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**Subject:** FishNews - June 25, 2014 - Advisory Committee Nominations, Killer Whale Research, Sea Turtles Galore, Probiotics for Shellfish, and More

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**June 25, 2014**

## HIGHLIGHTS

### EVENTS

#### June-August

Public town hall meetings on **NOAA Fisheries' National Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Policy**, held in conjunction with regional fishery management council meetings.

#### June 26-27

**Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council meeting** in Key West, Florida.

#### June 26-27

**Western Pacific Fishery Management Council meeting** in Honolulu, Hawaii.

#### June 30-July 1

**Northeast Federal**



#### **MAFAC Request for Nominations - Two Weeks Left**

The Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee advises the Secretary of Commerce on living marine resource matters. MAFAC members represent a wide spectrum of fisheries, protected resources, and marine habitat interest. Nominations are due **July 7**.

#### **Southern Resident Killer Whales: 10 Years of Research and Conservation**

NOAA Fisheries [released a report](#) highlighting the accomplishments of 10 years of dedicated research and conservation of the endangered Southern Resident killer whale population. Read the report, watch a video on Southern Resident research, and meet the NOAA staff who help protect and conserve these endangered marine mammals.

#### **Sea Turtles Galore...**

**Fishery-Dependent Data  
Visioning Project  
Industry Workshop** in  
New Bedford,  
Massachusetts.

**July-September**

Three free **Atlantic Shark  
Identification  
Workshops** in Texas and  
Florida.

**July-September**

Six free **Protected  
Species  
Safe Handling, Release,  
and Identification  
Workshops**  
in Florida, Maryland,  
Massachusetts, South  
Carolina, Texas, New  
Jersey.

**July 15-17**

**Peer review of NOAA's  
Gulf of Maine Haddock  
and Sea Scallop stock  
assessments**, open to the  
public, in Woods Hole,  
Massachusetts.

**July 29-31**

**Peer review of NOAA's  
Bering Sea/Aleutian  
Islands Atka mackerel  
stock assessment**, open  
to the public, in Seattle,  
Washington.

**August 7**

**Public meeting prior to  
the 65th International  
Whaling Commission  
meeting**  
in Silver Spring,  
Maryland.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**June 30**

Initial proposals due for  
**Atlantic Coastal  
Cooperative Statistics**

**Underwater Robots Search for Sea Turtles**

Scientists test out a new tool for keeping track of  
endangered populations of sea turtles: submersible  
side-scan sonar.

**Podcast: For Rescued Sea Turtle Eggs,  
a Slim Chance to Survive**

NOAA Fisheries veterinarian Brian Stacy describes a  
very unusual attempt to rescue the eggs of a sea turtle  
that was hit and killed by a boat.

**Movements of Leatherbacks in the Pacific  
Ocean Revealed**

NOAA Scientists recently discovered that most adult  
leatherback sea turtles in the Pacific Ocean return to  
the same feeding areas between nesting seasons.

**Reducing Sea Turtle Bycatch in Atlantic Pelagic  
Longline Fisheries**

NOAA Fisheries and the Atlantic pelagic longline  
fishery share responsibility to reduce the bycatch of  
leatherback and loggerhead sea turtles, which are listed  
under the Endangered Species Act.

**Probiotics on the Shellfish Farm**

NOAA Fisheries scientists developed a new, environmentally  
friendly technology to increase yields at oyster hatcheries using  
probiotics. Probiotics are microorganisms that improve health  
by growing beneficial bacteria that inhibit the growth of other,  
detrimental bacteria. Although probiotics are already used at  
salmon and shrimp farms-and some yogurts for humans-this is  
the first time they have been developed for oysters.

**Fisheries at Capitol Hill Ocean Week 2014**

The videos of speakers and panel discussions at this annual,  
three-day event are now available online. For especially fish-  
rich discussion and content, listen to the keynote speech by  
[John Podesta, Counselor to the President](#) and two panel  
discussions - [U.S. Action on a Global Stage](#) and [The Future of  
American Fisheries](#) for which Eileen Sobeck participates.

**2014 International Smart Gear Competition**

Do you have a good idea for reducing bycatch of marine  
mammals and tuna with new or redesigned fishing gear?  
Check out World Wildlife Fund's 2014 International Smart  
Gear Competition, a NOAA-sponsored competition geared  
toward developing innovative solutions to reduce bycatch.  
Entries are due **August 31**.

**NOAA and Partners Release 2014 Dead Zone  
Forecasts**

**[Program](#)** funding request.

### **[July 7](#)**

Nominations due for  
**U.S. Delegation** to the  
September 2014  
**International Whaling  
Commission meeting.**

### **[July 7](#)**

Nominations due for the  
**Marine Fisheries  
Advisory Committee.**

### **[July 14](#)**

Letters of intent due for  
FY2014 federal funding  
opportunity  
**Understanding Climate  
Impacts on Fish Stocks  
and Fisheries to Inform  
Sustainable  
Management.**

### **[July 14](#)**

Nominations due for 2014  
**Nancy Foster Habitat  
Conservation Award.**

## **FEDERAL REGISTER ACTIONS**

**[Click here](#)** for a list of only  
those actions open for  
public comment. Scroll  
search for National  
Oceanic and Atmospheric  
Administration.

For a list of all daily  
actions, check the Federal  
Register **[online](#)**.

NOAA-funded scientists expect an average, but still large, hypoxic or "dead" zone in the Gulf of Mexico this year and a slightly above-average hypoxic zone in the Chesapeake Bay. Hypoxic (very low oxygen) zones are caused by excessive nutrient pollution, which causes plankton to multiply, decompose, and use up the oxygen needed by other marine life. Large dead zones threaten important fisheries.

## **Greater Amberjack Now on FishWatch**

Check out the new greater amberjack profile on **[FishWatch.gov](#)**. As we continue to expand FishWatch, we hope to add a number of new species profiles each year. Stay tuned for more new profiles in the coming months.

## **Lightning Safety: When Thunder Roars, Go Indoors!**

This week is Lightning Safety Awareness Week. Learn what to do - and **[what not to do](#)** - to stay safe when thunderstorms threaten.

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## **Alaska**

### **Gulf of Alaska Groundfish Amendment - Open for Public Comment**

By **July 25**, submit your comments on a proposed rule to implement Amendment 97 to the Fishery Management Plan for Groundfish of the Gulf of Alaska. These regulations would establish separate annual limits for Chinook bycatch in for different sectors of vessels that fish for groundfish other than pollock.

### **Interactive Maps Share Science Center's Research**

Check out the Alaska Fisheries Science Center's newly-updated interactive mapping tools to visualize sets of key Alaska fisheries data. One map, updated with 2013 observer data, provides a tool to understand **[fish and invertebrate catches in the Bering Sea/Aleutian Islands and Gulf of Alaska groundfish fisheries](#)**, while another uses bathymetry data to map **[fish habitat in Cook Inlet](#)**.

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## **West Coast**

### **Record Smolt Numbers in Washington's Baker River**

It's a record-smashing season for young salmon migrating through the Baker River in the North Cascades of Washington State. An innovative fish passage system developed by NOAA Fisheries, dam owner Puget Sound Energy, and other partners and installed between 2008-2013, has helped recover the population from its near extinction in the 1980s.

### **Rockfish Survey by Remotely Operated Vehicle**

In Puget Sound, a remotely operated vehicle provides a valuable glimpse of nearly 30 species of rockfish, three of which are listed under the Endangered Species Act. ROVs, which can descend to depths and into habitats that are hard for divers to reach, provide an effective way to survey rockfish populations without actually catching them.

### **Photo Contest Winners: The Best of the West**

Check out the winners of NOAA Fisheries' 2014 West Coast Photo Contest, aimed to capture the unique work that NOAA Fisheries does protecting and conserving living marine resources throughout the West Coast.

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## ***Pacific Islands***

### **Monk Seal Surveys Underway in Northwestern Hawaiian Islands**

The NOAA Ship *Hi'ialakai* is on a 26-day mission in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands to monitor and study the endangered Hawaiian monk seal population. Every year, NOAA scientists monitor the status of monk seals at remote locations in the islands and research ways of enhancing the seals' recovery.

### **Bottomfish Research Underway in N. Mariana Islands**

Scientists from multiple agencies are aboard NOAA Ship *Oscar Elton Sette* on a 30-day research mission in the waters of the northern islands of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Their mission is to learn more about the biology and environment of the bottomfish populations that support local fisheries.

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## ***Southeast***

### **NOAA Fisheries, States Request Help Collecting Red Snapper Data**

NOAA Fisheries and state partners from North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida seek fishermen willing to help collect data during the 2014 South Atlantic commercial and recreational red snapper seasons. Data will be collected through a variety of methods and will provide crucial information for future population assessments.

### **South Atlantic Council Approves Measures for Public Hearing/Scoping Meetings**

At their June meeting, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council reviewed draft amendments to fishery management plans and approved several to take out to public hearing and scoping meetings this August. Read more about the amendments they are considering this year.

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## Greater Atlantic

### Delaware Artificial Reefs Special Management Zone - Open for Public Comment

By **August 4**, [submit your comments](#) on proposed measures to implement Special Management Zones for five Delaware artificial reefs. The reefs were built to enhance recreational fishing, and these recommendations are designed to reduce gear conflict between recreational hook-and-line fishing and commercial pot fisheries.

### Scientists Explore Deep-Sea Corals in Gulf of Maine

A team of U.S. and Canadian scientists and engineers will spend two weeks surveying and collecting samples of deep-sea corals and other marine life in the northern Gulf of Maine using a remotely operated vehicle. While previous cruises have explored and mapped the canyons visually, this will be the first to take samples.

### Whale Watch Trip Turns into Successful Whale Rescue

A vessel owned by a member of NOAA Fisheries' WhaleSENSE Program ventured into Canadian waters in search of whales and found one entangled in fishing gear. The vessel contacted help and stood by for nearly two hours, reporting the whale's location. The following morning an international team was able to successfully cut the whale free.

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