



# NOAA FISHERIES

## Atlantic Highly Migratory Species

# Atlantic Bluefin Tuna Angling Category Fishery: Gulf of Mexico Trophy Fishery Closing June 7, 2017

June 5, 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” or greater) in the Gulf of Mexico effective 11:30 p.m. local time, Wednesday, June 7, 2017, through December 31, 2017.**

Based on reported landings from the NMFS Automated Catch Reporting System, NMFS has determined that the codified Angling category Gulf of Mexico 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 in the Gulf of Mexico 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 June 7, 2017. The intent of this closure is to prevent overharvest of the Angling category Gulf of Mexico trophy BFT subquota. The annual Angling category trophy limit of one large medium or giant BFT per vessel remains in effect for vessels fishing in the *northern* area. The Angling category fishery for BFT measuring 27 to less than 73” is open *except in the Gulf of Mexico*. 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 Gulf of Mexico. 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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