



Public Invited to Informational Meetings Regarding Upcoming Seasonal Closure of Hawaii's Bottomfish Fishery

HONOLULU (13 April 2007) New regulations coming into effect on May 1, 2007, will close waters 0-200 nautical miles around the main Hawaiian Islands to all fishing for seven deepwater bottomfish species (onaga, ehu, gindai, kalekale, opakapaka, lehi, and hapu`upu`u: the Deep 7) from May 1 through September 30, 2007. These emergency regulations are necessary to end overfishing for these species while a long-term management program is implemented. (Go to <http://www.wpcouncil.org> to download FAQ sheet on the long-term timeline.) Because these regulations will affect both State and Federal waters, they will be implemented through a combination of State and Federal rulemaking.

The Western Pacific Regional Fishery Management Council is coordinating a series of public information meetings in cooperation with Hawaii's Division of Aquatic Resources as well as the National Marine Fisheries Service's Pacific Islands Fisheries Science Center and Pacific Islands Regional Office. These meetings are intended to provide an opportunity for the public to ask questions of resource scientists and managers regarding the new regulations and to gather public opinion regarding the long-term management of Hawaii's bottomfish fishery.

The main Hawaiian Islands bottomfish fishery meetings are scheduled at the following times and locations:

- April 16, 2007, 5-9 p.m., Lanai High School Cafeteria, Lanai
- April 17, 2007, 6-9 p.m., Ala Moana Hotel-Carnation Room, Honolulu, Oahu
- April 18, 2007, 6-9 p.m., Waiakea High School Cafeteria, Hilo, Hawaii
- April 19, 2007, 6-9 p.m., King Kamehameha Kona Beach Hotel, Kona, Hawaii
- April 20, 2007, 6-9 p.m., Maui Community College, Kahului, Maui
- April 21, 2007, 6-9 p.m., Chiefess Kamakahelei Middle School, Lihue, Kauai
- April 24, 2007, 4-9 p.m., Kaunakakai, Molokai, Mitchell Pauole Center

For more information, contact the Council at (808) 522-8220, (808) 522-8226 (fax), info.wpcouncil@noaa.gov or log on to www.wpcouncil.org.

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