

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE (NMFS) REPORT
ON HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES (HMS) ACTIVITIES

Proposed Rule for Implementing a Federal Limited Entry (LE) Drift Gillnet (DGN) Permit

The proposed rule and notice of availability of an amendment to the HMS Fishery Management Plan to implement a federal LE DGN permit recommended by the Council at its March 2017 meeting is expected to publish in the Federal Register in September 2017. The public comment period would close in November 2017.

Commercial Pacific Bluefin Tuna Fishery Closure

On August 28, 2017, NMFS announced that the Pacific bluefin tuna fishery was closed to U.S. commercial vessels ([82 FR 40720](#)) because landings exceeded the 2017 catch limit. Preliminary estimates indicate that approximately 471 metric tons (mt) of Pacific bluefin tuna was caught, exceeding the internationally agreed limit of 425 mt. The rule prohibits targeting, retaining on board, landing or transshipping Pacific bluefin tuna, with the exception of any Pacific bluefin tuna already on board. Any tuna already on board must be landed within 14 days after the effective date of the closure, that is, no later than September 11, 2017.

Bigeye Tuna Closure

On September 1, 2017 ([82 FR 41562](#)), NMFS announced the closure of the U.S. pelagic longline fishery for bigeye tuna for vessels over 24 meters in overall length in the eastern Pacific Ocean (EPO) for the remainder of 2017. This action was necessary to prevent the fishery from exceeding the applicable catch limit of 500 metric tons established by the Inter-American Tropical Tuna Commission (IATTC) in Resolution [C-17-01](#), which governs tuna conservation in the EPO for 2017. The closure is effective 12 a.m. local time September 8, 2017, through 11:59 p.m. local time December 31, 2017. All bigeye tuna caught in this fishery by the closure date must be landed by September 22, 2017.