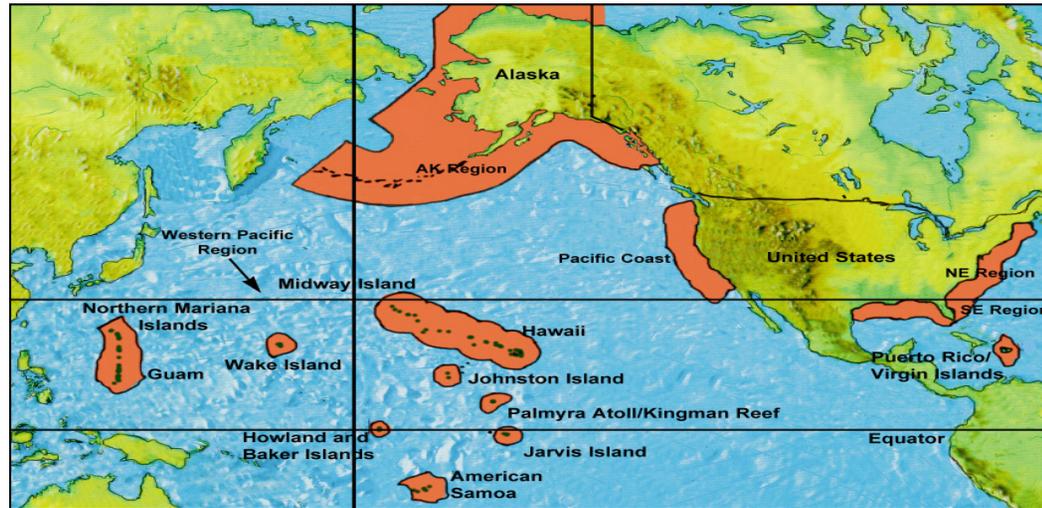
The mission of NOAA's Office of Law Enforcement is to **protect global marine resources by enforcing domestic laws and international treaties and obligations** dedicated to **protecting wildlife and their natural habitat** for the use and enjoyment of future generations.

Meeting this mission requires not only state-of-the art **science** and **management** programs, but also a fair, effective, and comprehensive **compliance** and **enforcement** program

About us

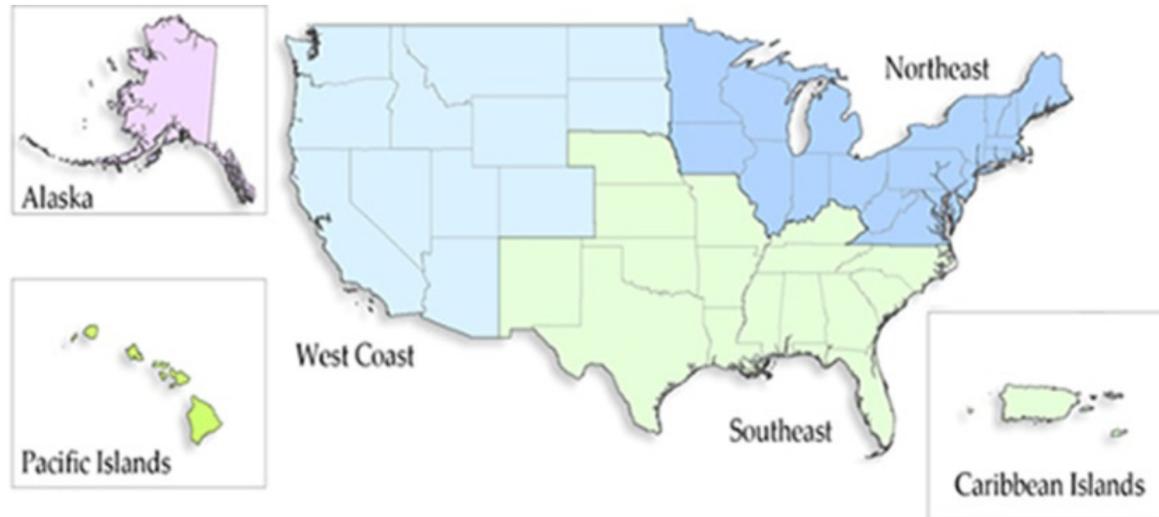
- The Office for Law Enforcement has a mission across all NOAA lines as a matrix program.
- The Office of General Counsel Enforcement Section is the primary legal partner of OLE and prosecutes civil cases.
- The Department of Justice and U.S. Attorney's Offices are the legal advisors and prosecutorial partners in criminal matters.
- U.S. Coast Guard is our primary federal enforcement partner.

U.S. Primary Jurisdiction



- 3.36 million square miles of open ocean
- More than 95,000 miles of U.S. coastline
- 13 National Marine Sanctuaries and 4 Marine National Monuments
- High seas and international trade relating to U.S. treaties and international law

OLE Divisions



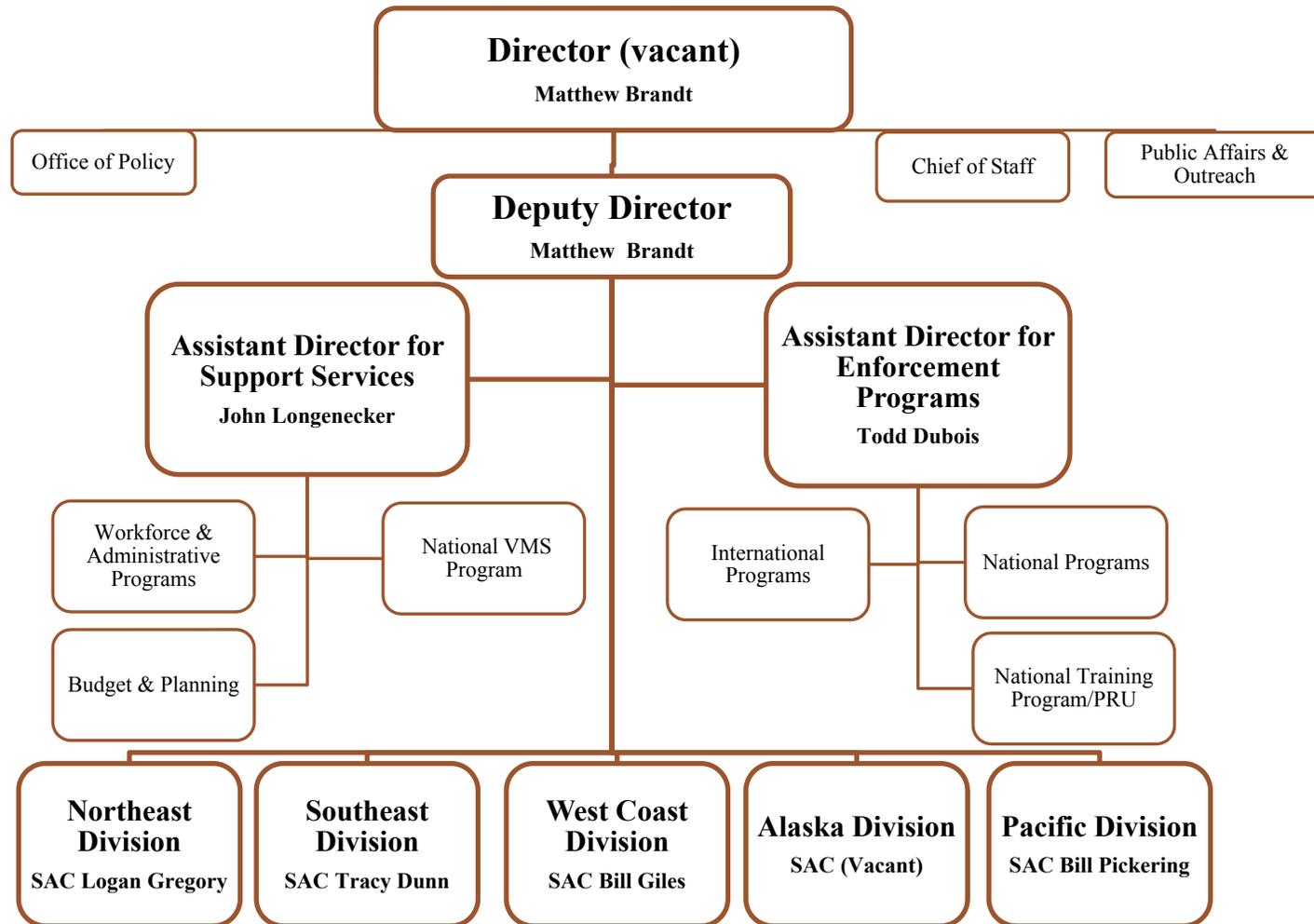
Headquarters in Silver Spring, MD

Five Divisions co-located with Regional Offices (NE, SE, AK, W, and PI)

53 field offices throughout the United States and U.S. territories

96 Special Agents – 27 Enforcement Officers - 73 Support Staff

Organization



Primary laws OLE enforces



- Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act
- Endangered Species Act
- Marine Mammal Protection Act
- Lacey Act
- National Marine Sanctuaries Act

Enforcement Operational Priorities

National Priorities

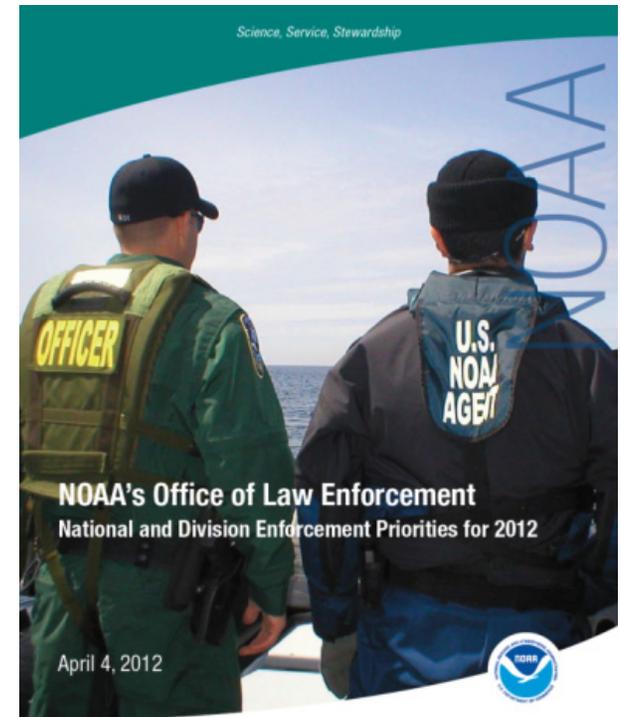
- Support Sustainable Fisheries and Safe Seafood
- Support Recovered and Healthy Marine and Coastal Species and Healthy Habitats

Supporting Priorities

- Compliance Assistance
- Observers

Divisional Priorities

- <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/ole/docs/2013/ole-division-priorities-2013-final.pdf>



Collaborative fisheries enforcement to implement international treaties and obligations

- Investigations of Illegal Unreported & Unregulated (IUU) fishing activity and trafficking in illegal fish and fish product
- Fisheries enforcement technical assistance
- Regional Fishery Management Organizations (RFMO) participation
- Port State Measures and other IUU-related legislation
- NOAA's "Leveling the Playing Field" plan to combat IUU



How we accomplish our priorities

- Outreach and compliance assistance
- Criminal and civil investigations
- Patrols, inspections and monitoring
- Partnerships with state, tribal, federal and nongovernmental organizations
- Collaborative fisheries enforcement to implement international treaties and obligations
- Use of innovative technological tools

Federal partnerships

U.S. Coast Guard
27 + 1? JEA State & U.S. Territory
Partners
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
U.S. Customs & Border Protection
U.S. Marshals Service
Federal Bureau of Investigation
Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco & Firearms
Drug Enforcement Administration
Food & Drug Administration
U.S. Department of Justice
U.S. Attorney's Offices



Partnerships

- **Joint Enforcement Agreements** (JEAs) with 27 coastal states and U.S. territories
- **Federal partnerships** with U.S. Coast Guard, Fish & Wildlife Service, Customs & Border Protection, and others
- Civil cases are prosecuted by **NOAA's Office of General Counsel's Enforcement Section**
- Criminal cases are prosecuted by **U.S. Department of Justice** and **U.S. Attorney's Offices**



Communication, Education and Outreach

- Developed a comprehensive communications and engagement strategy
- Increased number of uniformed enforcement officers and dock patrols aimed at education
- Created and utilized opportunities for direct engagement between fisheries stakeholders and OLE director



Compliance assistance



OLE has established a comprehensive and effective compliance program

- Built on input from stakeholders
- Expand existing programs and partnerships around the country
- Non-enforcement context

Compliance Assistance Program in Northeast

- Compliance assistance liaison
- Outreach coordinator



Innovative technological tools such as Vessel Monitoring System

- Operational Since 1994
- 4,300+ registered vessels
- 1,400 vTrack users
- Monitoring 20+ fisheries/permits nationwide
- 6 active monitoring locations
 - NE, SE, AK (Juneau and Kodiak), NW, PI
- 8 type-approved mobile transceivers (5 companies)



Why does a strong enforcement program matter?

Our work

- sustains fish stocks for commercial, recreational, tribal and US territorial users
- prevents the illegal, unregulated and unreported harvesting and trafficking of fish and wildlife
- protects marine mammals and endangered species
- maintains and restores marine and inland water habitats
- conserves coral reefs and marine protected areas
- levels the playing field for all industry participants
- holds accountable those who violate the law



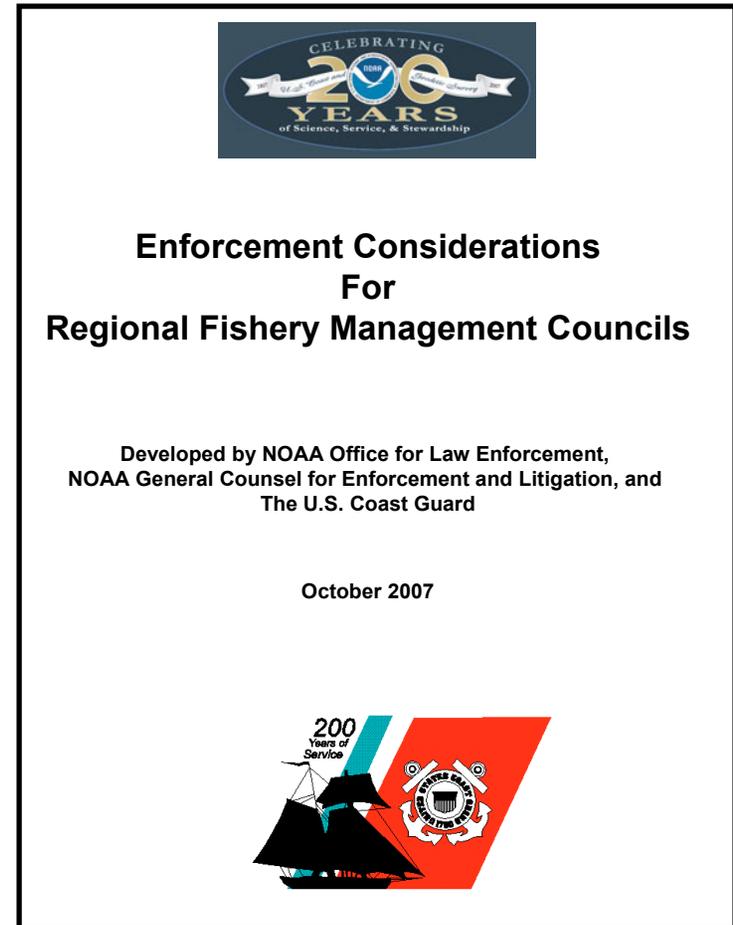
Enforcement is critical to fisheries management

- NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in climate, weather, oceans, and coasts; to share that knowledge and information with others; and to conserve and manage coastal and marine ecosystems and resources.
- Meeting this mission requires not only state-of-the art **science** and **management** programs, but also a fair, effective, and comprehensive compliance and **enforcement** program.

How can Councils help?

Effective regulations:

- Simple and easy to understand
- Few as possible and/or concise
- Fish is accountable and traceable throughout the wholesale process



Other considerations

Compliance and/or enforcement are difficult if regulations are:

- Man power intensive (monitoring offloads or weighing, etc.)
- Complex or convoluted
- Lack accountability (effective paperwork/electronic trail)
- Use estimates (estimated weight of catch, catch composition, discards, etc.)
- Law enforcement resource intensive (resource limits of OLE, Coast Guard, and States)

In conclusion:

- **Science / Management / Enforcement**
- **Enforcement partnerships are critical**
- **Compliance is the goal**
- **Effective regulations**
- **OLE is uniquely qualified**

Office of Law Enforcement – NOAA Fisheries

Questions/Comments?

