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Subject: Amendment 10 to the Atlantic Herring FMP

To: daniel.j.salerno@gmail.com <daniel.j.salerno@gmail.com>

Cc: Elizabeth Etrie <etetrie@clf.org>

Hi Dan,

I hope you had a good weekend. I'm writing, before the Executive Committee Meeting, to provide our hope that you will do what you can to ensure Amendment 10 to the Herring FMP remains a multi-year priority for the Council in 2026. Now that the Omnibus Flexibility Amendment is completed, the Council should turn its attention back to herring and address some critical conservation and equity concerns. Between climate change and high volume fisheries that have operated in the region in the recent past, multiple forage fish stocks, including Atlantic herring, Atlantic mackerel, bluebacks, alewives, and American and hickory shad, have collapsed.

Amendment 10 offers a path to facilitate rebuilding some of these populations by:

- Protecting additional spawning grounds
- Moving mid-water trawl fishing offshore where/when necessary
- Reducing bycatch of river herring and shad
- Supporting recreational and commercial fisheries (as well as ecotourism businesses) that depend on healthy forage fish populations; and
- Recognizing and addressing Tribal user group conflicts and upholding federal trust responsibilities.

The seasonal buffer zones in Maine under the FMP have led to the return of certain river herring runs and even a commercial fishery. I've been dragging my kids to Damariscotta Mills to see the alewives run for decades and the change over this time has been remarkable. From a few thousand fish in the late 90s to millions of fish now attracting bald eagles, osprey, and seals, as well as supporting a significant directed harvest for lobster bait. In contrast, Southern New England has invested hundreds of millions in restoration, yet river herring runs remain stagnant due in part to at-sea bycatch.

There is strong public support for this action and we hope the Council will ensure Amendment 10 remains on the priority list for 2026. Please reach out to either of us if you have any questions.

Thanks for all you do, Erica

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