

**New England Fishery Management Council  
Groundfish Committee Report**

Portsmouth, NH  
January 31, 2018

Meeting Motions

**Recreational Management Measures for Fishing Year 2018**

**Committee Motion 1:**

The Council recommends to NMFS Status Quo (“Option 0”) management measures for Gulf of Maine cod and Gulf of Maine haddock for fishing year 2018. Status quo recreational measures are:

- 1) Cod: no possession year-round
- 2) Haddock: 12 fish, 17 in minimum size, and closed March-April 14 and September 17-October 31

*Rationale:* When examining the options, the maker and seconder of the motion felt that updated information and potential changes in regulations may result in lower catches of Gulf of Maine cod than projected in the bioeconomic model. These issues include: 1) if the State of Massachusetts decides to change their Gulf of Maine cod possession limit from 1 to 0 fish in state waters Gulf of Maine cod, 2) addressing enforcement and outreach concerns in federal waters of the no possession limit for Gulf of Maine cod, and 3) using updated 2017 data when available in the model (rather than 2016 as a proxy for some waves— since 2016 data is expected to be higher). In addition, wave 6 (November -December) 2016 MRIP data was higher than expected for several stocks (black sea bass, Georges Bank cod) in New England and the Mid-Atlantic. In addition, once implemented, the Massachusetts Bay Spawning Protection Area may result in reduced recreational catches of Gulf of Maine cod from November 1 to January 31.

[Committee Motion 1 *carried*. 6/0/5]

**Control Date**

**Committee Motion 2:**

The Council recommends a revised control date for the charter/party groundfish fishery as the date of publication of the notice in the Federal Register.

[Committee motion *carried* 11/0/0.]

**Amendment 23/Groundfish Monitoring**

No motions to consider.