



# NOAA FISHERIES

## Atlantic Highly Migratory Species

# Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Angling Category Fishery: Northern Area Trophy Fishery Closing August 11, 2017

August 9, 2017

**The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) closes the Atlantic bluefin tuna (BFT) Angling category fishery for large medium and giant “trophy” BFT (measuring 73” curved fork length or greater) in the northern area effective 11:30 p.m. local time, Friday, August 11, 2017, through December 31, 2017. The northern area is the area north of 39°18’N (off Great Egg Inlet, NJ).**

Based on reported landings from the NMFS Automated Catch Reporting System, NMFS has determined that the codified Angling category northern area trophy BFT subquota has been reached and that the trophy fishery should be closed in that area. Retaining, possessing, or landing large medium or giant BFT north of 39°18’ N. lat. by persons aboard vessels permitted in the HMS Angling category and the HMS Charter/Headboat category (when fishing recreationally) must cease at 11:30 p.m. local time on August 11, 2017. The intent of this closure is to prevent overharvest of the Angling category northern area trophy BFT subquota. NMFS closed the 2017 Angling category trophy fishery for the southern area and Gulf of Mexico effective March 20 and June 7, respectively. Therefore, as of August 11, 2017, the Angling category trophy BFT fishery will be closed in all areas for 2017. Catch-and-release fishing is permissible as described below.

### Who is affected?

This closure applies to vessels permitted in the HMS Angling category and the HMS Charter/Headboat category fishing in the northern area (defined in bold above). Fishermen may catch and release or tag and release BFT of all sizes, subject to the requirements of HMS catch-and-release and tag-and-release programs. NMFS regulations require that all BFT that are released be handled in a manner that will maximize their survival, and without removing the fish from the water. For additional information on safe handling, see the “Careful Catch and Release” brochure available at [www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/). **HMS Charter/Headboat and Angling category vessel owners are required to report the catch of all BFT retained or discarded dead, within 24 hours of the landing(s) or end of each trip, by accessing [hmspermits.noaa.gov](http://hmspermits.noaa.gov) or by using the HMS Catch Reporting App.**

This notice is a courtesy to BFT fishery permit holders to help keep you informed about the fishery. For more information on BFT fishing regulations, including recreational size and retention limits, please go to [hmspermits.noaa.gov](http://hmspermits.noaa.gov) or call (978) 281-9260. Official notice of Federal fishery actions is made through filing such notice with the Office of the Federal Register.

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