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## New England Fishery Management Council

50 WATER STREET | NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS 01950 | PHONE 978 465 0492 | FAX 978 465 3116  
 John F. Quinn, J.D., Ph.D., *Chairman* | Thomas A. Nies, *Executive Director*

### MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** September 25, 2020  
**TO:** Council  
**FROM:** Tom Nies, Executive Director  
**SUBJECT:** Northeast Multispecies ASM Funds

Several Council members requested information on ASM funds provided in the 2018, 2019, and 2020 appropriations bills. Dr. Jon Hare provided information on past spending at the June Council meeting and in a letter dated September 24, 2020. Using the information from these sources, staff has prepared an estimate of the ASM funds that will be available at the beginning of FY 2022 (the likely implementation date for any changes in ASM coverage adopted by Amendment 23). Please note that these are rough estimates. Predicting fishing activity and observer deployments over the next year and half is fraught with challenges. In addition, we don't know how federal funding regulations may affect how much if this money will be available at the beginning of FY 2022 and beyond. We also don't know if additional funds will be appropriated.

The allocation of the funds provided by Congress for the Northeast Multispecies ASM program 12 is summarized in the following table. Over the period 2018-2019, the ASM spend plan allocated \$10.3 million for the industry's at sea costs. In June the Council was told that approximately \$8 million remains. An additional \$4.13 million was assigned in the 2020 spend plan, for a total of about \$12 million.

|   | FY-18          | FY-19          | FY-20          |
|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Industry at-sea monitoring costs          | \$6.26         |                |                |
| NMFS Shoreside Costs                      | \$1.20         | \$2.70         | \$3.43         |
| EM/ET Technologies                        | \$1.23         | \$1.50         | \$1.95         |
| Observer Gear                             | \$0.65         |                | \$0.10         |
| Aging of Observer Samples                 | \$0.25         |                |                |
| Shared Mission Support Costs              | \$0.70         | \$0.70         | \$0.70         |
| ASM Training                              |                | \$0.60         |                |
| Future Industry At-Sea Monitoring Support |                | \$4.10         | \$4.13         |
| Gear and Analyses Related to A23          |                | \$0.70         |                |
| <b>Total (millions)</b>                   | <b>\$10.30</b> | <b>\$10.30</b> | <b>\$10.30</b> |

In recent years, approximately 10,500 days have been fished in the sector program. Using this as an estimate of future activity, the following table provides a crude estimate of the funds that would be available at the start of FY 2022, and an estimate of the observer days that could be funded. Notice this table assumes none of these funds are spent on EM.

| <b>FY</b>             | <b>Days Fished</b> | <b>Targeted ASM Rate*</b> | <b>Days Observed</b> | <b>ASM Cost \$600/day</b> | <b>ASM Cost \$800/day</b> |
|-----------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| FY 2020**             | 10,500             | 40%                       | 3,150                | \$ 1,890,000              | \$ 2,520,000              |
| FY 2021               | 10,500             | 40%                       | 4,200                | \$ 2,520,000              | \$ 3,360,000              |
| Total                 |                    |                           |                      | \$ 4,410,000              | \$ 5,880,000              |
|                       |                    |                           |                      |                           |                           |
| Total Funds Available |                    |                           |                      | \$12,000,000              | \$12,000,000              |
|                       |                    |                           |                      |                           |                           |
| FY 2022 Available     |                    |                           |                      | \$7,590,000               | \$6,120,000               |
| Funded Days Available |                    |                           |                      | 12,650                    | 7,650                     |

Notes:

\*Assumes the targeted rate is 40 pct in FY 2021

\*\*No ASM deployments were made May 1 August 14, 2020, so observer rate is applied to only  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the days fished shown.

Staff notes the following uncertainties with these estimates.

- We do not know what the realized coverage rate will be in FY 2020 and FY 2021. Initial reports are that waivers related to the pandemic may reduce the coverage rate below 40 percent. Lower realized coverage rates would increase the funds available at the start of FY 2022.
- We do not know what the ASM cost/observed day will be. The amounts above bracket the average based on FY 16-FY 18 sector contracts. Higher costs would reduce the amount available at the start of FY 2022.
- Days absent have declined since FY 2011, but the decline slowed in FY 2018 and FY 2019. It's unclear whether effort will decline further over the next year and a half. Further declines would increase the amount available at the start of FY 2022.
- We do not know what the targeted coverage rate will be in FY 2021.