

# Fishing News And Notes

## National Saltwater Angler Registry Launches

(NAPSA)—There's important news for America's recreational anglers hooked on saltwater fishing.

Starting Jan. 1, 2010, most U.S. saltwater fishermen will have to be signed up with the National Saltwater Angler Registry before they go fishing.

The good news is that the vast majority of recreational fishermen will not have to take any action to become registered. That's because they live in states that will have an agreement in place with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to automatically register licensed saltwater fishermen.



### A new registry lets saltwater anglers help protect fish stocks.

instance, some states exempt seniors, active-duty military or other individuals.)

To get the updated list of exempted states or to learn more about the registry, anglers can visit [www.countmyfish.noaa.gov](http://www.countmyfish.noaa.gov). Beginning Jan. 1, anglers can also register at that site or through a toll-free phone call to 1-888-MRIP411.

### Protecting The Seas

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](http://www.countmyfish.noaa.gov).

But fishermen in some states, including Hawaii, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Virginia, as

well as Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, will need to register online or by phone if they:

- Fish for or catch anadromous species in any tidal waters—these are fish such as striped bass, shad and river herring that live in the oceans but spawn in freshwater.

- Fish in federal waters more than three miles from the ocean shore or the mouth of harbors, rivers or bays.

- Don't meet any of the exemptions in the law.

Among the anglers exempted are those who are under 16; fish only on licensed for-hire vessels; hold subsistence fishing or highly migratory species angling permits; are fishing under a valid commercial license; or who live in an exempted state but are not required to have a saltwater fishing license from that state. (For

