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Subject: FishNews - March 18, 2015 - Presidential IUU Task Force Releases Action Plan, FishWatch.gov Update, NOAA Fisheries Offices Merge, and More

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March 18, 2015

HIGHLIGHTS

EVENTS

March 24

Scoping workshop held by the Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council to discuss a **proposed amendment modifying the Red Snapper Individual Fishing Quota Program** in St. Petersburg, Florida.

March 24 and 31

Science seminar series by the Alaska Fisheries Science Center.

March 25

Public meeting to solicit comments on the proposed **revisions to the National Standard Guidelines** of the



Presidential Task Force on Combatting IUU Fishing Releases Action Plan

On Monday, the Presidential Task Force on Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing and Seafood Fraud, co-chaired by Department of Commerce/NOAA and the Department of State, released its [final action plan](#). The plan outlines aggressive steps that federal agencies will take to implement the Task Force's recommendations.

FishWatch.gov Update - Request for Feedback

We're ready for your feedback on the beta version of our new mobile-friendly website. We only have 10 profiles so far on the beta site, but we want early feedback before we proceed adding the other 93 profiles. Check it out on your desktop, tablet, and

Magnuson-Stevens
Fishery Conservation and
Management Act.

March 26

Rescheduled
**Atlantic Shark
Identification workshop**
in Norfolk, Virginia.

March 30-31

Three public hearings on
**Pacific salmon
management
alternatives** hosted by the
Pacific Fishery
Management Council.

March 30-April 2

**Gulf of Mexico Fishery
Management Council
meeting** in Biloxi,
Mississippi.

March 30-April 28

Nine **scoping workshops**
hosted by the Gulf of
Mexico Fishery
Management Council to
discuss two **proposed
mackerel amendments**.

April 6-14

**North Pacific Fishery
Management Council
meeting** in Anchorage,
Alaska.

April 9

Free **Atlantic Shark
Identification workshop**
in Wilmington, North
Carolina.

April 10-16

**Pacific Fishery
Management Council
meeting** in
Rohnert Park, California.

April 13 and 28

Two free **Protected
Species Safe Handling**,

phone: <http://app5.erg.com/fishwatch>. Please email your
comments to fishwatch@noaa.gov by **April 15**.

NOAA Fisheries Offices Combine to Address International Fisheries and Seafood

NOAA Fisheries recently merged its Office of International
Affairs and its Seafood Inspection Program, positioning itself
to more fully engage in the global ocean-to-plate discussion.
John Henderschedt, most recently of the North Pacific Fishery
Management Council, will lead the new office as its director
beginning on April 6.

Search for U.S. Recreational Commissioner to ICCAT

The Administration is seeking an individual to serve as the
U.S. Recreational Commissioner for the International
Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT).
The individual should have knowledge and experience
regarding recreational fishing in the Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of
Mexico or Caribbean Sea. Please submit expressions of interest
or input concerning prospective candidates by **April 17** to
Russell Smith (Russell.Smith@noaa.gov) and Rachel O'Malley
(Rachel.O'Malley@noaa.gov).

Alaska

2015 Charter and Commercial Halibut Management

The regulations of the International Pacific Halibut
Commission are now in effect for fishing year 2015. At its
annual meeting in January, the commission recommended
area-specific catch limits for 2015 that, in most areas, were
higher than 2014 limits. Read details here.

Science Program Review 2015: Protected Species

NOAA Fisheries conducts regular, objective peer reviews of its
scientific activities at each Fisheries Science Center. This year,
an independent panel will review the Alaska Fisheries Science
Center's marine mammal science programs.

Results from Untrawlable Habitat Initiative Experiment

Bottom trawl surveys have limited use for sampling species
that prefer steep or rocky habitats. Scientists working with the
Untrawlable Habitat Strategic Initiative conducted their first
full-scaled experiment last fall, testing the sampling efficiency
of remotely operated and autonomous vehicles. Video
included.

West Coast

Environmental Changes Stress West Coast Sea Lions

Release, and Identification workshops in Port St. Lucie, Florida, and Kenner, Louisiana.

April 14-16

Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council meeting in Long Branch, New Jersey.

April 21-22

Caribbean Fishery Management Council meeting in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands.

April 21-23

New England Fishery Management Council meeting in Mystic, Connecticut.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

March 20

Nominations due for **Marine Mammal Scientific Review Groups**.

March 24

Applications due for **2015 Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund Grants**.

April 10

Applications due for open seats on **Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council Scientific and Statistical Committees**.

April 27

Applications due for 2015 NOAA Sea Grant **Aquaculture Extension and Technology Transfer** funding.

FEDERAL REGISTER ACTIONS

Unusually warm ocean conditions off the U.S. Pacific Coast have affected everything from plankton to sea lions. Because of the division of family responsibilities, male and female sea lions are responding to the changes in different ways. Males have moved farther north to feast on strong salmon returns, while females, tied to the rookeries on the Channel Islands, spend more time trying to find enough food for their offspring, often leaving their starving pups for days at a time.

Low-Oxygen Impacts on West Coast Groundfish

A new study by scientists at the Northwest Fisheries Science Center and Oregon State University examines the impact of low-oxygen "dead-zones" on the distribution of fish species. As these dead zones recur and expand with the climate change, sensitive fish species that must escape these areas may become harder to find.

NOAA Fisheries Develops Novel Juvenile Fish Feeder

Scientists at the Northwest Fisheries Science Center developed a fish feeder that automatically feeds young fish on a recurrent basis while preventing the feed from clumping and oxidizing. The patent-pending Microparticulate Feeder for Larval and Juvenile Fish is now available for licensing by a qualified U.S. company.

Salmon Stock Reference Points - Open for Public Comment

By **April 2**, please submit your comments on proposed updates to management reference point values for three Pacific salmon stocks, as recommended by the Pacific Fishery Management Council for use in developing annual management measures. These updates would be implemented as part of the methodology review the Council conducted last year.

Council Chooses Options for 2015 Salmon Season

The Pacific Fishery Management Council adopted three public review options for the 2015 salmon season off the West Coast of the United States. Following public hearings, public comment solicitation, and consultations with scientists, the Council will select a final option at their upcoming meeting in April.

NOAA Expands Northern California Marine Sanctuaries

NOAA released a final rule that will more than double the size of both Cordell Bank and Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuaries, located off the coast of northern California. The expansion follows years of public comment. Research by NOAA and partners has identified the nutrient-rich upwelling zone flowing through the expanded area as one of the most productive in North America.

[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](#).

Pacific Islands

Scientists Recommend Measures for Tuna Longliners

Following their 3-day meeting last week, the Scientific and Statistical Committee of the Western Pacific Fishery Management Council recommended three management measures for longline fisheries in American Samoa and other U.S. Pacific Islands, including Hawaii. The Council considered the scientists' recommendations this week at their meeting in Honolulu.

Southeast

Southeast Region Draft Strategic Plan - Open for Public Comment

By **July 11**, please submit your comments on NOAA Fisheries Southeast Region's draft strategic plan for fiscal years 2016-2020. This planning effort is one component of a national effort to ensure that the agency's regulatory and science programs are consistent, transparent, efficient, and aligned with the agency's core mandates.

Gulf Council Seeks Applicants for Scientific and Statistical Committees

The Gulf of Mexico Fishery Management Council requests applications for open seats on its Scientific and Statistical Committees. These committees are comprised of experts in statistics, fisheries biology, sociology, or other special sciences, and they provide independent, scientific advice to the Council. Applications are due **April 10**.

South Atlantic Council Addresses Proposed Measures

At last week's meeting in St. Simons Island, Georgia, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council addressed a range of management issues. Topics included regulations for blueline tilefish, protection of spawning areas for snapper-grouper species, stock assessments for red snapper and gray triggerfish, and management measures for king mackerel. Read a summary of the Council's actions [here](#).

Greater Atlantic

Scallop Fishery Framework Adjustment - Open for Public Comment

By **April 1**, please submit your comments on proposed Framework Adjustment 26 to the Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery Management Plan. Framework 26 would set management measures for the Atlantic Sea Scallop fishery for the 2015

fishing year, including annual catch limits, days at sea allocations, specific area closures, gear modifications, and other measures.

New GIS Shapefiles Available on GARFO's Website

NOAA Fisheries announces the publication of 49 new GIS (Geographic Information Systems) shapefiles on the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office's website. The third and final phase of [GIS file publication](#), this batch depicts 139 regulated areas defined under the Northeast Multispecies, Monkfish, and Atlantic Herring Fishery Management Plans.

A Look Back at the Opening of Woods Hole Main Lab

The main laboratory building for the Northeast Fisheries Science Center officially opened 55 years ago, in March 1960. That building replaced an older, wooden structure, built to house the lab in 1885, which had suffered severe damage from hurricanes in the 1940s and 1950s.

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