



NOAA
FISHERIES

Office of
Sustainable
Fisheries

Spring Gulf of Mexico Pelagic Longline Monitoring Area Reconsideration

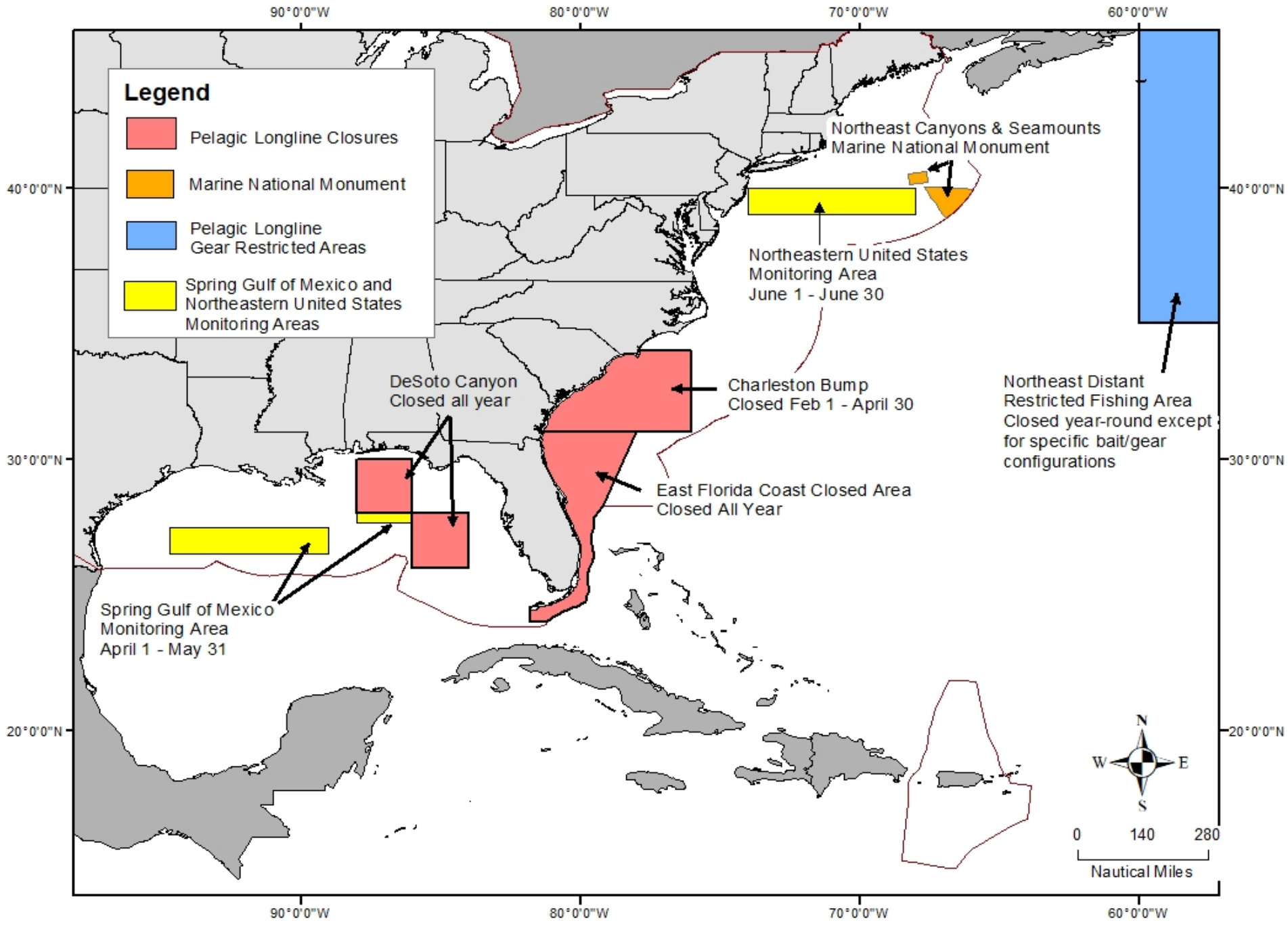
Atlantic Highly Migratory Species
Management Division
Summer 2021

Why are we undertaking a reconsideration process?

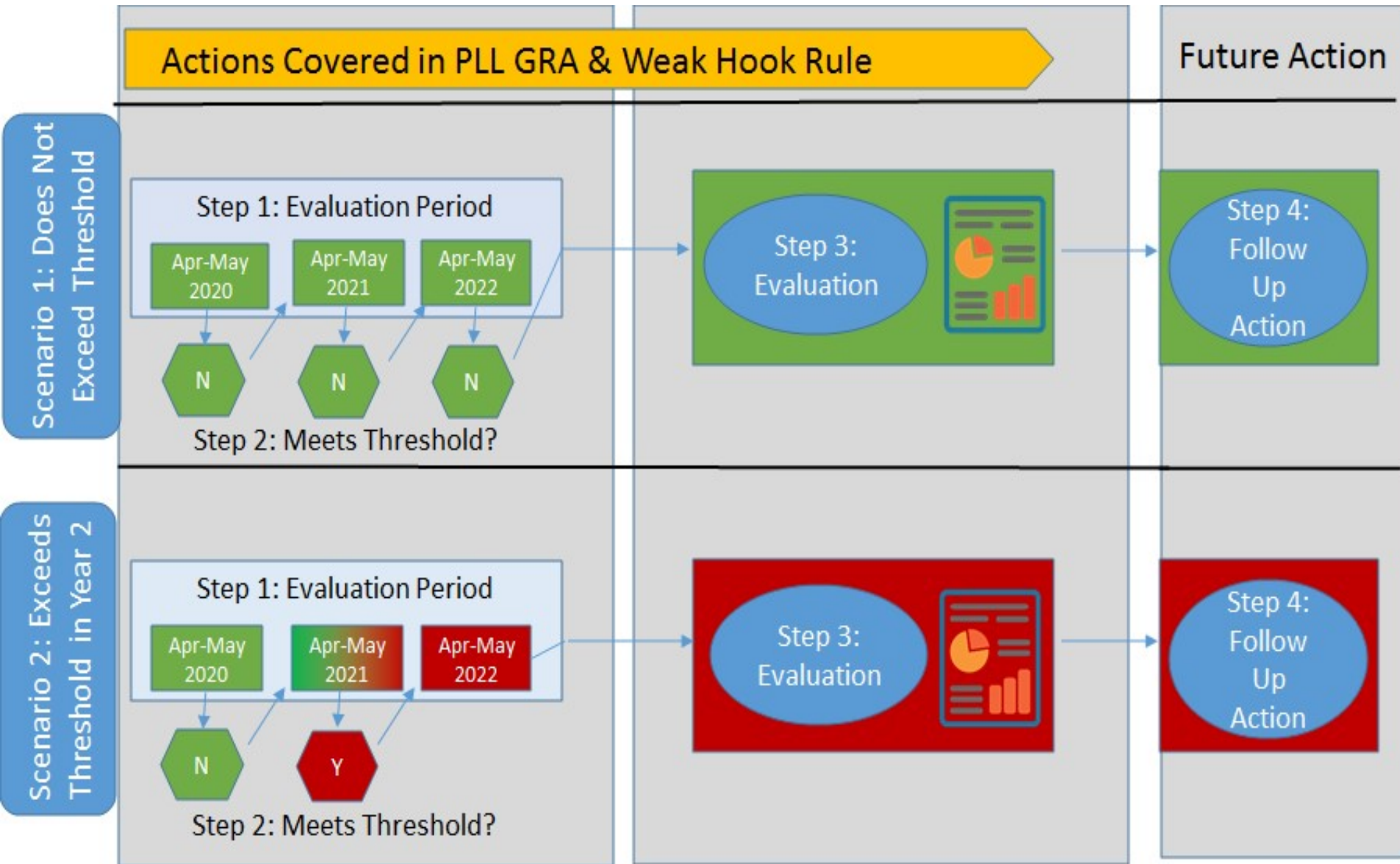
- Joint Explanatory Statement that accompanied the 2021 Appropriations Act.
- Directed NOAA to reconsider the decision in the April 2, 2020 final rule (Gear Restricted Area -Weak Hook Rule) to open the Spring Gulf of Mexico Monitoring Area to pelagic longline fishing.

Final Rule (effective April 2, 2020)

- Converted the Spring Gulf of Mexico Gear Restricted Area to a monitoring area
- Established a three-year evaluation period
- Fishing subject to a 63,150 lb-Individual Bluefin Tuna Quota (IBQ) threshold
- After the three-year evaluation period, data collected from the Monitoring Area will be reviewed, and a report will be compiled, and NOAA Fisheries may take further action if needed.



Monitoring and Evaluation Process



Spring Gulf of Mexico Monitoring for 2020

Available at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/pelagic-longline-bluefin-tuna-area-based-and-weak-hook-management-measures>

Longline Category Regional BFT Catch in pounds whole weight (Not Including NED)	Landings	Discards	Total	Monitoring Area Threshold*
Atlantic (June 1- 30, 2020)	10,748	6,631	17,379	
Areas Outside the NE US Monitoring Area	10,748	6,631	17,379	
NE US Monitoring Area	-	-	-	150,519
Gulf of Mexico (April 1 - May 31, 2020)	0	0	0	
Areas Outside the Spring GOM Monitoring Area	0	0	0	
Spring GOM Monitoring Area	0	0	0	63,150

(-) Denotes confidential data with less than three vessels consistent with MSA requirements

* Denotes the amount (lb) of bluefin tuna that can be caught (landings and dead discards) during each monitoring area period before the monitoring area is closed, as established in the final rule.



Spring Gulf of Mexico Monitoring for 2021 (as of June 21, 2021)

Available at: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/pelagic-longline-bluefin-tuna-area-based-and-weak-hook-management-measures>

Longline Category Regional BFT Catch in pounds whole weight (Not Including NED)	Landings	Discards	Total	Monitoring Area Threshold*
Atlantic (June 1- 30, 2021)	0	0	0	
Areas Outside the NE Monitoring Area	0	0	0	
NE US Monitoring Area	-	-	-	150,519
Gulf of Mexico (April 1 - May 31, 2021)	5,920	518	6,438	
Areas Outside the Spring GOM Monitoring Area	5,920	518	6,438	
Spring GOM Monitoring Area	0	0	0	63,150

(-) Denotes confidential data with less than three vessels consistent with MSA requirements

* Denotes the amount (lb) of bluefin tuna that can be caught (landings and dead discards) during each monitoring area period before the monitoring area is closed, as established in the final rule.



What Are We Requesting?

- NOAA Fisheries has opened a 30-day period for the public to submit information.
- Requesting information regarding the Spring Gulf of Mexico Monitoring Area that may not have been considered in the final rule.
- In late summer 2021, NOAA Fisheries will review the information submitted and assess if it presents any relevant new information not already considered during development of the April 2, 2020 final rule and if any such new information merits further action related to the Spring Gulf of Mexico Monitoring Area.



What Are We Requesting?

- Information and Comments must be submitted through <https://www.regulations.gov> and search the docket NOAA-NMFS-2018-0035
- Information and Comments must be received by July 15, 2021
- For further information contact Craig Cockrell and craig.cockrell@noaa.gov or 301-427-8503

