



NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND
ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE



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National Saltwater Angler Registry Opens on New Year's Day

New program, part of improved data collection system, to help protect nation's ocean resources

Saltwater recreational fishermen have long expressed concerns about the data used to estimate the effects of recreational fishing on ocean resources and the nation's economy. The National Saltwater Angler Registry, which launches on Friday, will help address that concern by providing a comprehensive list of the nation's saltwater anglers that will be used to improve surveys of fishermen. These surveys are used by NOAA scientists to assess the health of fish stocks and to estimate the economic contributions of anglers.

Many saltwater recreational fishermen will be required to register before fishing in 2010. The registry is open for registrations starting Friday, January 1. But if you have a state saltwater fishing license, you may already be part of the registry.

"By registering, recreational anglers will make their catch count," said Jim Balsiger, acting NOAA assistant administrator for NOAA's Fisheries Service. "The National Saltwater Angler Registry is an important tool that will enable us to better estimate the health of marine fisheries so that we're able to preserve the pastime of recreational saltwater fishing for generations to come."

"Recreational fishers need the registry," says Capt. Monty Hawkins, a party boat operator and recreational fishing advocate based in Ocean City, Md. "People's lives depend on the quality of the government's information. It's the basis for management decisions on everything from creel limits to whether to shut down whole sections of the coast. I've been harshly critical of recreational fishing data in the past, but I welcome the registry as a way to improve upon the current system."

Gordon Colvin, a biologist with NOAA's Fisheries Service and interim senior policy advisor on recreational fishing to Balsiger, who has spearheaded the registry implementation, said that many anglers will not need to take any action to register, because their coastal states already have agreements in place with NOAA to share state saltwater fishing license information.

Who Needs to Register:

Recreational saltwater fishermen will need to register if they:

- Hold a license from one of 10 coastal states or territories which do not currently have comprehensive saltwater angler license or registration requirements—Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New Hampshire, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, Virginia, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.
- Fish for or are likely to catch anadromous species in tidal and salt waters; these are fish like river herring, shad, smelt and striped bass that live in the oceans but spawn in fresh water, OR
- Fish in the federal waters more than three miles from the ocean shore or from the mouths of rivers or bays

Who Doesn't Need to Register

Some anglers don't have to register if they:

- Hold a license from one of 15 coastal states with comprehensive licensing or registration — Alabama, Alaska, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, South Carolina, Texas, Washington;
- Are not required under state law in one of these 15 states to hold a fishing license as is sometimes the case with seniors or active-duty military;
- Are under age 16;
- Pay to fish on licensed charter, party or guide boats;
- Hold a Highly Migratory Species Angling permit or subsistence fishing permit;
- Fish commercially under a valid license.

National Saltwater Angler registration is free in 2010. To register beginning Friday, anglers can visit <http://www.countmyfish.noaa.gov> and click on the Angler Registry link, or call the toll-free registration line at 1-888-MRIP411 (1-888-674-7411) from 4:00 am to 12 midnight EST daily.

Anglers will need to provide their name, date of birth, address and telephone number, and will receive a registration number that will allow them to begin fishing immediately. They will receive a registration card in the mail in about 30 days.

Steve Medeiros, executive director of the Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association and a leading advocate for a saltwater fishing license in his state, said the registry is an important step. "While it's true that some fishermen don't like the idea of having to register to participate in a sport they've taken for granted their whole lives, anyone fishing today knows that increasing pressures on the ocean are having a real effect," he said. "If we're going to pass the sport down to our children and grandchildren, we're going to need sound management based on good data."

The registry will be used as the basis for conducting surveys of saltwater recreational fishermen to find out how often they fish. It will eventually replace the use of random-digit dialing to coastal households, a system NOAA has had in place since the 1970s. The goal is to improve survey efficiency and reduce bias by making calls only to homes where people fish, and reaching saltwater anglers who live outside coastal counties.

While the registry is among the most visible aspects of NOAA's Marine Recreational Information Program, it is only one component of this rigorous multi-year, multi-phased overhaul of the system NOAA uses to collect and report recreational fishing data. Each piece of its design and implementation has been guided by close working relationships among NOAA personnel, fisheries managers, state partners, independent scientists and the recreational fishing community.

Recreational fishermen should also remember that regardless of whether an individual is registered with NOAA, they must obey all state regulations and licensing requirements where they are fishing.

NOAA understands and predicts changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and conserves and manages our coastal and marine resources. Visit us at <http://www.noaa.gov> and on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/noaa.lubchenco>.



Search

Go Fish!

This site

You are here: [Home](#) > [About Us](#) > [Organization](#) > [Angler Registry Team](#)

National Saltwater Angler Registry

Please Note: Registration is quick, easy, and FREE in 2010. Anglers can register through our [website](#) or by calling (888) MRIP-411. Operators are available 7 days a week from 4:00 am to 12:00 midnight (EST).

Anglers will need to provide their name, date of birth, address and telephone number, and will receive a registration number that will allow them begin fishing immediately. After approximately 30 days, they will receive a registration card in the mail.

Who Will Need to Register?

Beginning January 1, 2010, recreational fishermen will need to sign up with the new National Saltwater Angler Registry if they:

- DO NOT hold a saltwater fishing license from a state where they are automatically registered (the green states on the map). OR ...
 - DO NOT meet any of the exceptions in the law (listed below).
- AND ...**
- DO fish for or catch anadromous species in tidal waters; these are fish like striped bass, smelt, shad or river herring that spend part of their lives in fresh water and part in saltwater. OR ...
 - DO fish in the Federal waters more than three miles from the ocean shore or from the mouth of harbors, bays and rivers.



Exceptions include anglers who are under the age of 16; 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 or subsistence fishing license or permit.

Not sure if you need to register? [Click here](#).

Why Register?

Registration is the law, and it helps NOAA and anglers work together to gather better data on angling catch to help ensure the future of saltwater fishing.

Stay informed. *We will be updating this website as states sign agreements with NOAA and new tools*

• Home

• About Us

[Program Overview](#)

[How Angler Surveys Work](#)

[Timeline on MRIP Development](#)

[Organization](#)

[Executive Steering Committee](#)

[Angler Registry Team](#)

[Operations Team](#)

[Communications and Outreach](#)

[Design and Analysis Work Group](#)

[HMS Work Group](#)

[For Hire Work Group](#)

[Data Management and](#)

[Standards Work Group](#)

[Angler Registry Database Work](#)

[Group](#)

• Projects

• Events and Meetings

• Newsroom

• Partnerships

• Tools & Resources

[RSS Feeds](#)

[Widgets](#)



are available. Sign up for the [RSS feed](#) to get the latest.

Learn more [about the registry](#) and how we're working with anglers to ensure the long-term sustainability of recreational fishing.

A new federal law requires most saltwater fishermen to sign up with the National Saltwater Angler Registry. Registering is quick, easy, and FREE in 2010.

Do I need to register?

CLICK HERE ►

Already know you need to register?

Click the appropriate button below. Unless you operate a charter boat, head boat or guide boat, you will want to click on the **individual angler registration**

**Individual
Angler Registration**

CLICK HERE ►

For-Hire Vessel

CLICK HERE ►

In a few select states, owners and operators of commercial charter boats, head boats and guide boats are required to register passenger vessels with NOAA. Not sure if you need to register, find out [here](#).

The National Saltwater Angler Registry is a new tool to help better count fishermen and their catch. Become part of a network of fishermen helping to conserve our oceans and ensure the future of recreational fishing. By registering, you help NOAA make your catch count.

You can also register by calling (888) MRIP-411 seven days-a-week between the hours of 4:00 am and 12:00 am (EST)

Register 2010



New Federal Law Affecting VA Saltwater Fishermen



WHAT?
National Saltwater
Angler Registry.

WHEN?
Registration will be
required beginning
Jan. 1, 2010.

WHO MUST REGISTER?

Virginia anglers who fish in federal waters, or target or catch anadromous species (saltwater fish that spawn in freshwater) like shad, striped bass or river herring.

WHO IS EXEMPT?

Anglers who are under 16; only fish on licensed charter, party or guide boats; hold a Highly Migratory Species Angling permit; are fishing under a valid commercial license; or are already registered through an exempted state.

HOW DO I REGISTER?

Starting Jan. 1, 2010, go online at www.countmyfish.noaa.gov. Registration is FREE in 2010.

WHY REGISTER?

Registration is the law. It is also an important new tool for NOAA and anglers to help ensure the longterm sustainability of saltwater fishing.

MARINE
RECREATIONAL
INFORMATION
PROGRAM



LEARN MORE

www.countmyfish.noaa.gov

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Register 2010

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the purpose of the Registry?

The registry will serve as a national “phone book” of anglers, allowing NOAA to quickly and easily reach current fishermen to learn about their most recent fishing activities. That information is a crucial part of our ability to estimate the health of fish stocks, and to check that protections put in place to preserve fisheries will be fair, effective, and based on sound science. The registry is also a tool for recreational fishermen. As the first full accounting of the scope of recreational saltwater fishing in the U.S., it will help to more fully demonstrate anglers’ economic, conservation and marine stewardship impacts.

Is the future of fishing really in doubt?

With the data necessary to effectively manage fisheries in hand, NOAA has no doubt that our nation’s tradition of saltwater recreational fishing will continue into the future. It is true, however, that there are numerous pressures like pollution, climate change, and in some cases overfishing, which have made the work of fisheries managers – and the data they rely upon – more important than ever.

Do recreational fishermen really have that great of an impact on the resource?

While many people assume the number of fish caught by recreational fishermen must pale in comparison to the commercial harvest, the truth is that for many popular species – such as striped bass, bluefish, tautog and black rockfish to name just a few – the recreational take is by far the largest proportion.

Can I register and fish the same day?

Yes. Beginning January 1, 2101, fishermen will be able to reregister online or by phone. Simply write down the registration number you receive and take it with you when you go fishing to present to Law Enforcement if requested.if requested. A permanent registration card will follow in the mail.

LEARN MORE

www.countryfish.noaa.gov



Register 2010

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www.countryfish.noaa.gov

ARTICLE FOR MEDIA REFERENCE OR DIRECT PLACEMENT
SOURCE: NOAA FISHERIES

NOAA CONTACT
FORBES DARBY
TEL: (301) 713-9501
Forbes.Darby@noaa.gov

STATE/LOCAL CONTACT

Most New Jersey Saltwater Recreational Fishermen Will Need To Register with NOAA Beginning January 1

*Saltwater Angler Registry Part of Improved Data Program
To Help Protect Long-Term Sustainability of Recreational Fishing*

Under a new federal law, most New Jersey saltwater recreational fishermen will be required to register with the new National Saltwater Angler Registry before they go fishing next year.

Beginning January 1, 2010, New Jersey fishermen will need to register if they:

- Fish for or catch anadromous species in tidal and salt waters; these are fish like river herring, shad or striped bass that live in the oceans but spawn in fresh water, OR
- Fish in the Federal waters more than three miles from the ocean shore or from the mouths of rivers or bays, OR
- Don't meet any of the exceptions in the law.

Those exceptions include anglers who are under the age of 16; only fish on vessels that are holders of for-hire (or charter boat and party boat) permits issued by NOAA Fisheries; hold a Highly Migratory Species Angling permit; or are fishing commercially under a valid license. In addition, out-of-state saltwater anglers who are already registered with NOAA do not need to re-register to fish in New Jersey.

Registration is quick and easy and will be free in 2010. Beginning January 1, anglers simply need to log on to www.countmyfish.noaa.gov and click on the Angler Registry link, or call the toll-free registration line at **1-888-MRIP411** (1-888-674-7411). Anglers will need to provide their name, date of birth, address and telephone number, and will receive a registration number that will allow them to begin fishing immediately. After approximately 30 days, they will receive a registration card in the mail.

The registry is an important tool that will help fishermen and policy makers work together to better account for the contributions and impacts of saltwater anglers on ocean ecosystems and coastal economies. It is part of a national overhaul of the way NOAA collects and reports recreational fishing data. The goal of the initiative – known as the Marine Recreational Information Program, or MRIP – is to provide the most accurate information possible that can be used to determine the health of fish stocks. Reliable, universally trusted data will in turn aid anglers, fisheries managers and other stakeholders in their combined efforts to effectively and fairly set the rules that will ensure the long-term sustainability of recreational fishing.

For more information, visit www.countmyfish.noaa.gov.



NOAA FISHERIES SERVICE



NOAA Fisheries Service is an agency within the Commerce Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in the earth's environment and conserve and manage coastal and marine resources to meet our nation's economic, social and environmental needs. The NOAA Fisheries Service provides world class science and stewardship.

For more information
on how to register, go to:

www.CountMyFish.noaa.gov

NEW LAW IN 2010

National Saltwater Angler Registry

Most Maryland 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 beginning January 1, 2010.

OVERVIEW

The Marine Recreational Information Program, or MRIP, is a new tool being used to achieve NOAA's mission of safeguarding the long-term health of our shared marine resources. The focus of the program is on saltwater recreational fishing, which generates an estimated \$82 billion in sales and supports over 500,000 jobs annually. MRIP is changing the way recreational fishing data is collected and reported to help ensure that managers, anglers, and other stakeholders have reliable information necessary to manage fish stocks and their surrounding ecosystems for generations to come.

THE NATIONAL SALTWATER ANGLER REGISTRY

A critical component of MRIP is the new National Saltwater Angler Registry, which will serve as a "phone book" of the nation's sport fishermen. The registry will enable NOAA to more effectively gather information from saltwater fishermen, enhancing our ability to produce the most timely and accurate information possible about the health of recreational fish stocks.

Most important, the registry will enable NOAA and anglers to more effectively work together to protect the long-term sustainability of our oceans and the sport of saltwater fishing.

WHO NEEDS TO REGISTER IN 2010

Maryland anglers will need to register if they:

- Fish for or catch anadromous species in tidal waters;
- Fish in the Federal waters more than 3 miles from the ocean shore or from the mouth of Chesapeake Bay;
- Don't meet any of the exceptions below.

Federal law requires anglers to register with NOAA even if they have a Maryland saltwater fishing license, boat license, or fish in a free area.

There is no cost to register in 2010.

EXCEPTIONS

Marylanders will not need to register if they are under 16; 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 Maryland.