

ATLANTIC HERRING FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN

2027-2031 SPECIFICATIONS ACTION DRAFT ALTERNATIVES

ALTERNATIVE 1 – NO ACTION

The No Action alternative is the specifications from the [2025-2027 specifications action](#).

Table 1. Summary of current Atlantic herring fishery specifications (mt).

	Current Specifications (mt)*		
	2025	2026	2027
Overfishing Limit (OFL)	20,802	23,491	31,075
Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC)	8,587	13,165	13,165
Management Uncertainty**	4,031	4,031	4,031
Optimum Yield (OY) / Annual Catch Limit (ACL)	4,556	9,134	9,134
Domestic Annual Harvest (DAH)	4,556	9,134	9,134
Border Transfer (BT)	0	0	0
Domestic Annual Processing (DAP)	4,556	9,134	9,134
US At-Sea Processing (USAP)	0	0	0
Area 1A sub-ACL (28.9%)	1,317	2,640	2,640
Area 1B sub-ACL (4.3%)	196	393	393
Area 2 sub-ACL (27.8%)	1,267	2,539	2,539
Area 3 sub-ACL (39%)	1,777	3,562	3,562
Fixed Gear Set-Aside	30	30	30
Research Set-Aside (RSA) as % of sub-ACL	0%	0%	0%
*Implemented December 11, 2025.			
** If the New Brunswick weir fishery landings through October 1 are less than the associated “trigger,” then 1,000 mt will be subtracted from the management uncertainty buffer and added to the Area 1A sub-ACL and the ACL.			

Table 2. Summary of river herring and shad (RH/S) catch caps (mt).

Catch Cap Area	Current Specifications (mt)	
	2026	2027
Midwater Trawl Gulf of Maine	76.7	76.7
Midwater Trawl Cape Cod	32.4	32.4
Midwater Trawl Southern New England and Mid-Atlantic	129.6	129.6
Bottom Trawl Southern New England and Mid-Atlantic	122.3	122.3

ALTERNATIVE 2 – UPDATED SPECIFICATIONS

Alternative 2 would update Atlantic herring specifications based on the 2026 management track stock assessment and recommendations from the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC).

- Evaluation of management uncertainty, including Canadian catch

- PDT previously recommended continuing to use 10-year recent catch average, citing prior analysis and discussion
- PDT completed a preliminary analysis of Area 1A transfer
- Committee tasked PDT to preliminarily set border transfer, US at-sea processing, and Research Set-Aside (RSA) to zero.
- River herring and shad catch caps would remain status quo.
- Committee tasked PDT to include an alternative that would increase the fixed gear set-aside from 30 to 45 mt

Table 3. Atlantic herring 2027-2031 specifications alternatives.

	Alternative 1: No Action 2027 Specifications (mt)	Alternative 2: Updated 2027-2031 Specifications (mt)
Overfishing Limit (OFL)	31,075	13,165
Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC)	13,165	10,532
Management Uncertainty**	4,031	5,131
Optimum Yield (OY) / Annual Catch Limit (ACL)	9,134	5,401
Domestic Annual Harvest (DAH)	9,134	5,401
Border Transfer (BT)	0	0
Domestic Annual Processing (DAP)	9,134	5,401
US At-Sea Processing (USAP)	0	0
Area 1A sub-ACL (28.9%)	2,640	1,561
Area 1B sub-ACL (4.3%)	393	232
Area 2 sub-ACL (27.8%)	2,539	1,502
Area 3 sub-ACL (39%)	3,562	2,106
Fixed Gear Set-Aside	30	45
Research Set-Aside (RSA) as % of sub-ACL	0%	0%
*Implemented December 11, 2025.		
** 10-year Canadian New Brunswick weir catch average. If the New Brunswick weir fishery landings through October 1 are less than the associated “trigger,” then 1,000 mt will be subtracted from the management uncertainty buffer and added to the Area 1A sub-ACL and the ACL.		

Table 4. Summary of river herring and shad (RH/S) catch caps under each alternative.

Catch Cap Area	Alternative 1: No Action (mt)	Alternative 2: Updated 2027-2031 Specifications (mt)
Midwater Trawl Gulf of Maine	76.7	76.7
Midwater Trawl Cape Cod	32.4	32.4
Midwater Trawl Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic	129.6	129.6
Bottom Trawl Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic	122.3	122.3