

# Fisheries Enforcement

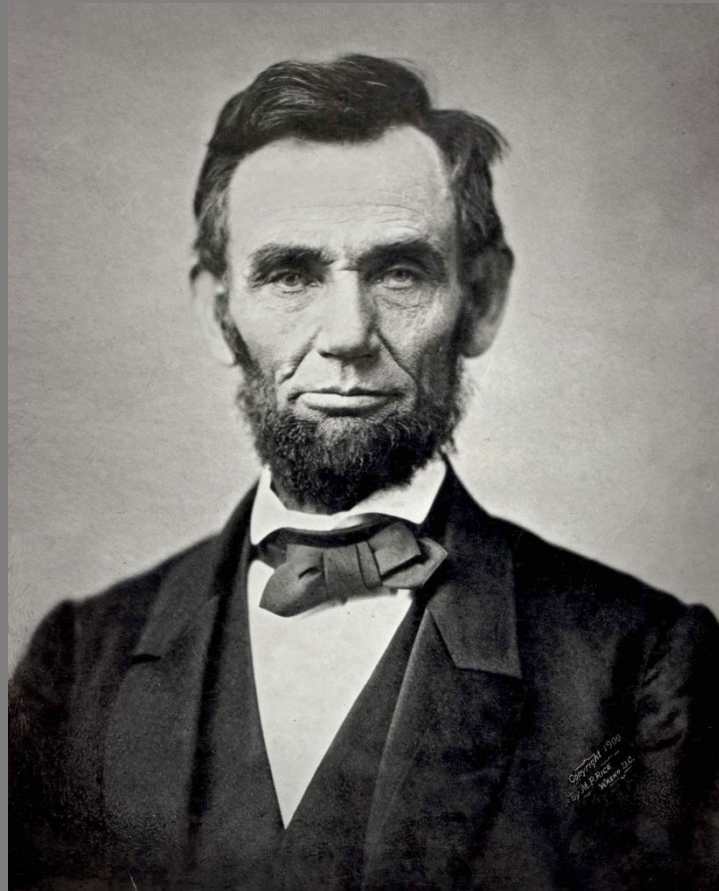


**NOAA  
FISHERIES**

Office of Law  
Enforcement



October 21, 2024



“Laws without enforcement are just good advice.”  
-Abraham Lincoln

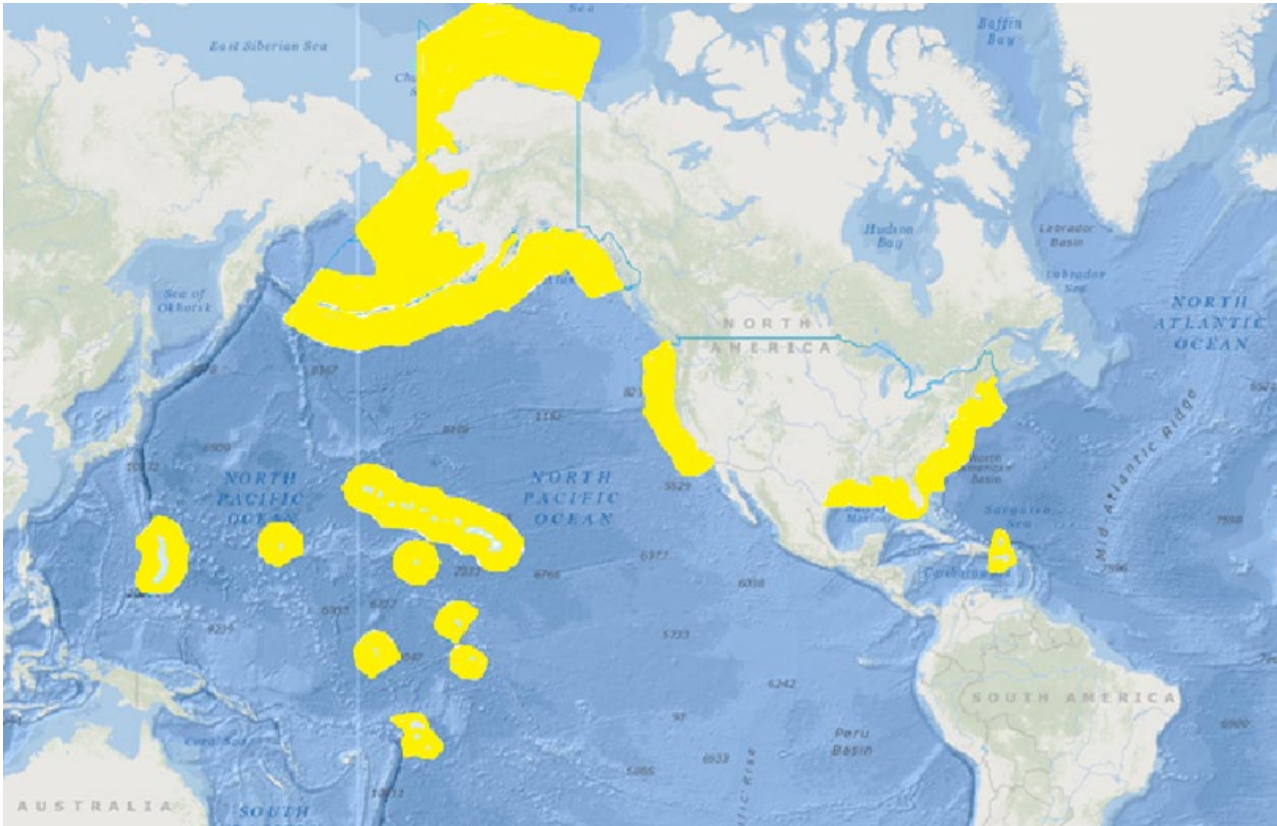
# Mission

NOAA's Office of Law Enforcement (OLE) protects natural marine resources by enforcing domestic laws and international treaties and obligations dedicated to protecting marine wildlife and their natural habitat for the use and enjoyment of future generations.





# OLE's Jurisdiction



3.36 million square miles of open ocean

More than 95,000 miles of U.S. coastline

15 National Marine Sanctuaries and 2 Marine National Monuments

High seas and international trade relating to U.S. treaties and international law



# We are where you are



Headquarters in Silver Spring, MD

Five Divisions co-located with Regional Offices (NE, SE, AK, WC, and PI)

51 field offices throughout the United States and U.S. territories

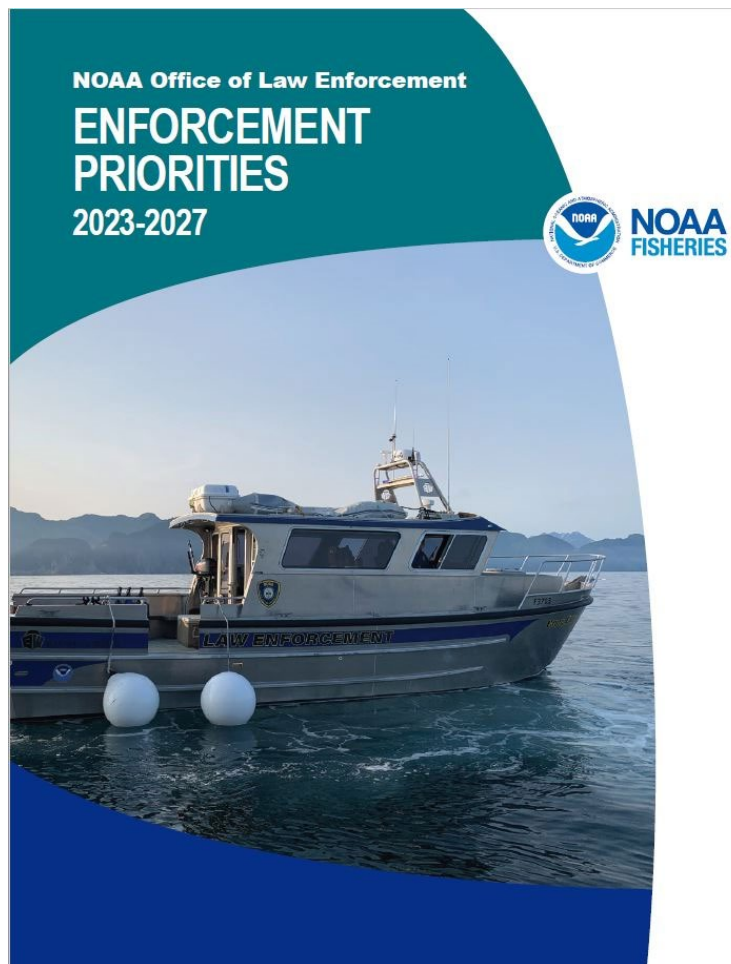
# OLE Enforcement Activity



We enforce more than 40 laws designed to protect marine life and their habitat.

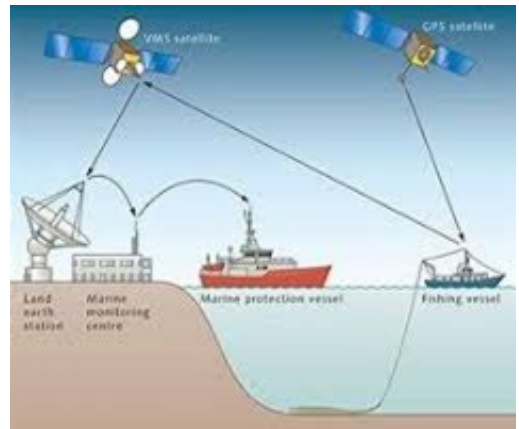


# OLE's Enforcement Priorities



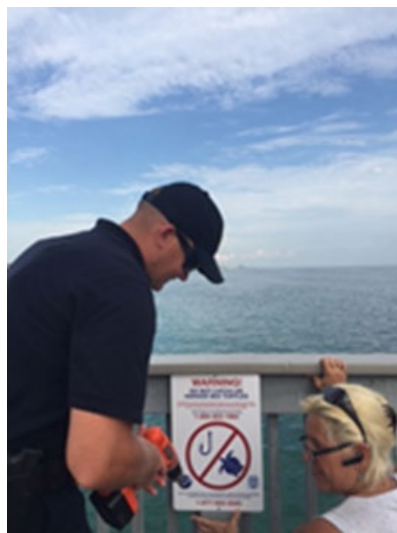
# How we accomplish our priorities

- Outreach and compliance assistance
- Patrols, inspections and monitoring
  - Criminal and civil investigations
- Partnerships with state, tribal, federal and nongovernmental organizations
- Collaborative fisheries enforcement to implement international treaties and obligations
- Use of innovative technological tools





# Education, Outreach and Compliance Assistance



# Partnerships

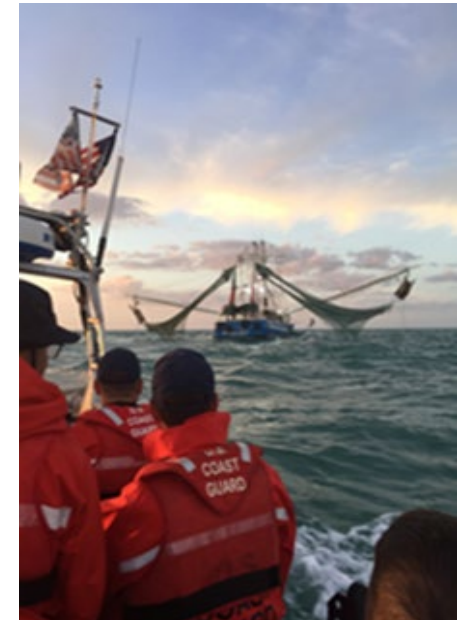
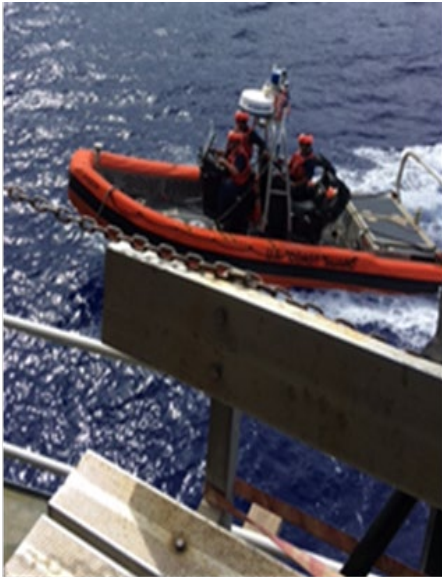
- **Cooperative Enforcement Program (JEAs)** with 29 coastal states and U.S. territories
- **Federal partnerships** with U.S. Coast Guard, Fish & Wildlife Service, Customs & Border Protection, and others
- Civil cases are prosecuted by **NOAA's Office of General Counsel's Enforcement Section**
- Criminal cases are prosecuted by **U.S. Department of Justice** and **U.S. Attorney's Offices**





# Partnerships – United States Coast Guard

- USCG has concurrent jurisdiction with NOAA to enforce the statutory and regulatory provisions of the MSA.
  - Living Marine Resources (LMR) = 1 of USCG's 11 missions.





# Why does a strong enforcement program matter?

## Enforcement is critical to fisheries management

### Effective Enforcement:

- Sustains fish stocks for commercial, recreational, and tribal users
- Helps prevent the illegal, unregulated and unreported harvesting and trafficking of fish and wildlife
- Protects marine mammals and endangered species
- Maintains and restores marine and inland water habitats
- Conserves marine protected areas
- Levels the playing field for all industry participants
- Holds accountable those who violate the law



# How can Councils help?

Effective regulations:

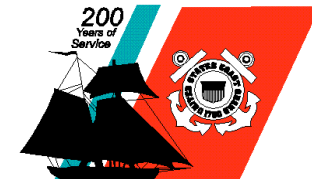
- Simple and easy to understand
- Few as possible and/or concise



## Enforcement Considerations For Regional Fishery Management Councils

Developed by NOAA Office for Law Enforcement,  
NOAA General Counsel for Enforcement and Litigation, and  
The U.S. Coast Guard

October 2007



# Want more information?

NOAA Office of Law Enforcement's  
website:

[www.fisheries.noaa.gov/ole](http://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/ole)

24/7 enforcement hotline to report suspected violations:

1-800-853-1964





# Questions?

