



NEWS FROM NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION • US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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MEDIA ADVISORY
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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NOAA REQUESTS PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN PLANS TO END OVERFISHING *Suggestions Will Be Taken at Meeting on Jekyll Island, Ga.*

The U.S. Congress and President Bush recently directed the nation's fishery managers to end overfishing by 2010. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration will host an open meeting in Georgia to give citizens in the southeastern United States an opportunity to comment on how this marine stewardship responsibility may be accomplished.

WHAT: Public Scoping Meeting to Receive Input on:

- Developing an environmental impact statement for this action
- Establishing annual catch limits in U.S. fisheries to end overfishing
- Establishing accountability measures associated with catch limits
- The role of science (the councils' Scientific and Statistical Committees) in establishing annual catch limits

WHEN: March 6, 2007, 6:30 p.m.

WHERE: Jekyll Island Club Hotel, Jekyll Island, Georgia 31527

WHO: Interested members of the public and news media

BACKGROUND

The United States is overfishing 48 species or species complexes, including 11 in the South Atlantic and nine coast-wide highly migratory stocks. Continued overfishing has slowed the rebuilding of overfished stocks.

The newly reauthorized Magnuson-Stevens Act requires annual catch limits by 2010, which will end overfishing. Annual catch limits must be coupled with accountability measures to ensure that catches do not exceed the limit or potentially mitigate the effect of exceeding the limits, and the law elevates the importance of following scientific advice in fishery management decisions.

With assistance from the public, NOAA will develop guidelines to help the eight regional fishery management councils and NOAA Fisheries Service modify fishery management plans to meet these requirements.

The guidelines should be finalized by the end of 2007. Written comments may be emailed to: annual.catch.limitDEIS@noaa.gov; faxed to: 301-713-1193; or mailed to: Mark Millikin, NOAA/NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. The deadline for comments is April 17, 2007.

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Public meetings have been scheduled in other regions of the country. To see the entire list of dates and locations, go to: Magnuson-Stevens Reauthorized Act of 2006: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/msa2007>