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Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Advisory Panel

HMS Overview
September 3, 2025

This Presentation...

Brief status update on:

- Staff changes
- Executive Orders and Presidential Memos
- Updates re: HMS rulemaking
- HMS Management-Based Research Needs
- BSIA Framework review
- Ecosystem Products and Services
- Operations and communications
- HMS catch reporting options
- Updates beyond HMS Management Division

AP Meeting Discussion...

HMS staff presentations:

- Economic update
- Atlantic bluefin tuna year in review/2026 management
- Mobulids rulemaking
- Discussion on Executive Orders 14192 and 14276

External presentation:

- Office of Law Enforcement/U.S. Coast Guard Enforcement Update



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Staff Changes

- Departures
 - Becky Jauch - Fisheries Reporting and Monitoring Branch
- Temporary detail
 - Becky Curtis (Rulemaking Branch) - On detail with another division of the NMFS Office of Sustainable Fisheries' (Operations and Regulatory Services Division) through March 2026



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2025 Executive Orders and Presidential Actions

Among others....

- [“Regulatory Freeze Pending Review”](#)
- EO 14172 – [“Restoring Names that Honor American Greatness”](#)
- EO 14192 – [“Unleashing Prosperity Through Deregulation”](#)
- EO 14219 - [“Ensuring Lawful Governance and Implementing the President’s “Department of Government Efficiency” Deregulatory Initiative”](#)
- EO 14276 – [“Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness”](#)



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Rulemaking and Inseason Actions (2025)

As of mid-August:

- Several HMS-specific actions completed including:
 - 2025 shark specifications
 - 11 inseasons (all bluefin tuna)
 - 4 meeting notices
 - 1 proposed rule (mobulids)
- Several actions are pending as described on the next slide

Also: updated National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Procedures
see <https://www.noaa.gov/general-counsel/nepa>



Some of the Pending HMS-Specific Rules and Actions

- Pending Final Rules or Actions
 - Amendment 15 (spatial management)
 - eReporting
- Some of the Pending Proposed Rules or Actions
 - Atlantic blacknose and recreational shark fishery considerations
 - Swordfish, albacore tuna, and bluefin tuna quota adjustments
 - Swordfish and shark limited access permit considerations
 - Fishing gear considerations (buoy gear, speargun, bait nets)
 - Pelagic and demersal indicator species list considerations
 - Amendment 16 (shark fishery updates)
 - Amendment 17 (essential fish habitat updates)



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HMS Management-Based Research Needs

- The most recent ***HMS Management-Based Research Needs and Priorities*** [document](#) was released in 2020
- An update to this document is being drafted to address emerging data needs, and to be responsive to changes in stock status, fishery priorities, regulations, and science
- A draft document is anticipated to be released for public comment later in 2025
- Submit comments/suggestions to Tobey.Curtis@noaa.gov



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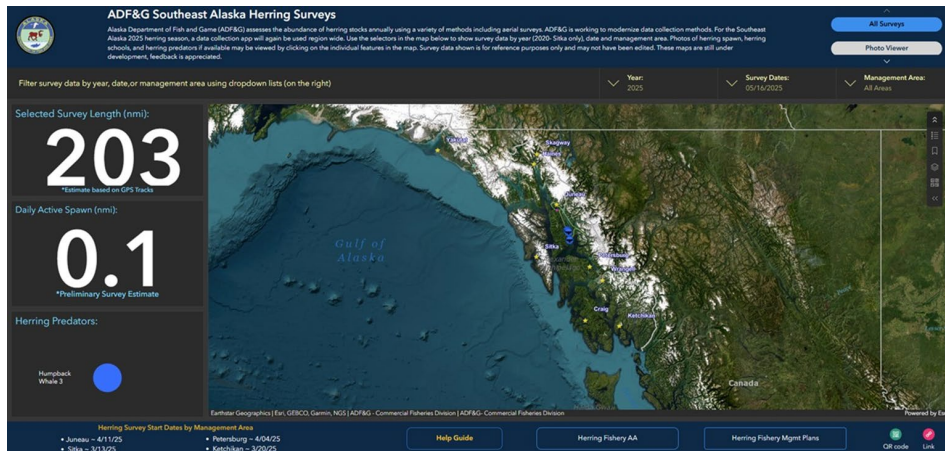
Ecosystem Products and Services

Ecosystem-Based Fishery Management (EBFM)

- New EBFM Publication available (Fish and Fisheries, [Harvey et al. 2025](#))
- New Climate Vulnerability Assessment available (PLoS Climate, [Loughran et al. 2025](#))

Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)

- Phase 1 ([5-Year Review](#)) published 4/18/2024
- Phase 2 (Amendment 17) - anticipated in Spring 2026
 - Help us develop our outreach products! Provide feedback on EFH mapper design.



Is it easy to use?
Is it helpful in understanding
proposed updates to EFH?

AP Meeting: Hallway, Thurs 8:15-8:45 a.m.; or ask Jen at breaks
Email to request a demo: jennifer.cudney@noaa.gov or
ann.williamson@noaa.gov

Operations in 2025 by the Numbers

(through August 8, 2025)

Operations:	Number
EFP/SRP/Display/LOA	42
Shark Research Fishery Permits	3
HMS Tournaments Registered	229
Shark ID & Protected Species Workshops	15
Atlantic HMS News Subscribers	~20,000
Open Access Vessel permits	29,276
Recreational Shark Endorsements	15,878 (54%)
CHB Commercial Sale Endorsements	2,068 (49%)



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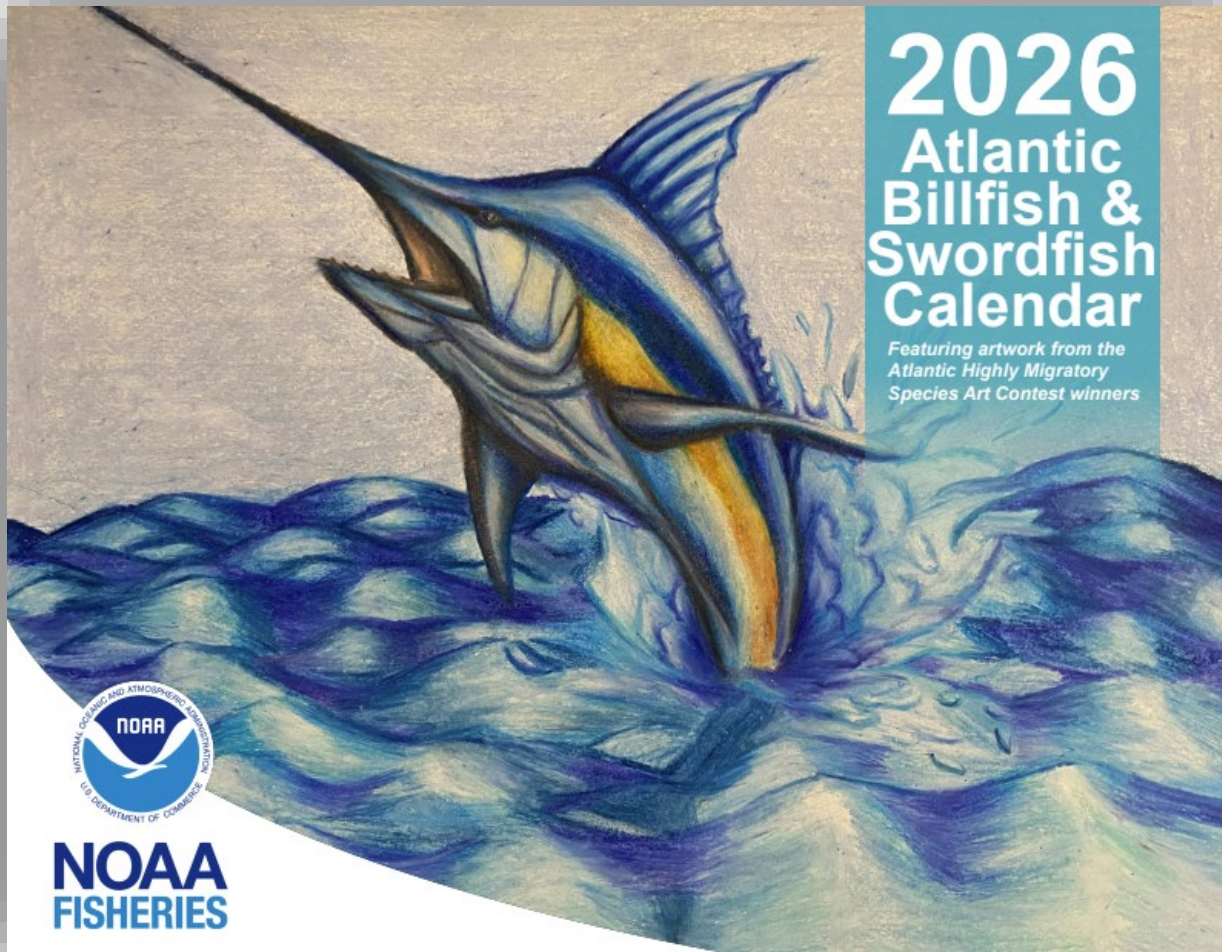
HMS Webpages/Communications

Automatic sign-up for HMS News when purchasing a permit through the [HMS permits website](#)

- Based on AP member suggestions
- Permit holders can unsubscribe through HMS News emails
- Note: Email addresses associated with permit purchases will be signed up regardless of whether permit holder has unsubscribed in the past



HMS Outreach & Education - Art Contest/Calendar



- Featuring Atlantic Billfish and Swordfish
- Available soon
- [More information](#)



HMS Catch Reporting Options

- HMS Angling, Charter/Headboat, and Atlantic Tunas General/Harpoon category permit holders can now submit catch reports for bluefin tuna, billfish, and swordfish via:
 - [HMS Permit Shop website](#)
 - [HMS Catch Reporting smartphone app](#)
 - [SAFIS eTrips Mobile and Online](#) – available for HMS open access permit holders with GARFO or Southeast trip or logbook reporting requirements
 - [Bluefin Data, LLC “VESL”](#) – available for HMS open access permit holders with Southeast for-hire logbook reporting requirements
 - No matter which option is used, **HMS catch reports must be submitted within 24 hours of returning from a trip**
- Currently, GARFO FishOnline does not collect all the data needed to satisfy HMS Catch Reporting requirements, but HMS is actively working with GARFO to add them
 - Platform users will need to continue submitting separate HMS catch reports via the HMS Catch Reporting app or Permit Shop website until further notice, or switch to SAFIS eTrips to submit their GARFO eVTRs
- For now, HMS Commercial Logbook participants must continue to submit paper logbooks



HMS Catch Reporting Options - Catch Cards

- North Carolina discontinued its HMS Catch Card program effective April 1, 2025
- Maryland is continuing their HMS Catch Card program through December 31, 2025
- Following discontinuation of a catch card program, federal HMS catch reporting requirements will apply to HMS permit holders using the options outlined in the previous slide
- For-hire captains with federal logbook requirements will have One-Stop Reporting options:
 - If they have South Atlantic logbook requirements, then either SAFIS eTrips or VESL would currently be their best reporting options
 - Those with GARFO eVTR reporting requirements will have to use SAFIS eTrips
- Billfish and swordfish tournament catch information will be collected and reported by registered HMS tournament operators
- NC sent a letter to all permit holders in early March outlining their federal reporting options, and the HMS Management Division followed up with emails with links to online resources
- A similar outreach campaign will be conducted for Maryland



There is a lot happening outside the HMS Division

Seafood Import Prohibitions under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) Import Provisions

- On August 29, 2025, NOAA Fisheries announced its 2025 comparability finding determinations for foreign fisheries under the [MMPA Import Provisions](#)
- Any fish or fish products sourced from foreign fisheries that do not have comparable standards for reducing marine mammal bycatch as U.S. fisheries will be ineligible for import into the United States beginning on January 1, 2026
- Findings:
 - Full comparability for all fisheries from 89 nations
 - Partial comparability findings for 34 nations' fisheries
 - Denied comparability findings for all fisheries from 12 nations
- [More information](#)



There is a lot happening outside the HMS Division

NOAA's National Seafood Strategy

- The National Seafood Strategy outlines NOAA Fisheries' direction for supporting a thriving domestic U.S. seafood economy and enhancing the resilience of the seafood sector; supports EOs 14192 (Deregulation) and 14726 (Seafood Competitiveness)
- The vision is to ensure that:
 - U.S. seafood continues to be produced sustainably
 - The U.S. seafood sector contributes to the nation's climate-ready food production and to meeting critical domestic nutritional needs
 - U.S. seafood production increases to support jobs, the economy, and the competitiveness of the U.S. seafood sector
 - Supply chains and infrastructure are modernized with more value-added activity in the United States
 - Opportunities are expanded to grow the size and capacity of the seafood workforce
- We are working with the National Seafood Strategy Coordinator on a National HMS Pilot initiative in the coming months describing the current state of U.S. highly migratory species markets
- For more information: [NOAA's National Seafood Strategy](#)



There is a lot happening outside the HMS Division

HMS Recreational Data Updates – Large Pelagics Survey (LPS)

- NOAA Fisheries' Office of Science and Technology (OST) experienced staffing reductions and is shifting some staff to support the LPS part-time
- OST focusing on timeliness of LPS catch estimates; finalization of the LPS redesign will be delayed
- Regarding the LPS Redesign:
 - New Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) design submitted for certification in September 2024; peer-review workshop conducted in January 2025
 - Peer reviewer comments were positive; OST replies and requested analyses anticipated this fall
 - Calibration of a new LPS time series delayed until 2026
 - Timing of field implementation of new design is TBD



Communication Goal: No Surprises

- **Goals for All**
 - Advisors/Public aware, informed, and engaged
 - Agency aware, informed, and engaged
- **AP Member Role**
 - Listen and engage in discussions
 - Share with your constituents
 - Bring ideas to and advise Agency
- **Agency Role**
 - Ensure compliance with all domestic & international requirements
 - Raise issues and inform AP and public
 - Listen and engage in discussions
 - Make decisions considering feedback



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Conclusion/Looking Forward

In conclusion:

- We are covering a lot of ground at this hybrid meeting
- Operational activities require substantial agency resources

Looking forward:

- We value your input and want your input on priorities and potential solutions



Questions?

Thank you!

