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Subject: FishNews - June 17, 2015 - Sea Turtle Week 2015, MAFAC Nominations Deadline, NOAA's Bycatch Strategy, and More

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June 17, 2015

HIGHLIGHTS

EVENTS

June 18

Last day of **Western Pacific Fishery Management Council meeting** in Honolulu.

June 18

Last day of **New England Fishery Management Council meeting** in Newport, Rhode Island.

June 22-25

Council Coordination Committee meeting in Key West, Florida.

June 22-25

Regional Fishery Management Council Administrative Officers meeting in Key West,



Celebrating Sea Turtle Week 2015

Join us for this week-long look at sea turtle science and conservation.

- [Read a kickoff message](#) from Eileen Sobeck, Head of NOAA Fisheries.
- [Learn more](#) about the six species of sea turtle found in U.S. waters.
- [Ride along with scientists](#) as they capture and tag sea turtles to get the information we need to protect these endangered species.
- [Chat with sea turtle expert](#) Barbara Schroeder at a Reddit "Ask Me Anything" session tomorrow, **June 18**, from 2-4 pm ET.
- [Listen to a brand-new podcast](#) about saving the Pacific

Florida.

July 29 - July 1

Public meeting of the **Center for Independent Experts** to conduct a peer review of the stock assessment of the General Model for Alaskan Crabs Stocks, in Seattle.

July 1

Industry meeting in New Bedford, Massachusetts, with Northeast Fisheries Science Center U.S. members of the **Transboundary Resources Assessment Committee** preceding the committee's July meeting.

July 9 and 16

Two free **Protected Species Safe Handling, Release, and Identification Workshops** in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, and Ronkonkoma, New York.

July 23

Free **Atlantic Shark Identification Workshop** in Panama City, Florida.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

June 30

Applications due to three **National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Councils** (Flower Garden Banks, Stellwagen Bank, and Monitor) for open seats representing recreational fishing interests.

July 2

Proposals due for **Coastal Ecosystem Resiliency**

leatherback sea turtle.

Species in the Spotlight: Pacific Leatherback

The Pacific leatherback sea turtle is one of NOAA Fisheries' eight [Species in the Spotlight](#). Learn more about what we're doing to help protect these sea turtles from the multiple threats they face.

Saving Cold-Stunned Sea Turtles

A record number of cold-stunned sea turtles washed ashore on Cape Cod beaches last year. Volunteers brought the turtles to the New England Aquarium, a NOAA Fisheries Sea Turtle Stranding Network member, and from there other facilities along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts rallied to find space to care for, rehabilitate, and eventually release them.

Marine Fisheries Advisory Council Nominations

Nominations are sought for appointments to the Marine Fisheries Advisory Committee (MAFAC), which advises the Secretary of Commerce on living marine resource matters. Appointees serve up to two consecutive three-year terms. Nominations are due **July 20**.

NOAA's Bycatch Strategy - Request for Feedback

NOAA Fisheries is in the early stages of developing a new National Bycatch Strategy and we're looking for your input. Please visit our new webpage for information on NOAA's bycatch efforts and then submit your comments by **July 10**.



NOAA and Canadian Agency Partner on Aquaculture

NOAA announced a new partnership with the Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) to increase cooperation on environmental management of the marine aquaculture industry. Learn more about this first formal arrangement on marine aquaculture between the two countries.

Capitol Hill Ocean Week Wrap-Up: Fisheries, Species in the Spotlight, and IUU Fishing

If you were unable to catch the above discussions on live streaming, they are now available as videos on-line, including:

- [Interview panel](#) with Eileen Sobeck on "Managing Protected Marine Species"
- [Panel discussion](#) on "Ensuring A Sustainable U.S. Seafood Supply"
- [Keynote and Panel Discussion](#) on status of the Presidential Task Force on IUU Fishing and Seafood Fraud.

Green Sea Turtle Listing - Extended Comment Period

By **July 27** (formerly June 22), please submit your comments

Grants.

July 20

Nominations due to the **Marine Fisheries Advisory Council** (MAFAC).

July 30

Nominations due for six appointments to **U.S. Advisory Panel** and one to the **Joint Management Committee** for the **Pacific Whiting Treaty** between the United States and Canada.

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](#).

on a proposal by NOAA Fisheries and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to reclassify the green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) into 11 Distinct Population Segments under the Endangered Species Act. The agencies have also announced three additional public hearings.

Alaska

NOAA Seeks Info on Slain Steller Sea Lions

NOAA Fisheries seeks information on the deliberate killings of several Steller sea lions found dead on a beach near Cordova, Alaska, earlier this month. Killing marine mammals is prohibited under the Marine Mammal Protection Act, and the western population of Steller sea lions is also protected under the Endangered Species Act. NOAA offers a reward of up to \$2,500 for information leading to a conviction in this case.

West Coast

Cordell Banks, Farallones Sanctuaries Expanded

The expansion of Cordell Bank and Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuaries off the coast of northern California took effect last week. The Gulf of the Farallones National Marine Sanctuary has been renamed the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary to reflect the newly expanded area.

Celebrating Habitat Successes Large and Small

In 1996, the first pilot project of NOAA's Community-based Restoration Program began in Santa Rosa, California. The project restored a small creek in the Russian River watershed that runs through a highly urbanized area. Today, NOAA's Restoration Center continues to support projects like these on a much larger scale.

Two Major Groundfish Stocks Rebuilt

The Pacific Fishery Management Council announced this week that two important West Coast groundfish stocks-Canary rockfish and petrale sole-that were formerly overfished have now been rebuilt ahead of schedule. The two stocks have been subject to strict rebuilding plans for more than a decade, and their recovery demonstrates the success of these management efforts and the [U.S. science-based fisheries management process](#) under the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

Pacific Islands

Coral Reef Fish Populations in Main Hawaiian Islands

NOAA Ship *Hi'ialakai* is underway this month on an expedition to gather data on the status of reef fish populations in the Main Hawaiian Islands. The 20-day research cruise represents a multi-agency effort between the Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center and federal, state, and university partners.

Ecosystem Surveys in the Northern Mariana Islands

NOAA Ship *Oscar Elton Sette* is underway this month on an expedition to conduct soft-bottom and mid-water ecosystem surveys in the waters around the Northern Mariana Islands. The idea for the soft-bottom survey project, which is gathering information on the distribution of an edible crab species, was put forth at a 2013 workshop.

Greater Atlantic

Mid-Atlantic Council Approves Corals Amendment

At their June 2015 meeting, members of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council unanimously approved an amendment to protect deep-sea corals from damage by fishing gear in the Mid-Atlantic. The amendment prohibits trawls, dredges, and bottom longline gear in a marine protected area roughly the size of Virginia.

High-Tech Tracking Tags Expand Research Opportunities

Advances in acoustic and satellite technologies are allowing researchers to track marine animals across great distances, even in challenging environments. A study published in *Science* this month, co-authored by a NOAA researcher, details how these advancements are contributing to our understanding of animal movement.

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