

Atlantic Herring Committee & Advisory Panel

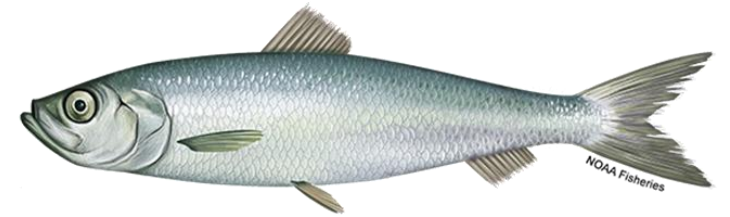
**PORTSMOUTH, NH
JUNE 8, 2026**



New England Fishery
Management Council

MANAGEMENT UPDATES

- NOAA
- COUNCIL
- ASMFC



New England Fishery
Management Council

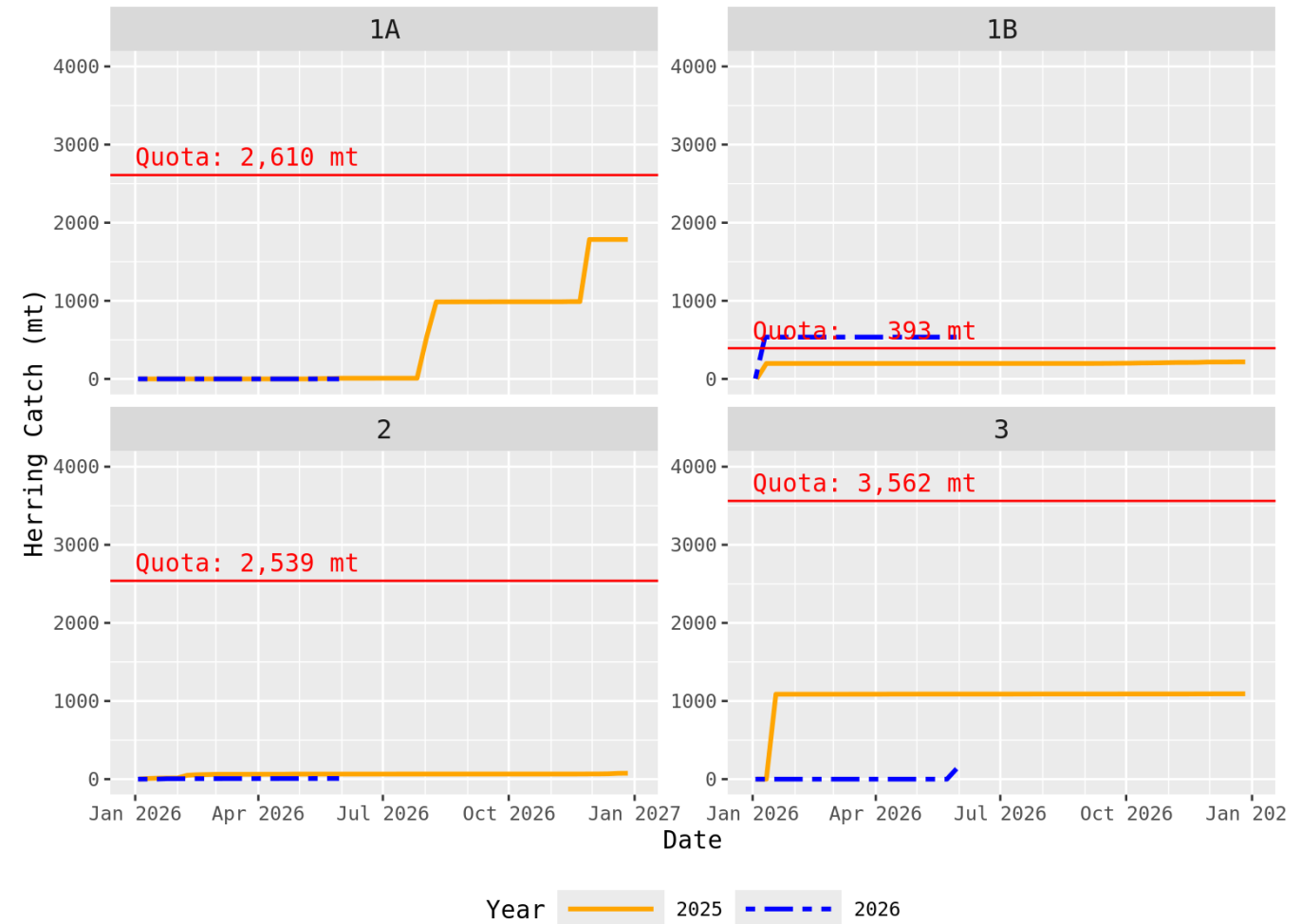
NOAA Fisheries



Atlantic Herring Catch, May 28, 2026, GARFO

Area	Quota (mt)	Cumulative Catch (mt)	Percent Quota Caught
1A	2,610	0.0	0.0%
1B	393	535.4	136.2%
2	2,539	8.5	0.3%
3	3,562	133.0	3.7%
ACL	9,134	676.9	7.4%

Area 1B under 2,000 lb possession limit for remainder of year



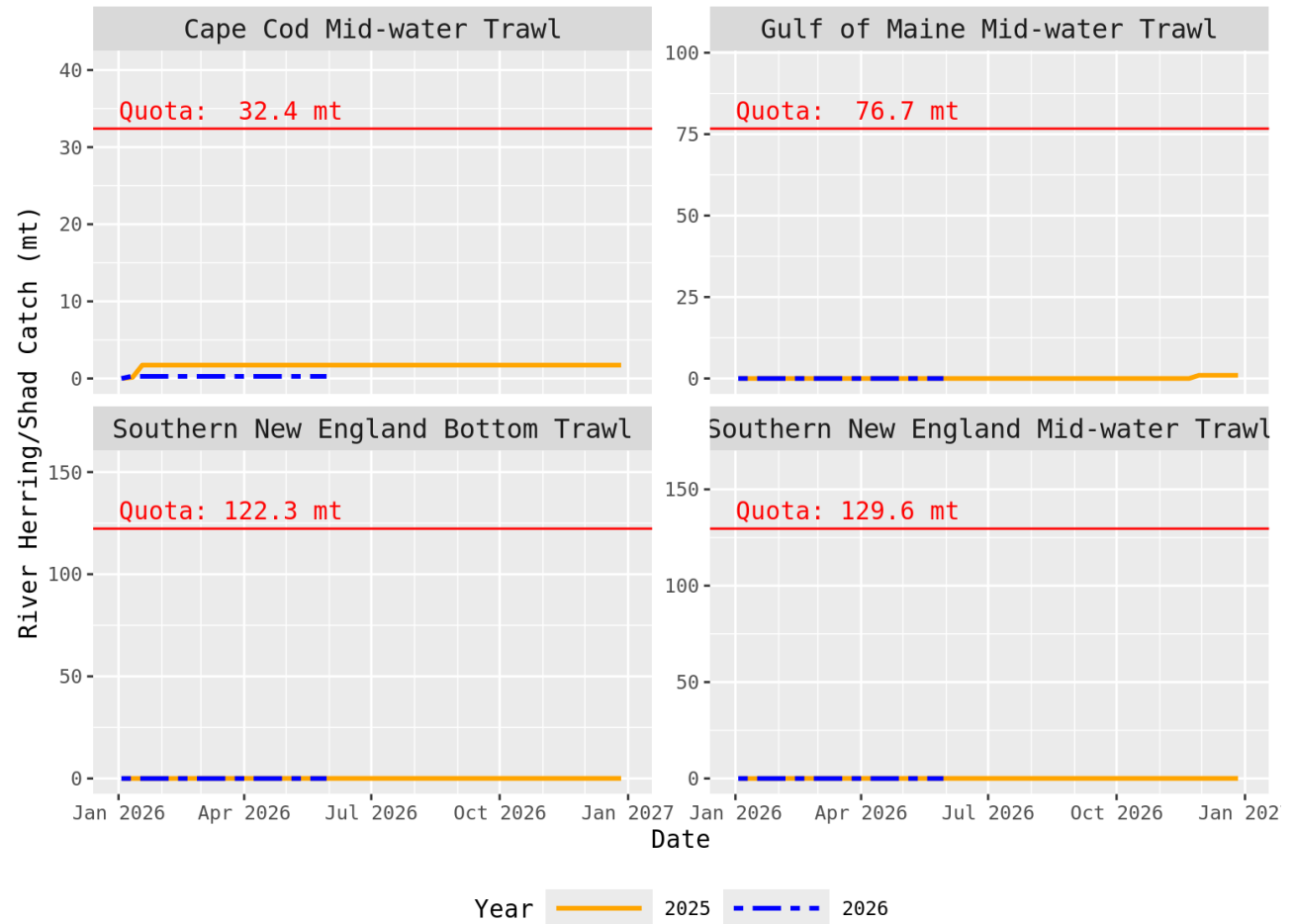
New England Fishery
Management Council

NOAA Fisheries



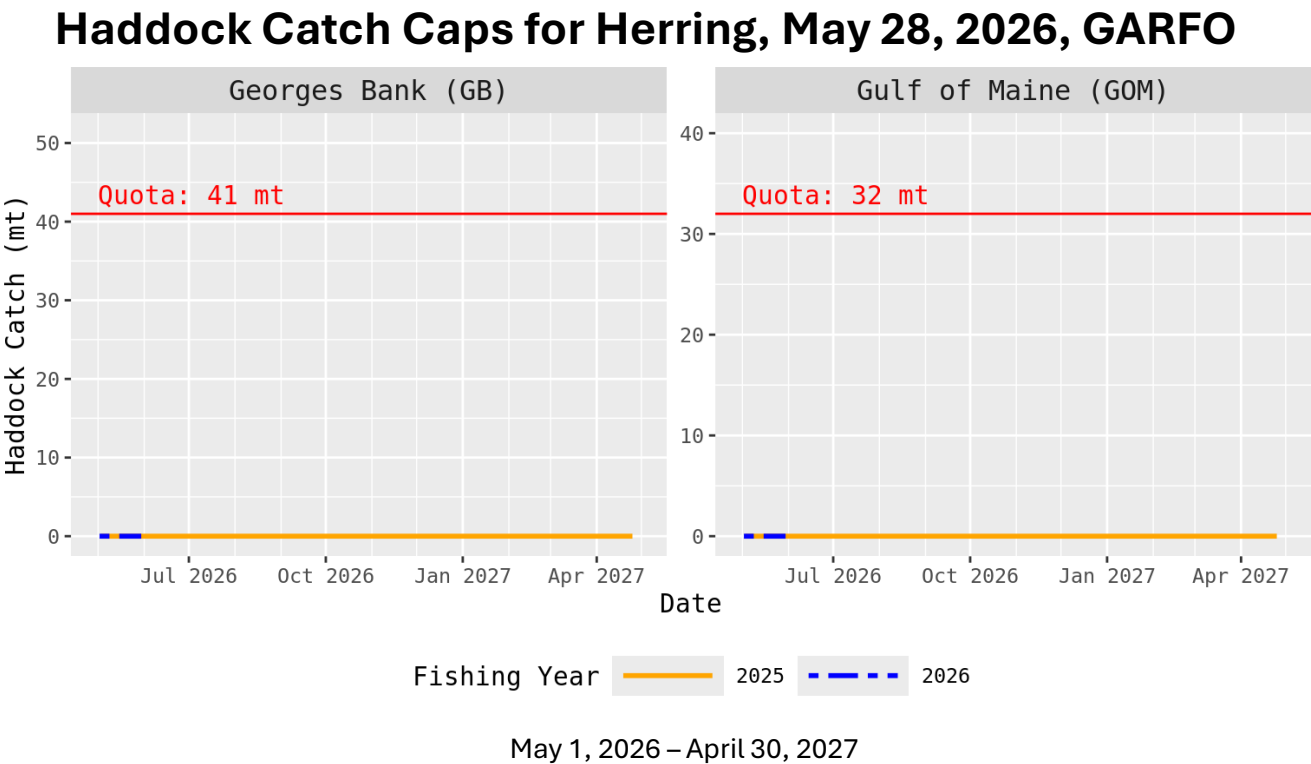
<u>Catch Cap</u>	<u>Quota (mt)</u>	<u>Cumulative Catch (mt)</u>	<u>Percent Quota Caught</u>
Cape Cod Mid-water Trawl	32.4	0.3	0.9%
Gulf of Maine Mid-water Trawl	76.7	0.0	0.0%
Southern New England Bottom Trawl	122.3	0.0	0.0%
Southern New England Mid-water Trawl	129.6	0.0	0.0%

RH/S Catch Caps for Herring, May 28, 2026, GARFO



New England Fishery
Management Council

<u>Catch Cap</u>	<u>Quota (mt)</u>	<u>Cumulative Catch (mt)</u>	<u>Percent Quota Caught</u>
Georges Bank (GB)	41	0.0	0.0%
Gulf of Maine (GOM)	32	0.0	0.0%



2026 Atlantic Herring Outlook by Quarter

Council Priority	Jan – Mar	Apr - Jun	July - Sept	Oct - Dec
Action: herring specifications 2027-2031, river herring /shad measures & other management measures	PDT completes Council tasking on river herring/shad		PDT develops measures and impacts analysis	
		Council: update on action	Council: update on action/initiate if FW	Sub-Panel SSC meets RH/S: 8/24
			Council: final action	NOAA: review; target Jan 1 implementation
Management Track Stock Assessment		Peer Review: June 29-30	SSC meets: August 11-12	
2027 Council Priorities			Preliminary discussion/list	Council: Set 2027 Priorities

Ongoing: Coordinate with MAFMC/ASMFC on Atlantic herring, Atlantic mackerel and river herring and shad issues

Multi-year: Amendment 10/user group conflicts (paused)

New: Modifications to Vessel Baseline Restrictions (in response to EO 14276)

Updated June 1, 2026, NEFMC Staff



New England Fishery
Management Council

2026 ACTION - AMENDMENT OR FRAMEWORK ADJUSTMENT

For Today's Meeting:

- Review draft analyses from the PDT
- Develop recommendations to the Committee/Council



New England Fishery
Management Council

DRAFT SCOPE

To set specifications for Atlantic herring for fishing years 2027-2031 and to modify other management measures (i.e., specifications process and carryover), and to enhance river herring (alewife and blueback herring) and shad (American shad and hickory shad) avoidance and other catch reduction measures to better support ongoing coastwide restoration efforts for those species.



COUNCIL'S PROBLEM STATEMENT FOR RIVER HERRING & SHAD

The current management measures to address catch of shad and river herring in the directed Atlantic herring fishery have catch estimation challenges and were instituted when the abundance and landings of Atlantic herring were much higher than they presently are. This action will augment efforts to restore and maintain runs of river herring and shad through consideration of management alternatives for the directed Atlantic herring fishery that enhance river herring and shad avoidance and catch reduction (e.g., time/area closures and/or reconsideration of catch caps).



LIKELY RANGE OF ALTERNATIVES

Action 1 – Atlantic Herring Specifications Process

Action 2 – Atlantic Herring Specifications for 2027-2031

Action 3 – Carryover of Unharvested Catch

Action 4 – River Herring and Shad Management Measures



TIMELINE

Updated May 29, 2026 by Council staff.

Note: Additional meetings of PDT/TC, AP, and CTE to be scheduled.

March 2	Herring PDT
March 23	Herring AP
April 15	Council: update on action
April 27	Herring PDT
May 20	Herring AP
May 21	Herring Committee
May 26	Herring PDT
June 8	Herring AP & Committee
June 9	Herring PDT
June 23-25	Council: update on action, initiate if FW
June 29-30	2026 June Management Track Assessment Peer Review
August 11-12	SSC Meeting: Herring ABC/OFLs
August 24	SSC Subpanel Meeting: Review RH/S work
August – September	Herring AP & Committee meetings
September 15-17	Council: final action
September – December	Action submission
January 1, 2027	Target implementation



Herring Committee
Report: June 23,
2:30 pm

Herring Peer
Review: June 30

PDT completes
Council
tasking on river
herring/shad

PDT develops
measures and
impacts
analysis

ACTION 1 – ATLANTIC HERRING SPECIFICATIONS PROCESS



New England Fishery
Management Council

SPECIFICATIONS PROCESS: DRAFT ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1: No Action

- Process for setting herring specifications would remain unchanged.
- List of specifications items would remain unchanged.

Alternative 2: Update the Specifications Process

- Revise to make the process regulations less prescriptive
 - Committee tasked PDT to continue this work



ACTION 2 – ATLANTIC HERRING SPECIFICATIONS FOR 2027-2031



New England Fishery
Management Council

SPECIFICATIONS: DRAFT ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1: No Action

- No action would continue the specifications from the 2025-2027 specifications action.



SPECIFICATIONS: DRAFT ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 2: Updated Specifications

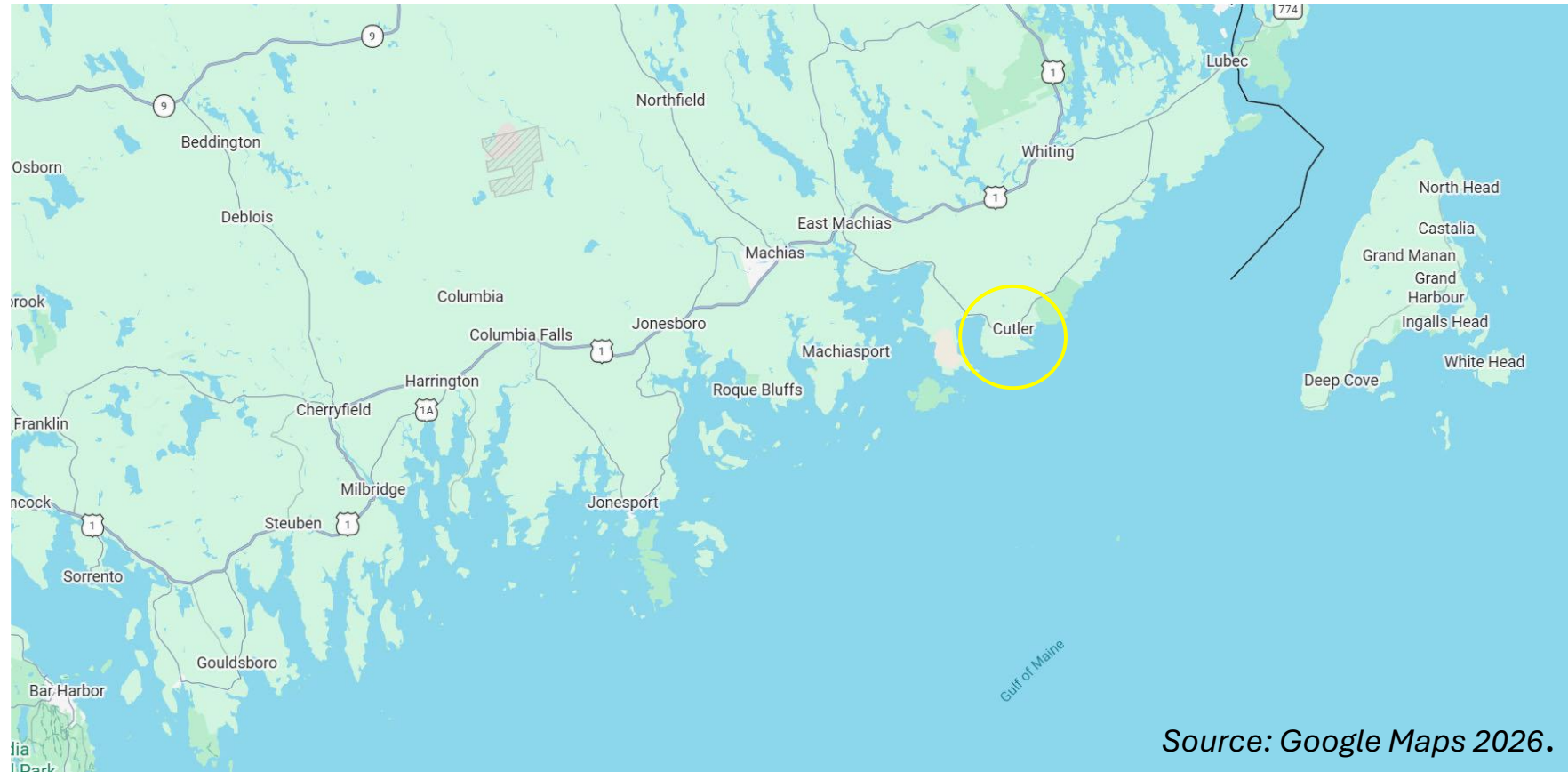
- Based on 2026 management track stock assessment and recommendations from SSC
- Evaluation of management uncertainty, including Canadian catch
 - PDT recommends to continue using most recent 10-year average
 - PDT will add Area 1A transfer analysis
- Identify status quo specifications
 - PDT recommends no changes to the approach and to follow what's outlined for 2025-2027 specifications
 - CTE tasked PDT to preliminarily set border transfer, US at-sea processing, herring RSA at zero
 - CTE tasked PDT to add an alternative increasing the fixed gear set-aside from 30 to 45 mt
- Summarize in a table to compare combinations of the options, as appropriate



FIXED GEAR SET-ASIDE DATA

- Fixed gear data pulled from west of Cutler, Maine
- Average landings 2016 – 2025: 16.1 mt
 - Range from 1 to 48 mt, annually
 - More detailed information not available to ensure confidentiality

Source: ME DMR, May 27, 2026



Source: Google Maps 2026.



New England Fishery
Management Council

AREA 1A/ NEW BRUNSWICK WEIR FISHERY TRANSFER, 2016-2025

PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

Year	Management Uncertainty (mt)	Buffer exceeded? (Using final landings)	Transfer threshold (mt)	Amount of transfer (mt)	Made transfer? (using preliminary landings)	Threshold exceeded? (using final landings)	Preliminary landings at time of transfer (mt)	Final landings (mt)	Difference in landings (mt)
2016	6,200	No	4,000	1,000	Yes	Yes	3,478	4,130	652
2017	6,200	No	4,000	1,000	Yes	No	1,732	2,244	512
2018	6,200	Yes	4,000	N/A	No	Yes	N/A	13,371	N/A
2019	6,200	Yes	4,000	1,000	Yes	Yes	2,250	6,482	4,232
2020	4,560	Yes	2,942	1,000	Yes	Yes	1,125	6,951	5,826
2021	4,669	Yes	3,012	1,000	Yes	Yes	1,209	4,870	3,661
2022	4,669	No	3,012	1,000	Yes	Yes	1,385	4,315	2,930
2023	4,220	No	2,722	1,000	Yes	No	525	1,485	960
2024	4,220	No	2,722	1,000	Yes	No	930	2,681	1,751
2025	4,031	No	2,722	1,000	Yes	Yes	1,223	3,475	2,252

Source: NOAA/GARFO, May 26, 2026.

Note: Landings include both the New Brunswick weir and shutoff portions of the fishery. Analysis is preliminary.



New England Fishery
Management Council

ACTION 3 – CARRYOVER OF UNHARVESTED CATCH



New England Fishery
Management Council

CARRYOVER OF UNHARVESTED CATCH

Regulations	Reference
(g) Carryover. (1) Subject to the conditions described in this paragraph (g), unharvested catch in a herring management area in a fishing year (up to 10 percent of that area's sub-ACL) shall be carried over and added to the sub-ACL for that herring management area for the fishing year following the year when total catch is determined. For example, NMFS will determine total catch from Year 1 during Year 2, and will add carryover to the applicable sub-ACL(s) in Year 3. All such carryover shall be based on the herring management area's initial sub-ACL allocation for Year 1, not the sub-ACL for Year 1 as increased by carryover or decreased by an overage deduction, as specified in paragraph (a)(3) of this section. All herring caught from a herring management area shall count against that area's sub-ACL, as increased by carryover. For example, if 100 mt of herring is added as carryover from Year 1 to a 5,000 mt sub-ACL in Year 3, catch in that management area would be tracked against a total sub-ACL of 5,100 mt. NMFS shall add sub-ACL carryover only if catch does not exceed the Year 1 ACL, specified consistent with § 648.200(b)(3). The ACL, consistent with § 648.200(b)(3), shall not be increased by carryover specified in this paragraph (g). (2) No unharvested catch will be carried over and added to any management area sub-ACL for the 2025 and 2026 fishing years.	50 CFR 648.201(g)



CARRYOVER OF UNHARVESTED CATCH

- PDT discussed that this is a risk tolerance question for the Council
- Committee recommended continuing to develop options 1 and 2:

Option 1: No Action	Carryover of unharvested catch would continue to be allowed as outlined in regulations.
Option 2: Flexible Approach	Carryover would occur unless it is inconsistent with the goals and objectives of the FMP and Council notifies NMFS (e.g., letter to GARFO)
Option 3: Stock Status-Based Approach	Carryover would proceed if the stock is not overfished. Carryover would be suspended if the stock is overfished.



CARRYOVER – FISHING YEAR 2025 TO FY 2027

PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

Sub-ACL	1A	1B	2	3	ACL
Initial 2025 sub-ACL (mt)	1,317	196	1,267	1,777	4,556
Adjusted 2025 sub-ACL (mt)	2,317	196	1,267	1,777	5,556
2025 catch (mt)	1,776	216	72	1,093	3,158
Underage/Overage (mt)	541	-20	1,195	684	N/A
Percent Overage (%)	N/A	110	N/A	N/A	N/A
Percent of Overage to deduct (only over 10%) (%)	0	0	0	0	N/A
Amount of overage deduction (mt)	0	0	0	0	0
Carryover (up to 10%) (mt)	132	N/A	127	178	N/A
Initial 2027 sub-ACL (mt)	2,640	393	2,539	3,562	9,134
Adjusted 2027 sub-ACL (mt)	2,772	393	2,666	3,740	9,134
Percent increase with carryover (%)	5	N/A	5	5	N/A
Source: NOAA/GARFO, May 26, 2026. Analysis is preliminary.					



ACTION 4 – RIVER HERRING AND SHAD MANAGEMENT MEASURES



New England Fishery
Management Council

RIVER HERRING AND SHAD MANAGEMENT MEASURES

Alternative 1: No Action

- All river herring and shad management measures would remain unchanged and in place unless changed in a future action.
 - River herring and shad catch caps, catch cap areas
 - Monitoring and avoidance areas

Alternative 2: Modify Catch Caps and/or Catch Cap Areas

- Revise the reference period for the catch caps
- Scale the catch caps to changes in the Atlantic herring biomass
- Use biologically based approaches for catch caps developed by ASMFC during the River Herring Benchmark Stock Assessment as a starting point



RIVER HERRING AND SHAD MANAGEMENT MEASURES

Alternative 3: Establish Time/Area Closures within Atlantic Herring Management Areas 2 and 3

- Where aggregations of river herring and shad overlap with the directed Atlantic herring fishery

Alternative 4: Remove River Herring/Shad Avoidance Areas

- Have not used these areas for management



COUNCIL TASKING, JUNE 24, 2024

1. That the Atlantic Herring Plan Development Team assess data availability and analyze and develop alternatives for Amendment 10 that implement time/area closures for portions of Atlantic Herring Management Areas 2 and 3 where aggregations of river herring and shad overlap with the directed Atlantic herring fishery.
2. That the Atlantic Herring Plan Development Team assess data availability and analyze and develop alternatives for Amendment 10 that implement revisions to the basis of river herring and shad catch cap values that: (1) are reflective of regional river herring/shad abundance, and (2) scale (with ceilings and floors) to changes in Atlantic herring abundance and/or regional river herring abundance.
3. That the Atlantic Herring Plan Development Team analyze and develop recommendations for implementing improvements to the accuracy and precision of river herring and shad catch estimates in the directed Atlantic herring fishery.



RIVER HERRING AND SHAD: PROGRESS REPORT

Task 1:

Presentation from PDT on species distribution models for river herring, shad and Atlantic herring.

Task 2:

The PDT supports using the CAMS modified approach to summarize the river herring and shad catch data by gear type (midwater trawl, purse seine, and small-mesh bottom year), year (2016-2025) and catch cap area (Gulf of Maine, Cape Cod, Southern New England/Mid Atlantic, and Georges Bank), and at two trip landings thresholds (2,000 lb and 6,600 lb landings of Atlantic herring). Data analysis is ongoing and a progress report is anticipated at the June 9, 2026 PDT meeting.



DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COMMITTEE/ COUNCIL



New England Fishery
Management Council

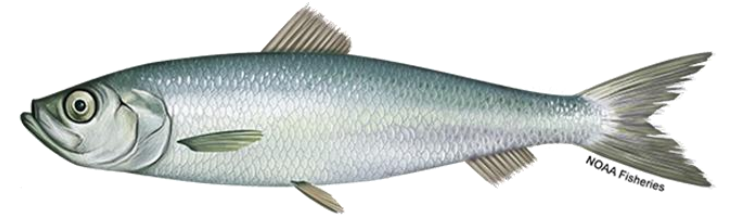
DEVELOP RECOMMENDATIONS

Likely range of alternatives:

- Action 1 – Atlantic Herring Specifications Process
- Action 2 – Atlantic Herring Specifications for 2027-2031
- Action 3 – Carryover of Unharvested Catch
- Action 4 – River Herring and Shad Management Measures



OTHER BUSINESS



New England Fishery
Management Council

ADDITIONAL SLIDES



New England Fishery
Management Council

Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission



In April 2026, the Atlantic Herring Management Board members from Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts set the effort control measures for the 2026 Area 1A (inshore Gulf of Maine) fishery for June 1 – September 30.

The Area 1A sub-annual catch limit (ACL) is 2,401 metric tons (mt) after adjusting for the 30 mt fixed gear set-aside and the fact that Area 1A closes at 92% of the sub-ACL.

In October 2025, the Board established the following seasonal allocations for the 2026 Area 1A sub-ACL: 72.8% available for season 1 (June 1 – September 30) and 27.2% available for season 2 (October 1 – December 31).

See [announcement](#) for overview of days out, landings limits, and other effort measures.



New England Fishery
Management Council

MANAGEMENT TRACK STOCK ASSESSMENT

Overview of Assessment Plan:

- Update 2025 Research Track stock assessment model, WHAM
- Data inputs will remain relatively unchanged, updated through 2025
- Model configuration will remain the same unless required to resolve problematic diagnostics
- Began work to address some Research Track recommendations, not expected to be ready for use in Management Track
 - Combine federal survey data with other surveys that catch age-1 herring more frequently
 - Consider using seabird diet data for herring recruitment index
- Backup Assessment Plan: Ismooth (empirical, index-based approach)



RIVER HERRING AND SHAD: TASK 1

1. That the Atlantic Herring Plan Development Team assess data availability and analyze and develop alternatives for Amendment 10 that implement time/area closures for portions of Atlantic Herring Management Areas 2 and 3 where aggregations of river herring and shad overlap with the directed Atlantic herring fishery.

STATUS:

- The PDT received a presentation on species distribution modeling work in [January 2025](#).
- The PDT will receive an update on the development of species distribution models for alewife, blueback herring, American shad, and Atlantic herring at the May 26 meeting.
- The PDT plans to present its work at the joint Advisory Panel and Committee meeting on June 8, 2026.
- The Council will also receive the report at its June 23-25, 2026 meeting.
- A peer review by a sub-panel of the SSC is being organized to review the PDT's analysis → August 2026



RIVER HERRING AND SHAD: TASK 2

2. That the Atlantic Herring Plan Development Team assess data availability and analyze and develop alternatives for Amendment 10 that implement revisions to the basis of river herring and shad catch cap values that: (1) are reflective of regional river herring/shad abundance, and (2) scale (with ceilings and floors) to changes in Atlantic herring abundance and/or regional river herring abundance.

STATUS:

- The PDT received a presentation on ASMFC's 2024 River Herring Benchmark Stock Assessment in [November 2024](#). One of the Terms of Reference was on developing a biological basis for the catch caps.
- The PDT will explore the approaches developed in the Benchmark and other options. Summarized current catch cap approaches for discussion at the April 27 and May 26 PDT meetings.
- The PDT plans to present its work at the joint Advisory Panel and Committee meeting on June 8, 2026.
- The Council will also receive the report at its June 23-25, 2026 meeting.
- A peer review by a sub-panel of the SSC is being organized to review the PDT's analysis → August 2026



RIVER HERRING AND SHAD: TASK 2

Catch Cap Approach	Description/Methods
River herring and shad catch ratios with expansion factor (NEFMC river herring and shad catch caps)	- Apply RH/S catch ratio from qualifying trips during reference period to total catch on qualifying trips
River herring and shad catch ratios (MAFMC Atlantic mackerel RH/S catch cap)	- Apply RH/S catch rate from trips during a reference period to quota
Set percentage of sub-ACL (NEFMC Georges Bank haddock catch cap)	- Catch cap equals a percentage of the sub-ACL
Dynamic catch caps (proof-of-concept presented in 2024 River Herring Benchmark Stock Assessment)	- Develop a catch multiplier to apply to average catch, would allow caps to increase/decrease based on abundance
Annual bycatch limit – number of individuals (Bering Sea Chinook salmon bycatch cap for pollock fisheries)	- Hard cap set for number of individual fish that can be caught



RIVER HERRING & SHAD: TASK 3

3. That the Atlantic Herring Plan Development Team analyze and develop recommendations for implementing improvements to the accuracy and precision of river herring and shad catch estimates in the directed Atlantic herring fishery.

STATUS:

- A sub-group of the PDT completed the tasking including drafting a summary report between November 2024 and February 2026.
- The draft report was reviewed by the entire PDT by correspondence and at its meeting on [March 3](#), 2026.
- The PDT agreed with the conclusions and recently finalized the report.
- The Council will receive the report at its June 23-25, 2026 meeting.



TASK 3 PDT REPORT

The PDT sub-group conducted 4 analyses:

Analysis 1 → gear-specific global rates

- Used gear-specific (midwater or bottom trawl) global rate when data was available; if not, used global rate across gears

Analysis 2 → all years transition rate

- Tested using all observed trips from 2015-2024 instead of only the previous year

Analysis 3 → Three-year transition rate

- Tested 3-year transition rate instead of one year

Analysis 4 → SBRM stratification

- Tested stratifications by northern and southern regions



TASK 3 PDT REPORT

Conclusions:

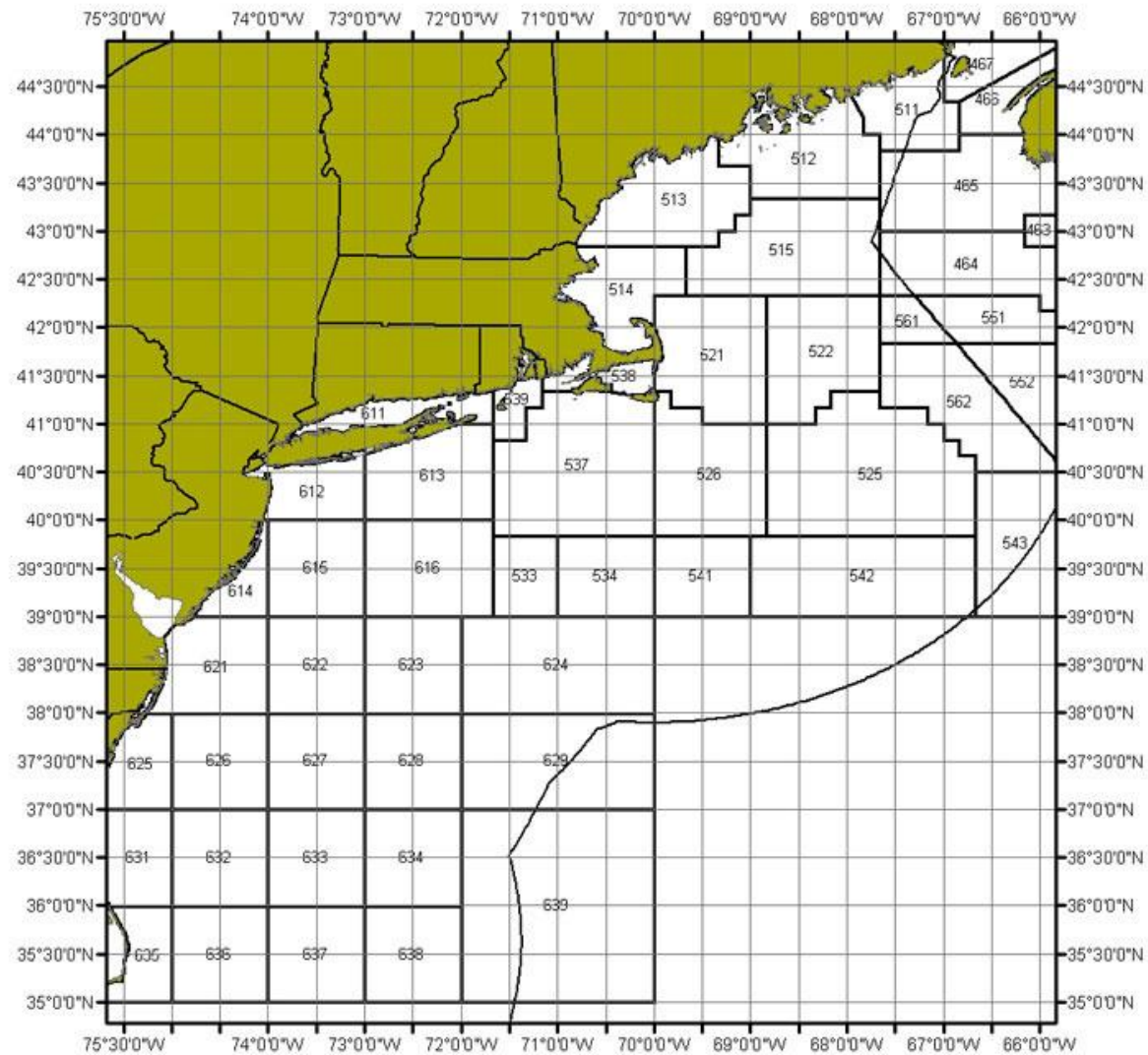
- The sub-group did not find suitable methods that improved accuracy/ precision, **did not recommend** any major changes to current RH/S estimation methods
- Supported a gear-specific global rate when data is available
- Modifying transition rate or geographic extent of observer data stratifications did not produce more precise estimates
- Additional observer coverage for midwater trawl fleet would likely reduce frequency of when transition rate or global rate is needed and improve in-season estimations



Amendment 10 to the Atlantic Herring FMP: Action Development to Date

Updated April 10, 2026

December 2022	Council passes a motion to “revisit Amendment 8 inshore midwater trawl closure”; Council prioritizes an analysis to investigate what combination of factors may have led to low shad & river herring bycatch estimates in 2020-2022.
April 2023	Herring Committee & Advisory Panel discuss priority, develop tasking motions for Herring PDT; Herring PDT develops memo re: river herring and shad priority; Council passes a draft problem statement, remanded it to the Committee for refinement.
June 2023	Council adopts the draft problem statement.
September 2023	Council passes a motion tasking the Herring Committee and PDT with developing a scoping document for public scoping process; Council initiates Amendment 10 (A10).
December 2023 January 2024	Council adds consideration of river herring and shad management measures to A10; Revises problem statement for river herring and shad; Council approves the scoping document; scoping process commences.
March – June 2024	Public Scoping period for A10 (March 1-April 30); Herring PDT develops summary of public comments.
June 2024	Herring Committee & Advisory Panel, Council receive summary of public comments, provide tasking to the Herring PDT re: analyzing user group overlap on the Atlantic herring resource, analyzing and developing alternatives/recommendations related to river herring and shad.
October 2024 – March 2025	Herring PDT works to address Committee & Council tasking; Council receives progress report at January 2025 meeting.
April 2025	Council moves to substitute the 2025 priority regarding A10 to develop an omnibus action to address management flexibility measures. Resuming work on A10 will be considered during the Council’s annual priority setting process in December 2025.
December 2025	Council considered resuming with on A10 during its annual priority setting process. The Council shifted the river herring and shad aspects of A10 into a new action, under development in 2026.



<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/map/greater-atlantic-region-statistical-areas>



New England Fishery
Management Council