

NOAA
FISHERIES

Highly
Migratory
Species

HMS Advisory Panel: Priorities and Next Steps



September 9-10, 2015
Silver Spring, Maryland

Comments from Overview



- Tuna landings source is from dealer reporting system
- Billfish landings – 10% of spp were roundscale; concern about identification issues
- Billfish are, and will continue to be, commercially prohibited
- Interest in materials on BFT quota rule
- Clarification about the combination of the tournament registration and reporting databases (in-house reorganization); one volunteer to test beta online registration

Deepwater Horizon PLL Bycatch Reduction Project

- Clarification: NRDA doesn't assess the damage to the fleet; assesses damage to resources.
 - Restoration focus is on fisheries in this case; however, many other plans are underway
- Concern that the PLL fishery is being held responsible for the oil spill.
 - Concept is to increase/restore biomass of injured resources by not removing them from the water. Injury and exposure to the bycatch species are also of great importance.
 - Concern about impracticality of greenstick (catch quality) and buoy gears (transit time in the GOM)
- Suggestion for a marketplace impact analyses
- Suggestion to consider already-closed areas in analysis
- Consider authorizing buoy gear to catch tunas – draft amendment 7 considered this, but it was not in the final amendment
- Concern about additional pressures on fleet after A7 regulations

Deepwater Horizon PLL Bycatch Reduction Project

- Underlying economics of alternative gears hasn't changed: big boats, fuel inefficient – suggest addressing vessel replacement
- Lack of knowledge about the habitat for HMS suggests restoration money should fund research in that area
- Bycatch reduction is an important issue, but this \$20M project needs independent peer review
- Support for bluefin tuna stock restoration by making this voluntary project available to fishermen
- Buoy gear bycatch report available, along with HMS SAFE Report (Ch 4: Fishery Data Update) for all fisheries' bycatch

DWH PLL Bycatch Reduction Project – Restoration Plan

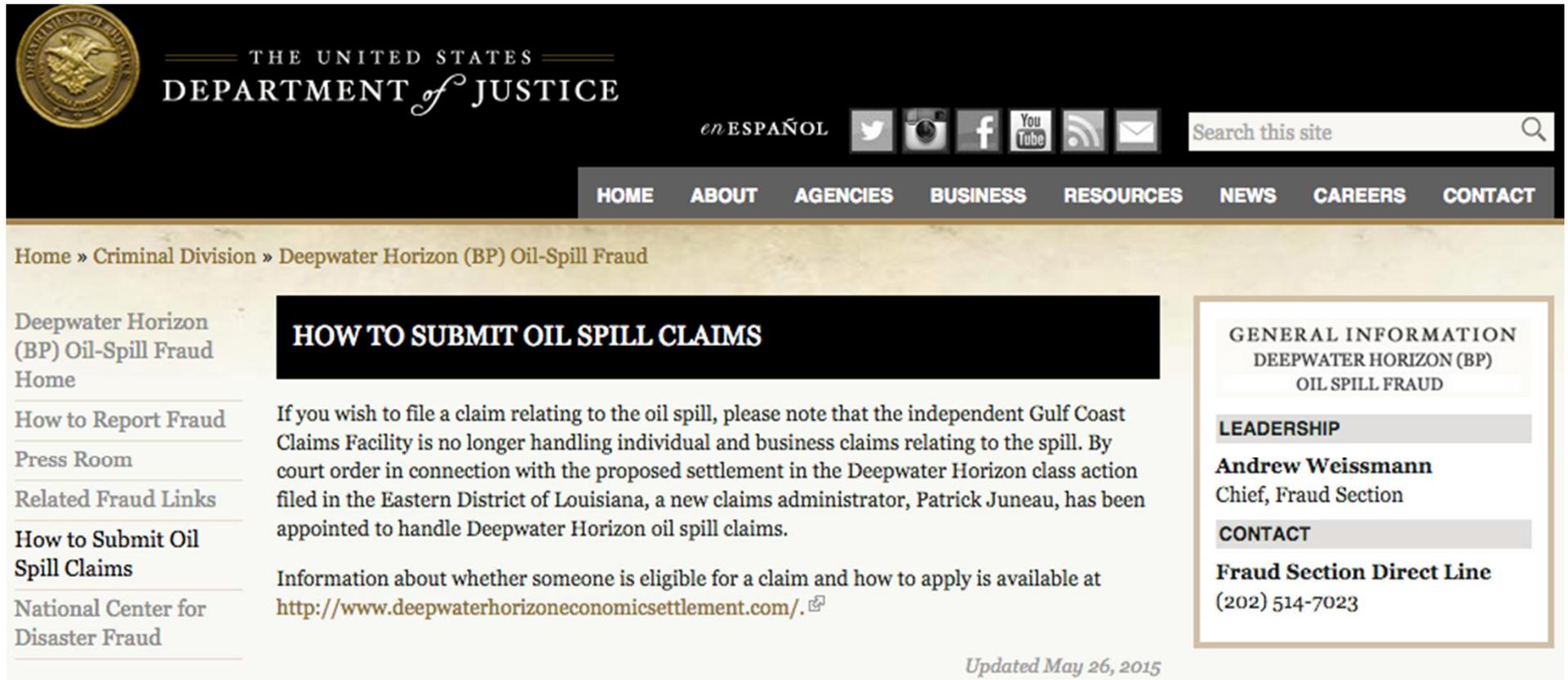
The screenshot shows the NOAA Gulf Spill Restoration website. At the top, it says "GULF SPILL RESTORATION" and "Website maintained by NOAA on behalf of the Deepwater Horizon Natural Resource Damage Assessment Trustees". Below this is a navigation menu with options: HOME, ABOUT US, RESTORATION, DAMAGE ASSESSMENT, PLANNING, SCIENCE & DATA, MEDIA. A search bar is also present. The main content area is titled "Phase IV of Early Restoration". It contains a paragraph about the Draft Phase IV Early Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessments published on May 20, 2015. Below this, it lists "Useful Links" including: Draft Phase IV Early Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessments (pdf, 55MB)*, Draft Phase IV Early Restoration Plan and Environmental Assessments (Executive Summary) (3MB)*, Press Release (pdf, 969KB), Press Release – Comment Period Extended (pdf, 969KB), Public Repositories (pdf, 107KB), Phase IV Overview Fact Sheet (pdf, 3.08MB), Phase IV Overview Fact Sheet (Vietnamese Translation) (pdf, 1.2 MB), Public Comment Portal, and Public Meeting Calendar. On the right side, there is a "Project Fact Sheets:" section with a list of states: Alabama, Florida, Mississippi, Texas, and Gulf-wide. Below this list are links for "Sea Turtle Early Restoration (pdf, 939KB)", "Pelagic Longline Bycatch Reduction (pdf, 4.07MB)", "Sea Turtle Early Restoration (Vietnamese Translation) (pdf, 955 KB)", and "Pelagic Longline Bycatch Reduction (Vietnamese Translation) (pdf, 320 KB)".

- Litigation process/NRDA has restricted external involvement in research, but there is public comment for the plan
- Monitoring plan includes performance criteria to evaluate project success

<http://www.gulfspillrestoration.noaa.gov/restoration-planning/phase-iv/>

Chapter 14 in the Phase IV Early Restoration Plan – PLL Bycatch Reduction Project

Source: Deepwater Horizon Claim Submission



The screenshot shows the U.S. Department of Justice website. The header includes the Department of Justice seal, the text 'THE UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT of JUSTICE', and a search bar. A navigation menu contains links for HOME, ABOUT, AGENCIES, BUSINESS, RESOURCES, NEWS, CAREERS, and CONTACT. The breadcrumb trail reads 'Home » Criminal Division » Deepwater Horizon (BP) Oil-Spill Fraud'. The main content area features a black box with the title 'HOW TO SUBMIT OIL SPILL CLAIMS'. Below this, a paragraph states that the independent Gulf Coast Claims Facility is no longer handling individual and business claims, and a new claims administrator, Patrick Juneau, has been appointed. A link is provided for more information: <http://www.deepwaterhorizoneconomicsettlement.com/>. A sidebar on the left lists related links such as 'Deepwater Horizon (BP) Oil-Spill Fraud Home', 'How to Report Fraud', 'Press Room', 'Related Fraud Links', 'How to Submit Oil Spill Claims', and 'National Center for Disaster Fraud'. A sidebar on the right provides 'GENERAL INFORMATION DEEPWATER HORIZON (BP) OIL SPILL FRAUD', 'LEADERSHIP' (Andrew Weissmann, Chief, Fraud Section), and 'CONTACT' (Fraud Section Direct Line, (202) 514-7023). The page is dated 'Updated May 26, 2015'.

www.justice.gov/criminal-oilspill/how-submit-oil-spill-claims

Law Enforcement & USCG Updates

NOAA Office of Law Enforcement

- Interest in copy of presentation; can be found at:
http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/advisory_panels/hms_ap/meetings/sept_2015/documents/ole_hmsap_0915.pdf

US Coast Guard

Atlantic Shark Management

Final Amendment 6 and Shark Specifications

- Implement a trip limit for Atlantic blacknose sharks
- Implement a bycatch allowance for non-blacknose SCS (~200 lb) once blacknose quota is reached to reduce dead discards
- Mackerel fishery catches primarily Atlantic sharpnose and bonnethead, any blacknose caught are released alive
- Support for opening Atlantic LCS on January 1 and toggling trip limit between 3 and 45 sharks

Atlantic Shark Management

Amendment 5b

- As shown in the results of the NEFSC survey, there are lots of sharks out there; trying to avoid them
- Circle hook requirement for rec. would help with shark mortality
- Avoid increasing rec. minimum size for sharks
- PLL hook limit would greatly impact the high seas fleet and dolphin (mahi) fishermen
- Long gangions on PLL gear reduce shark mortality
- Use data that is reflective of the current state of the fisheries including the recent NEFSC survey
- Provide more clarity of recreational estimate methodologies
- Provide range and CV estimates when presenting data

Atlantic Shark Management

Amendment 9 & Smoothhound Shark Stock Assessment Results

- Several questions regarding:
 - SEDAR 39 assessment details
 - How the assessments will inform quota calculations
- Reiterated opposition to proposed percent catch composition requirements for smooth dogfish at-sea fin removal

Atlantic Shark Management

Future Stock Assessments

- SEDAR handles the assessments for the Councils and Commissions in addition to HMS
- Need to assess a number of species, including the Agg. LCS species and the Caribbean sharpnose and reef sharks
- When assessing hammerheads, focus on scalloped or great, not smooth
- Consider hiring a contractor to conduct assessments and work public process into contract TOR
- Consider using Council method for data poor sharks
- Prioritization ranking process may not help
- Keep the scheduled updates for dusky and GOM blacktip; Prioritize sandbar for 2018

Day 1: Public Comments

- Rav Freidel - Requiring circle hooks for all shark fisheries, especially tournaments, will help reduce shark mortality; this approach has been successful in NY
- Glen Hopkins - PLL fishermen have a lot of requirements (logbooks, permits, observers, closed areas, trip limits, USCG exams and boardings, EM, etc.) and make a lot of sacrifices. Would like BFT carryover. Support sandbar for 2018 stock assessment.
- Steve English - Do not make us discard dead SCS once the season is closed. Need a trip limit on blacknose sharks and flexibility to manage SCS similar to LCS. Suggest making the Spanish mackerel fishery an experimental fishery that can land non-blacknose SCS when the fishery is closed would allow NMFS to collect scientific information and change the regulations.

HMS Recreational Implementation Plan

- Need for coordination among national and regional implementation plans
- Communication with and engaging recreational fishermen is important
 - NMFS staff getting in the field is valuable – much of the best work happens in the field
 - Trust is most important – need engaged to build trust for NMFS actions
 - NMFS staff should write articles for fishing publications to educate/inform
 - Communication/engagement would help address enforcement issues
- NMFS and academics should develop protocol for charter industry to engage in scientific areas and management - especially important in the Caribbean
- Make sure most recent and appropriate data are used in assessments - helps to build trust
- Need to advertise OLE actions to improve compliance
- Need to coordinate with state agencies to tie into promotion of public access, ecosystem conservation and resource enhancement
- Need to fully utilize JEA partners to aid in enforcement

Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Management

- New reporting requirement for commercial categories – need outreach from both Agency & Industry
- Need to harvest US quota regardless of who catches it (flexibility at the end of the year)

General Category

- Some want April May season – 12 month fishery need flexibility to cater quota
- Agency needs to continue to incorporate environmental changes in management

Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Management

Pelagic Longline

- Concern about decreased effort & landings – complex issue, but the year is not over
- Vessels not willing to lease quota
- Look at big picture – revitalization of the swordfish fishery
- Cumulative impacts of PLL regs is very difficult
- Future maintenance of EM – cost concerns
- Ideas for providing more flexibility and/or quota
 - Continue suspension of trip level accountability
 - Allow carry-over of quota
 - Additional quota to all or only to active vessels
 - Allow fishing of ATL quota in GOM
- Rulemaking needed for substantive changes to the system

HMS Tournament Expenditures Survey

- Staff/Contractors need to be present and engaged at events;
 - Person-to-person contact by NMFS staff
- Expand and make goals of this survey more obvious to operators
- Tell the anglers what's in it for them – placing a value on the fishery is very important (learned through oil spill), so that impact/value can be quantified
- Don't want to overburden the operators with this survey by asking them to advertise it; need to show anglers how it will help them (big issue). Example: "protection of the sector"
- NMFS should print articles in fishing magazines to reach the anglers

HMS Tournament Expenditures Survey

- Some operators ask participants for state vessel registration numbers; registrants shouldn't have a problem giving HMS permit numbers (for compliance monitoring and so NMFS can contact them)
- NMFS wouldn't have to go to every tournament
 - Registration is the best time to collect contact information
 - Coordination with the state agencies would help (FL and SC offered to help)
- Tournament-specific merchandise should be clarified in the survey; careful not to double-account for marina sales and participant purchases
- Interest in information about prizes for all-release tournaments vs. hybrids vs. landings
- Eliminate duplicative questions between operators and participants
- Season-long rodeos will be a different situation than other tournaments
- Be clear: participant survey should be clear about "team" vs. "individual"

HMS Essential Fish Habitat

- Continued concern about seismic testing and survey activities off the East Coast
- AP Members continued to provide excellent suggestions for new sources of information
- HMS should consider a more dynamic approach to defining EFH based on environmental conditions (climate change)
- HMS should participate in seismic survey public comment processes.
- HMS should add seismic survey impacts to the TRT's next meeting agenda

International Affairs

- Appreciation for Agency activities to combat IUU fishing
- Need to make it real
- Caution on impacts to US fisheries interests
- Use full suite of US measures for mammals
- Countries being evaluated should have observer programs for high risk fisheries and enforcement capability to meet our standards

Electronic Bluefin Tuna Catch Documentation

- Good to see the eBCD rule happening
- System looks straightforward
- Need volunteers to test it out
- Request to complete proposed rule before ICCAT meeting
- HMS should publish the final rule ASAP (before ICCAT deadline)

Day 2: Public Comment

- Pew is encouraged that eBCD rulemaking is moving forward
- Would like to see authorization of tuna tail cutting (not just fins) for increased storage space at sea

Deadlines (CPE = End of Public Comment Period)

- Please send draft tournament economics survey comments to George.Silva@noaa.gov
- Tournament Economics Survey FR Notice (CPE 10/26/15)
- Tournament Registration and Reporting PRA (CPE 10/5/15)
- NMFS Office of Protected Resources 90 Day Findings (CPE 10/13/15)
 - Smooth hammerhead
 - Bigeye thresher
- Presidential Initiative on IUU Fishing and Seafood Fraud (CPE 9/11/15)
- Town Hall Meeting - Protection for Deep Sea Canyons and Seamounts off New England - meeting and CPE 9/15/15
- Shark Specifications (CPE 9/17/15)
- Fish and Fish Product Import Provisions of the MMPA (CPE 11/9/15)

Reminders to AP Members

Please return your
name tags and table tents
to the registration table

Please fill out an **evaluation form** and
return to the registration table

Travel Forms and Receipts are due
Tuesday, September 15th
Return envelopes will be provided for
receipts and signed travel vouchers

