



**NOAA
FISHERIES**

**Office of Law
Enforcement**

NOAA Fisheries Enforcement Programs and Operations

James Landon, Director

October 28, 2015

Mission

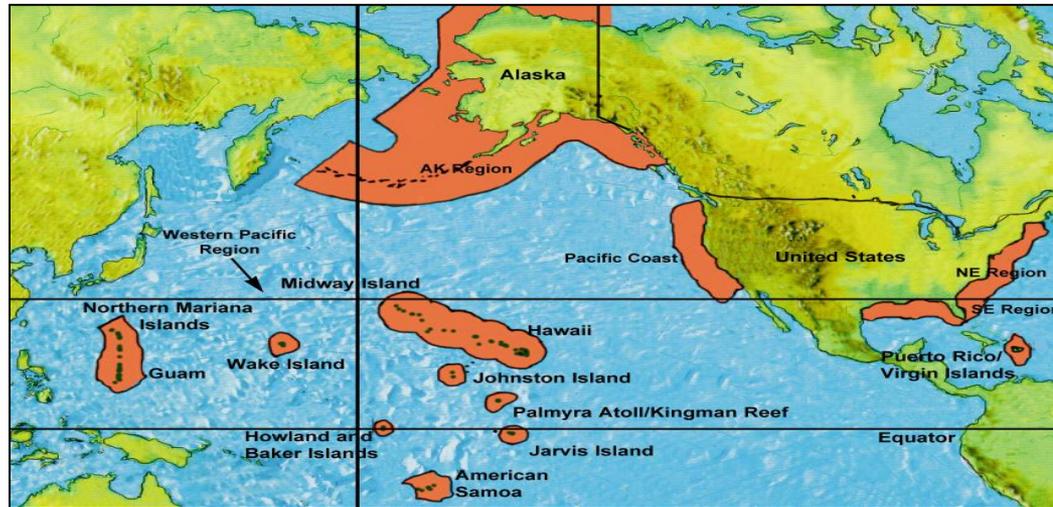
The mission of NOAA's Office of Law Enforcement is to **protect global marine resources by enforcing domestic laws and international treaties and obligations** dedicated to **protecting wildlife and their natural habitat** for the use and enjoyment of future generations.

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

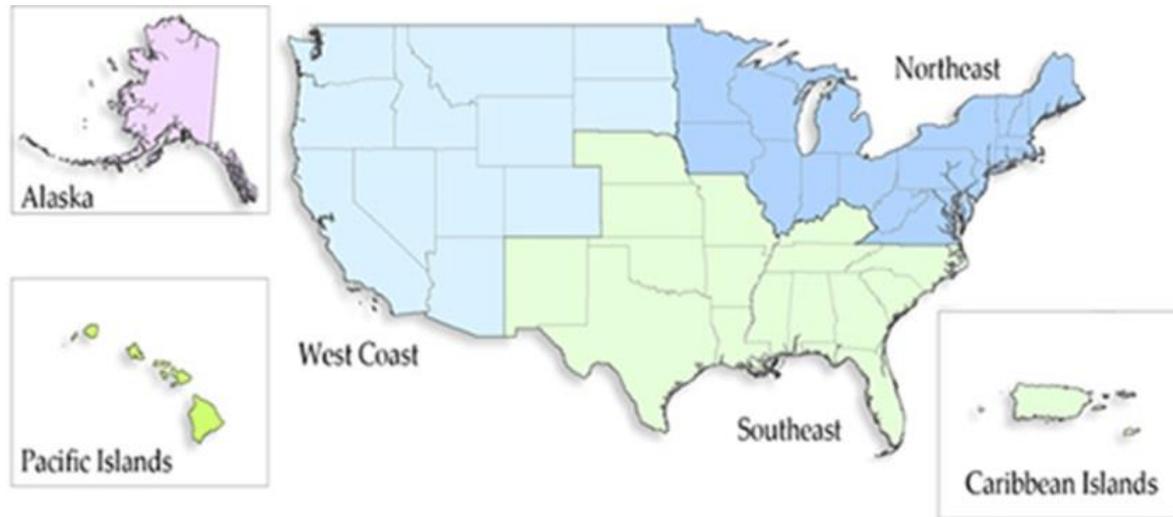
- The Office for Law Enforcement has a mission across all NOAA lines as a matrix program.
- The Office of General Counsel Enforcement Section is the primary legal partner of OLE and prosecutes civil cases.
- The Department of Justice and U.S. Attorney's Offices are the legal advisors and prosecutorial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



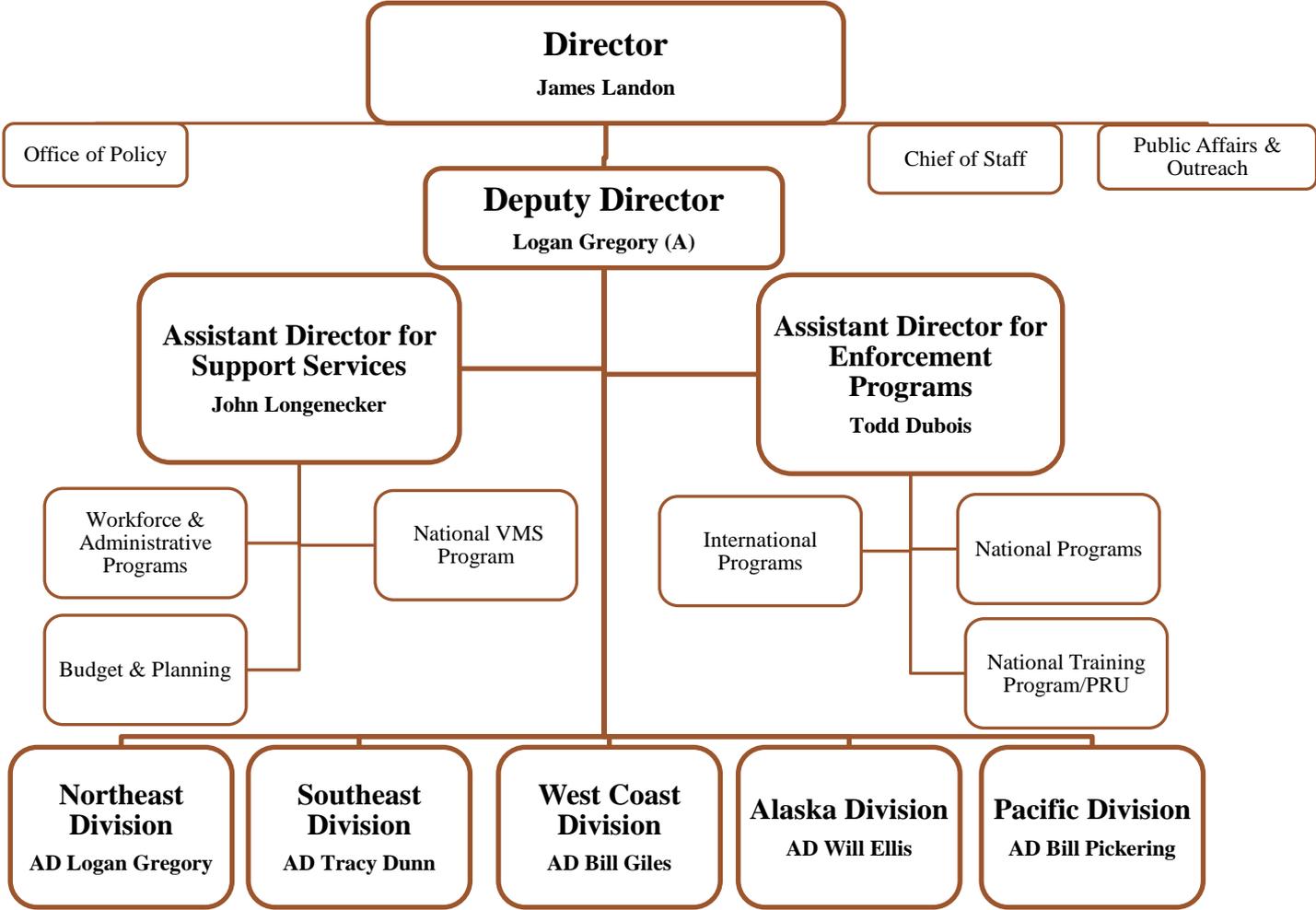
Headquarters in Silver Spring, MD

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

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

89 Special Agents – 38 Enforcement Officers - 62 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

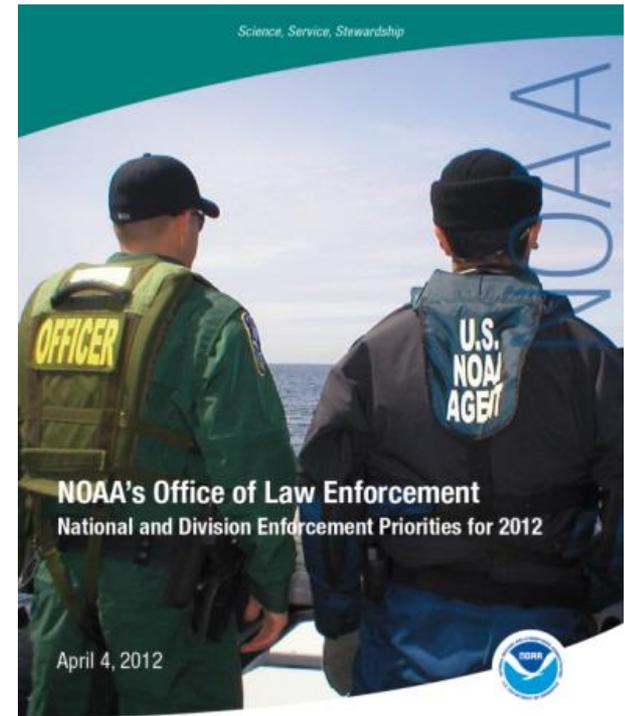
- Support Sustainable Fisheries and Safe Seafood
- Support Recovered and Healthy Marine and Coastal Species and Healthy Habitats

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



Enforcement Considerations For Regional Fishery Management Councils

Developed by NOAA Office for Law Enforcement,
NOAA General Counsel for Enforcement and Litigation, and
The U.S. Coast Guard

October 2007



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?

