

SALTWATER ANGLER REGISTRY TAKES EFFECT JANUARY 1, 2010

NEW LAW IN 2010: National Saltwater Angler Registry

DURHAM, N.H. -- Starting January 1, most New Hampshire saltwater recreational anglers and spearfishers will need to be registered to fish for anadromous species in tidal waters or for any fish in Federal waters.

New Hampshire anglers will need to register if they fish for or catch anadromous species like striped bass or smelt in tidal waters; or fish in Federal waters more than 3 miles from the ocean shore. Registration is quick, easy, and FREE in 2010. To register, visit <http://www.CountMyFish.noaa.gov> or call 1-888-674-7411, beginning January 1, 2010. You can register and fish the same day.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) will use the information to create a National Saltwater Angler Registry, which will be used to gather information from saltwater fishermen. It is needed to enhance NOAA's ability to produce timely and accurate estimates of the catch and harvest of saltwater fish by recreational anglers.

"The Registry will vastly improve the quality of recreational catch and harvest information," said Doug Grout, Chief of Marine Fisheries. "Having accurate estimates of recreational harvest is important in our efforts to work together with NOAA and anglers to protect the long-term sustainability of our oceans and saltwater fishing."

The registry is part of the Marine Recreational Information Program, a new tool being used improve the accuracy of recreational catch and harvest data that is vital to safeguarding the long-term health of our shared marine resources. The focus of the program is on saltwater recreational fishing, which nationally generates an estimated \$82 billion in sales and supports over 500,000 jobs annually.

There are a few exceptions to the registration requirement. New Hampshire anglers and spearfishers will not need to register if they are under 16 years old; only fish on licensed charter, party or guide boats; hold a Highly Migratory Species Angling permit; or hold and are fishing under a valid commercial license. Out-of-state saltwater anglers who are already registered with NOAA do not need to re-register to fish in New Hampshire.

The registry is free the first year, but starting in 2011, a fee will be charged unless states have an approved saltwater recreational fishing license in place. Through legislation passed in 2009, New Hampshire met this requirement by establishing a recreational saltwater license that will take effect in January 2011. At that time, New Hampshire saltwater anglers will purchase the \$15 license and be exempt from having to register with the National Saltwater Angler Registry. The new state license will ensure that fees paid by New Hampshire anglers stay in the state to help manage saltwater and anadromous fisheries.

For a fact sheet with Frequently Asked Questions about the new angler registry, visit http://www.fishnh.com/marine/Saltwater_Registry_FAQs.html.

Want to learn more? Listen in as Marine Chief Doug Grout talks about the new National Saltwater Registry on N.H. Fish and Game's new podcast at <http://blog.wildnh.com>.

The New Hampshire Fish and Game Department is the guardian of the state's fish, wildlife and marine resources and their habitats. Learn more about its stewardship of marine resources at <http://www.fishnh.com/marine>.