

*Science, Service, Stewardship*



# Adaptive Management and the 2011 Commercial Season for the Atlantic Shark Fishery

Highly Migratory Species  
Management Division  
NMFS/NOAA

September 2010

**NOAA  
FISHERIES  
SERVICE**



# Overview



- Background
- Objectives of Proposed Rule
- Proposed Quotas for 2011
- Alternatives for Adaptive Management
- Request for Public Comments



## Background: Current Regulations

- 2 regions for non-sandbar large coastal sharks (LCS) (GOM and Atlantic) with separate quotas; 1 overall region/quota for all other species/complexes.
- 1 season each year.
- Season opens upon effective date of final rule announcing season.
- Season closes when landings reach 80 percent of the quota.
- Blacknose and non-blacknose small coastal shark (SCS) quotas close together when landings reach 80% of either quota.



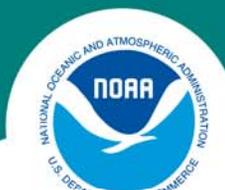
# Background: The Problem

- 2009:
  - Atlantic region closed on July 1 (open for 22 weeks).
  - All Atlantic participants did not have the opportunity to harvest the quota due to time/area closures and shark migratory patterns.
- 2010:
  - GOM region closed on March 17 (open for 6 weeks).
  - All GOM participants did not have full opportunity to harvest the quota due to inclement weather and short season.
  - GOM non-sandbar LCS fishery closed before oil spill; but oil spill closure affected fishing grounds for all SCS in GOM.



# Background: Landings Through July 31

Species Group	Region	2010 Annual Quota (mt dw)	Preliminary 2010 Landings (mt dw)	Quota Percentage
Non-Sandbar Large Coastal Sharks	Gulf of Mexico	390.5 (860,896 lb dw)	407.9 (899,362 lb dw)	104.5% <b>CLOSED</b>
	Atlantic	169.7 (374,121 lb dw)	22.2 (49,026 lb dw)	13.1%
Non-Sandbar LCS Research Quota	No regional quotas	37.5 (82,673 lb dw)	25.2 (55,487 lb dw)	67.1%
Sandbar Research Quota		87.9 (193,784 lb dw)	42.6 (93,844 lb dw)	48.4%



# Background: Landings Through July 31

Species Group	Region	2010 Annual Quota (mt dw)	Preliminary 2010 Landings (mt dw)	Quota Percentage
Non-Blacknose SCS	No regional quotas	221.6 (488,539 lb dw)	40 (88,187 lb dw)	18%
Blacknose Sharks		19.9 (43,872 lb dw)	6.8 (15,082 lb dw)	34.4%
Blue Sharks		273 (601,856 lb dw)	3.4 (7,388 lb dw)	1.2%
Porbeagle Sharks		1.5 (3,307 lb dw)	1.3 (2,824 lb dw)	85% <b>CLOSED</b>
Pelagic Sharks Other Than Porbeagle or Blue		488 (1,075,856 lb dw)	92.9 (204,750 lb dw)	19%



# Objectives of Proposed Rule

- Establish the 2011 quotas and season opening dates.
- Consider measures to extend the shark fishing seasons.
- Consider a new management structure for the Atlantic shark fisheries that would preserve the directed nature of the fishery (*i.e.*, allowing fishermen to target sharks).
- Provide fishery participants more opportunity, to the extent possible, to harvest the shark quotas in the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico.
- Develop flexibility measures to accommodate unforeseen events, such as the Deepwater Horizon/BP oil spill or inclement weather.



# 2011 Proposed Quotas

<b>Species Group</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>2010 Annual Quota</b>	<b>Preliminary 2010 Landings</b>	<b>Overharvest</b>	<b>2011 Expected Quota</b>	<b>Proposed 2011 Opening Dates</b>
Non-Sandbar Large Coastal Sharks	Gulf of Mexico	390.5 (860,896 lb dw)	407.9 (899,896 lb dw)	17.4	373.1 (822,536 lb dw)	On or about January 1
	Atlantic	169.7 (374,121 lb dw)	22.2 (49,026 lb dw)	-2.6	190.4 (419,756 lb dw)	July 15
Non-Sandbar LCS Research Quota	No regional quotas	37.5 (82,673 lb dw)	25.2 (55,487 lb dw)	-	37.5 (82,673 lb dw)	On or about January 1
Sandbar Research Quota		87.9 (193,784 lb dw)	42.6 (93,844 lb dw)	-	87.9 (193,784 lb dw)	



# 2011 Proposed Quotas

Species Group	Region	2010 Annual Quota	Preliminary 2010 Landings	Overharvest	2011 Expected Quota	Proposed 2011 Opening Dates
Non-Blacknose SCS	No regional quotas	221.6 (488,539 lb dw)	40 (88,187 lb dw)	-	221.6 (488,539 lb dw)	On or about January 1
Blacknose Sharks		19.9 (43,872 lb dw)	6.8 (15,082 lb dw)	-	19.9 (43,872 lb dw)	
Blue Sharks		273 (601,856 lb dw)	3.4 (7,388 lb dw)	-	273 (601,856 lb dw)	
Porbeagle Sharks		1.5 (3,307 lb dw)	1.3 (2,824 lb dw)	-	1.7 (3,748 lb dw)	
Pelagic Sharks Other Than Porbeagle or Blue		488 (1,075,856 lb dw)	92.9 (204,750 lb dw)	-	488 (1,075,856 lb dw)	

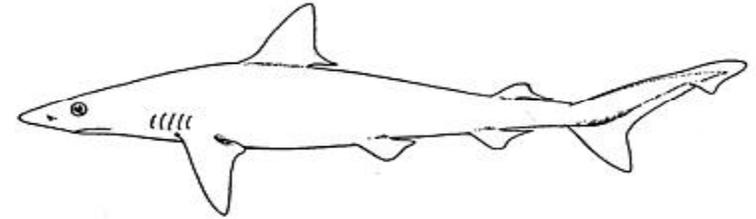


# Summary of Alternatives for Adaptive Management

- Under Amendment 2, NMFS anticipated that shark fishermen would no longer target non-sandbar LCS due to the reduced non-sandbar LCS trip limit and prohibition of sandbar sharks; anticipated that quotas would last year round.
- Since implementation of Amendment 2, non-sandbar LCS fishing seasons have not lasted year round.
- As such, NMFS is considering how shark management should move forward in the future.
- Two approaches for the short-term in the proposed rule and draft EA:
  - Revisit static trip limits (alternative 1 and its sub-alternatives)
  - Revisit season opening and closing dates and flexible trip limits (alternative 2 and its sub-alternatives).



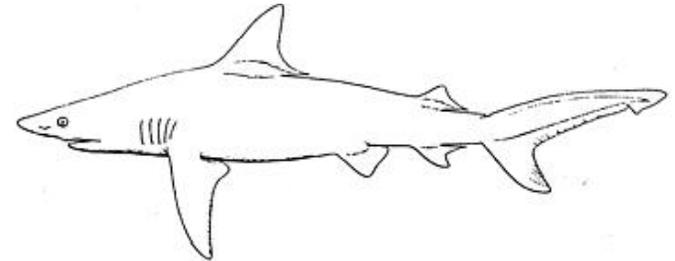
# Alternative 1



- 1A - No Action. Maintain the current vessel trip regulations for non-sandbar LCS
- 1B - Establish a new non-sandbar LCS trip limit that would extend the fishing season in the GOM region based on available quota and time available in the fishing season
- 1C - Establish a new non-sandbar LCS trip limit that would extend the fishing season in the Atlantic region based on available quota and time available in the fishing season



## Alternative 2



- 2A - Establish opening dates for the shark fisheries based on certain criteria and process (*Preferred Sub-Alternative*)
- 2B - Establish inseason trip limit adjustment criteria for the Atlantic shark fishery (*Preferred Sub-Alternative*)



Establish new opening dates for the shark fisheries based on certain criteria and process (*Preferred Sub-Alternative 2A*)

- When establishing opening dates, NMFS would consider the following criteria and other relevant factors:
  1. The available annual quotas for the current fishing season for the different species/complexes based on any over- and/or underharvests experienced during the previous commercial shark fishing seasons;
  2. Estimated season length based on available quota(s) and average weekly catch rates of different species/complexes in the relevant area or region from the previous years;
  3. Length of the season for the different species/complexes in the previous years and which fishermen were able to participate in the fishery in those years;



## Establish new opening dates for the shark fisheries based on certain criteria and process (*Preferred Sub-Alternative 2A*)

4. Variations in seasonal distribution, abundance, or migratory patterns of the different species/complexes based on scientific and fishery based information;
5. Effects of catch rates in one part of a region precluding vessels in another part of that region from having a reasonable opportunity to harvest a portion of the different species/complexes quotas;
6. Effects of the adjustment on accomplishing the objectives of the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP and its amendments; and/or,
7. Effects of a delayed opening with regard to fishing opportunities in other fisheries.



## Establish inseason trip limit adjustment criteria for the Atlantic shark fishery *(Preferred Sub-Alternative 2B)*

- When adjusting the trip limit(s), NMFS would consider the following criteria and other relevant factors:
  1. The amount of remaining shark quota in the relevant area or region, to date, based on dealer reports;
  2. The catch rates of the relevant shark species/complexes, to date, based on dealer reports;
  3. Estimated date of fishery closure based on when the landings are projected to reach 80 percent of the quota given the realized catch rates;



## Establish inseason trip limit adjustment criteria for the Atlantic shark fishery *(Preferred Sub-Alternative 2B)*

4. Effects of the adjustment on accomplishing the objectives of the 2006 Consolidated HMS FMP and its amendments;
5. Variations in seasonal distribution, abundance, or migratory patterns of the relevant shark species based on scientific and fishery-based knowledge; and,
6. Effects of catch rates in one part of a region precluding vessels in another part of that region from having a reasonable opportunity to harvest a portion of the relevant quota.



# Public Hearing Locations

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Hearing Location</b>
Sept 22, 2010	6:30pm	Crowne Plaza Hotel HMS AP Meeting Silver Spring, MD
Sept 27, 2010	5 – 7:30 pm	Tequesta Branch Library Tequesta, FL
Oct 4, 2010	5 – 8 pm	Belle Chasse Auditorium Belle Chasse, LA
Oct 6, 2010	2pm	Conference Call 1-800-857-3903 Passcode: 2381782

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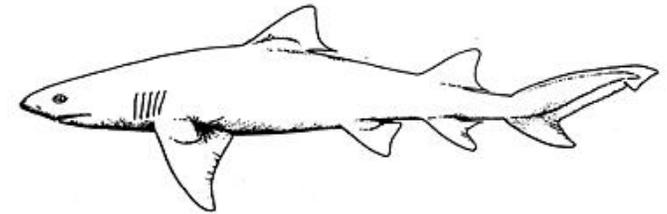


# Request for Comments

Please submit comments to:

<http://www.regulations.gov>

Keyword - "0648-AY98"



Comment period closes on October 20, 2010

**Comments can also be submitted via fax:**

301-713-1917; Attn: Karyl Brewster-Geisz or Guý DuBeck

**Or Mail:**

NMFS SF1, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910

**Please identify comments with 0648-AY98**

For more information go to: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/>



# 2011 Shark Research Fishery

- Request for applications published on September 20
- Deadline for applications will be October 20
- ~ 10 applicants expected to receive permits
- Requirements for qualified vessels are:
  - Complete application received by deadline
  - Valid safety decal
  - Landings history of sharks in logbooks
  - No HMS-related NOVA or Permit Sanction
  - Complied with observer program in the past 2 years