



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE

Southwest Region
501 West Ocean Boulevard, Suite 4200
Long Beach, California 90802-4213

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*Given by
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*4:05pm
9-10-02*

**Northern Allocation of Pacific Sardine
Notice of Fishery Closure**

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA - NMFS announces that the northern allocation of Pacific sardine of 39,481 metric tons (mt) will be reached on September 14, 2002. The closure north of Pt. Piedras Blancas (35° 40' N. lat.) will remain in effect until October 1, 2002, which is the date the reallocation of the remaining portion of the coast wide harvest guideline is required by the Coastal Pelagics Species Fishery Management Plan (FMP).

For the fishing season January 1, 2002, through December 31, 2002, the harvest guideline for the Pacific coast of 118,442 mt was calculated according to the formula in the FMP, of which 39,481 mt was allocated north of Pt. Piedras Blancas and 78,961 mt was allocated south of Pt. Piedras Blancas according to the allocation procedure in the FMP. The procedure was adopted to prevent any segment of the fishing industry from gaining an unfair harvesting advantage due to the regional availability of sardine as it undergoes its normal migration pattern. On October 1 of each year, the remaining harvest guideline north and south of Pt. Piedras Blancas is totaled and divided equally between the two areas.

As of September 6, at least 35,000 mt had been landed north of Pt. Piedras Blancas, with three weeks to harvest the remaining 4,481 mt. Current harvest rates indicate that the northern allocation will be reached by September 14. Notice of the closure at 12:01 a.m. on September 14, 2002 (midnight September 13), will be published soon in the *Federal Register*. Soon after the closure, the unharvested portion of the harvest guideline will be determined and additional fish will become available to the northern area through the allocations process.

Total harvest last year north of Pt. Piedras Blancas for the period ending September 30 was 30,921 mt. South of Pt. Piedras Blancas, as of September 6, approximately 47,961 mt of the 78,961 mt allocation remained.

