

Update: Pelagic Longline Bluefin Tuna Area-Based and Weak Hook Management



NOAA
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Office of
Sustainable
Fisheries

Advisory Panel
Fall 2018

Outline

- ❖ Issues Considered
- ❖ Area and Weak Hook Management Options
- ❖ Scoping Meetings Held
- ❖ Comments on Each Issue
- ❖ Next Steps

Scoping Document Issues Considered

Three Pelagic Longline (PLL) Areas Under Consideration

- ❖ Northeastern U.S. Closed Area
- ❖ Cape Hatteras Gear Restricted Area
- ❖ Gulf of Mexico Gear Restricted Areas

One Gear Measure Under Consideration

- ❖ Weak Hooks in Gulf of Mexico

Management Options	Management Option Description
No Action	Would maintain current regulations for the Northeastern U.S. Closed Area, Cape Hatteras GRA, Gulf of Mexico GRA
Performance Access	Would consider access through performance metrics for Northeastern U.S. Closed Area and Gulf of Mexico GRA
Modify Spatial and/or Temporal Coverage	Based on preliminary analysis of current data, could lead to a change in area and time restrictions for all areas
Provisional Application of the Area	Would apply the area restrictions consistent with current regulations once a specified level of bluefin tuna catch has occurred
Elimination of the Area	Would remove the area restrictions from the current regulations for all areas

Management Options	Management Option Description
No Action	Would maintain current regulations which requires year-round use of weak hooks.
Seasonal Application of Weak Hooks	Would require weak hook use for only certain months of the year.
Elimination of Weak Hook Requirement	Would remove the weak hook requirement for the PLL fishery

Scoping Meetings & Webinar

Date	Location
March 8, 2018	HMS Advisory Panel Silver Spring, MD
March 13, 2018	Public Webinar / Call
March 15, 2018	Panama City, FL
March 21, 2018	Manteo, NC
April 2, 2018	Houma, LA
April 11, 2018	Little Egg Harbor, NJ
April 18, 2018	Gloucester, MA

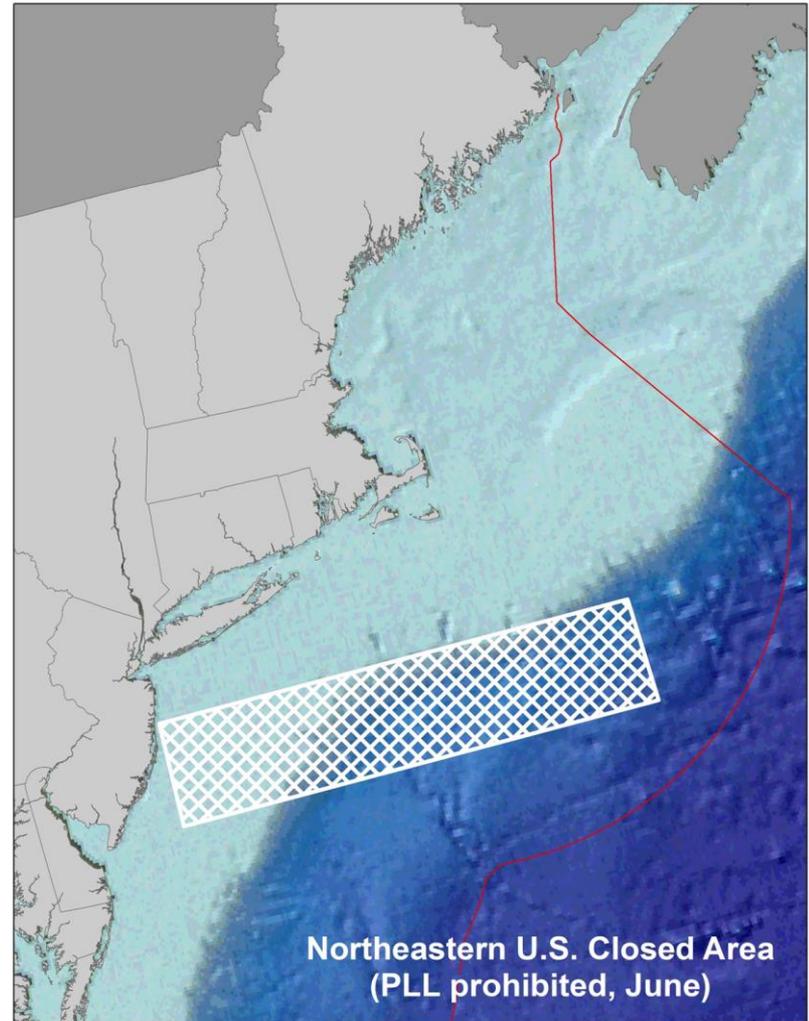
Comment Period ended May 1, 2018

Comments Received

Northeastern U.S. Closed Area

Comments not in favor of relieving restrictions:

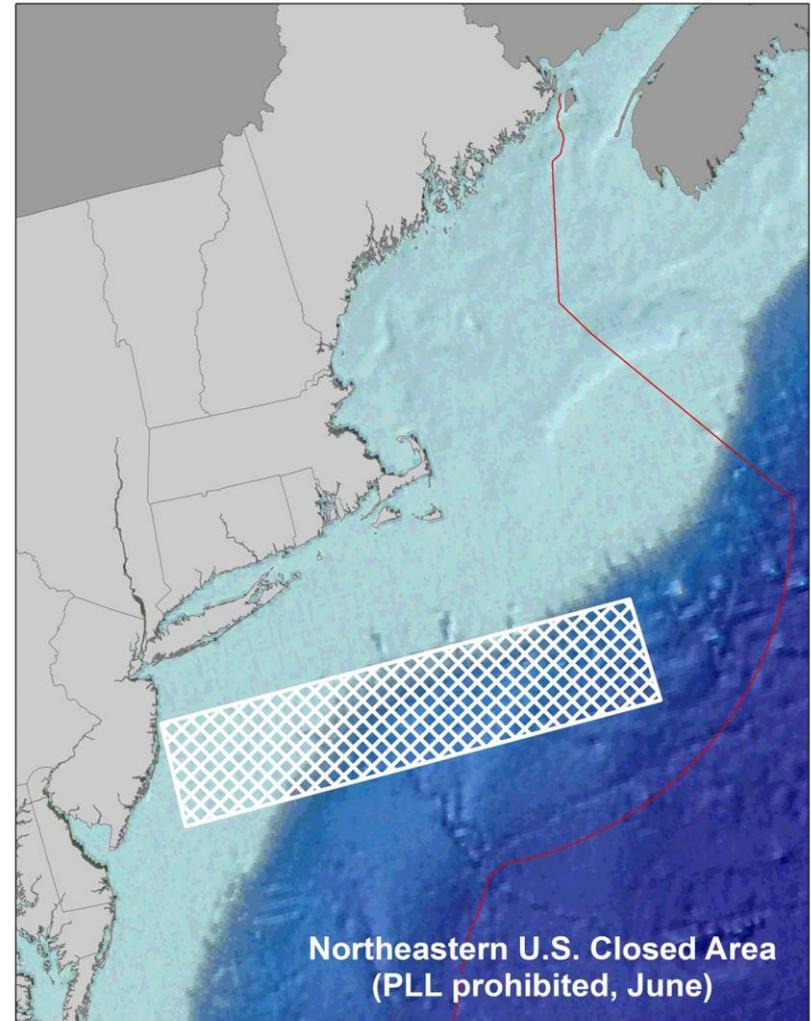
- Expansion of closed area
 - North and east along continental shelf; “seaward”
 - Temporal - include both June and July
- Support for no action alternative until :
 - Experimental data collection
 - NMFS conducts research
 - NMFS issues an EFP in conjunction with NOAA scientists



Northeastern U.S. Closed Area

Comments in favor of relieving some restrictions:

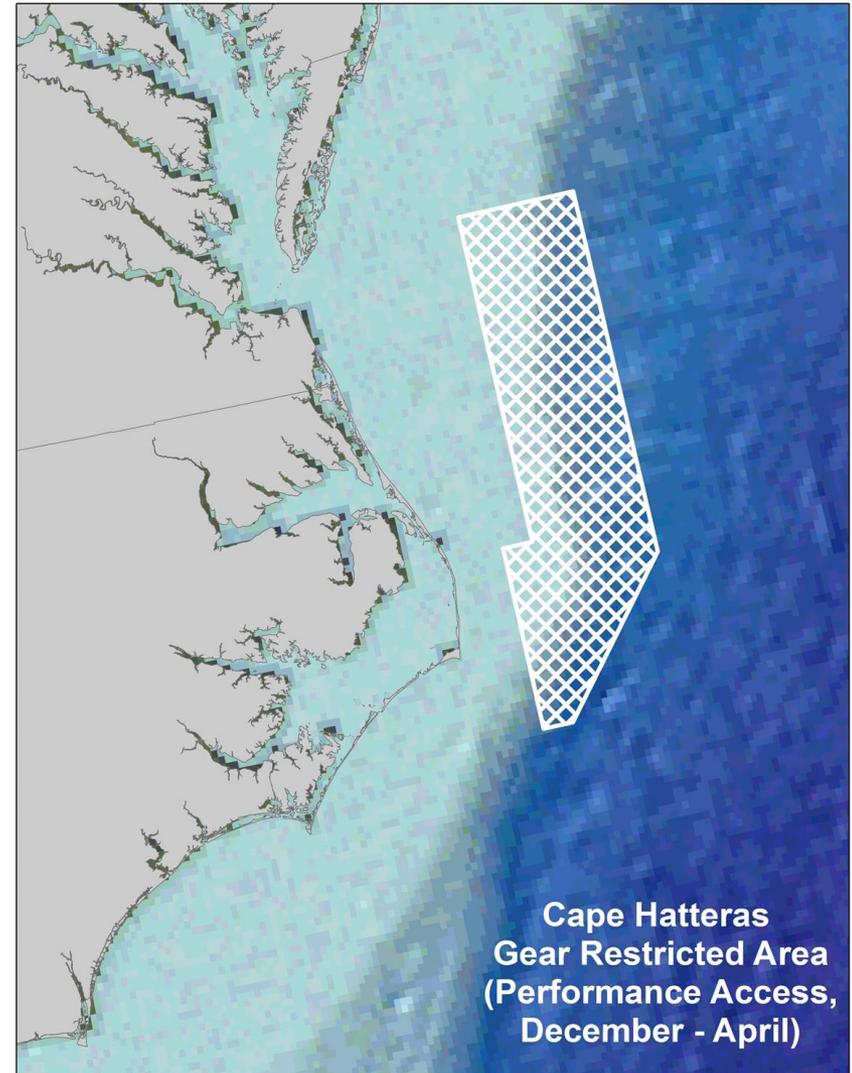
- Remove western portion of the area
- Support for the provisional application - keeping area open until a threshold/trigger is met
- Remove the area completely
 - Allows fleet to spread out; gives flexibility to avoid bycatch (e.g., bluefin tuna and whales)



Cape Hatteras Gear Restricted Area

Comments not in favor of relieving restrictions:

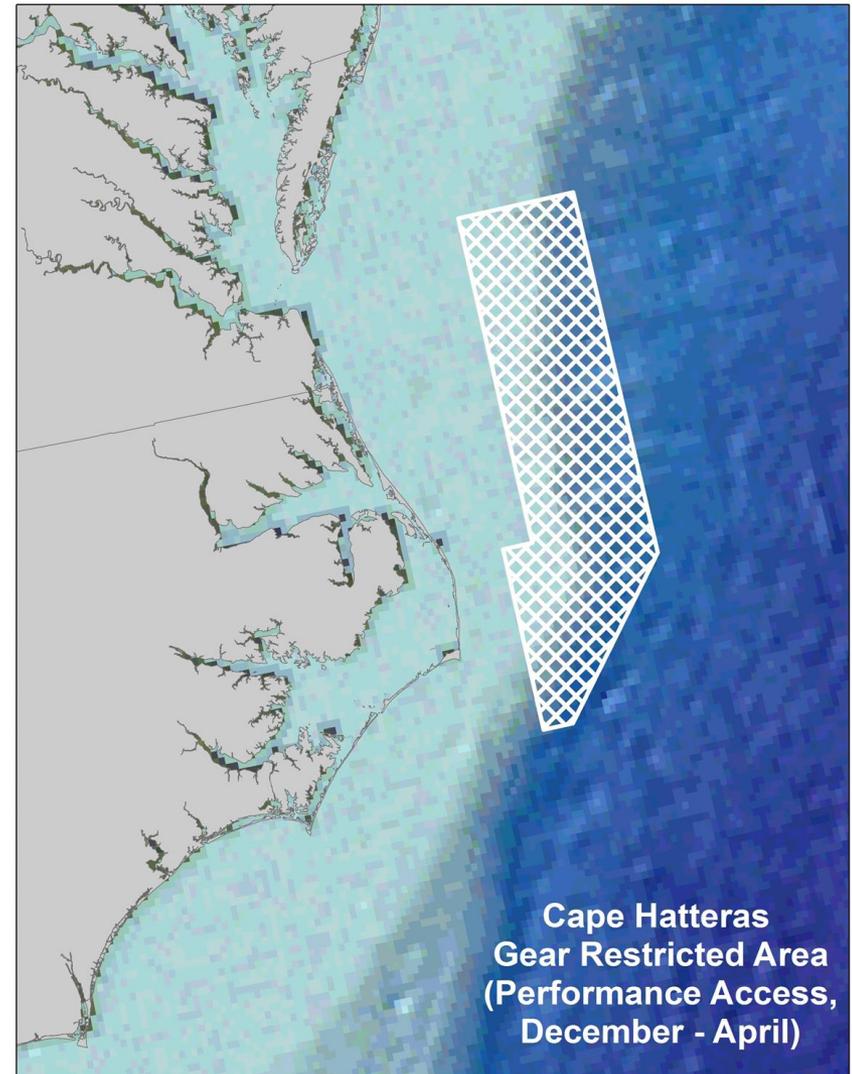
- Support of Status Quo
- Prevent PLL targeting of bluefin
- Keep GRA intact to protect Slope Sea spawning fish
- Extend the GRA -
 - northward to Norfolk Canyon or to entrance of Chesapeake Bay
 - south to the “triple 0’s”
 - eastward by 30’ longitude



Cape Hatteras Gear Restricted Area

Comments in favor of relieving some restrictions:

- Eliminate the GRA
- Some support for provisional application



Gulf of Mexico Gear Restricted Areas

Comments not in favor of relieving restrictions:

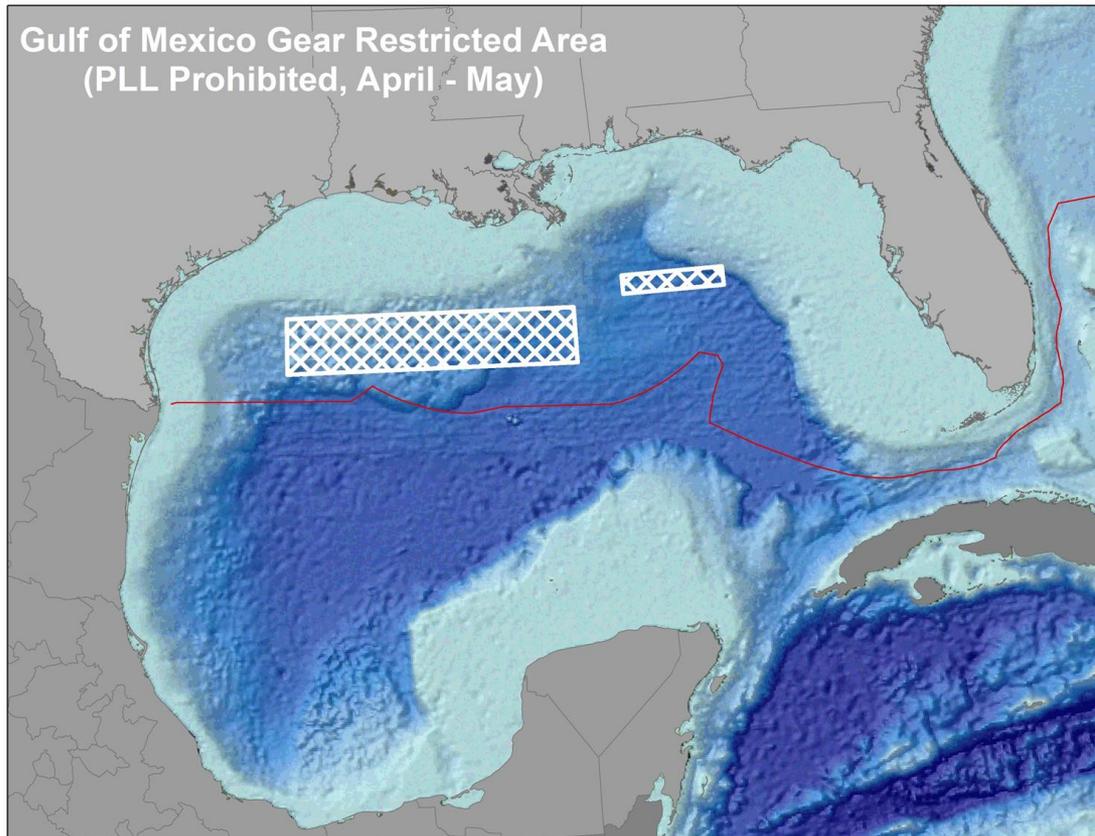
- Do not include the GOM GRAs in rulemaking
- Keep the GRA (a No Action alternative)
 - Gulf of Mexico GRA avoids interactions
 - IBQ system does not avoid interactions
- Make the GRA more restrictive - increase size & timing
- Combine GOM GRA boxes into a larger box
- Pursue alternative gears, consider a buyout
- Do not consider performance metrics - minimal benefits, may incentivize underreporting



Gulf of Mexico Gear Restricted Areas

Comments in favor of relieving some restrictions:

- Remove Gulf of Mexico GRA
- Limited support for the provisional application option



Weak Hooks

Comments not in favor of relieving restrictions:

- Support for a status quo
- NMFS should implement more weak hook regulations in PLL fishery.



Weak Hooks

Comments in favor of relieving some restrictions:

- Removal of the requirement (would still allow for voluntary use)
- Seasonal weak hook requirement
 - Adjust timing in alternative to require January to June instead of March to June
- Designate BFT hotspots where weak hooks would be required



Next Steps

- Proposed Rule Anticipated-Spring 2019
- Public hearings Spring/Summer 2019
- Final Rule Anticipated - Fall 2019



FEDERAL REGISTER

The Daily Journal of the United States Government



<http://heatherdane.com/leave-corporate-become-life-coach-part-1/changesahead/>



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