



DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

News Release

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**STATE LAND BOARD ANNOUNCES EXTENSION
OF BOTTOMFISHING CLOSED SEASON**

HONOLULU – The Board of Land and Natural Resources at its meeting today approved a request for the extension of the closed fishing season for main Hawaiian Islands bottomfish through November 14, 2008. The closed fishing season, which began April 14, 2008, was originally scheduled to reopen on September 1, 2008.

The State’s action implements the recommendation of the federal Western Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Council, which at its most recent meeting in June 2008 voted to extend the seasonal closure for the main Hawaiian Islands bottomfish fishery through November 14, 2008.

This recommendation was based on the need for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries to recalculate its stock assessment using more recent commercial catch data from 2005 to 2007. The Council also recommended that this recalculation include Northwestern Hawaiian Island bottomfish catch data, and to account for a reduction of fishing effort there, over time. The Council, which includes the State of Hawai‘i, agreed with this analysis and voted unanimously to support the recommendation.

“When a shared-jurisdiction fishery is involved, such as for the bottomfish fishery, both state and federal fishery rules need to be consistent to facilitate enforcement, lessen confusion for the fishing public, and to reduce the problem of overfishing. We are working with our federal partners to effect this.”

This approved rule change has now been filed with the Lt. Governor's office in accordance with state policy, and will become law in 10 days.

The extension of the closed season applies to only seven deepwater bottomfish species – ehu, gindai, hapuupuu, kalekale, lehi, onaga and opakapaka.

For more information visit the Department of Land and Natural Resources website:
www.hawaii.gov/dlnr

The federal fishery managers from the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration Pacific Islands Regional Office are expected to implement a temporary rule that would extend the closed season for federal waters for the same time period.

For information on the status of the federal fishery rule, visit the following websites:

www.fpir.noaa.gov
www.wpcouncil.org
www.hawaiibottomfish.info

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