

National Marine Fisheries Service
Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
Sustainable Fisheries Division
www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov

Status Report of Greater Atlantic Region Actions

Prepared for the September 15-17, 2026
Meeting of the
New England Fishery Management Council

September 11, 2026

New England Council Actions

Omnibus Management Flexibility Amendment to New England Fishery Management

Council Fishery Management Plans

On May 14, 2026, NMFS published the notice of availability for the Amendment in the *Federal Register* (91 FR 27234), with a comment period ending July 13, 2026. On July 8, 2026, NMFS published a proposed rule that included implementing regulations for the administrative measures in the Amendment in the *Federal Register* (91 FR 42165). The comment period on the proposed rule ended on August 7, 2026. On August 4, 2026, the Greater Atlantic Office's Regional Administrator, Michael Pentony, approved the Amendment on behalf of the Secretary of Commerce. NMFS is currently developing a final rule to implement this action. For additional information, please contact Travis Ford at (978) 281-9233 or Travis.Ford@noaa.gov.

Small-Mesh Multispecies

None at this time.

Groundfish

Amendment 25 to the Northeast Multispecies FMP

On June 30, 2026, NMFS published a final rule for Amendment 25 to the Northeast Multispecies FMP in the *Federal Register* (91 FR 39529). This rule implements measures to incorporate revised Atlantic cod stock units into the Northeast Multispecies FMP, and set status determination criteria, specifications, and commercial and recreational management measures, for the four new cod stocks, as recommended by the New England Fishery Management Council. In addition to the measures recommended by the Council in Amendment 25, this final rule also included recreational management measures for Western Gulf of Maine, Eastern Gulf of Maine, and Georges Bank cod. For additional information please contact Liz Sullivan at (978) 282-8493 or email at liz.sullivan@noaa.gov.

Framework 72 to the Northeast Multispecies FMP

On August 4, 2026, NMFS published an interim final rule for Framework 72 to the Northeast Multispecies FMP in the *Federal Register* (91 FR 49358). Framework 72 implements status determination criteria for Georges Bank yellowtail flounder, sets catch limits for multispecies stocks, and revises the process for setting recreational measures for Atlantic cod and haddock. The comment period closed on September 3, 2026. For additional information please contact Liz Sullivan at (978) 282-8493 or email at liz.sullivan@noaa.gov.

Scallops

None at this time.

Herring

None at this time.

Monkfish

Framework 17 to the Monkfish Fishery Management Plan

On August 27, 2026, NMFS published a final rule in the *Federal Register* (91 FR 55282) for Framework Adjustment 17 to the Monkfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP), effective on September 28, 2026. This rule implements Councils' recommended specifications for fishing year 2026 and projected specifications through 2028 and a streamlined way to implement accountability measures when annual monkfish catch limits are exceeded. This rule also included a measure for implementing default rollover specifications for the monkfish fishery originally included in Framework Adjustment 13 to the Monkfish FMP. For additional information please contact Spencer Talmage at (978) 281-9232 or email at spencer.talmage@noaa.gov.

Atlantic Deep-Sea Red Crab

None at this time.

Northeast Skate Complex

None at this time.

Mid-Atlantic Council Actions

Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass

None at this time.

Spiny Dogfish

None at this time.

Surfclam and Ocean Quahog

None at this time.

Atlantic Bluefish

None at this time.

Tilefish

None at this time.

Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish

2026 Chub Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fishery Specifications

On July 9, 2026, NMFS published a final rule in the *Federal Register* (91 FR 42360) implementing 2026 specifications for the Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fishery Management Plan (FMP). This action set new 2026 and projected 2027-2028 specifications for the chub mackerel and *Illex* squid fisheries, and reaffirmed previously-projected 2026 specifications for the longfin squid and butterfish fisheries. This rule took effect on August 10, 2026. For additional information, please contact Maria Fenton at (978) 281-9196 or Maria.Fenton@noaa.gov.

2026 *Illex* Squid Closure

On August 21, 2026, NMFS published a temporary rule in the *Federal Register* (91 FR 54247) closing the directed *Illex* squid fishery in Federal waters effective August 23, 2026, through December 31, 2026. *Illex* squid fishery regulations require that NMFS implement this closure when the Regional Administrator projects that 96 percent of the domestic annual harvest will be caught. During this closure, vessels are prohibited from fishing for, possessing, or landing more than 10,000 lb of *Illex* squid at any time per trip, and from landing *Illex* squid more than once per calendar day. For additional information, please contact Maria Fenton at (978) 281-9196 or Maria.Fenton@noaa.gov.

Quota Transfers

Between June 18 and August 21, 2026, NMFS published *Federal Register* notices of summer flounder quota transfers from North Carolina to Virginia (91 FR 36760, June 18, 2026; 91 FR 43573, July 16, 2026), and North Carolina to Massachusetts (91 FR 45737, July 21, 2026; 91 FR 54247, August 21, 2026). The transfers were made to repay landings made by out-of-state permitted vessels under safe harbor agreements. For additional information, please contact Matthew Rigdon at (978) 281-9336 or Matthew.Rigdon@noaa.gov.

Other Actions

Cost Recovery

None at this time.

Paperwork Reduction Act

None at this time.

Jonah Crab

None at this time.

Industry Funded Monitoring Omnibus Amendment

None at this time.

Lobster

None at this time.

Other Actions

Internet and Chartplotters Survey - Initial Results

The Internet & Chartplotters Survey was emailed on May 13, 2026, to Federal permit holders in the Greater Atlantic Region. The survey was intended to help GARFO understand the prevalence of internet access at sea and the brands of chartplotters that fishermen use in support of [Executive Order 14276, Restoring American Seafood Competitiveness](#), which directed NOAA Fisheries to “modernize data collection and analytical practices that will improve the responsiveness of fisheries management to real-time ocean conditions.” The survey closed on June 26, 2026.

There was a 5-percent response rate to the survey, with 241 complete responses to the approximately 4,670 emails distributed, with an additional 27 partially completed surveys. In 2025, GARFO issued 4,169 permits. The survey results represent 320 unique permits (8 percent of all permits), including 52 vessels with a recreational (Federal party/charter) permit. Of the 320 permits, 177 submitted a Vessel Trip Report to GARFO in 2025. The primary gear types fished in 2025 by survey respondents were pot/trap, mobile, and handline/rod and reel. Respondents’ 2025 landings primarily consisted of Atlantic sea scallops, Atlantic surfclams and ocean quahogs, and American lobster.

Internet

Approximately 32 percent of survey respondents reported that they have internet access while outside of cell phone range. Of the respondents that indicated they have internet access, the overwhelming majority reported using Starlink as their primary internet service provider. The main motivators cited for having internet access outside of cell phone range were: Safety (86 percent); personal communication (83 percent); and business communication (59 percent). The main reasons survey respondents cited for *not* having internet access outside of cell phone range were: Cost (75 percent), do not need it (37 percent), and almost always in cell phone range (22 percent).

Chartplotters

The most prevalent chartplotters reported across all respondents were: Garmin (118); Furuno (97); Simrad (62); and TimeZero (44). For respondents that reported owning/managing a single

vessel, the most prevalent primary chartplotters were Garmin (41 percent), Simrad (15 percent), Furuno (12 percent), TimeZero (9 percent), Raymarine (8 percent), and Hondex (8 percent). The primary brands for the respondents that reported owning/managing more than 1 vessel were: Furuno (42 percent); Garmin (32 percent); TimeZero (24 percent); P-Sea Windplot (24 percent); and Simrad (22 percent). Nearly half of the respondents (45 percent) do not have more than one chartplotter on their vessel(s). However, of those that do, the most common additional chartplotters were Furuno (22 percent), Garmin (9 percent), and Simrad (9 percent).

For additional information, please contact Caroline Potter at (978) 281-9325 or caroline.potter@noaa.gov.

Habitat Actions

None at this time.

Protected Resources Actions

On August 17, 2026, NMFS filed a Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Analysis Assessing Modifications to the Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Plan to Reduce Mortality and Serious Injury of Large Whales in Commercial Trap/Pot and Gillnet Fisheries along the U.S. East Coast in the *Federal Register* (91 FR 53231). NMFS is beginning the rulemaking process to meet the mandate in the Consolidated Appropriations Act 2023, which requires NOAA Fisheries to have new regulations in place for the American lobster and Jonah crab trap/pot fisheries that are consistent with the Marine Mammal Protection Act by December 31, 2028.

The Notice of Intent initiated a 60-day comment period during which NMFS asked the public to identify issues it should address and the impacts of the measures they would like to be considered by submitting written comments through [regulations.gov](https://www.regulations.gov) through October 16, 2026, or to provide them at this meeting. For additional information, please contact Corie Grewal at corie.grewal@noaa.gov.

Research Permits and Acknowledgments - Applications Under

Review (For a comprehensive list of research permits and acknowledgements, refer to the [Greater Atlantic Exempted Fishing Permit Program Inventory](#)).

On June 23, 2026, NMFS received an Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) application from the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (MA DMF), New Hampshire Fish and Game, Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management, and Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection to trial a seasonal weekly aggregate catch limit for the Northern Region spiny dogfish fishery. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at christine.ford@noaa.gov.

On July 2, 2026, NMFS received an EFP application from Atlantic Capes Fisheries to continue its

surfclam and ocean quahog mixing amendment study. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at christine.ford@noaa.gov.

On July 24, 2026, NMFS received an EFP application from the Maine Center for Coastal Fisheries to conduct its annual Eastern Gulf of Maine Sentinel Survey. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at christine.ford@noaa.gov.

On August 4, 2026, NMFS received a Scallop Research-Set-Aside Letter of Authorization (RSA LOA) application from the Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen's Association to conduct compensation fishing in support of its protecting scallop seed project. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978) 281-9252 or Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov.

On August 17, 2026, NMFS received an EFP application from the Maine Department of Marine Resources (ME DMR) to continue its on-demand fishing trials. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at christine.ford@noaa.gov.

On August 19, 2026, NMFS received a Scallop RSA LOA application from the University of New Hampshire to conduct compensation fishing in support of its recruitment feasibility study. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978) 281-9252 or Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov.

On August 21, 2026, NMFS received a Scallop RSA LOA application from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute (WHOI) to conduct compensation fishing in support of its early-warning system to forecast scallop mortality risk study. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978) 281-9252 or Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov.

On August 24, 2026, NMFS received an EFP application from MA DMF to continue its on-demand trials. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at christine.ford@noaa.gov.

On August 31, 2026, NMFS received a Scallop RSA LOA application from WHOI to conduct compensation fishing in support of its predicting scallop recruitment project. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978) 281-9252 or Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov.

On September 1, 2026, NMFS received an EFP application from the Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC) to continue its on-demand fishing trials. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at christine.ford@noaa.gov.

On September 3, 2026, NMFS received a Temporary Possession Letter of Authorization (TPP) from the Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) to examine the effects of light emitting diodes on Jonah crabs. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at christine.ford@noaa.gov.

On September 4, 2026, NMFS received an EFP application from ME DMR to conduct its annual ventless lobster trap survey. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978)

281-9185 or at christine.ford@noaa.gov.

On September 8, 2026, NMFS received an Exempted Educational Activity Authorization application from the University of New England in support of its fisheries biology classes. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at christine.ford@noaa.gov.

On September 9, 2026, NMFS received a TPP application from CCE to assess the usability of a novel turtle excluder device in the summer flounder fishery. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at christine.ford@noaa.gov.

Research Permits and Acknowledgments – Application Review Completed

On June 24, 2026, NMFS issued an LOA to the Commercial Fisheries Research Foundation (CFRF) to conduct its South Fork Wind Farm ventless fish pot monitoring survey. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at christine.ford@noaa.gov.

On June 25, 2026, NMFS issued a Scallop RSA LOA to the Coonamessett Farm Foundation (CFF) to conduct compensation fishing in support of its offshore wind impacts to scallop project and its optical assessment of Georges Bank survey. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978) 281-9252 or Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov.

On June 25, 2026, NMFS issued a Scallop RSA LOA to the Virginia Institute of Marine Science to conduct compensation fishing in support of its scallop abundance and distribution assessment. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978) 281-9252 or Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov.

On June 29, 2026, NMFS issued a Scallop RSA LOA to ME DMR to conduct compensation fishing in support of its scallop dredge survey in the Northern Gulf of Maine. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978) 281-9252 or Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov.

On June 30 2026, NMFS issued an EFP to CFF to conduct compensation fishing in the Great South Channel Habitat Management Area, in support of its benthic habitat survey. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at christine.ford@noaa.gov.

On July 1, 2026, NMFS issued a Scallop RSA LOA to CFRF to conduct compensation fishing in support of its research fleet survey. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978) 281-9252 or Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov.

On July 16, 2026, NMFS issued an LOA to the University of Massachusetts, School of Marine Science and Technology, to conduct its 2026 demersal trawl survey of the Revolution and Sunrise Wind Development Areas. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978)

281-9252 or Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov.

On July 27, 2026, NMFS issued an LOA to CFF to conduct its seasonal survey of the scallop fishery on the eastern part of Georges Bank. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978) 281-9252 or Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov.

On August 10, 2026, NMFS issued an LOA to ME DMR to conduct its annual Maine and New Hampshire inshore trawl survey. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at christine.ford@noaa.gov.

On August 18, 2026, NMFS issued a Scientific Research Permit to NEFSC to conduct a deep-sea coral survey in the Gulf of Maine. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at christine.ford@noaa.gov.

On August 31, 2026, NMFS issued an EFP to CFRF to process tilefish at sea to collect conversion factor data. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978) 281-9252 or Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov.

On September 10, 2026, NMFS issued a Scallop RSA LOA to CFF to conduct compensation fishing in support of its seasonal survey of Georges Bank. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978) 281-9252 or Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov.

On September 10, 2026, NMFS issued an EFP to CFF to trial the use of electronic monitoring in the scallop fishery. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978) 281-9252 or Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov.