



NOAA
FISHERIES

General Category Restricted-Fishing Days (RFDs) Final Rule

Highly Migratory Species Management Division

September 2021



Background

- Proposed rule published May 12, 2021 (86 FR 25992)
 - Public comment accepted through June 11, 2021
 - Public Hearing – May 19, 2021
 - Advisory Panel Meeting – May 25, 2021
 - Received 67 written comments
- Final rule published on August 9, 2021 (86 FR 43421)



Summary of Comments



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Comments on resumed use of General category RFDs

- Support, noting that RFDs should prevent market gluts and lengthen the General category season within the subquota time-periods
- General concern that:
 - The proposed rule would inappropriately manipulate the market
 - The action is premature due to the unique impacts of COVID–19 in 2020
 - The action would not result in extending the fishery, but instead would lead to a derby fishery
- Suggestions that tournaments be exempted from RFDs given their economic importance to communities and because they are a source of valuable scientific data and information for bluefin tuna
- Questions and suggestions regarding how RFDs would be set in the future, e.g., for 2022

Comments on proposed 2021 RFD Schedule

- Implement starting early in June
- Implement starting in September
- Avoid weekends
- Avoid Fridays and Saturdays as demand to buy and sell bluefin tuna is greatest on those days



Final Rule- 2021 RFD Schedule



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Final 2021 RFD Schedule

- The first RFD was Sept. 3 and the last will be Nov. 30.
- NOAA Fisheries may waive RFDs but will not modify RFDs in other ways (e.g., switching days or adding RFDs).

| SEPTEMBER | | | | | | |
|-----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| SU | MO | TU | WE | TH | FR | SA |
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 |
| 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 |
| 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | | |
| | | | | | | |

| OCTOBER | | | | | | |
|---------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| SU | MO | TU | WE | TH | FR | SA |
| | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 |
| 31 | | | | | | |

| NOVEMBER | | | | | | |
|----------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| SU | MO | TU | WE | TH | FR | SA |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
| 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
| 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 |
| 28 | 29 | 30 | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

Note: Landing and selling bluefin tuna can only happen on the days that are not shaded.

Contacts

Please contact us with any other questions or comments:

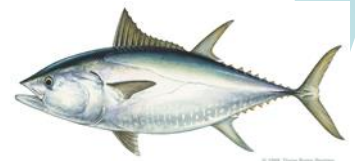
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Also see the Compliance Guide for this action at:

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/final-rule-restricted-fishing-days-atlantic-bluefin-tuna-fishery>



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