

John / George - FYI (bcc)
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MEMORANDUM 27 April 1992

To: Bill Paty, Chair BLNR; Files
Through: Henry Sakuda, Administrator DAR
From: Don Heacock, Kauai District Aquatic Biologist *DEH*
Subject: Public request for a State funded Shark Control Program

General Comments

Attachment (1) is a letter received on 2 April 1992 from Mr. Rick Bundschuh encouraging the State of Hawaii to cull large sharks around the Hawaiian Islands. Mr. Bundschuh also phoned me and qualified his letter by stating that the "large sharks" he refers to are in fact tiger sharks (Galeocerdo cuvier).

There appears to be an increase in shark attacks (5 have occurred since Nov. 1991) and other related incidents (bumpings, etc.) recently in Hawaii (see Attachment 2). This increase in incidents may be related to the following:

- a. increase in human population and concomitant increase in nearshore eutrophication (ie. increased nutrients) and increase in nearshore productivity;
- b. increase in the number of people involved in ocean nearshore recreation sports.

Specific Comments

Professionally, I recommend that DAR initiate a shark control program by selectively removing large tiger sharks. This species can be selectively caught by using very large hooks and by using shark as "bait", since tiger sharks are the only common species of shark in Hawaii that regularly eat other sharks. It is likely that the selective removal of large, more dangerous sharks (eg. tiger sharks and rare great white sharks) from nearshore waters in Hawaii would lessen the probability of shark attacks occurring.

Initially, the fishing for large tiger sharks should be done statewide with contracts going to select fishers to fish daily for 1 month. Areas to be fished should be selected by District aquatic biologists working with the contract fishers. On Kauai the areas fished should be as follows: Northshore- Haena Point, Hanalei Bay, Kalihiwai Bay; Eastside- Anahola Bay, Wailua Bay, Nawiliwili Bay; Southshore- Makahuena Point, Hanapepe Bay, Pakala/Waimea area. Data would be collected on catch composition, catch per effort (CPE), length-frequency, location of catch, and stomach contents.

Subsequent to the first month of fishing, these contract fishers should be placed "on call" for future incidents where shark attacks or other related incidents occur. If an attack occurs, the contract fishers should respond ASAP within 24 hrs after the attack and attempt to catch the shark involved.

Tourism is a \$10 billion industry in Hawaii and is an industry that can easily be negatively impacted by an increase in shark attacks. I strongly believe that a selective tiger shark control program would be appropriate socially, economically, and ecologically.