


ENVIRONMENT

ROSIE O'DONNELL IS FEELING ENVIRONMENTALISTS' BITE OVER PHOTO WITH DEAD SHARK

Posted on January 12, 2012 at 2:50pm by  [Liz Klimas](#)

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Rosie O'Donnell, the controversial, 49-year-old talk show host, has entered the hot water of environmentalist wrath



over a photo showing her and her children with a dead hammerhead shark.

Rosie O'Donnell with her children and a dead hammerhead shark. (Photo: Mark The Shark)

As of 12 days ago, the Florida Fish and Wildlife conservation board made killing three types of hammerhead sharks in Florida waters a second degree misdemeanor, although it states that catch and release is still allowed. The hammerhead shark is not listed on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's endangered species list, but one species of hammerhead was put on the World Conservation Union's Red List as endangered in 2008. The Florida FFW cited declining levels of the shark population for enacting the ban in the state.

The current controversy began when Mark “The Shark” Quartiano, who hosts guided sport fishing tours in Miami, posted the photo of O’Donnell’s family and the shark on his website as the Celebrity Angler of the Month. O’Donnell explains on Twitter that her daughter reeled in the shark “years ago” before it became endangered or unlawful to catch, though under the FFW ban catching is allowed as long as the fish is released.

Erik Brush, a Sarasota marine conservationist, is one of the individuals leading the effort against O’Donnell. He was teasing media about the “scoop” he had over an incident involving O’Donnell in late Dec. 2011 on Twitter. The Sun-Sentinel has more from Brush:

“Right now sharks are the most endangered animals around,” said Brush. “This is basically an endorsement. It sends the message that it’s an OK activity. And this is not an activity that we want celebrities endorsing.”

Along with some aggressive comments against O’Donnell’s catch on Twitter and Facebook, the Sun Sentinel reports that marine biologists, diving organizations and members of environmental groups such as Shark Savers, Planet Ocean Alliance and the Australian Anti-Shark-Finching Alliance are coming down hard on her.