



# Southeast Fishery Bulletin

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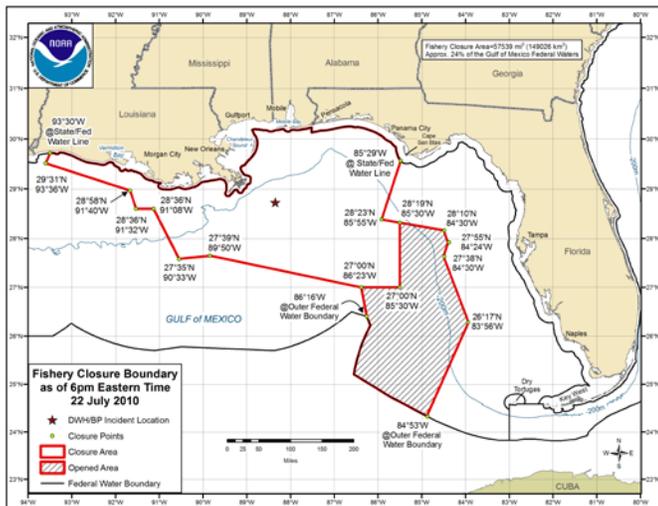
## BP Oil Spill: NOAA Re-opens Previously Closed Portions of the Gulf of Mexico to Commercial and Recreational Fishing

Effective **July 22, 2010 at 6 p.m. eastern time** (5 p.m. central time), NOAA will reopen 26,388 square miles (68,345 sq km) of area it had previously closed to commercial and recreational fishing in the Gulf of Mexico in response to the BP/Deepwater Horizon oil spill. All commercial and recreational fishing including catch and release is prohibited in the remaining closed area; however, transit through the area is allowed.

observed in the northeastern Gulf was projected to enter the loop current and move south. Since mid-June, NOAA data has shown no oil in the area, and United States Coast Guard observers flying over the area in the last 30 days have also not seen any oil. Trajectory models show the area is at a low risk for future exposure to oil. NOAA collected 52 samples of fish from this area, including commercially and recreationally important species. Sensory testing showed no detectable oil or dispersant odors or flavors in the samples, and the results of chemical analysis were well below levels of concern.

NOAA continues to work closely with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the states to ensure seafood safety, by closing fishing areas where tainted seafood could potentially be caught, and assessing whether seafood is tainted or contaminated to levels that pose a risk to human health. NOAA and FDA are working together to sample seafood from inside and outside the closure area, as well as dockside- and market-based sampling.

The closed area is bounded by rhumb lines connecting, in order, the following coordinates:



Map Link:

[http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sf/deepwater\\_horizon/BP\\_OilSpill\\_FisheryClosureMap\\_072210.pdf](http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/sf/deepwater_horizon/BP_OilSpill_FisheryClosureMap_072210.pdf)

The closed area now measures 57,539 sq mi (149,026 sq km) and covers about 24% of the Gulf of Mexico exclusive economic zone. Before the southern area was re-opened, 83,927 miles (217,371 sq km), or roughly 35% of federal waters of the Gulf, were closed to fishing. NOAA will continue to evaluate the need for fisheries closures based on the evolving nature of the spill and will re-open closed areas as appropriate.

The re-opened area was originally closed as a precaution, because light oil sheen that had been

North latitude	West longitude
At state/federal line	85° 29'
28° 23'	85° 55'
28° 19'	85° 30'
27° 00'	85° 30'
27° 00'	86° 23'
27° 39'	89° 50'
27° 35'	90° 33'
28° 36'	91° 08'
28° 36'	91° 32'
28° 58'	91° 40'
29° 31'	93° 36'
At the state/federal line	93° 30'
Follow the state/federal water line easterly to beginning point	

## Reminders

Modeling and mapping the actual and projected spill area is not an exact science. NOAA Fisheries Service strongly advises fishermen not to fish in areas where oil or oil sheens (very thin layers of floating oil) are present, even if those areas are not currently closed to fishing.

If state waters are closed to fishing due to the oil spill, all vessels must comply with that closure. If state waters

### Ways to Receive Closure Information:

- Sign up for Southeast Fishery Bulletins: send an email to: [SERO.Communications.Comments@noaa.gov](mailto:SERO.Communications.Comments@noaa.gov)
- Call 1-800-627-NOAA (1-800-627-6622) to hear a recording of the current coordinates (with messages in Spanish and Vietnamese)
- Listen to NOAA Weather Radio for updates
- Sign up for text messages on your cell phone: text **fishing@gulf** to 84469 (for more information, visit <http://www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com/go/doc/2931/558107>)
- Follow us on Twitter: usnoaagov to get a tweet when the closed area changes

are not closed to fishing due to the oil spill, federally permitted vessels may fish in those waters while abiding by all other applicable regulations.

Permit holders are reminded to maintain their federal vessel permits by submitting timely reporting requirements and renewal applications, even if the vessel is not currently engaged in fishing activities.

### Links for more information:

#### Southeast Regional Office's Web page:

[http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/deepwater\\_horizon\\_oil\\_spill.htm](http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/deepwater_horizon_oil_spill.htm)

#### NOAA's National Ocean Service

<http://response.restoration.noaa.gov>

#### Deepwater Horizon Response

<http://www.deepwaterhorizonresponse.com>

Fishermen who wish to contact BP about a claim should call 1-800-440-0858.