



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Division of Marine Fisheries
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Maura T. Healey
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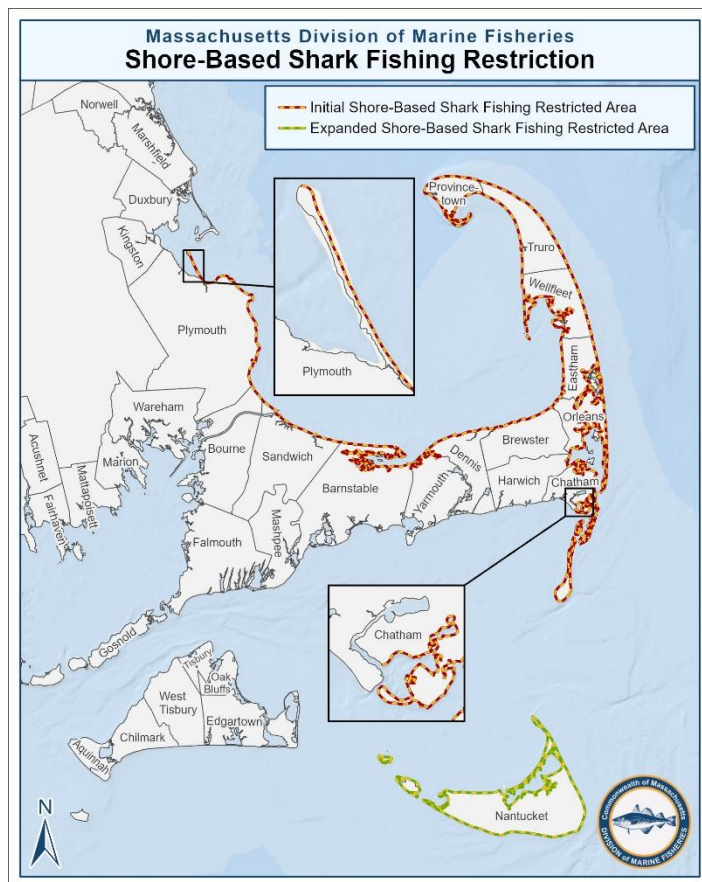
Daniel J. McKiernan
Director

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Marine Fisheries Advisory

Emergency Regulations Expand Shore-Based White Shark Fishing Restrictions to Town of Nantucket

The Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) has filed emergency regulations to prohibit anglers from using metal or wire leaders measuring 18-inches or greater in combination with hooks with a gap larger than 5/8-inch when fishing from the shoreline of the town of Nantucket. This emergency action temporarily expands the geographic area of an existing regulation designed to curtail shore-based anglers from targeting white sharks around Cape Cod Bay and the eastern shore of Cape Cod (see map). The emergency regulation will remain in effect for a period of 90 days and DMF will consider permanently expanding the spatial extent of the existing rule for 2027.



Massachusetts has become a seasonal destination for anglers seeking to target white sharks. Baiting and fishing for white sharks from shore poses unnecessary public safety risks and may be harmful or lethal to the shark. While other DMF regulations prohibit intentionally attracting and capturing white sharks from shore or for a vessel, discerning this from other lawful fishing activity can be challenging. This created a need for additional enforcement tools, particularly along the shoreline where the public safety risk is greatest and anglers are only likely to fish with heavy gear to target white sharks. Accordingly, in 2025, DMF adopted a new regulation that restricts certain hook and leader combinations used to target white sharks when shore-based fishing. Nantucket was not included

in the initial rule because its beaches have a long history of shore-based fishing for a variety of other shark species and there was little evidence to suggest anglers were targeting white sharks from the town's shoreline. However, throughout the spring and summer of 2026, there have been several documented incidents involving shore-based anglers targeting and catching white sharks on Nantucket and producing dangerous circumstances for swimmers and beachgoers. This acute public safety risk prompted today's emergency action.

Shore-based anglers are not prevented from using conforming tackle to fish for other popular recreational shark species (e.g., brown sharks, sand tiger sharks). However, they are reminded that existing regulations restrict chumming from sunrise to sunset and prohibit the use of mechanized, compressed propulsion, or remote-controlled devices to deploy baited hooks when shore-based fishing.

For more information, please visit our website: www.mass.gov/marinefisheries