

Table 1 – Summary of Gulf of Maine cod recreational catch performance and federal management (fishing years 2010 – 2024).

Fishing Year	Sub-Annual Catch Limit (mt)	Catch (mt)	Percent of catch limit taken (%)	Minimum Size (inches)	Bag Limit Fish per angler - daily	Season Open	Season Closed	Additional Measures/Notes
2010	2,673	1506.9	56.4	24	10	5/1/10 to 10/31/10 and 4/16/11 to 4/30/11	11/1/10 to 4/15/11	<p>First year of sub-ACL 33.7% of ABC with 7% management uncertainty buffer applied</p> <p>Groundfish Regulations:</p> <p>Only one line per angler, and</p> <p>Fillets landed by private recreational and</p> <p>charter/party vessels must have at least</p> <p>2 sq. inches (5.08 sq. cm) of contiguous</p> <p>skin that allows for the ready</p> <p>identification of the fish species. Such</p> <p>fillets are required to be from legal-sized</p> <p>fish, but the fillets themselves would</p> <p>not need to meet the minimum size</p> <p>requirements in the regulations.</p>
2011	2,824	1640.3	58.1	24	10	5/1/11 to 10/31/11 and 4/16/12 to 4/30/12	11/1/11 to 4/15/12	<p>First Year: Gulf of Maine (Whaleback) Cod Spawning Protection Area:</p> <p>From April 1 through June 30 of each year, all recreational vessels, including private recreational and charter/party vessels, may only use pelagic hook-and-line gear, as defined below, when</p>

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								fishing in the Whaleback Cod Spawning Protection Area. ¹
2012	2,215	937.4	42.3	19	9	5/1/12 to 10/31/12 and 4/16/13 to 4/30/13	11/1/12 to 4/15/13	
2013	486	639.3	131.5	19	9	5/1/13 to 10/31/13 and 4/16/14 to 4/30/14	11/1/13 to 4/15/14	
2014	486			21	9	5/1/14 to 8/31/14 and 4/15/14 to 4/30/14	9/1/14 to 4/14/15	Replaced by interim action on 11/15/14
		623.3	128.3	n/a	0	closed	11/15/14 to 4/30/15	2014 interim action: Seasonal 30-minute block closures, no recreational gear capable of catching groundfish in closures
2015	121	84.5	69.8	n/a	0	Closed year-round		Interim action Seasonal closures removed on 5/1/16

¹ **Pelagic hook-and-line gear** is defined as handline or rod and reel gear that is designed to fish for, or that is being used to fish for, pelagic species. No portion of this gear may be operated in contact with the bottom at any time.

Possession Restrictions: Any vessel fishing in the Gulf of Maine Whaleback Cod Spawning Protection Area, or the Winter Massachusetts Bay Spawning Protection Area, including pelagic hook-and-line gear by recreational vessels, is prohibited from possessing or retaining regulated species or ocean pout from April 1 through June 30 of each year.

Transiting: Recreational vessels are allowed to transit the Gulf of Maine Cod Spawning Protection Area, and Winter Massachusetts Bay Spawning Protection Area provided all gear is stowed in accordance with the regulations.

Fishing Year	Sub-Annual Catch Limit (mt)	Catch (mt)	Percent of catch limit taken (%)	Minimum Size (inches)	Bag Limit Fish per angler - daily	Season Open	Season Closed	Additional Measures/Notes
2016	157	280.9	178.9	24	1	8/1/16 to 9/30/16	5/1/16 to 7/31/16 and 10/1/16 to 4/30/17	
2017	157			24	1	8/1/17 to 9/30/17	5/1/17 to 7/31/17 and 10/1/18 to 4/30/18	Replaced by final rule effective on 7/27/17
		245.4	156.3	n/a	0	Closed year-round		
2018	220	146.9	66.8	n/a	0	Closed year-round		First Year: Winter Massachusetts Bay Spawning Protection Area: From November 1 through January 31 of each year, all recreational vessels, including private recreational and charter/party vessels, may only use pelagic hook-and-line gear, as defined below, when fishing in the Winter Massachusetts Bay Spawning Protection Area. ¹
2019	220	79.8	36.3	21	1	9/15/19 to 9/30/19	5/1/19 to 9/14/19 and 10/1/19 to 4/30/20	Previous year's regulations were in effect until July 5, 2019, when these measures were implemented. Based on comments received on the proposed rule there will not be an open season in April 2020.

Fishing Year	Sub-Annual Catch Limit (mt)	Catch (mt)	Percent of catch limit taken (%)	Minimum Size (inches)	Bag Limit Fish per angler - daily	Season Open	Season Closed	Additional Measures/Notes
2020	193	184	95.3	21	1	9/15/20-9/30/20 and 4/1/21-4/14/21 (Private) 9/8/20-10/7/20 and 4/1/21-4/14/21 (Charter/Party)	5/1/20-9/14/20 and 10/1/20-3/31/21 (Private) 5/1/20-9/7/20 and 10/8/20-3/31/21 (Charter/Party)	Revised sub-ACL to 37.5% of ABC with 7% management uncertainty buffer applied
2021	193	146.2	75.8	21	1	9/15/21-9/30/21 and 4/1/22-4/14/22 (Private) 9/8/21-10/7/21 and 4/1/22-4/14/22 (Charter/Party)	5/1/21-9/14/21 and 10/1/21-3/31/22 (Private) 5/1/21-9/7/21 and 10/8/21-3/31/22 (Charter/Party)	
2022	192	165.7	86.2	22	1	9/1/22-10/7/22 and 4/1/23-4/14/23	5/1/22-8/31/22, 10/8/22-3/31/23 and 4/15/23-4/30/23	Final rule effective 8/30/22
2023	192	170.4	88.7	22	1	9/1/23-10/31/23	11/1/23-4/30/24	Final rule effective 8/14/23
2024	192			23	1	9/1/24-10/31/24	11/1/24-4/30/25	An increase in the minimum fish size from 22" to 23". Final rule effective August 14, 2023.

Fishing Year	Sub-Annual Catch Limit (mt)	Catch (mt)	Percent of catch limit taken (%)	Minimum Size (inches)	Bag Limit Fish per angler - daily	Season Open	Season Closed	Additional Measures/Notes
2025	Proposed FW69 99* Emergency Action 120**			23	1	9/1/25-10/31/25	11/1/25-4/30/26	The Council recommended an additional opening for the month of May. Pending – proposed rule published on December 8, 2025.

*Sub-ACL proposed for WGOM cod in Framework 69, new cod stock units not implemented in FY2025

**Sub-ACL specified in emergency action (based on Framework 69 proposed ABCs, adjusted from 4 cod stock units to 2 existing stock units) ²

² See: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/05/02/2025-07635/magnuson-stevens-fishery-conservation-and-management-act-provisions-fisheries-of-the-northeastern>

Table 2 – Summary of Gulf of Maine haddock recreational catch performance and federal management (fishing years 2010 – 2024).

Fishing Year	Sub-Annual Catch Limit (mt)	Catch (mt)	Percent of catch limit taken (%)	Minimum Size (inches)	Bag Limit Fish per angler - daily	Season Open	Season Closed	Additional Measures/Notes
2010	324	297.4	91.8	18	no limit		n/a	First year of sub-ACL 27.5% of ABC with 7% management uncertainty buffer applied Groundfish Regulations: Only one line per angler, and Fillets landed by private recreational and charter/party vessels must have at least 2 sq. inches (5.08 sq. cm) of contiguous skin that allows for the ready identification of the fish species. Such fillets are required to be from legal-sized fish, but the fillets themselves would not need to meet the minimum size requirements in the regulations.
2011	308			18	no limit	5/1/11 to 1/5/12	n/a	First Year: Gulf of Maine (Whaleback) Cod Spawning Protection Area: From April 1 through June 30 of each year, all recreational vessels, including private recreational and charter/party vessels, may only use pelagic hook-and-line gear, as defined below, when fishing in the Whaleback Cod Spawning Protection Area. ¹
				19	9	1/6/12 to 4/19/12	n/a	Accountability Measure (AM) for 2010 overage

Fishing Year	Sub-Annual Catch Limit (mt)	Catch (mt)	Percent of catch limit taken (%)	Minimum Size (inches)	Bag Limit Fish per angler - daily	Season Open	Season Closed	Additional Measures/Notes
		238.5	77.4	18	no limit	4/20/12 to 4/30/12	n/a	AM lifted after re-evaluation of data showing no 2010 overage
2012	259	280.7	108.4	18	no limit		n/a	
2013	74	231.5	312.2	21	no limit		n/a	
2014	173	658.6	380.7	21	3	5/1/14 to 8/31/14 and 11/1/14 to 2/28/15	9/1/14 to 10/31/14 and 3/1/15 to 4/30/15	Replaced by interim action on 11/15/14 <i>2014 interim action: Seasonal 30-minute block closures, no recreational gear capable of catching groundfish in closures</i>
2015	372	381.9	102.7	17	3	5/1/15 to 8/31/15 and 11/1/15 to 2/29/16	9/1/15 to 10/31/15 and 3/1/16 to 4/30/16	
2016	928	887.0	95.6	17	15	5/1/16 to 2/28/17 and 4/15/17 to 4/30/17	3/1/17 to 4/14/17	
2017	1,160			17	15	5/1/17 to 2/28/18	3/1/18 to 4/14/18	Replaced by final rule effective 7/27/17

Fishing Year	Sub-Annual Catch Limit (mt)	Catch (mt)	Percent of catch limit taken (%)	Minimum Size (inches)	Bag Limit Fish per angler - daily	Season Open	Season Closed	Additional Measures/Notes
						and 4/15/18 to 4/30/18		
		795.0	68.5	17	12	5/1/17 to 9/16/17 and 11/1/17 to 2/28/18 and 4/15/18 to 4/30/18	9/17/17 to 10/31/17 and 3/1/18 to 4/14/18	
2018	3,358	595.0	17.7	17	12	5/1/18 to 9/16/18 and 11/1/18 to 2/28/19 and 4/15/19 to 4/30/19	9/17/18 to 10/31/18 and 3/1/19 to 4/14/19	First Year: Winter Massachusetts Bay Spawning Protection Area: From November 1 through January 31 of each year, all recreational vessels, including private recreational and charter/party vessels, may only use pelagic hook-and-line gear, as defined below, when fishing in the Winter Massachusetts Bay Spawning Protection Area. ¹
2019	3,194	423.2	13.3	17	15	5/1/19 to 2/29/20 and 4/15/20 to 4/30/20	3/1/20 to 4/14/20	Previous year's regulations were in effect until July 5, 2019, when these measures were implemented. The possession limit increased from 12-15 fish, and the fall closure has been

Fishing Year	Sub-Annual Catch Limit (mt)	Catch (mt)	Percent of catch limit taken (%)	Minimum Size (inches)	Bag Limit Fish per angler - daily	Season Open	Season Closed	Additional Measures/Notes
								removed to increase access to this healthy stock.
2020	6,210	1202.3	19.4	17	15	5/1/20-2/28/21 and 4/1/21-4/30/21	3/1/21-3/31/21	Revised sub-ACL to 33.9% of ABC with 7% management uncertainty buffer applied
2021	5,295	901.5	17.0	17	15	5/1/21-2/28/22 and 4/1/22-4/30/22	3/1/22-3/31/22	
2022	3,634	477.2	13.1	17	20	5/1/22-2/28/23 and 4/1/23-4/30/23	3/1/23-3/31/23	An increase in the bag limit from 15 fish to 20 fish became effective August 30, 2022.
2023	FW 65: 610 Emergency Action: 793	474.3	59.8	For hire: 18 Private: 17	For hire: 15 Private: 10	5/1/23-2/28/24 and 4/1/24-4/30/24	3/1/24-3/31/24	The Council proposed an 18-inch minimum size and 15 fish limit for both the for-hire and private angler sector. NMFS implemented split measures out of concerns that an 18-inch minimum would unnecessarily constrain catch and increase dead discards in the private angler sector. This rule became effective August 14, 2023.
2024	759			18	15	5/1/24-2/28/25 and 4/1/25-4/30/25	3/1/25-3/31/25	These changes make the measures the same for all recreational vessels, rather than having different bag limits and minimum fish sizes for private vessels and for-hire vessels. This rule became effective July 24, 2024.

Fishing Year	Sub-Annual Catch Limit (mt)	Catch (mt)	Percent of catch limit taken (%)	Minimum Size (inches)	Bag Limit Fish per angler - daily	Season Open	Season Closed	Additional Measures/Notes
2025	Emergency Action: 729 Proposed FW69: 1,075*			18 Proposed: 17	15	5/1/25-2/28/26 and 4/1/26-4/30/26	3/1/26-3/31/26	The Council proposed a decrease in the minimum fish size (18" to 17"). Pending – proposed rule published on December 8, 2025.

*Sub-ACL as proposed in Framework 69. Pending – proposed rule published on December 8, 2025. Current sub-ACL in place through emergency action ³

³ See: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2025/05/02/2025-07635/magnuson-stevens-fishery-conservation-and-management-act-provisions-fisheries-of-the-northeastern>