

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES MANAGEMENT TEAM REPORT ON
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE REPORT

The Highly Migratory Species Management Team (HMSMT) reviewed the May 11, 2005 letter from FISH requesting removal of current time-area closures that are in place to protect leatherback sea turtles from August 15-November 15.

FISH identified four alternatives.

The HMSMT met with the Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel (HMSAS) to review these four alternatives and wanted an opportunity to fully develop alternatives. A meeting will be held of a working sub-group of the HMSAS and HMSMT prior to the September Council meeting.

The proposed timeline presents alternatives to the Council in November to be approved for public review. March 2006 is targeted as the final adoption date by the Council, which triggers an Endangered Species Act Section 7 Consultation. Following the March Council meeting, NMFS would draft the implementing regulations. In July 2006, Protected Resources would complete the Biological Opinion. The regulations would be effective August 15, 2006.

PFMC
06/14/05