

while fishing in accordance with Section 118 of the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1387(c)(3)(A)).

What is the Process for Registering in an Integrated Fishery?

For some fisheries, NMFS has integrated the MMPA registration process with existing state and Federal fishery license, registration, or permit systems and related programs. Participants in these fisheries are automatically registered under the MMPA and are not required to submit registration or renewal materials or pay the \$25 registration fee. Following is a list of integrated fisheries and a summary of the integration process for each Region. Fishers who operate in an integrated fishery and have not received registration materials should contact their NMFS Regional Office (see **ADDRESSES**).

Which Fisheries Have Integrated Registration Programs?

The following fisheries have integrated registration programs under the MMPA:

1. All Alaska Category II fisheries.
2. All Washington and Oregon Category II fisheries.
3. Northeast Regional fisheries for which a state or Federal permit is required. Individuals fishing in fisheries for which no state or Federal permit is required must register with NMFS by contacting the Northeast Regional Office (see **ADDRESSES**).
4. All North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida Category II fisheries for which a state permit is required.

Alaska Region

The Alaska Region has integrated MMAP registration for Alaska Category II fisheries with the Alaska State system for registering commercial vessels and permitting commercial fishers. Therefore, if a vessel owner plans to participate in one or more of the Category II fisheries and is licensed under the State of Alaska's Commercial Fisheries Entry Program, the vessel owner will be registered automatically in the MMAP and will not have to submit MMAP registration or renewal materials or pay a processing fee. The information required for MMAP registration will be obtained by NMFS directly from the State of Alaska and will be automatically incorporated into the NMFS MMAP database. At the beginning of each calendar year, permitted vessel owners and set net operators will be sent an MMAP certificate for that year, an MMAP decal, the terms and conditions of the

authorization, and marine mammal injury and mortality reporting forms. MMAP certificates will be valid only if presented with a valid fishing permit.

Northwest Region

Washington and Oregon have integrated MMAP registration with existing permit programs for all Washington and Oregon Category II fisheries. These states issue MMAP certificates for Category II fisheries as part of the fishing license renewal process. MMAP certificates will be valid only if presented with a valid fishing permit. If a vessel owner plans to participate in one or more of the Category II fisheries or has a license issued by the states of Oregon or Washington, the vessel owner will be registered automatically in the MMAP and will not have to submit MMAP registration or renewal materials or pay a processing fee.

Southwest Region

No Southwest Region fisheries are integrated under the MMAP.

Northeast Region

In the Northeast Region, MMAP registration is integrated with existing fishing permit processes for all fishers engaged in Category I or II fisheries for which a state or federal permit is required. At the beginning of each calendar year, these vessel owners will be sent an MMAP certificate for that year, the terms and conditions of the authorization, and marine mammal and injury reporting forms. However, all state and Federal permit holders that receive new permits for Category I or II fisheries after the beginning of the calendar year must submit a registration or renewal application to NMFS Northeast Regional Office (see **ADDRESSES**). MMAP certificates will be valid only if presented with a valid state or Federal fishing permit. Individuals fishing in Category I or II fisheries in the Northeast Region for which state or federal permits are not required must register under the MMAP by submitting a registration or renewal form to NMFS Northeast Regional Office (see **ADDRESSES**). No fees are required for either integrated or non-integrated fisheries.

Southeast Region

NMFS has integrated registration for all participants in North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida Category II fisheries for which a state permit is required. Therefore, for these fisheries, the vessel owner will be registered automatically in the MMAP and will not have to submit MMAP registration or

renewal materials or pay a processing fee. At the beginning of each calendar year, these vessel owners will be sent an MMAP certificate for that year, the terms and conditions of the authorization, and marine mammal and injury reporting forms. MMAP certificates will be valid only if presented with a valid state permit. All fishers who plan to participate in any other Category I or II fishery in the Southeast Region must register under the MMAP by submitting a registration or renewal form and the processing fee to NMFS. The Southeast Region is currently working towards integrating additional state and federal licensing and permitting systems with the MMAP.

How Do I Renew My Registration Under the MMPA?

Regional Offices, except for the Northeast Region, annually send renewal packets to participants in Category I or II fisheries that have previously registered; however, it is the responsibility of the fisher to ensure that registration or renewal forms are completed and submitted to NMFS at least 30 days in advance of fishing. Individuals who have not received a renewal packet by January 1 or are registering for the first time should request a registration form from the appropriate Regional Office (see **ADDRESSES**).

Am I Required to Submit Reports When I Injure or Kill a Marine Mammal During the Course of Commercial Fishing Operations?

In accordance with the MMPA (16 U.S.C. 1387(e)) and 50 CFR 229.6, any vessel owner or operator, or fisher (in the case of non-vessel fisheries), participating in a Category I, II, or III fishery must report all incidental injuries or mortalities of marine mammals that occur during commercial fishing operations to NMFS. "Injury" is defined in 50 CFR 229.2 as a wound or other physical harm. In addition, any animal that ingests fishing gear or any animal that is released with fishing gear entangling, trailing, or perforating any part of the body is considered injured, regardless of the absence of any wound or other evidence of an injury, and must be reported. Instructions on how to submit reports can be found in 50 CFR 229.6.

Am I Required to Take an Observer Aboard My Vessel?

Fishers participating in a Category I or II fishery are required to accommodate an observer aboard vessel(s) upon request. Observer requirements can be found in 50 CFR 229.7.