

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 December 2-4, 2025
Meeting of the
New England Fishery Management Council

November 25, 2025

New England Council Actions

Small-Mesh Multispecies

None at this time.

Groundfish

Extension of Emergency Measures for the Northeast Multispecies Fishery

On October 3, 2025, NMFS published a rule to extend the emergency measures implemented for the Northeast Multispecies FMP on May 2, 2025. This action was necessary to address an emergency presented by an absence of approved specifications and other measures for fishing year 2025. This rule extends all emergency measures in the May 2, 2025, emergency rule, and updates sector and common pool allocations to reflect the final rosters that were not available when the emergency rule was originally implemented. This temporary rule is valid through April 30, 2026. For additional information, please contact Heather Nelson at (978) 281-9334 or at heather.nelson@noaa.gov.

Scallops

None at this time.

Herring

2025 New Brunswick Weir Adjustment

On November 18, 2025, NMFS published a temporary rule (90 FR 51570) increasing the herring Area 1A sub-ACL (annual catch limit) from 783 to 1,783 mt and the ACL from 2,710 to 3,710 mt for the remainder of 2025. Because herring landings in the New Brunswick weir fishery were less than 2,722 mt through October 1, NOAA Fisheries is required by the regulations implementing the Atlantic Herring Fishery Management Plan to subtract 1,000 mt from the management uncertainty buffer and to reallocate it to the herring Area 1A sub-ACL and the ACL. This adjustment is effective November 17, 2025 through December 31, 2025 or until fully harvested. For additional information, please contact Ashley Trudeau at (978) 281-9252 or email at Ashley.Trudeau@noaa.gov.

Monkfish

None at this time.

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

Massachusetts Commercial Summer Flounder Fishery Closure

Effective November 7, 2025, NMFS closed the summer flounder commercial fishery in Massachusetts through December 31, 2025 (90 FR 50490). This action was triggered because the 2025 commercial summer flounder quota allocated to Massachusetts has been harvested. The Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries closed the state fishery starting on October 25, 2025. For additional information, please contact Matthew Rigdon at 978-281-9336 or Matthew.Rigdon@noaa.gov.

Spiny Dogfish

None at this time.

Surfclam and Ocean Quahog

None at this time.

Atlantic Bluefish

None at this time.

Tilefish

Blueline Tilefish Commercial Closure

Effective November 10, 2025, NMFS closed the blueline tilefish commercial fishery through December 31, 2025 (90 FR 50743). This action was triggered because blueline tilefish commercial landings exceeded 100 percent of the annual Total Allowable Landings (TAL). On July 11, 2025, NMFS had reduced the commercial possession limit in order to slow landings and keep the commercial fishery open as long as possible. For additional information, please contact Matthew Rigdon at 978-281-9336 or Matthew.Rigdon@noaa.gov.

Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish

2025-2026 Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Specifications

On September 23, 2025, NMFS published a final rule in the *Federal Register* (90 FR 45674) implementing 2025-2026 specifications for the Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fishery Management Plan. This action sets 2025 and projects 2026 specifications for the butterfish fishery, and reaffirms previously-projected 2025 specifications for the Atlantic mackerel, chub mackerel, *Illex* squid, and longfin squid fisheries. This action also reduces the minimum size for square mesh used on directed butterfish trawl trips from 3 inches to greater than 2 5/8 inches. The effective date for this rule is October 23, 2025. For additional information, please contact Maria Fenton at (978) 281-9196 or Maria.Fenton@noaa.gov.

Quota Transfers

On September 29, 2025, NMFS published a temporary rule in the *Federal Register* (90 FR 46528) to increase the commercial scup possession limit and quota for the Winter II season. The temporary rule transfers unused Winter I quota to Winter II, and increases the possession limit based upon the amount of quota being rolled over, as described in the final rule for 2025 Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass, and Bluefish Specifications (December 10, 2024; 89 FR 99138). Effective on October 1, 2025, the Winter II quota will be 4,162,331 lb, and the possession limit will be 15,000 lb per trip. For additional information, please contact Matthew Rigdon at (978) 281-9336 or Matthew.Rigdon@noaa.gov.

On September 19, 2025, and September 29, 2025, NMFS published *Federal Register* notices of summer flounder quota transfers from North Carolina to Massachusetts (90 FR 45154); and Massachusetts to Rhode Island (90 FR 46528). 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.

On September 29, 2025, NMFS published a notice in the *Federal Register* (90 FR 46527) of a bluefish quota transfer from New Jersey to North Carolina. The transfer was made to ensure that North Carolina would not exceed its 2025 bluefish quota. For additional information, please contact Matthew Rigdon at (978) 281-9336 or Matthew.Rigdon@noaa.gov.

Other Actions

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.

Habitat Actions

None at this time.

Protected Resources Actions

None at this time.

Research Permits and Acknowledgments - Applications Under Review

On September 19, 2025, NMFS received a Scientific Research Letter of Acknowledgement (LOA) application from the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS), to develop a regional industry-based bottom trawl survey (RIBTS). For additional information, please contact Elise Scholl at (978)281-9189 or at elise.scholl@noaa.gov.

On September 29, 2025, NMFS received an exempted fishing permit (EFP) application from the Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen's Alliance (CCCFA), to continue the use of alternative cage sizes and tags in support of the Surfclam and Ocean Quahog fishery. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at christine.ford@noaa.gov.

On October 16, 2025, NMFS received an LOA application from the University of Massachusetts (SMAST), to conduct a study of the connectivity and dispersal of black sea bass in Southern New England. For additional information, please contact Christine Ford at (978) 281-9185 or at christine.ford@noaa.gov.

On November 16, 2025, NMFS received an LOA application from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute (WHOI), to conduct a study of ecosystem dynamics and production on the Northeast U.S. shelf. For additional information, please contact Elise Scholl at (978)281-9189 or at elise.scholl@noaa.gov.

Research Permits and Acknowledgments – Application Review Completed

On September 30, 2025, NMFS issued an LOA to the Commercial Fisheries Research

Foundation, to conduct its annual South Fork Wind beam trawl monitoring survey. For additional information, please contact Elise Scholl at (978)281-9189 or at elise.scholl@noaa.gov.