An Introduction to NOAA Fisheries

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Our Mission

NOAA Fisheries is responsible for the stewardship of the nation's ocean resources and their habitat. We provide vital services for the nation: productive and sustainable fisheries, safe sources of seafood, the recovery and conservation of protected resources, and healthy ecosystems—all backed by sound science and an ecosystem-based approach to management.
NOAA Fisheries Locations

Alaska Region
- Regional Office: Juneau, AK
- Science Center Headquarters: Seattle, WA (Sand Point)
- Science Center Laboratories:
  - Auke Bay, AK
  - Kodiak, AK
  - Lena Point, AK

West Coast Region
- Regional Offices:
  - Arcata, CA
  - Long Beach, CA
  - Sacramento, CA
  - Portland, OR
  - Seattle, WA
- Science Center Headquarters:
  - La Jolla, CA - Southwest
  - Seattle, WA - Northwest
- Science Center Laboratories:
  - Monterey, CA
  - Santa Cruz, CA
  - Newport, OR
  - Pt. Hardeen, OR
  - Manchester, WA
  - Mukilteo, WA
  - Pasco, WA

Southeast Region
- Regional Office: St. Petersburg, FL
- Science Center Headquarters: Miami, FL
- Science Center Laboratories:
  - Panama City, FL
  - Pascagoula, MS
  - Beaufort, NC (shared with NOS)
  - Galveston, TX

Greater Atlantic Region
- Regional Office: Gloucester, MA
- Science Center Headquarters: Woods Hole, MA
- Science Center Laboratories:
  - Milford, CT
  - Orono, ME
  - Sandy Hook, NJ
  - Narragansett, RI

Pacific Islands Region
- Regional Office: Honolulu, HI
- Science Center:
  - Honolulu, HI
NOAA Fisheries’ Impact

- Commercial and recreational saltwater fishing in the United States generated more than $214 billion in sales and supported 1.83 million jobs.

- Our ecosystem-based management approaches protect living marine resources and promote sustainability.

- We protect, restore, and conserve important habitat for anadromous and marine species.

- Our scientific research informs societal decision-making for sustainable fisheries and healthy oceans.
The Value We Deliver

- Productive and sustainable fisheries
- Safe sources of seafood
- Recovery and conservation of protected resources
- Healthy ecosystems and resilient communities

*Data from Fisheries Economics of the United States, 2014 (May 2016)
The Value We Deliver

• American taxpayers entrust the nearly 3,000 NOAA Fisheries employees with ~$945M annually to conduct our assigned missions and, in return, gain 1.83 million jobs and $214 billion in sales.*

*Data from Fisheries Economics of the United States, 2014 (May 2016)
Major Legislative Drivers

- Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA)
- Endangered Species Act (ESA)
- Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA)
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- Oil Pollution Act (OPA)
- Resources and Ecosystems Sustainability, Tourist Opportunities and Revived Economies of the Gulf Coast States Act (RESTORE Act)
- National Aquaculture Act
Recent Agency Accomplishments

- Continued our successful efforts to end overfishing, minimize bycatch, and rebuild and maintain commercial fish stocks at sustainable levels; number of overfished stocks remains near all-time low; rebuilt stocks tops 40.

- Developed Agency policy on Ecosystem Based Fishery Management, including a Road Map for implementation of the policy.

- Began implementation of the *IUU Task Force Action Plan*, a significant effort to combat illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing and seafood fraud.

- Launched the “*Species in the Spotlight: Survive to Thrive*” campaign to rally public and private support in stabilizing the populations of the eight most endangered species under our purview.
Recent Agency Accomplishments, cont’d

• Developed a National Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Policy and Implementation Plan to better serve recreational anglers and the communities that rely on them.

• Moved forward with habitat restoration activities in the Gulf of Mexico in the wake of the $18B settlement following the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill.

• Implemented the nation’s first comprehensive regulatory program for aquaculture in federal waters in the Gulf of Mexico to expand seafood production and create new jobs in an environmentally sustainable manner.

• Released an Ocean Noise Policy to guide the agency in more effectively and comprehensively managing ocean noise effects on marine life during the next decade.
Major Fisheries Issues by Region

- **Alaska**
  - Steller sea lions
  - Ringed and bearded seals
  - International Pacific Halibut Commission
  - Cook Inlet beluga whales
  - Salmon and halibut bycatch
  - Observers and electronic monitoring
  - Large whale unusual mortality events
  - Arctic

- **Pacific Islands**
  - Corals
  - Marine national monuments
  - Monk seals
  - Hawaiian spinner dolphins
  - Main Hawaiian Islands false killer whales
  - Longline fisheries
  - Sea turtles
  - Department of Defense build-up

- **West Coast**
  - Changing ocean conditions
  - Salmon recovery—habitat restoration and hydropower operations
  - Central Valley water operations
  - Southern Resident killer whales
  - California sea lions
  - Groundfish trawl catch shares
  - Pacific bluefin tuna

- **Southeast and Caribbean**
  - Shrimp/turtles
  - Gulf and South Atlantic red snapper
  - Deepwater Horizon restoration and recovery
  - Corals
  - Right whales
  - Bottlenose dolphins
  - Sturgeon/hydropower/fish passage
  - Port expansion
  - Large-scale recreational fisheries
  - Large-scale habitat loss
  - Energy exploration and development

- **Northeast and Mid-Atlantic**
  - Groundfish
  - River herring
  - Atlantic salmon
  - Sturgeon
  - Right whales
  - Highly migratory species
  - Electronic monitoring and reporting
  - Aquaculture permitting
  - Habitat protection
Ensure the Productivity and Sustainability of Fisheries and Fishing Communities
Productivity & Sustainability of Fisheries & Fishing Communities

- Foster healthy, productive, and sustainable marine fisheries and their habitats in coordination with the Regional Fishery Management Councils and state partners.

- Provide high-quality stock assessments and ecological and socioeconomic information required for the federal management of fisheries and their essential habitats.

- Implement ecosystem-based fisheries management.
Productivity & Sustainability, cont’d

- Engage internationally to promote sound fishery management and conservation of global resources consistent with U.S. domestic fisheries policy.

- Protect and restore coastal and marine habitats to sustain our valuable commercial and recreational fisheries and maintain resilient coastal ecosystems and communities.

- Provide science, services, and policies to support the significant expansion and sustainability of U.S. marine aquaculture.
Recover & Conserve Protected Species
Recover & Conserve Protected Species

- Carry out the mandates of the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) and the Endangered Species Act (ESA) through specific requirements focused on reducing negative effects of human activities.

- Exercise our authorities through the MMPA to implement measures to reduce mortality and serious injury of marine mammals and protected living marine resources in international fisheries.

- Execute Ecosystem-Based Fisheries Management (EBFM) to ensure that protected species are managed in an efficient, integrated manner, accounting for ecological considerations.
Recover & Conserve Protected Species, cont’d

- Conduct high-quality science to develop robust actions related to the recovery and conservation of protected species.

- Depend on captive propagation and out-planting when the status of protected species is critically endangered and other measures to maintain or improve a species status in the wild have failed.

- Protect and restore habitats and the ecosystems on which protected species depend.
Our Science
NOAA Fisheries Science Mission

Conduct scientific research that improves the ability of the United States government to:

- Monitor and assess fish, invertebrate, protected species populations, marine ecosystems, and the associated human communities which rely on these resources.
- Understand and forecast effects of climate change on marine ecosystems.
- Describe and assess the role of habitats in supporting healthy marine ecosystems.
NOAA Fisheries Science Mission cont’d

- Designed to provide the necessary data to meet the mandates of MSA, MMPA and ESA.

- Reliant on partnerships with:
  - Other NOAA Line Offices (especially OAR and NOS)
  - Other Federal Agencies, including BOEM, USGS, US Navy, USACE, and USFWS (i.e., AMAPPs)
  - Academic partners, including six NOAA Cooperative Institute and the Living Marine Resources Cooperative Science Center.
High Priority Scientific Research

Fishery-independent Living Marine Resource Surveys

- Scientific surveys with statistical sampling design
- Most reliable source of stock abundance data and biology
- Provide better understanding of stock trends and ecosystem dynamics

Fishery-dependent Data Collection

- Observers and electronic monitoring
- Landings statistics and economic information
- Cooperative research
High Priority Scientific Research

Ecosystem Approaches to Management

- Ecosystem and human responses to climate change, ocean acidification
- Economic and social analysis

Advanced Sampling Technology

- Advanced acoustic/video methods, unmanned vehicle systems (UAS & AUV) and signal processing technologies
- Implement improvements and efficiencies to inform management
Focus Areas

Building Resilient Ecosystems, Fisheries and Communities

- Ecosystem Based Fishery Management
- National Climate Science Strategy and Regional Climate Action Plans
- Stock Assessment Improvement/Prioritization

External Science Program Reviews

- In 2013, NMFS started a 5-year, peer-review process of Science Centers and Headquarters programs
- Why? - To improve integration, identify best practices, share successes and challenges
- 2017: Economics and Human Dimensions Review
- 2018: Strategic Plan review/update to incorporate information from the program reviews

Integrated Ecosystem Assessments
Our Science in Summary

• NOAA Fisheries’ actionable science meets its mandates, but pushes beyond just providing mandated advice.

• We have moved out with new science initiatives on ecosystems, climate, fisheries, and communities.

• Our goal is to provide the science to support strong coastal communities through resilient fisheries and ecosystems.