

10 October 2022

# Proposed amendment to commercial fishing regulations

## Consultation paper 17

### *Ocean Haul Fishery – Crowdy Head*

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#### Overview of the activity

The general purpose (GP) hauling net is used in the Ocean Hauling Fishery from sea beaches subject to marine park, aquatic reserve, and fisheries spatial controls. The GP hauling net has been used in NSW since post-colonial days and must be operated with the assistance of at least one other person. The GP hauling net is used to take species such as mullet, luderick, yellowfin bream, sand whiting, and silver biddy. Catch may be managed by adjusting numbers of endorsements (or fishers) on an as-needs basis or species-specific controls.

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#### Current arrangement

Beach hauling is not allowed along the 24 km stretch of coastline between Crowdy Head and Wallabi Point to the south.

This is one of many industry and DPI initiated closures introduced in the mid-2000's to demonstrate to the community that beach hauling occurs in limited locations and the industry's commitment to sharing access with other stakeholders (surfers, swimmers, fishers etc.).

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#### Proposed change

Allow use of the GP hauling net during 'mullet travelling season' (March to August) along the 6 km stretch of beach between Crowdy Head and Harrington Inlet, but exclude take of Mulloway pending and subject to the Mulloway Harvest Strategy that is being prepared.

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#### What is the problem being resolved?

In recent years, management of the Ocean Hauling Fishery, including the beach hauling sector, has changed with endorsement numbers significantly reduced.

Not allowing the Crowdy Head crew access to the 6 km stretch of beach between Crowdy Head and Harrington Inlet imposes unnecessary restrictions that:

- Impacts seafood supply (erosion on the northern side of Crowdy is impacting hauling activity)
- Compromises safety (the northern side of Crowdy Head is popular with other stakeholders)
- Present social licence risks (for the same reason as above)
- Impact profitability (compounded by recent flooding and loss of access to the Manning River)
- Impact the wellbeing of the crew and their families

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## Outcomes

The proposed change would deliver the following outcomes and benefits:

- Reduce interactions with other stakeholders
- Continuity of seafood supply
- Improve profitability
- Improve business and investment confidence for local fishing families
- No discernible impact on the environment
- No discernible impact on fisheries resources (the local crew can only haul at one place at a time)

ensure that the information upon which they rely is up to date and to check the currency of the information with the appropriate officer of the Regional NSW or the user's independent adviser.