

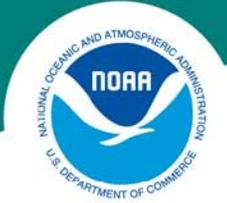
**NOAA
FISHERIES
SERVICE**



Highly Migratory Species Advisory Panel

HMS Management Overview

February 18-19, 2009



Rulemaking/Operations Update

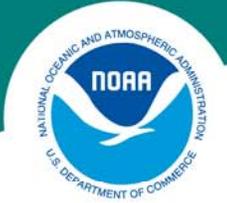
Since the September 2008 AP meeting,

- Published 3 proposed rules
- Published 1 final rule with 1 more in progress
- Held hearings on Draft EFH Amendment 1
- Finished Scoping for Shark Amendment 3 & Caribbean Amendment 4
- Released Pre-Draft of Shark Amendment 3
- Issued 7 EFPs, SRPs, & LOAs to date for 2009
- Oversaw 90 workshops to date
- ~2,300 people receiving Atlantic HMS News



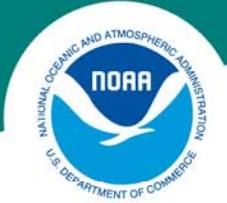
EFH Amendment 1

- Consolidated HMS FMP - Phase 1 of EFH 5-year review – presented updated data
- Draft Amendment 1 - Phase 2 updates EFH and considers measures to minimize fishing impacts
 - NOI to prepare EIS published Nov 7, 2006
 - Scoping at March & Oct 2007 AP meetings
 - Notice of Availability of Draft published Sept 19, 2008
 - Proposes new Habitat Area of Particular Concern for BFT in Gulf of Mexico
 - Comment period closed Dec 12, 2008
- Final EFH Amendment 1 ~ spring/summer 2009



Small Coastal Shark Amendment 3

- NOI to Prepare EIS published May 7, 2008
- Blacknose sharks are overfished/overfishing occurring; a rebuilding plan must be implemented
- Shortfin mako sharks are experiencing overfishing
- Issues/Options & scoping meeting schedule published July 2, 2008
- 5 scoping meetings held plus consultations with 5 Regional Councils & 2 Interstate Commissions
- Comment period closed October 31, 2008; Released scoping summary Dec 24, 2008
- Predraft released February 11, 2009
 - Comments requested by **March 16**



Caribbean Amendment 4

- Will address authorized gears, permitting & data collection in Puerto Rico & USVI
- Pre-scoping – Winter 2007/2008
- Notice of Intent to Prepare EIS published May 27, 2008
- Notice of Availability of Issues/Options paper & scoping meetings published July 14, 2008
- 5 scoping meetings held plus consultations with 5 Regional Councils & 2 Interstate Commissions
- Comment period closed October 31, 2008; Scoping summary released Jan 15, 2009
- Agency preparing outreach materials & coordinating with PR, USVI state partners & CFMC



2009 Shark Season Rule

- Base quotas established in Amendment 2
 - All fisheries opened on July 24
- Proposed rule published Oct 27, 2008
 - Annual season rule adjusts for over- or underharvests
 - Sets opening date for all shark fisheries
 - Comment period closed Nov 26, 2008
- Final rule published Dec 24, 2008
- Fisheries opened Jan 23, 2009

- 2009 Shark Research fishery notice published Dec 3, 2008
 - 10 vessels applied; 7 selected

- Florida fisheries disaster declaration request



Swordfish 2008 Specifications

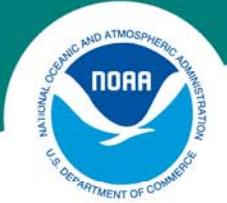
- Proposed rule published Nov 18, 2008; comment period extended to Jan 16, 2009
 - Adjust 2008 quotas based on 2007 underharvests
 - Allow chartering arrangements using foreign vessels

SWO SPECS	2007	2008
NSWO Base	2,937.6 mt dw	2,937.6 mt dw
NSWO Adjusted	4,406.4 mt dw	4,406.4 mt dw
SSWO Base	75.2 mt dw	75.2 mt dw
SSWO Adjusted	150.4 mt dw	150.4 mt dw



Bluefin Tuna Specifications

- 2009 Specs: Implement revised annual BFT quota and propose General and Angling Category effort controls
- Proposed Rule: Published Feb 18, 2009
 - 2009 Base Quota: 1009.9 mt
 - 2009 Proposed Adjusted Quota: 1437.4 mt
 - Additional 25 mt set-aside to account for BFT bycatch in NED PLL fishery
- 1 Inseason action
 - General category at 2 lg med/giant, effective Jan 1 – 31
- Comment period closes March 20
 - Hearings in Gloucester & Silver Spring



Bluefin Tuna Continued

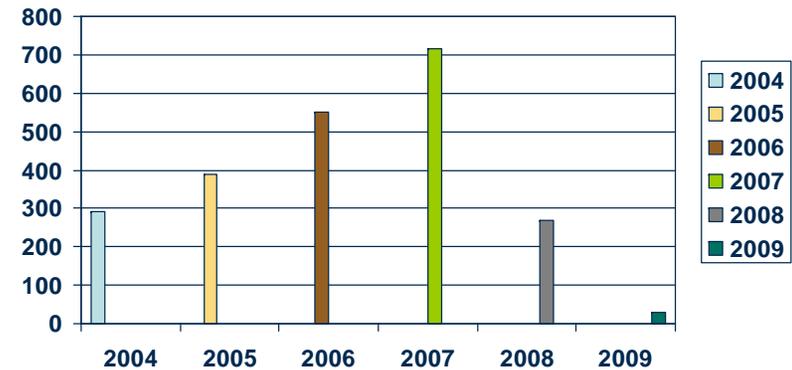
- Gulf of Mexico observer coverage
 - PLL vessels; goal to obtain comprehensive view of stock & fishery on spawning grounds via 100% observer coverage
 - March 30 – June 12
 - Continuation of 2007 & 2008 efforts
- International BFT management measures major focus at ICCAT in November 2008
- ICCAT intersessional on compliance in March will focus on BFT
- Weak hook research



Recreational Swordfish Issues

Non-Tournament SWO Landings

- CY 2004: 290
- CY 2005: 388
- CY 2006: 549
- CY 2007: 716
- CY 2008: 268
- CY 2009: 28 (to date)

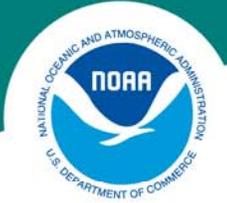


- 2008 Non-tournament landings are currently far below recent years even though recreational retention limits were increased in 2007
 - Increased fuel prices?
 - Reduced availability of fish?
 - Reduced interest?
 - Reduced compliance with reporting requirements?



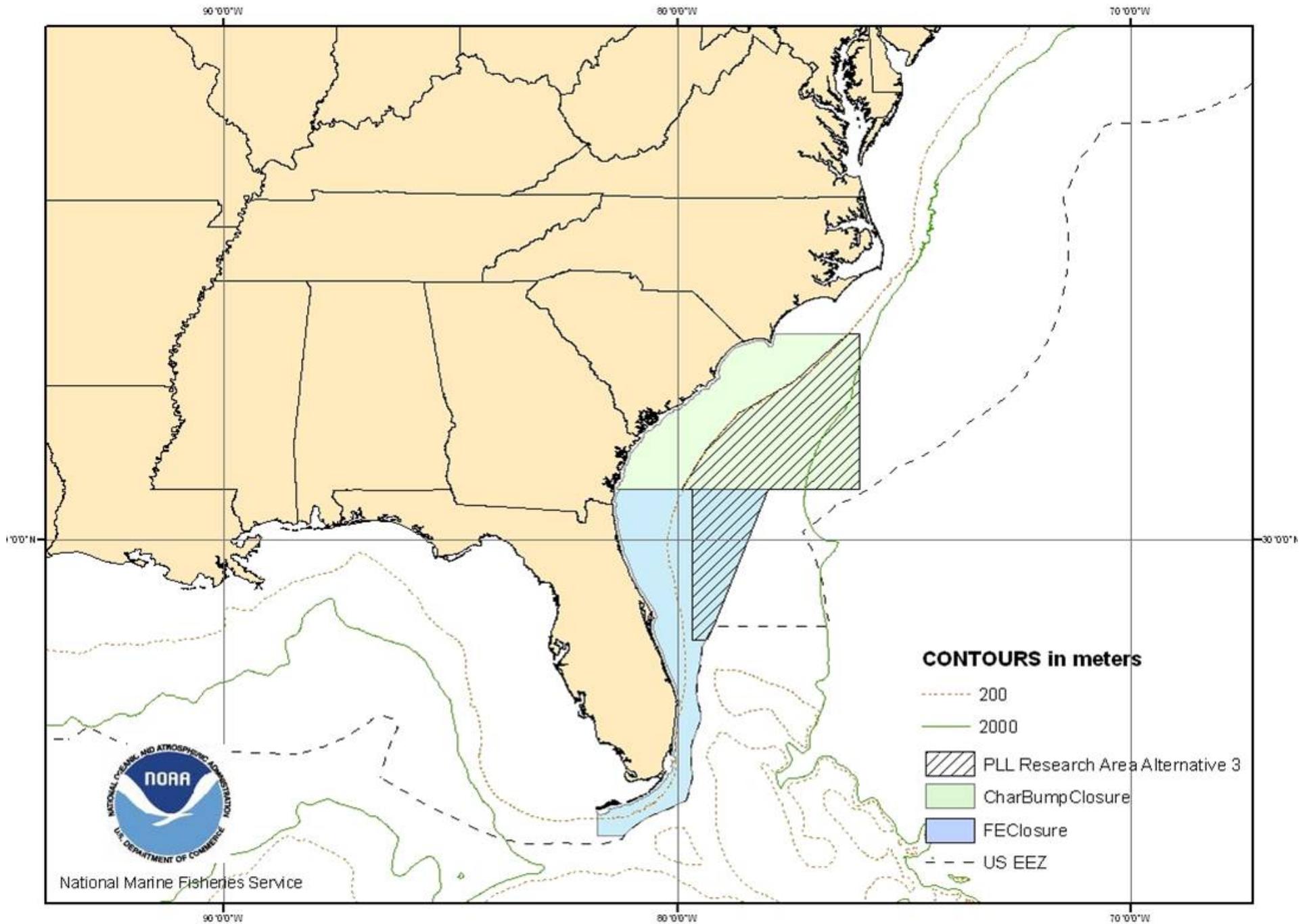
Recreational Billfish Issues

- Preliminary Marlin Landings
 - CY 2008: 51 BUM; 51 WHM = 102 total (preliminary)
 - CY 2009: 0 BUM; 0 WHM (to date)
- Preliminary Sailfish Landings
 - CY 2008: 143 total
 - CY 2009: 36 (to date)
- Tournament C-hook regulations effective Jan. 1, 2008
- Non-tournament BLF/SWO reporting website “live”
- 2008 tournaments - 267
- Distribution of NC SeaGrant C-hook DVDs to BLF tournaments ongoing
- Potential underreporting of tournament landed BLF and SWO



PLL Closed Area Research

- Notice of Availability of Final EA published on January 3, 2008
- Goals of research:
 - 1) Collect baseline data in closed areas under current fishery conditions; 2) Evaluate existing bycatch reduction measures, and 3) Collect data to examine the effectiveness of existing area closures to meet current conservation and harvesting goals
- Conditions:
 - Max of 3 boats (only 2 fishing at one time), 289 sets (145 in closed areas) w/500 18/0 non-offset circle hooks, 100% observer coverage





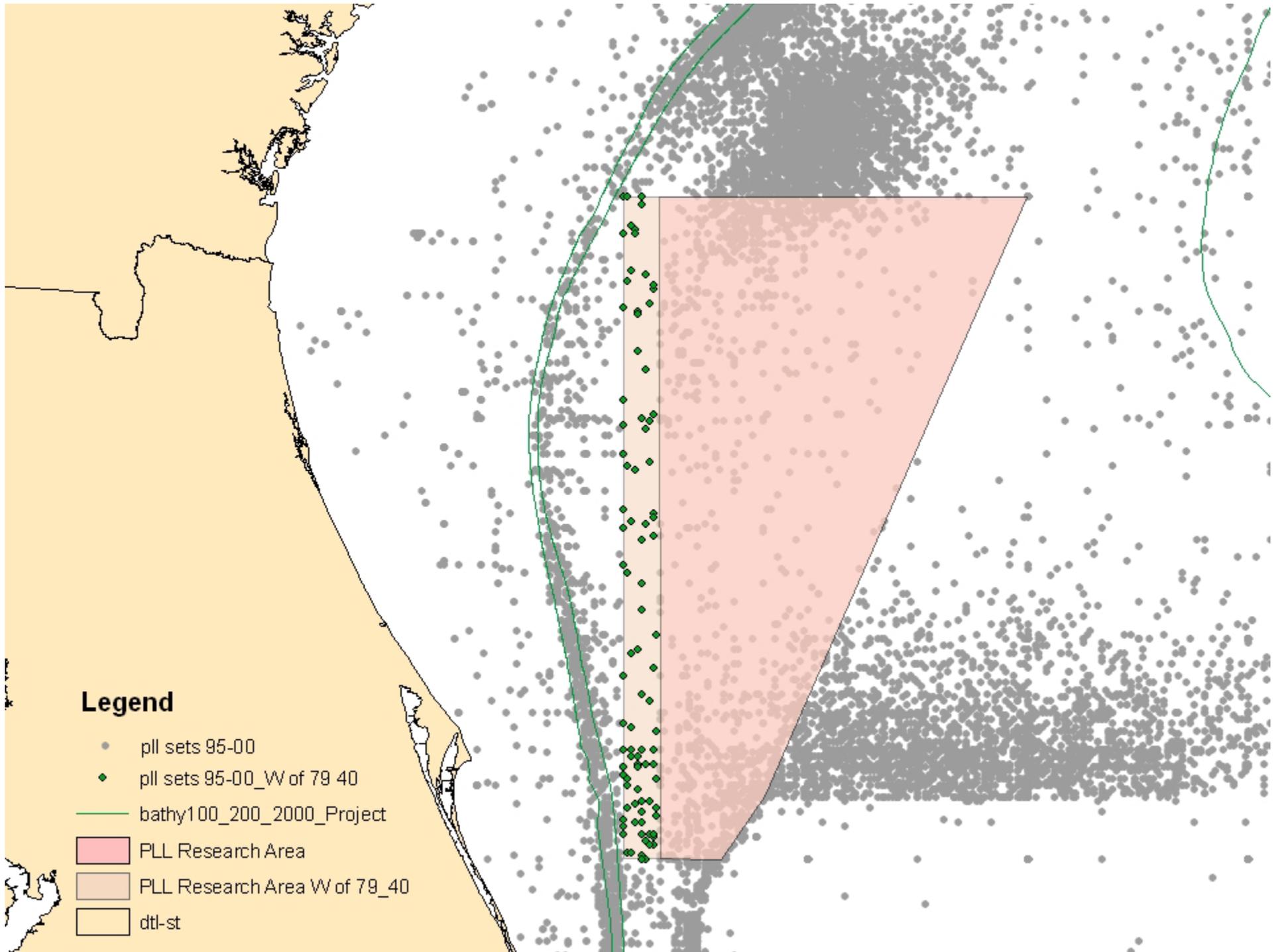
PLL Closed Area Research: Results thru December 2008

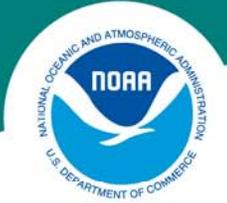
- 13 trips completed (2 vessels) from February – Dec 2008
- 65 sets with 18/0 non-offset circle hooks (18 Closed; 47 Open)
- No bluefin tuna
- Closed Area:
 - SWO: 211 kept, 67 released alive, 74 dead discards (dd)
 - 1 white marlin, 2 blue marlin, & 4 sailfish (3 sailfish dd)
- Open Area:
 - SWO: 205 kept, 29 released alive, 59 dd
 - 7 white marlin (3 dd), 18 sailfish (3 dd), 23 blue marlin (5 dd), & 10 white marlin/roundscale spearfish (4 dd)
- 4 turtles: 2 loggerhead in open area, 2 leatherback in closed areas, all released alive with no trailing gear



PLL Closed Area Research: 2009

- NOI to issue EFPs published Nov 14, 2008
 - Provided update on research at that time
 - Requested comment on extension for 1 year and moving boundary 10 nm eastward
 - Comment period closed Dec 15, 2008
- Agency decision pending





Workshops

- Protected Resources Handling & Release
 - Pelagic & bottom longline & shark gillnet vessel owners & operators
 - Mandated by 2004 PLL Biological Opinion
 - Required for permit renewal starting in 2007; must be on board vessel
 - Valid for three years
- Shark Carcass Identification
 - Shark dealers
 - Required for permit renewal as of Jan 2008
 - Valid for three years
- Outreach
 - Certified mailing & press release when HMS FMP final rule published; directed mailings to permit holders quarterly; HMS workshops webpage; list serve notices; fact sheets



Protected Species Release & Disentanglement Workshops

- Since 2005, **60** workshops have been held, geographically distributed among approximately 30 locations (including two industry-sponsored workshops).
- **996** certificates have been issued (385 “owner” certificates; 611 “operator” certificates).
- Certificates issued in 2006 are starting to expire, so participants will need to be recertified.
- Revised Technical Memorandum 580 released in January 2009:
 - Turtle tether (or)
 - Ninja sticks
 - New dehooking device authorized



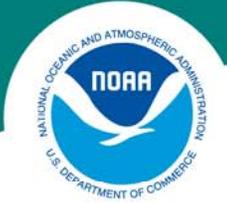
Upcoming PR Workshop Locations

- March 11, 2009 - Corpus Christi, TX
- March 18, 2009 - Fort Pierce, FL
- April 2009 - Manahawkin, NJ*
- April 2009 - Panama City, FL*
- May 2009 - Manteo, NC*
- May 2009 - Ocean City, MD*
- June 2009 - Key Largo, FL*
- June 2009 - Houston, TX*
- July 2009 - Islip, NY*
- July 2009 - Charleston, SC*
- August 2009 - Madeira Beach, FL*
- August 2009 - New Orleans, LA*
- September 2009 - Boston, MA*
- September 2009 - Manahawkin, NJ*

***tentative**

Protected Species Safe Handling, Release, and Identification Workshops

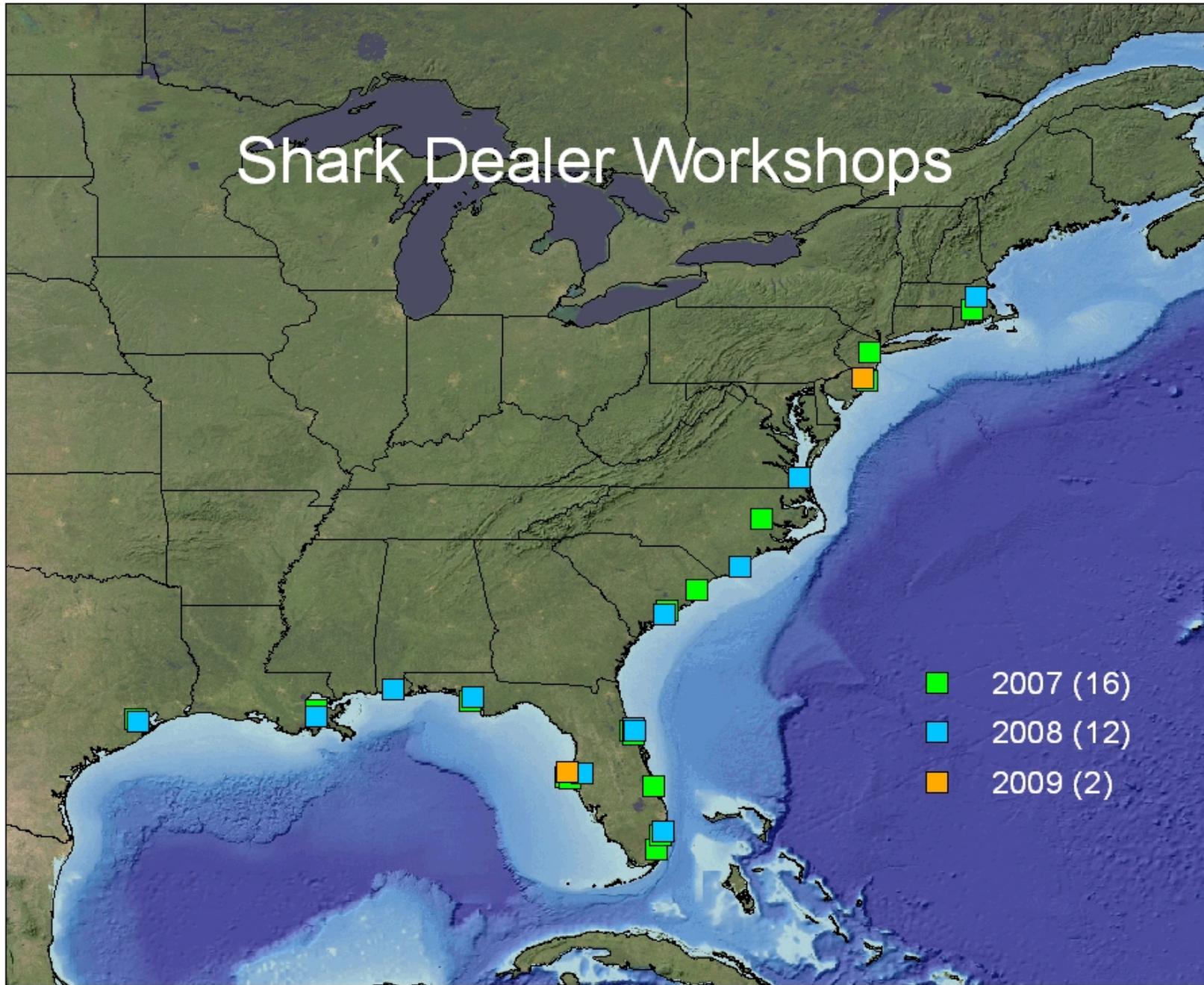




Atlantic Shark Identification Workshops

- Since 2007, **30** workshops have been held, geographically distributed among approximately 15 locations.
- **367** certificates have been issued (76 “dealer” certificates; 98 “proxy” certificates; 193 “participant” certificates).
 - Percent of landings reported as “unknown” has decreased:
 - 2000 - 2006 → 5.8%
 - 2007 - 2008 → 0.75%

Shark Dealer Workshops





Upcoming Shark Workshop Locations

March 11, 2009 - Greenville, NC

April 2009 - Boston, MA*

May 2009 - Vero Beach, FL*

June 2009 - New Orleans, LA*

July 2009 - Wilmington, NC*

August 2009 - Charleston, SC*

September 2009 - Houston, TX*

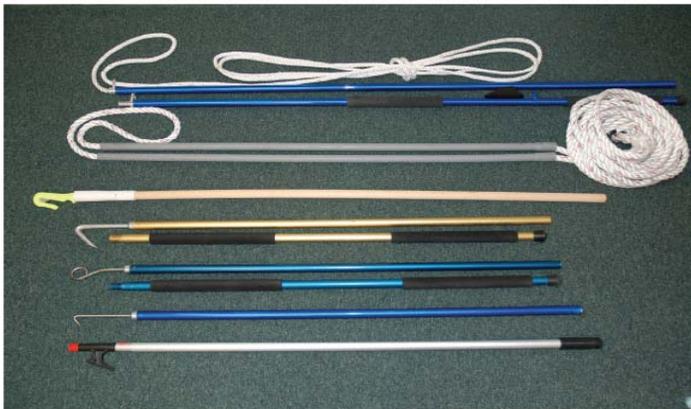
***tentative**



TM-580 Careful Release Protocols

NOAA Technical Memorandum NMFS-SEFSC-580

CAREFUL RELEASE PROTOCOLS FOR SEA TURTLE
RELEASE WITH MINIMAL INJURY



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NOAA Fisheries
Southeast Fisheries Science Center
75 Virginia Beach Drive
Miami, Florida 33149

December 2008

- Replaces TM-524
- Includes new required handling gears:
 - Turtle tether
 - Ninja sticks
- Includes new authorized handling gears:
 - Roby dehooker
 - NOAA/Bergman dehooker
- More detailed handling & release protocols
- No change in regulatory requirements to possess/ follow protocols



Exempted Fishing Permits

- 2009 to date – total 7
 - 3 EFPs
 - 0 Scientific Research Permits
 - 2 SHK display
 - 2 SHK letters of acknowledgement
- 2008 - 32 total
- 2007 – 41 total
- 2006 - 44 total
- All require some level of analysis



Litigation Update

- Blue Ocean Institute
 - Challenges NMFS denying their petition for BFT spawning area/time closure in Gulf of Mexico
 - Agency was granted summary judgment on all counts
 - Appeal filed January 7, 2009



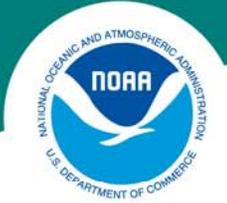
Operations/Other

- Council/Commissions:
 - GFMC
 - Madison/Swanson closed area sunset elimination
 - New area closure “The Edges”
 - Grouper/reefish turtle takes & Gulf Council recent action
 - ASMFC
 - Interstate Shark FMP implemented January 2009; update on state actions at spring meeting
 - Smooth dogfish addendum
- Modernization of BFT dealer reporting underway
- Development of web-fillable BFT int’l trade reports underway
- International Trade Data System in development
- Annual Catch Limit final rule published
- Swordfish MMPA petition for rulemaking
- IUU/Bycatch Report to Congress, proposed rule



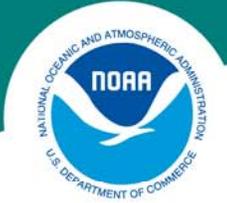
Suggestions from Sept 2008 AP Completed

- ✓ Yellowfin tuna detailed presentation
- ✓ Amended Swordfish detailed presentation
- ✓ Mailed videos of small coastal shark bycatch in shrimp trawls & pictures of “fins on” as requested
- ✓ Checked with Southeast Fisheries Science Center on concerns regarding blacknose shark stock assessment (information is in Amendment 3 Pre-Draft)
- ✓ Extended comment period for scoping on Amendments 3 & 4



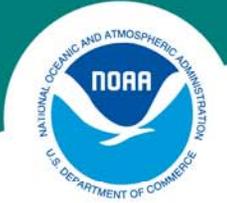
Suggestions from Sept 2008 AP Underway

- Conduct time/area research
- Create BLF recreational landings update
- Improve SWO marketing
 - Brochure assistance
 - Seafood Cook-off
 - FishWatch website
- Outreach –
 - Provide placards to tournament directors as part of registration
 - Create placards for other HMS species
 - Send compliance guides to all permit holders



Suggestions from Sept 2008 AP Under Consideration

- Permits:
 - Renew/issue lapsed permits
 - Allow permit leasing
 - Establish gear-based permits or Limited Access Privilege Programs
 - Use or lose permit requirement
 - Reopen SWO handgear permits
 - Create SWO General category permit
 - Eliminate triple permit requirement for squid trawlers
- Change CHB SWO retention limit to 1/person
- Improve dealer reporting, i.e., electronic reporting
- Require circle hooks on buoy gear
- Adjust PLL incidental catch limits to reduce BFT discards
- Address FADs in Caribbean



Conclusion/Looking Forward

- Rulemaking schedule is quite full
- Operational activities continue
- Your input is valued
- We need you to take the information from the AP meeting back to your constituents & give us feedback

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Questions?

Thank you!