

NEWS RELEASE

MS Dept. of Marine Resources
1141 Bayview Ave., Biloxi 39530



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MDMR officials oppose proposed changes to NOAA shark regulations

BILOXI, Miss. – The Mississippi Department of Marine Resources is opposed to proposals by NOAA Fisheries that would increase shark regulations for recreational and commercial fishermen.

NOAA is proposing that recreational and commercial fishermen be required to complete an online shark identification and fishing regulation training course. They also would be required to use circle hooks when fishing for or landing sharks.

Executive Director Jamie Miller recently sent a letter to the National Marine Fisheries Service that said these proposals would be “placing punitive regulations on shark species that assessments have indicated healthy stocks which impact both recreational and commercial sectors.”

According to the NOAA Fisheries website, “these measures are based on recent assessments that determined dusky sharks are overfished and experiencing overfishing.”

Miller and the Office of Marine Fisheries agree with the assessment about the Dusky Shark, but in his letter Miller said NOAA’s proposals go much further.

“This proposed amendment impacts other species of sharks in which assessments indicate the stocks to be healthy,” he said. “Managing all shark species as a single unit could have undesirable consequences for both recreational and commercial fishermen and stock health.”

NOAA is accepting comments on these proposals through Dec. 22. Anyone wishing to comment can go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and refer to NOAA-NMFS-2013-0070.

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