



NSGLC News

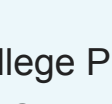
— February 2026 —



Photo: Navin Rajagopalan

NSGLC's monthly e-newsletter with publication and research highlights, as well as news alerts on other major activities.

Help Show Sea Grant's Value



Do you value the National Sea Grant College Program? Have you benefited from the resources produced by the National Sea Grant Law Center? Do you have a story about how Sea Grant has impacted your life or work that you'd like to share? If so, we encourage you to fill out this short [Google form](#) to contribute to an initiative of the Sea Grant Network to show the value of Sea Grant to communities across the country.

[Fill Out Our Form](#)

Publications

Read the February 2026 issue of the [Ocean and Coastal Case Alert](#)! The Case Alert is a monthly newsletter highlighting recent court decisions impacting ocean and coastal resource management. Read about the Fifth Circuit's opinion in a personal injury case following a lifboat accident on an offshore platform.

[View the Ocean and Coastal Case Alert](#)



Photo: Tiago Florence

Blog Post: High Sea Treaty Goes Into Effect

The United Nations has announced the High Seas Treaty, an agreement to protect marine life in international waters, has officially entered into force. Find out more in this blog post by NSGLC Research Associate Charles Miller.

[View Blog Post](#)



Photo: NOAA

Blog Post: Gulf Fishery Management Council Votes to Extend the Requirements of the DESCEND Act

The Gulf Fishery Management Council voted to extend the requirements of the DESCEND Act. Read Cathy Janasie's blog post about it here.

[View Blog Post](#)

Research

Advisory Memo: Background on the Marine Mammal Protection Act Import Provisions and Their Implementation

An extension agent from UGA Marine Extension and Georgia Sea Grant contacted NSGLC to request information on the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA) import provisions and their implementation. Starting on January 1, 2026, all harvesting nations with commercial fisheries exporting fish and fish products to the United States must have received comparability findings from the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) confirming that their exporting fisheries meet the conditions in the MMPA import provisions. This advisory memo first provides background on the MMPA import provisions and 2016 rule implementing the provisions, NMFS's List of Foreign Fisheries (LOFF), and NMFS's comparability finding determinations. Then, it discusses a challenge to the 2016 rule and comparability finding determinations.

[Download the Advisory Memo](#)

NSGLC Presents

Legal and Regulatory Developments in Offshore Aquaculture Permitting

Stay up to date with the National Sea Grant Law Center attorneys on recent legal developments, key nationwide permits, and recent legal challenges.

March 18
3 PM EST

[Register Now](#)

Webinar:

Legal and Regulatory Developments in Offshore Aquaculture Permitting (March 18, 2026 at 3pm EST)

The permitting process for offshore aquaculture projects in federal waters is complex. Multiple federal agencies play a role, and permit requirements vary depending on the type and location of the operation. In addition, policy changes and litigation can create uncertainty and cause confusion. In this webinar, the National Sea Grant Law Center will review recent legal and regulatory developments related to offshore aquaculture permitting, including the current status of Nationwide Permit 55 for seaweed, the sunset of Nationwide Permit 56 for finfish aquaculture, and lawsuits challenging permitted projects.

[Register for Webinar](#)

The National Sea Grant Law Center and project partners at Florida Statute University hosted a workshop on state aquaculture monitoring and reporting policies on February 18th as part of the Aquaculture America 2026 conference.



Also during Aquaculture America 2026, Director Stephanie Otts presented with Emily Riewesthal, Florida Sea Grant Aquaculture Marketing & Communications Specialist about our work to develop a local aquaculture policy toolkit through the [Southeast Aquaculture Communications Collaborative](#).

Top LinkedIn Post of the Month

The February 2026 'Ocean and Coastal Case Alert' is now available! The Case Alert is our monthly newsletter highlighting recent court decisions impacting ocean and coastal resource management.

View the list of cases and subscribe:

<https://lnkd.in/guPTbiSp>

Louisiana

Louisiana v. Nat'l Marine Fisheries Serv., No. 2:25-CV-00691, 2026 WL 184236 (W.D. La. Jan. 23, 2026).

The State of Louisiana and several private companies challenged the issuance of a biological opinion (BiOp) by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) related to oil and gas activities in the Gulf. They alleged that both the BiOp's jeopardy determination and its incidental take statement were arbitrary and capricious. The plaintiffs argued that the BiOp's findings were speculative and unsupported by the best available science, and that the resulting reasonable and prudent alternatives (RPAs) and reasonable and prudent measures (RPMs) violated the Endangered Species Act because they were based on flawed assumptions. NMFS maintained that the BiOp relied on the best available scientific data and that its methodologies and conclusions were reasonable. Ultimately, the district court granted plaintiffs' motion for summary judgment and motion to supplement the administrative record, held the BiOp's jeopardy determination (and resulting RPAs) and portions of the incidental take statement unlawful, and ordered additional briefing on the appropriate remedy.

