



New England Fishery Management Council

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Daniel Salerno, *Chair* | Cate O'Keefe, PhD, *Executive Director*

April 22, 2026

Mr. Michael Pentony
Regional Administrator
NOAA Fishery Service
Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930

Re: Using electronic jigging machines as a novel, ultra-low impact gear type to collect catch data and biological samples in the Gulf of Maine Groundfish Closure Areas EFP.

The New England Fishery Management Council (Council) has reviewed the exempted fishing permit (EFP) application submitted by the Gulf of Maine Research Institute (GMRI) entitled 'Using electronic jigging machines as a novel, ultra-low impact gear type to collect catch data and biological samples in the Gulf of Maine Groundfish Closure Areas.' The Council has no objection to the issuance of this EFP.

The Council supports the project objectives, particularly the collection of data on Atlantic pollock to address important research priorities identified in recent stock assessments. The Council also supports the opportunistic collection of Atlantic cod biological samples to contribute to the ongoing cod DNA study, recognizing the value of expanding the spatial coverage of these data through minimally invasive sampling methods.

Please contact me if you have questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cate O'Keefe". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Cate O'Keefe
Executive Director