#6

CORRESPONDENCE

November 13, 2018

Michael Pentony
Regional Administrator
National Marine Fisheries Service
Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930

Re: September 25, 2018 Correspondence concerning current ASM coverage levels

Dear Mike,

On behalf of Northeast Fishery Sector I, II, III, IV, VI, VII, VIII, IX and XII please accept the following response to your September 25, 2018 correspondence concerning the Sectors current realization of the 15% monitoring target coverage for FY 2018.

This matter was 1st brought to the attention of NEF Sector Mangers at the September 5, 2018 in person Sector Manager meeting held at GARFO. At that time GARFO staff presented the current concerns to all participants which prompted a thoughtful and detailed discussion regarding various issues that were impacting individual Sector's ability to meet the 15% monitoring target coverage rate. These issues ranged from ASM providers staffing constraints, need for ASM training courses to be held, low trip occurrence compared to previous fishing years, PTNS compliance issues and Trip Start Hail declaration mistakes. Needless to say there are countless elements; some within a Sector's ability to address while others are not, that are contributing to individual sectors being below average on their monitoring coverage.

All NEF Sector Managers walked away from the September 5th meeting with a sincere focus to work with their Sectors, ASM Provider and the Agency to ensure any and all elements are being appropriately addressed. The NESSN Program Director has also been working with NEF Sector Managers to better understand and address sector specific challenges towards meeting the 15% monitoring target coverage rate.

In working through these matters we have discovered that there is not one specific element consistent across all NEF sectors. Some NEF Sectors are on target to reach the 15% coverage rate, other NEF Sectors have no known compliance issues but need to work with their provider to ensure more trips when selected are monitored not waived between now and April 30, 2018; finally some NEF Sectors need to work with a small segment of their membership and their providers to get compliance and monitoring rates up.

Your September 25th correspondence provided each NEF Sector with more detailed sector specific issues concerning this problem. In the letters to the NEF Sectors the Agency included a

Northeast Sector Service Network
1 Blackburn Center, 2nd Floor
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CbK, JC 11/9/18

copy of the Sectors PTNS Compliance Report for trips occurring May through August. These compliance reports document situations where a vessel may have failed to pre-trip, refused to take a monitor and/or had a no call/no show. These are overarching categorizations which capture a host of issues, some intentional some not. When we compare the total amount of issues represented in the compliance report to the total groundfish trips taken we see the following level of compliance related issues:

	Total GF Trips	Total PTNS Issues May-August 2018	Compliance percentage
2-NEFS	597	3	0.5%
3-NEFS	138	6	4.3%
6-NEFS	34	0	0.0%
8-NEFS	97	5	5.2%
12-NEFS	267	0	0.0%

NEF Sectors take all of these matters seriously. While digging further into this information we have discovered that all of these issues can be corrected with effective communication and reminders to the members involved. We have also determined that in some situations the issues in question stem from simple mistakes such as occasional failures to notify NMFS that a vessel did not go fishing for a variety of reasons including weather and medical issues.

Furthermore, NEF Sectors have also been engaging with their selected ASM providers to evaluate how they can work to ensure that sectors below target are able to get their overall target coverage rate by the end of the fishing year. While we see places where improvements can be made, we do not believe any sector member is intentionally employing observer avoidance behavior based on the information we have available to us.

As highlighted in this letter, the NEF Sectors have already embarked on addressing numerous elements contributing to low monitoring rates. However, not all responsibility or blame rests on sectors when it comes to this issue. Provider related issues, failure to schedule requested training courses, and communication challenges equally contributed to the current issue. We will continue to do what is within our control to mitigate this issue, but we hope that GARFO and NEFSC equally look internally on ways they can help address the current issue and develop protocols to minimize its potential occurrence in the future.

To conclude, the NEF Sectors understand the 15% target coverage rate requirement for FY 2018. Each of the Sectors intends to continue to work with the Agency, the Observer Program, ASM Providers, NESSN and NEF Sector Members to ensure each Sector is meeting this requirement.

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Thank you,

Program Director, Northeast Sector Service Network

CC:
New England Fishery Management Council
Northeast Seafood Coalition
I, Northeast Fishery Sector Inc.
II, Northeast Fishery Sector Inc.
III, Northeast Fishery Sector Inc.
IV, Northeast Fishery Sector Inc. (lease only)
VI, Northeast Fishery Sector Inc.
VII, Northeast Fishery Sector Inc.
VIII, Northeast Fishery Sector Inc.
IX, Northeast Fishery Sector Inc. (lease only)
XII, Northeast Fishery Sector Inc.

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NOV 13 2018

Thomas A. Nies
Executive Director
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Dear Tom:

The Council recommended that we add the large-mesh belly panel (LMBP) to the list of approved gears for other non-groundfish fisheries when the accountability measure is triggered for southern windowpane flounder and for small-mesh fisheries when the Georges Bank yellowtail flounder accountability measure is triggered. Tomorrow we will publish a proposed rule for the use of this gear for small-mesh fisheries when the Georges Bank yellowtail flounder accountability measure is triggered.

We have reviewed the results of Cornell University's 2015 study, and the Groundfish Plan Development Team's (PDT) analysis that the Council submitted with its request. Based on this analysis, we are not proposing to approve the LMBP gear for use in the windowpane accountability measure area at this time because it does not meet the Council's gear performance standard. As currently written, the regulations require that any new selective gear reduce the catch of *all* stocks of concern (defined as stocks that are overfished or experiencing overfishing) by at least 50 percent, on a trip-by-trip basis (50 CFR 648.85(b)(6)(iv)(J)(*2*)(*i*)). While the study and PDT analysis demonstrates a sufficient reduction in southern windowpane flounder catch, it does not sufficiently reduce catch of yellowtail or winter flounder.

We understand that this gear could provide important flexibility to non-groundfish fisheries when faced with southern windowpane flounder accountability measures. The Council's gear performance standard was originally developed to evaluate gear for use by groundfish vessels in special programs (U.S./Canada Special Access Program and B Days-at-sea) that facilitated increased access to healthy stocks. The southern windowpane accountability measure does not provide new access to an area, but instead is designed to limit catch of that specific species to address the operational and biological issues related to the sub-ACL overage. The Council could consider creating a new gear performance standard, consistent with these accountability measure goals, to focus on evaluating the catch reductions of the species the accountability measure was designed for, rather than all overfished/overfishing stocks. If the Council chooses to adopt this modified approach to defining species of concern for gear performance standards for accountability measures, we may be able to consider approval of this gear in a future action.

If you have any questions please contact Sarah Heil, Groundfish Team Supervisor, at (978) 281-9257.

Sincerely,

Michael Pentony
Regional Administrator

cc: Christopher Moore, Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

Enclosures

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NOV 1 2018

Thomas A. Nies, Executive Director
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street
Newburyport, MA 01950

Dear Tom:

Thank you for your July 27, 2018, letter regarding Georges Bank (GB) winter flounder. As you know, the Council adopted a rebuilding plan for this stock in 2010 with a target rebuild date of 2017.

Results from recent GB winter flounder stock assessments have been highly variable (see attached table 1). The stock assessments in 2011 and 2014 estimated the spawning stock biomass (SSB) to be over 80 percent of its target SSB (SSB_{MSY}). However, the 2015 assessment significantly changed our understanding of the stock, estimating stock size at only 43 percent of its target. At that time, the stock was no longer expected to rebuild by 2017, even in the absence of fishing. This change was not due to a significant decline in biomass, but rather the emergence of a major retrospective pattern that led to previous overestimates of stock biomass.

Based on the 2017 assessment, overfishing is not occurring and the stock is no longer overfished; however, the estimated stock size is only 52 percent of SSB_{MSY}. GB winter flounder biomass is projected to decline below the overfished threshold in 2017, 2018, and 2019 (see attached table 2). Therefore, consistent with section 304(e)(1) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA), we are notifying the Council that this stock is approaching an overfished condition. Should this stock become overfished, based on realized catch, steps must be taken under MSA sections 304(e)(3) and (4) to rebuild the stock.

As your letter notes, a subsequent review of the 2017 assessment's biomass time series shows GB winter flounder was not below the overfished threshold in 2007, nor in any year since (see attached table 3). With this information, you stated the Council may wish to consider discontinuing the GB winter flounder rebuilding program. While the National Standard 1 Guidelines do provide for discontinuing a rebuilding plan under this scenario, because the stock is approaching an overfished condition, it is not advisable for the Council to do so. Biomass estimates show the stock declined considerably in 2016, compared to 2015, and is projected to continue to decline. While assessment results for this stock have varied, the Council should consider the retrospective pattern that led to overestimates of stock biomass and contributed to these recent changes, along with recent low recruitment. Further, if the stock becomes overfished based on the fall 2019 operational assessment, the Council would be required to develop and implement a rebuilding plan.

I recommend that the Council revise the GB winter flounder rebuilding plan in Framework Adjustment 58 based on work the Groundfish Plan Development Team has already completed. Once the results of the 2019 operational assessments are available, we will review stock status for all groundfish stocks, and notify the Council of any changes. If you have any questions about this guidance, or revising the rebuilding plan for Georges Bank winter flounder, please contact Sarah Heil, Groundfish Team Lead at the Greater Atlantic Fisheries Office, at (978) 281-9257.

Sincerely,

Michael Pentony
Regional Administrator

cc: Dr. Jon Hare, Director, Northeast Fisheries Science Center

Table 1: Recent GB Winter Flounder Assessment Results

Assessment	Terminal Year	F/F_{MSY}	Overfishing	SSB (mt)	SSB/SSB_{MSY}	Overfished	Retrospective Adjustment
2017 Operational	2016	0.22	No	3,946	0.52	No	Yes
2015 Operational	2014	1.45	Yes	2,883	0.43	Yes	Yes
2014 Operational	2013	0.68	No	6,947	0.86	No	No
2011 SAW/SARC 52	2010	0.36	No	9,703	0.82	No	No
2008 GARM III	2007	1.08	Yes	4,964	0.31	Yes	No

F= fishing mortality, F_{MSY}= fishing mortality associated with maximum sustainable yield, SSB= biomass, and SSB_{MSY}= biomass associated with maximum sustainable yield

Table 2: Short-Term Projections of Spawning Stock Biomass Compared to Target Spawning Stock Biomass, from the 2017 Assessment.

Year	SSB (mt)	SSB/SSB_{MSY}
2017	3,026 (2,307 to 3,875)	0.40
2018	2,450 (1,765 to 3,260)	0.31
2019	2,582 (1,693 to 4,070)	0.30
2020	4,014 (1,982 to 9,535)	0.45

Projections assume US and Canadian catch=ABC. The 95-percent confidence interval is shown in parentheses.

Table 3: Recent Spawning Stock Biomass Estimates, from the 2017 Assessment

Year	SSB (mt)	SSB/SSB_{MSY}
2007	4,411	0.58
2008	4,061	0.53
2009	4,448	0.59
2010	5,291	0.70
2011	5,691	0.75
2012	5,625	0.74
2013	5,281	0.69
2014	5,800	0.76
2015	7,116	0.94
2016	3,946	0.52

The 2016 SSB_{MSY} estimate is retrospective-adjusted because the adjusted value is outside the 90-percent confidence interval for the unadjusted value.

From: Marc
Sent: Sunday, October 28, 2018 11:29 AM
To: Jim Weinberg
Cc: Richard McBride; Kent.Smedbol@dfo-mpo.gc.ca; Doug Grout; Tom Nies; John Quinn
Subject: Atlantic Cod Stock Structure Working Group

Dear Dr. Weinberg,

I am a fisherman out of Portsmouth NH that targets groundfish (haddock, pollock, cod, etc.) when the regulations allow me to fish.

I noticed that there are no fishermen (commercial nor recreational) at the table as members of the cod working group..

There should be at least one member of both the commercial and recreational fishery represented in the working group with a seat at the table.

This would provide experience and input from the stakeholders that this working group may not have. I have concerns that without a fisherman's perspective the objectives below may not capture the stakeholders opinions and input.

I understand that the selection process was based on the guidance on selection of a SAW working group. However this criteria may be too restrictive for this group since it excluded fishermen.

My recommendation would be to solicit a member of both the commercial and recreational fishery and add them to the cod structure working group. If the group agrees, the criteria should be experience with fishing for cod.

Thank you for considering this request.

Marc Stettner

Portsmouth NH

•Identify high priority research that would contribute significantly to the issue of cod stock structure.

•Broadly consider potential management actions to meet management objectives including but not limited to maintaining status quo, altering stock boundaries, spatial and temporal restrictions, and stock composition analyses.

JC 10/31/18

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October 26, 2018

Cassie Canastra
Northeast Fishery Sector VII
62 Hassey Street
New Bedford, MA 02740

Dear Ms. Canastra:

On August 15, 2018, we received notice that the Northeast Fishery Sector VII Board of Directors had voted to make the F/V *Sao Jacinto* an active sector member, authorized to harvest sector annual catch entitlements. On August 30, 2018, the Northeast Fishery Sector VII notified us that it would be contracting with A.I.S. Inc. to provide at-sea monitoring services. The contract was provided to us on October 5, 2018. To acknowledge these changes, and with your concurrence, we amended the Northeast Fishery Sector VII operations plan approved for fishing years 2017 and 2018.

Additionally, we updated the Northeast Fishery Sector VII operations plan to include additional sector-specific exemptions, offloading ports, updated re-direction of effort and consolidation and redistribution of ACE, the revised Board of Directors, and the sector contacts table, provided to us on October 9, 2018.

Enclosed is a copy of the amendment, which you should append to your copies of the approved operations plan. If you have any questions, please contact Liz Sullivan at 978-282-8493.

Sincerely,

Peter Christopher
Acting Assistant Regional Administrator
for Sustainable Fisheries

cc. Tom Nies, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council

Enclosure

jc, rgf, rf 10/29/18

Stellwagen Bank Charter Boat Association
P.O.BOX 1230
Marshfield, MA 02050

New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street
Newburyport, MA
01950

October 23, 2018

"Comments on Recreational Measures for Gulf of Maine cod and Haddock"

Dear Dr. Quinn,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Stellwagen Bank Charter Boat Association with over one hundred and fifty members consisting of both charter boat captains and recreational anglers. I want to let you know we are very concerned regarding what the recreational measures for Gulf of Maine cod and haddockduring the 2019 fishing year even though nothing has been proposed.

A reminder of what the recreational bag limits for Gulf of Maine cod and haddock have been since 2010 areoutlined in the table below.

Bag Limits on GOM Cod and Haddock from 2010 – 2018

Year	Bag Limit GOM Cod	Bag Limit GOM Haddock
2010	10	No Bag Limit
2011	10	No Bag Limit
2012	9	No Bag Limit
2013	9	No Bag Limit
2014	9	3
2015	0	3
2016	1 Aug/Sep	15
2017	0	12
2018	0	12

Note: This does not include the closed seasons which include zero possession of GOM Haddock from 17 September – October 1st and 1 March – 14 Apr

JC 10/26/18

Looking at the historical bag limits since 2014, the regulations have had a dramatic impact for anyone who recreationally fishes for cod and haddock in the GOM. It was bad enough going from no bag limit on haddock during 2013 followed by a three fish limit during 2014 thinking it could not get worse. Well we were wrong and during 2015 were handed a zero possession of cod and a three haddock forcing many recreational anglers to quit fishing offshore and also many charter and party boats out of business. During 2016 the haddock bag limit was raised to fifteen fish per person and during the last two years reduced to twelve due to the fear we would catch too many GOM cod and exceed the ACL due to dead discards. This included not allowing the recreational sector to harvest approximatelythe 2100 extra metric tons of GOM HaddockACL.

Since 2015 recreational anglers have had virtually zero possession of GOM cod with the exception of 01 fish per person during Aug/Sep 2016 when there is little effort. I would imagine you are also hearing what anglers are telling us, they are observing lots of codfish in the Gulf of Maine. Pictures are being posted on social media of large market cod being caught and released while fishing for haddock or tuna from Maine to Stellwagen Bank. A dragger from the North Shore posted photos on Facebook of 2,000 lbs. of beautiful market size cod caught on a twenty minute towand later repeated this a few days later at another location.

While private anglers in the GOM and charter/party boats have a zero possession limit on cod, boats fishing south of 42 degrees north are landing ten fish limits of cod. They are filling not only totes with fish,but also boats with charters. Why would a recreational angler desire to charter a boat in the GOM when they can fish south to Cape Cod and land ten cod and have no bag limit on haddock? Numerous studies have proven these two stocks mix and move between the Gulf of Maine and Southern New England, Georges Bank locations.

Green Harbor, MA located in Marshfield use to have 15-20 boats taking out charters each weekend from March through June. It was historically known as the place to go to book a charter to fish Stellwagen Bank for cod and haddock. Today after closed seasons, zero cod possession, bag limits as low of only 3 haddock, many charter boat businesses have folded due to being unable to attract customers. With the current day situation the fleet is now reduced to just a handful of charter boats. Many private boats won't even leave the dock, claiming it is not worth the fuel to fish offshore with the current regulations.

The vessels running charters especially on six pack boats are currently struggling at the present time with zero possession of cod, haddock closed and now commercial Giant Bluefin Tuna shut down they are tied to the dock especially with no tautog or other southern species available.

We are asking the Recreational Advisory Panel, Groundfish Advisory Panel, Groundfish, Committee, New England Fisheries Management Council and Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO) to understand the economic loss and impact these regulations have caused, not only for the for hire sector but also the impact to marinas, tackle shops etc.

If we were not seeing cod we could certainly understand further restrictions, but boats are catching cod and seeing plenty of fish on the bottom. At a minimum the NEFMC should provide the recreational angler a reasonable bag limit of cod and eliminate the fall closure of haddock in the GOM. We remain frustrated hearing the same information each year at the RAP of exceeding the ACL based on bad MRIP data and other surveys.

Finally, we respectfully request the Recreational Advisory Panel report directly to the NEFMC and not the Groundfish Advisory Panel as there are many issues pertaining to recreational fisheries which are not groundfish related. These include everything from ASFMC managed species such as striped bass, black sea bass, summer flounder and HMS species. How can the groundfish committee have time to address other concerns of the recreational sector?

I want to thank you for your time and allowing us to comment on this matter. I am sure as we have additional meetings and proposals we will continue to make comments. If you have any questions please contact me anytime.

Sincerely,

David Waldrip
Stellwagen Bank Charter Boat Association

cc: Tom, Nies, Executive Director, NEFMC
Michael Pentony, Administrator (GARFO)
Terry Stockwell, Vice Chairman, NEFMC
Barry Gibson, Recreational Fishing Alliance, New England Representative
Michael Pierdinock, Recreational Fishing Alliance, MA Representative
Frank Blount, NEFMC, RAP Chairman
Dr. David Pierce, Director MA Department of Marine Fisheries

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OCT 16 2018

Thomas A. Nies
Executive Director
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Dear Tom:

We recently completed groundfish year-end accounting for the 2017 fishing year, and the final report is attached to this letter. The report is unchanged from the version we posted prior to the September Council meeting.

Gulf of Maine Cod

In fishing year 2017, catch exceeded the total annual catch limit (ACL) and acceptable biological catch (ABC) for Gulf of Maine cod. The overfishing limit (OFL) was not exceeded. Total catch of Gulf of Maine cod was 612.6 mt; the 2017 OFL was 667 mt. The Gulf of Maine cod ACL was exceeded by 140 mt (29 percent) and the ABC was exceeded by 113 mt (20 percent). Table 1 summarizes the overage and provides a breakdown of catch by fishery component.

Table 1: Fishing year 2017 Gulf of Maine cod catch, sub-ACLs, and sub-component values (amounts presented in mt).

Components with ACLs and sub-ACLs: With Accountability Measures (AMs)						Sub-components: No AMs	
	ACL	Groundfish Fishery	Sector	Common Pool	Recreational	State Water	Other
	A to E	A+B+C	A	B	C	D	E
2017 Catch Limit	473	437	271	9	157	27	10
2017 Catch	612.6	514.3	260.6	8.2	245.4	69.5	28.9

A combination of excess catch from the recreational fishery, the state waters sub-component, and the other sub-component contributed to the Gulf of Maine cod overage. In 2017, the state waters catch was 69.5 mt, and only 27 mt was set-aside for the state sub-component. At the September 18, 2018, Groundfish Committee meeting, the Massachusetts representative announced that the state is considering additional management measures to reduce state waters catch of Gulf of Maine cod.

The recreational fishery exceeded its sub-ACL by 88 mt despite adjusting measures for the 2017-fishing year. As you know, we already addressed this overage by adjusting recreational measures for fishing year 2018 to achieve, but not exceed, the 2018 recreational sub-ACL. We have also started the process of evaluating recreational measures for the 2019 fishing year.

Excess catch attributed to the other sub-component also contributed to the overage. The other sub-component includes catch from fisheries that do not have a sub-ACL, including landings associated with scientific research. Seventy-eight percent (22.3 mt) of the 28.9 mt 2017 other sub-component catch was categorized as research landings. These landings are associated with projects issued a Letter of Acknowledgement (LOA) or Scientific Research Permit (SRP). Research catch in 2017 was unusually higher than the most recent 5-year average (2.4 mt). We are actively monitoring research catch, and 2018 cod catch through August is less than 3 mt. Based on current catch levels, we do not expect research catch in 2018 to reach the levels observed in 2017.

Amendment 16 prescribes a process for addressing overages from vessels fishing outside of the allocated fishery. If the overall ACL for a stock is exceeded, then the amount of the overage due to catch from vessels fishing outside of the allocated fishery shall be distributed among allocated components of the Northeast multispecies fishery based on each allocated component's share of that stock's ACL. For example, in 2017, the sector component was allocated 57 percent of the groundfish ACL and will be responsible for 57 percent of the state water and other sub-components overage. Each component's share of the overage is then added to that component's catch to determine the net overage amount. If the sum exceeds the component's sub-ACL, the respective AMs for that component of the fishery will be triggered.

The AM for sectors and the common pool is a pound-for-pound payback. The AM for the recreational fishery is the adjustment of management measures in the next fishing year. Application of this AM will result in a net reduction of the 2019 sector sub-ACL by 28.8 mt and a 0.4-mt reduction of the common pool sub-ACL. These amounts are not expected to change, but finalized values and the adjusted ACLs will be provided in the Framework 58 proposed rule.

Scallop Sub-Annual Catch Limits

The scallop fishery exceeded three of its groundfish sub-ACLs: Georges Bank yellowtail; Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic yellowtail, and; Northern windowpane flounder. These overages are shown in Table 2 below. The total ACL was not exceeded for any of these stocks, and therefore no AMs have been triggered.

Table 2: Groundfish catch as a percentage of the sub-ACL for each groundfish stock allocated to the scallop fishery.

Stock	Scallop Fishery Sub-ACL (mt)	Catch (mt)	Catch as a Percent of the Scallop Fishery sub-ACL
GB Yellowtail Flounder	32	52.6	164.3%
Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic Yellowtail Flounder	4	4.3	104.1%
Northern Windowpane Flounder	36	44.1	122.4%
Southern Windowpane Flounder	209	143.9	68.8%

The scallop fishery exceeded its sub-ACL of Georges Bank yellowtail by 64 percent. This overage would normally trigger an accountability measure for the scallop fishery. However, there is currently a temporary regulatory provision (in effect for fishing years 2017 and 2018) that exempts the scallop fishery from this AM as long as the total ACL is not exceeded. No

scallop accountability measures will be triggered as a result of 2017 groundfish catch because the total ACL for Georges Bank yellowtail flounder was not exceeded.

The Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic yellowtail flounder overage is minor and occurred only after the scallop sub-ACL was reduced during the fishing year. During the fishing year, we projected that the scallop fishery would catch less than 90 percent of its sub-ACL. In such cases, the regulations allow us to reduce the scallop sub-ACL by an amount we expect to remain uncaught by the scallop fishery and increase the groundfish sub-ACL by the same amount. Based on our projections, we reduced the scallop sub-ACL by 29.9 mt, leaving a sub-ACL of 4.1 mt. The scallop fishery caught 4.3 mt, exceeding the sub-ACL by 0.2 mt. This minor overage normally would not require an AM because it does not exceed 50 percent of the sub-ACL, and the overall 256 mt ACL was not exceeded (overall catch totaled only 14.3 mt). The temporary 2018 threshold was also not met.

Recreational Catch

Recreational catch of Georges Bank cod, Gulf of Maine winter flounder, and pollock was greater than 5 percent of the total catch in fishing year 2017 (see Table 3). Recreational catch of these stocks is significant and may warrant further consideration by the Council. Amendment 16 specified that additional sub-ACLs may be considered when recreational catch is greater than 5 percent of total catch.

Table 3: Fishing year 2017 recreational catch, total catch, and recreational catch as a percentage of total catch.

Stock	Total Catch (mt)	Recreational Catch (mt)	Recreational Catch as a Percentage of Total Catch
Georges Bank Cod	522.5	52.9	10%
Gulf of Maine Winter Flounder	308.1	57.6	19%
Pollock	4,421.4	1,404.8	32%

We only recently completed the 2017 year-end accounting and wanted to provide the final catch report to you as quickly as possible to support and inform development of Framework 58. My staff will continue to work through the Groundfish Plan Development Team to review the final 2017 report. If you have any questions on the report, please contact Sarah Heil, Groundfish Team Supervisor, at (978) 281-9257.

Sincerely,

for Michael Pentony
Regional Administrator

cc: Dr. Jon Hare, Science and Research Director, Northeast Fisheries Science Center

Enclosure

Table 4: FY 2017 Northeast Multispecies Landings (mt)

Stock	**Total Landings**	Groundfish Fishery	Sector[1]	Common Pool	Recreational	Midwater Trawl Herring Fishery	Scallop Fishery	Small Mesh Fisheries	State Water	Other
	A to H	A+B+C	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
GB Cod	499.6	432.8	426.7	6.1					9.2	57.6
GOM Cod	368.3	276.8	246.5	3.8	26.6				68.7	22.7
GB Haddock	3,581.0	3,526.3	3,526.1	0.3		47.9			0.3	6.4
GOM Haddock	2,740.5	2,700.7	2,153.5	13.6	533.7	-			25.6	14.2
GB Yellowtail Flounder	30.9	30.9	30.9	-			-	-	-	-
SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder	14.3	13.3	9.4	3.9			-		1.0	0.0
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	261.7	187.4	179.9	7.5					71.5	2.8
Plaice	1,045.3	1,007.6	998.7	9.0					34.1	3.6
Witch Flounder	497.3	447.5	439.8	7.7					48.0	1.8
GB Winter Flounder	377.0	376.9	376.9	-					-	0.1
GOM Winter Flounder	296.3	110.7	107.9	2.8					183.2	2.4
SNE/MA Winter Flounder	428.5	401.6	364.6	37.0					22.2	4.7
Redfish	4,628.7	4,618.5	4,618.4	0.1					3.0	7.2
White Hake	2,020.1	2,015.7	2,015.1	0.5					1.0	3.5
Pollock	3,554.8	2,970.4	2,951.9	18.4					287.4	297.0
Northern Windowpane	0.0	0.0	0.0	-			-		0.0	-
Southern Windowpane	13.5	0.1	0.0	0.1			-		13.3	0.1
Ocean Pout	0.1	-	-	-					-	0.1
Halibut	60.8	25.7	25.6	0.1					30.0	5.1
Wolffish	0.0	0.0	0.0	-					-	-

[1]Landings do not include 0.85 mt of halibut corrected after data were finalized.
Values in metric tons of live weight
Sector and common pool include estimate of missing dealer reports

Any value for a non-allocated species may include landings of that stock or misreporting of species and/or stock area. These are northern windowpane, southern windowpane, ocean pout, halibut, and wolffish.

Source: NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
September 12, 2018, run date of July 31, 2018

These data are the best available to NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Data sources for this report include: (1) Vessels via VMS; (2) Vessels via vessel logbook reports; (3) Dealers via Dealer Electronic reporting; (4) Observers and at-sea monitors via the Northeast Fisheries Observer Program. Differences with previous reports are due to corrections made to the database.

Table 5: FY 2017 Northeast Multispecies Estimated Discards (mt)

Stock	**Total Discards**	Groundfish Fishery	Sector	Common Pool	Recreational	Midwater Trawl Herring Fishery	Scallop Fishery	Small Mesh Fisheries	State Water	Other
	A to H	A+B+C	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
GB Cod	22.8	13.1	12.8	0.3					0.6	9.2
GOM Cod	244.4	237.4	14.1	4.5	218.8				0.7	6.2
GB Haddock	749.8	564.2	564.2	-		-			12.0	173.5
GOM Haddock	405.1	359.3	97.5	0.5	261.3	-			3.8	42.0
GB Yellowtail Flounder	53.0	0.1	0.1	-			52.6	0.4	-	0.0
SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder	10.1	1.1	1.1	0.0			4.3		0.2	4.6
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	49.9	18.3	16.4	1.9					0.4	31.1
Plaice	87.6	70.7	70.3	0.4					2.5	14.4
Witch Flounder	93.9	47.2	46.7	0.5					1.7	45.0
GB Winter Flounder	13.9	0.7	0.7	-					-	13.2
GOM Winter Flounder	11.7	3.1	3.1	0.0					2.1	6.6
SNE/MA Winter Flounder	122.0	7.7	7.4	0.3					1.1	113.2
Redfish	32.9	29.0	28.1	0.9					1.2	2.7
White Hake	15.5	7.7	7.7	-					0.3	7.5
Pollock	866.6	38.1	38.1	0.0					348.2	480.4
Northern Windowpane	87.4	35.1	33.9	1.2			44.1		0.5	7.7
Southern Windowpane	427.4	71.3	66.3	5.0			143.9		11.3	200.9
Ocean Pout	28.1	11.1	10.7	0.4					0.3	16.6
Halibut	46.6	42.6	42.6	-					1.6	2.4
Wolffish	1.7	1.6	1.6	0.0					0.1	0.0

Values in metric tons of live weight
Sector and common pool include estimate of missing dealer reports

Source: NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
September 12, 2018, run date of July 31, 2018

These data are the best available to NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Data sources for this report include: (1) Vessels via VMS; (2) Vessels via vessel logbook reports; (3) Dealers via Dealer Electronic reporting; (4) Observers and at-sea monitors via the Northeast Fisheries Observer Program. Differences with previous reports are due to corrections made to the database.

Table 6: FY 2017 Northeast Multispecies Estimated State Water Sub-Component Catch Detail (mt)

Stock	Total			Commercial			Recreational		
	Catch	Landings	Discard	Total Catch	Landings[1]	Discard[1]	Total Catch	Landings	Discard
	A+B+C+D	A+C	B+D	A+B	A	B	C+D	C	D
GB Cod	9.7	9.2	0.6	7.0	6.6	0.4	2.8	2.6	0.2
GOM Cod	69.5	68.7	0.7	69.5	68.7	0.7	-*	-*	-*
GB Haddock	12.3	0.3	12.0	12.3	0.3	12.0			
GOM Haddock	29.4	25.6	3.8	29.4	25.6	3.8	-*	-*	-*
GB Yellowtail Flounder	-	-	-	-	-	-			
SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder	1.1	1.0	0.2	1.1	1.0	0.2			
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	71.9	71.5	0.4	71.9	71.5	0.4			
Plaice	36.6	34.1	2.5	36.6	34.1	2.5			
Witch Flounder	49.7	48.0	1.7	49.7	48.0	1.7			
GB Winter Flounder	-	-	-	-	-	-			
GOM Winter Flounder	185.3	183.2	2.1	127.9	127.8	0.1	57.4	55.4	2.0
SNE/MA Winter Flounder	23.2	22.2	1.1	20.7	20.4	0.4	2.5	1.8	0.7
Redfish	4.1	3.0	1.2	4.1	3.0	1.2			
White Hake	1.2	1.0	0.3	1.2	1.0	0.3			
Pollock	635.5	287.4	348.2	4.9	3.4	1.6	630.6	284.0	346.6
Northern Windowpane	0.5	0.0	0.5	0.5	0.0	0.5			
Southern Windowpane	24.5	13.3	11.3	24.5	13.3	11.3			
Ocean Pout	0.3	-	0.3	0.3	-	0.3			
Halibut	31.7	30.0	1.6	31.7	30.0	1.6			
Wolffish	0.1	-	0.1	0.1	-	0.1			

*Recreational catch of GOM cod and haddock in state waters is attributed to the recreational sub-ACL (see Tables 1 - 5), and so is not included above.

[1]January through April 2018 commercial catches are estimated.

State discard rate estimates based on discard rates on federal trips

Values in metric tons of live weight

Source: NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office

September 10, 2018, run date of August 31, 2018

These data are the best available to NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Data sources for this report include: (1) Vessels via VMS; (2) Vessels via vessel logbook reports; (3) Dealers via Dealer Electronic reporting; (4) Observers and at-sea monitors via the Northeast Fisheries Observer Program. Differences with previous reports are due to corrections made to the database.

Table 7: FY 2017 Northeast Multispecies Other Sub-Component Catch Detail (mt)

Stock	Total Catch	SCALLOP[1]	FLUKE	HAGFISH	HERRING	LOBSTER/ CRAB[2]	MACKEREL	MENHADEN	MONKFISH	RESEARCH	SCUP
GB Cod	66.8	5.3	0.1	-	0.0	0.1	0.0	-	0.9	8.1	0.1
GOM Cod	28.9	0.1	-	-	0.1	0.0	-	-	1.1	22.3	0.0
GB Haddock	180.0	6.2	1.0	-	11.5*	-	0.0	-	0.1	6.5	1.0
GOM Haddock	56.2	-	-	-	4.5*	0.0	-	-	0.0	13.4	0.0
GB Yellowtail Flounder	0.0	-*	-	-	-*	-	-	-	-	0.0	-
SNE Yellowtail Flounder	4.6	-*	0.7	-	0.1	-	0.0	-	0.1	0.0	0.7
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	33.9	16.8	-	0.2	1.5	0.0	-	-	0.0	2.6	0.0
American Plaice	18.0	6.4	0.1	-	0.5	-	0.0	-	0.0	3.3	0.2
Witch Flounder	46.8	12.7	1.9	0.0	1.7	0.0	0.0	-	0.1	1.7	1.8
GB Winter Flounder	13.3	8.7	0.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0	-
GOM Winter Flounder	9.0	3.8	-	-	0.3	0.0	-	-	0.0	2.1	-
SNE Winter Flounder	118.0	48.6	5.5	-	3.2	0.0	0.0	-	0.5	0.0	5.6
Redfish	9.9	-	0.1	-	0.2	0.0	0.0	-	0.0	6.6	0.1
White Hake	11.0	1.1	0.1	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.0	-	0.1	2.6	0.1
Pollock	777.4	0.1	0.0	-	0.2	-	0.0	-	0.4	0.9	0.0
Northern Windowpane	7.7	-*	0.0	-	0.3	-	-	-	0.0	0.1	0.2
Southern Windowpane	201.0	-*	27.8	-	6.2	-	0.1	-	2.5	0.0	26.0
Ocean Pout	16.8	2.5	1.4	-	0.4	-	0.0	-	0.1	0.0	1.3
Halibut	7.5	0.5	0.0	-	0.0	3.5	0.0	-	1.0	0.1	0.0
Wolffish	0.0	0.0	-	-	0.0	-	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	-

Values in metric tons of live weight

[1]Based on scallop fishing year March 2017 through March 2018

[2]Landings only. Discard estimates not applicable. Lobster/crab discards were not attributed to the ACL, consistent with the most recent assessments for these stocks used to set the respective quotas.

*Some or all catch attributed to separate sub-ACL as shown in Tables 1 through 5, and so is not included above.

Source: NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
August 31, 2018, run date of August 21, 2018

These criteria are used by the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO) to categorize trips to attribute groundfish catch for groundfish ACL accounting. By necessity these rules cannot capture the full complexity of categorizing every trip taken by vessels fishing in the Northeast. Further analysis should be completed to definitively attribute groundfish catch to an FMP for management purposes.

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Table 7: FY 2017 Northeast Multispecies Other Sub-Component Catch Detail (mt)

Stock	Total Catch	SHRIMP	SQUID	SQUID/ WHITING	SURFCLAM	WHELK/ CONCH	WHITING	UNCATEGORIZED	RECREATIONAL
GB Cod	66.8	0.0	0.5	0.1	0.1	-	0.0	1.5	50.1
GOM Cod	28.9	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.0	0.2	4.5	-*
GB Haddock	180.0	2.8	113.8	13.1	7.5	-	0.0	16.4	-
GOM Haddock	56.2	0.1	2.5	11.3	5.1	0.0	6.0	13.4	-*
GB Yellowtail Flounder	0.0	-	-*	-*	0.0	-	-	-	
SNE Yellowtail Flounder	4.6	0.0	1.7	0.1	0.2	-	0.0	0.9	
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	33.9	0.0	1.1	6.4	0.7	0.0	1.8	2.9	
American Plaice	18.0	0.1	5.0	0.7	0.3	-	0.0	1.2	
Witch Flounder	46.8	0.4	17.8	2.3	1.4	0.0	0.2	4.7	
GB Winter Flounder	13.3	-	2.6	1.9	0.0	-	-	0.0	
GOM Winter Flounder	9.0	0.0	0.2	0.9	0.2	0.0	0.5	0.8	0.2
SNE Winter Flounder	118.0	0.8	35.2	2.9	2.7	-	0.0	12.6	0.3
Redfish	9.9	0.0	2.2	0.2	0.1	-	0.0	0.4	
White Hake	11.0	0.1	3.5	0.5	0.2	0.0	0.0	2.0	
Pollock	777.4	0.0	0.4	0.1	0.1	-	0.0	1.0	774.2
Northern Windowpane	7.7	0.0	3.1	2.7	0.3	-	0.3	0.8	
Southern Windowpane	201.0	1.5	83.5	6.3	8.3	-	0.0	38.8	
Ocean Pout	16.8	0.1	5.4	0.7	0.5	-	0.0	4.2	
Halibut	7.5	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.1	-	0.0	1.9	
Wolffish	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	

Values in metric tons of live weight

*Some or all catch attributed to separate sub-ACL as shown in Tables 1 through 5, and so is not included above.

Source: NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
August 31, 2018, run date of August 21, 2018

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Table 8: FY 2017 Northeast Multispecies Other Sub-Component Landings Detail (mt)

Stock	Total	SCALLOP[1]	FLUKE	HAGFISH	HERRING	LOBSTER/ CRAB	MACKEREL	MENHADEN	MONKFISH	RESEARCH	SCUP
GB Cod	57.6	0.3	0.0	-	-	0.1	-	-	0.1	8.1	0.0
GOM Cod	22.7	-	-	-	-	0.0	-	-	0.0	22.2	-
GB Haddock	6.4	-	-	-	-*	-	-	-	-	6.4	-
GOM Haddock	14.2	-	-	-	-*	0.0	-	-	-	13.1	-
GB Yellowtail Flounder	-	-*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SNE Yellowtail Flounder	0.0	-*	0.0	-	-	-	-	-	0.0	-	-
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	2.8	-	-	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-	2.6	-
American Plaice	3.6	0.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3.2	0.1
Witch Flounder	1.8	0.0	0.0	-	-	0.0	-	-	-	1.7	-
GB Winter Flounder	0.1	0.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
GOM Winter Flounder	2.4	-	-	-	-	0.0	-	-	0.0	2.1	-
SNE Winter Flounder	4.7	0.5	0.2	-	-	0.0	-	-	0.0	-	0.6
Redfish	7.2	-	-	-	-	0.0	-	-	-	6.6	-
White Hake	3.5	0.0	0.0	-	-	0.1	-	-	0.0	2.6	0.0
Pollock	297.0	0.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0	0.9	-
Northern Windowpane	-	-*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Southern Windowpane	0.1	-*	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0	-	-
Ocean Pout	0.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Halibut	5.1	-	-	-	-	3.5	-	-	0.4	0.1	-
Wolffish	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Values in metric tons of live weight

[1]Based on scallop fishing year March 2017 through March 2018

*Some or all catch attributed to separate sub-ACL as shown in Tables 1 through 5, and so is not included above.

Source: NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office

August 31, 2018, run date of August 21, 2018

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Table 8: FY 2017 Northeast Multispecies Other Sub-Component Landings Detail (mt)

Stock	Total	SHRIMP	SQUID	SQUID/ WHITING	SURFCLAM	WHELK/ CONCH	WHITING	UNCATEGORIZED	RECREATIONAL
GB Cod	57.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.5	48.5
GOM Cod	22.7	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.5	-*
GB Haddock	6.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0	
GOM Haddock	14.2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.0	-*
GB Yellowtail Flounder	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
SNE Yellowtail Flounder	0.0	-	0.0	-	-	-	-	0.0	
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	2.8	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.3	
American Plaice	3.6	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-	0.2	
Witch Flounder	1.8	-	0.0	0.0	-	-	-	0.0	
GB Winter Flounder	0.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
GOM Winter Flounder	2.4	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.1	0.2
SNE Winter Flounder	4.7	-	0.6	0.1	-	-	-	2.6	0.2
Redfish	7.2	-	0.6	0.0	-	-	-	0.0	
White Hake	3.5	-	0.2	0.0	-	-	-	0.5	
Pollock	297.0	-	0.0	-	-	-	-	0.5	295.6
Northern Windowpane	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Southern Windowpane	0.1	-	0.0	-	-	-	-	0.1	
Ocean Pout	0.1	-	-	0.0	-	-	-	0.1	
Halibut	5.1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1.1	
Wolffish	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	

Values in metric tons of live weight

*Some or all catch attributed to separate sub-ACL as shown in Tables 1 through 5, and so is not included above.

Source: NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office

August 31, 2018, run date of August 21, 2018

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Table 9: FY 2017 Northeast Multispecies Other Sub-Component Estimated Discards Detail (mt)

Stock	Total	SCALLOP[1]	FLUKE	HAGFISH	HERRING	LOBSTER/ CRAB[2]	MACKEREL	MENHADEN	MONKFISH	RESEARCH	SCUP
GB Cod	9.2	5.0	0.1	-	0.0	NA	0.0	-	0.7	0.0	0.1
GOM Cod	6.2	0.1	-	-	0.1	NA	-	-	1.1	0.2	0.0
GB Haddock	173.5	6.2	1.0	-	11.5*	NA	0.0	-	0.1	0.0	1.0
GOM Haddock	42.0	-	-	-	4.5*	NA	-	-	0.0	0.3	0.0
GB Yellowtail Flounder	0.0	-*	-	-	-*	NA	-	-	-	0.0	-
SNE Yellowtail Flounder	4.6	-*	0.7	-	0.1	NA	0.0	-	0.1	0.0	0.7
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	31.1	16.8	-	0.2	1.5	NA	-	-	0.0	0.0	0.0
American Plaice	14.4	6.4	0.1	-	0.5	NA	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	0.1
Witch Flounder	45.0	12.7	1.9	0.0	1.7	NA	0.0	-	0.1	0.0	1.8
GB Winter Flounder	13.2	8.6	0.0	-	-	NA	-	-	-	0.0	-
GOM Winter Flounder	6.6	3.8	-	-	0.3	NA	-	-	-	0.0	-
SNE Winter Flounder	113.2	48.1	5.3	-	3.2	NA	0.0	-	0.5	0.0	5.0
Redfish	2.7	-	0.1	-	0.2	NA	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	0.1
White Hake	7.5	1.1	0.1	0.0	0.3	NA	0.0	-	0.1	0.0	0.1
Pollock	480.4	0.1	0.0	-	0.2	NA	0.0	-	0.4	0.0	0.0
Northern Windowpane	7.7	-*	0.0	-	0.3	NA	-	-	0.0	0.1	0.2
Southern Windowpane	200.9	-*	27.8	-	6.2	NA	0.1	-	2.5	0.0	26.0
Ocean Pout	16.6	2.5	1.4	-	0.4	NA	0.0	-	0.1	0.0	1.3
Halibut	2.4	0.5	0.0	-	0.0	NA	0.0	-	0.7	0.0	0.0
Wolffish	0.0	0.0	-	-	0.0	NA	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	-

Values in metric tons of live weight

[1]Based on scallop fishing year March 2017 through March 2018

[2]Discard estimates not applicable. Lobster/crab discards were not attributed to the ACL, consistent with the most recent assessments for these stocks used to set the respective quotas.

*Some or all catch attributed to separate sub-ACL as shown in Tables 1 through 5, and so is not included above.

Source: NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office

August 31, 2018, run date of August 21, 2018

These criteria are used by the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office to categorize trips to attribute groundfish catch for groundfish ACL accounting. By necessity these rules cannot capture the full complexity of categorizing every trip taken by vessels fishing in the Northeast. Further analysis should be completed to definitively attribute groundfish catch to an FMP for management purposes.

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Table 9: FY 2017 Northeast Multispecies Other Sub-Component Estimated Discards Detail (mt)

Stock	Total	SHRIMP	SQUID	SQUID/ WHITING	SURFCLAM	WHELK/ CONCH	WHITING	UNCATEGORIZED	RECREATIONAL
GB Cod	9.2	0.0	0.5	0.1	0.1	-	0.0	1.0	1.6
GOM Cod	6.2	0.0	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.0	0.2	4.0	-*
GB Haddock	173.5	2.8	113.8	13.1	7.5	-	0.0	16.4	
GOM Haddock	42.0	0.1	2.5	11.3	5.1	0.0	6.0	12.4	-*
GB Yellowtail Flounder	0.0	-	-*	-*	0.0	-	-	-	
SNE Yellowtail Flounder	4.6	0.0	1.7	0.1	0.2	-	0.0	0.9	
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	31.1	0.0	1.1	6.4	0.7	0.0	1.8	2.6	
American Plaice	14.4	0.1	5.0	0.7	0.3	-	0.0	1.0	
Witch Flounder	45.0	0.4	17.8	2.3	1.4	0.0	0.2	4.7	
GB Winter Flounder	13.2	-	2.6	1.9	0.0	-	-	0.0	
GOM Winter Flounder	6.6	0.0	0.2	0.9	0.2	0.0	0.5	0.7	-
SNE Winter Flounder	113.2	0.8	34.7	2.8	2.7	-	0.0	10.0	0.1
Redfish	2.7	0.0	1.6	0.2	0.1	-	0.0	0.4	
White Hake	7.5	0.1	3.3	0.4	0.2	0.0	0.0	1.6	
Pollock	480.4	0.0	0.4	0.1	0.1	-	0.0	0.5	478.6
Northern Windowpane	7.7	0.0	3.1	2.7	0.3	-	0.3	0.8	
Southern Windowpane	200.9	1.5	83.4	6.3	8.3	-	0.0	38.8	
Ocean Pout	16.6	0.1	5.4	0.7	0.5	-	0.0	4.1	
Halibut	2.4	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.1	-	0.0	0.8	
Wolffish	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	0.0	0.0	

Values in metric tons of live weight

*Some or all catch attributed to separate sub-ACL as shown in Tables 1 through 5, and so is not included above.

Source: NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office

August 31, 2018, run date of August 21, 2018

These criteria are used by the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office to categorize trips to attribute groundfish catch for groundfish ACL accounting. By necessity these rules cannot capture the full complexity of categorizing every trip taken by vessels fishing in the Northeast. Further analysis should be completed to definitively attribute groundfish catch to an FMP for management purposes.

These data are the best available to NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Data sources for this report include: (1) Vessels via VMS; (2) Vessels via vessel logbook reports; (3) Dealers via Dealer Electronic reporting. Differences with previous reports are due to corrections made to the database.

Table 10: FY 2015 - 2017 GOM Cod and Haddock Recreational Catch Evaluation (mt)

Stock	Fishing Year	Recreational Catch				
		Catch	Landings	Discard	Recreational sub-ACL	Percent of Catch Limit Taken
		A + B	A	B		
GOM Cod	2015	84.5	4.5	80.0	121	69.8
	2016	280.9	94.5	186.4	157	178.9
	2017	245.4	26.6	218.8	157	156.3
	Average	**203.6**	**41.9**	**161.7**	**145**	**140.4**
GOM Haddock	2015	381.9	238.3	143.6	372	102.7
	2016	887.0	560.2	326.8	928	95.6
	2017	795.0	533.7	261.3	1,160	68.5
	Average	**688.0**	**444.1**	**243.9**	**820**	**83.9**

Recreational estimates based on Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) data.
Values in metric tons of live weight

Source: NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
September 12, 2018

These data are the best available to NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).

Table 12: FY 2017 End of Year Accounting of Transboundary U.S./Canada Stocks - Percentage of U.S. TACs Caught (%)

Stock	% of U.S. TAC	Percent of Each Fishery Component U.S. TAC Caught								
		Groundfish	Sector	Common Pool	Recreational	Herring Fishery	Scallop Fishery	Small Mesh Fisheries	State Water	Other
	A to H	A+B+C	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Eastern GB Cod	30.0	30.0	30.5	0.0					NA	NA
Eastern GB Haddock	1.4	1.4	1.4	0.0		NA			NA	NA
GB Yellowtail Flounder	40.6	19.1	19.4	0.0			164.3	9.7	NA	0.1

Values in percent live weight (%)
Includes estimate of missing dealer reports
Source: NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
August 22, 2018

Any value for a non-allocated species may be due to landings of that stock; misreporting of species and/or stock area; and/or estimated landings (in lieu of missing reports) based on vessel histories.

These data are the best available to NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Data sources for this report include: (1) Vessels via VMS; (2) Vessels via vessel logbook reports; (3) Dealers via Dealer Electronic reporting. Differences with previous reports are due to corrections made to the database.

Table 13: FY 2017 End of Year Accounting of Transboundary U.S./Canada Stocks - U.S. TACs (mt)

Stock	U.S. TAC	Fishery Component TAC								
		Groundfish	Sector	Common Pool	Recreational	Herring Fishery	Scallop Fishery	Small-Mesh Fisheries	State Water	Other
	A to H	A+B+C	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Eastern GB Cod	146	146	143	3						
Eastern GB Haddock	29,500	29,500	29,295	205						
GB Yellowtail Flounder	207.0	162.6	160.1	2.5			32.0	4.0		2.1

Values in live weight

Source: NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
August 22, 2018

Any value for a non-allocated species may be due to landings of that stock; misreporting of species and/or stock area; and/or estimated landings (in lieu of missing reports) based on vessel histories.

These data are the best available to NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Data sources for this report include: (1) Vessels via VMS; (2) Vessels via vessel logbook reports; (3) Dealers via Dealer Electronic reporting. Differences with previous reports are due to corrections made to the database.

Table 14: FY 2017 End of Year Accounting of Transboundary U.S./Canada Stocks - U.S. Catch (mt)

Stock	U.S. Catch	U.S. Catch by Fishery Component								
		Groundfish	Sector	Common Pool	Recreational	Herring Fishery	Scallop Fishery	Small Mesh Fisheries	State Water	Other
	A to H	A+B+C	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Eastern GB Cod	43.7	43.7	43.7	-					-	0.0
Eastern GB Haddock	425.1	407.3	407.3	-		15.5			-	2.3
GB Yellowtail Flounder	84.0	31.0	31.0	-			52.6	0.4	-	0.0

Values in live weight
Includes estimate of missing dealer reports
August 22, 2018

Table 15: FY 2017 End of Year Transboundary U.S./Canada Vessels, Trips, DAS Used, and Observers

Area[1]	Number of Vessels		Number of Trips		DAS Used		Number of Observed Trips	
	Sector	Common Pool	Sector	Common Pool	Sector	Common Pool	Sector	Common Pool
Eastern U.S./Canada Area	38	0	187	0	1,174	0	24	0
Western U.S./Canada Area	56	0	459	0	2,728	0	83	0
Total	56	0	503	0	2,943	0	86	0

[1]Area based on area fished. Totals don't sum due to multi-area trips
Data display "NA" due to data confidentiality.

Source: NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
August 22, 2018

Any value for a non-allocated species may be due to landings of that stock; misreporting of species and/or stock area; and/or estimated landings (in lieu of missing reports) based on vessel histories.

These data are the best available to NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Data sources for this report include: (1) Vessels via VMS; (2) Vessels via vessel logbook reports; (3) Dealers via Dealer Electronic reporting. Differences with previous reports are due to corrections made to the database.

Table 16: FY 2017 End of Year Accounting of Transboundary U.S./Canada Stocks - U.S. Landings (mt)

Stock	U.S. Landings	U.S. Catch by Fishery Component								
		Groundfish	Sector	Common Pool	Recreational	Herring Fishery*	Scallop Fishery	Small Mesh Fisheries	State Water	Other
	A to H	A+B+C	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Eastern GB Cod	41.3	41.3	41.3	-					-	-
Eastern GB Haddock	329.1	313.6	313.6	-		15.5			-	-
GB Yellowtail Flounder	30.9	30.9	30.9	-			-	-	-	-

Values in live weight
Includes estimate of missing dealer reports
Source: NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
August 22, 2018

Any value for a non-allocated species may be due to landings of that stock; misreporting of species and/or stock area; and/or estimated landings (in lieu of missing reports) based on vessel histories.

These data are the best available to NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Data sources for this report include: (1) Vessels via VMS; (2) Vessels via vessel logbook reports; (3) Dealers via Dealer Electronic reporting. Differences with previous reports are due to corrections made to the database.

Table 17: FY 2017 End of Year Accounting of Transboundary U.S./Canada Stocks - U.S. Discards (mt)

Stock	U.S. Discards	U.S. Catch by Fishery Component								
		Groundfish	Sector	Common Pool	Recreational	Herring Fishery	Scallop Fishery	Small Mesh Fisheries	State Water	Other
	A to H	A+B+C	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Eastern GB Cod	2.4	2.4	2.4	-					-	0.0
Eastern GB Haddock	96.0	93.7	93.7	-		-			-	2.3
GB Yellowtail Flounder	53.0	0.1	0.1	-			52.6	0.4	-	0.0

Values in live weight
Includes estimate of missing dealer reports
Source: NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
August 22, 2018

Any value for a non-allocated species may be due to landings of that stock; misreporting of species and/or stock area; and/or estimated landings (in lieu of missing reports) based on vessel histories.

These data are the best available to NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Data sources for this report include: (1) Vessels via VMS; (2) Vessels via vessel logbook reports; (3) Dealers via Dealer Electronic reporting. Differences with previous reports are due to corrections made to the database.

NOAA FISHERIES
Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930

Tidal Bay Consulting, LLC

Memorandum

Date: October 22, 2018
To: Tom Nies, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council
From: Moira Kelly (GARFO), Mark Grant (GARFO), Emily Keiley (GARFO), Jamie Cournane (NEFMC), Jessica Joyce (Tidal Bay Consulting), and Caitlin Cleaver (FB Environmental)

Re: Input for planning GARFO's 2018/2019 Recreational Fishing Industry Workshops

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We are in the early stages of planning up to four workshops with the recreational fishing community, and are requesting stakeholder input on these preliminary ideas. If the Council could please forward this memo to the Recreational Advisory Panel, we would appreciate their feedback. We are open to new ideas on the goals and objectives, process, and logistics of these meetings, and also have some specific questions for consideration.

DRAFT meeting goal, objectives, and outcomes:

- **Goal (*what is the ideal state as a result of these workshops/why are we meeting?*):** A collaborative process for developing management measures for the recreational groundfish fishery that balance the need to prevent overfishing while enhancing recreational fishing opportunities for all stakeholders.

- **Objectives (*how will the goal be achieved?*)**:
    1. Short-term: Develop new management measures around preventing recreational catch overages in FY2019, specifically of GOM cod/haddock.
    2. Long-term: Think creatively how to meaningfully utilize new MRIP data in management of groundfish stocks with a recreational catch component in the long-term (defined as FY2020 and beyond).
    3. Stabilize business planning with multi-year measures and more predictable regulatory changes.
    4. Discuss how to adapt best practices in data management that allow for more appropriate usage of MRIP data, e.g., using an average of 3-5 years of data for analyses and not just looking back on 1-year of data.
    5. Develop measures and processes to better align timing of regulations across fisheries, other management plans (i.e. state and federal), and with the availability of data. For example, reducing overlap in closures across

recreational fisheries; increasing coordination between various recreational management plans, and decreasing the gap between the timing of stock assessments and the specifications process.

6. Develop solutions that work across sectors (e.g. private angler and for-hire fleet) and state regulations, or that address the nuances within various user groups (recognizing a one-size-fits all approach isn't ideal in most cases).
7. Brainstorm methods to regularly engage with captains and anglers throughout the season to get feedback on catch and trends, and develop ideas on how to enhance coordination between NOAA Fisheries, state partners, scientists, and the recreational fishing community.

- **Outcomes (*what will we walk out with? - results or products*)**:
  - A list of potential management measures/processes to address the short-term objective of preventing GOM cod and haddock overages and long-term objectives for all groundfish stocks with a recreational catch component.
    - *These ideas could be tested through pilot studies prior to integrating them into the regulatory process.*
  - A shared understanding of the new MRIP data collection and assessment processes, and any relevant data limitations.
  - A list of communication methods to inform all stakeholders of any new proposals, pilot studies, or potential rulemaking.

Meeting Logistics and Attendance:

1. Locations, dates and time of day: Currently, we are considering the following dates and times for the workshops and a summary presentation. We've discussed multiple alternatives, including evenings and weekends, to accommodate schedules of various stakeholders attending, from private anglers with day jobs to charter/party boat owners/captains, and others. Locations are tentative.

   a. **Dec. 18** – Evening 'data primer' workshop in a location north of Boston (e.g. Gloucester or Danvers) and accessible by webinar (~5:30-7:30 pm)
   b. **January 8** - Workshop in Point Judith, RI or Plymouth, MA (or similar) (full day, timing TBD).
   c. **January 10** – Workshop in Point Judith, RI or Plymouth, MA (or similar) (full day, timing TBD).
   d. **Jan. 15 or 16** - Workshop in Portsmouth, NH: full day (*before RAP meeting*)
   e. **January 29-31**: Preliminary presentation of workshop summaries at Council meeting.

Questions: ***1)*** *Are there any major schedule conflicts with these dates?* ***2)*** *What would be the ideal timing for the full day workshops, perhaps with at least one that starts and ends later to accommodate attendance after work?*

2. Representative attendance: Any ideas on how to invite and incentivize a broad range of stakeholders to attend and participate in these workshops would be appreciated. Currently, one incentive already in the budget is reimbursement for mileage.

   Question: Are there sponsors and/or partners that can contribute towards industry stipends (~$100/day)?

3. Meeting approach: The workshops could follow several different approaches in the four various locations (1. Southern Maine/NH, 2. North Shore MA, 3. South Shore MA, and 4. RI/CT), including having each meeting cover all topics or having each meeting focus on a separate topic. Thus far, we are leaning towards one data-specific meeting that is focused on MRIP data availability, applicability, and timing of incorporating new data in stock assessments. This would be a shorter, 2- to 3-hour evening meeting, available through webinar and in person. Then there would be three full-day workshops that would focus on all topics, understanding that issues vary by state and catch composition for that fleet/sector.

   Question: Feedback on either approach or alternative approaches are appreciated.

For more information, see the attached report from the GARFO Recreational Workshop in November 2017. The 2018 Saltwater Recreational Fisheries Summit report offers national perspectives, and the report is available online: https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/recreational-fishing/2018-saltwater-recreational-fisheries-summit

New England Recreational Fisheries

NOAA FISHERIES SERVICE

Improving New England Recreational Fisheries Management

Workshop Summary Report

November 13, 2017

Workshop Summary

Charter and party boat captains, private anglers, state fishery management partners, and others came together with NOAA Fisheries staff for a workshop on improving recreational fisheries management in New England. After agreeing on a common set of issues, workshop participants discussed potential ideal scenarios for each of the key issues. Participants then highlighted the hurdles or challenges that are preventing us from achieving the ideal state and possible approaches for overcoming those challenges. Time constraints left some issues without a full list of hurdles or solutions. However, we hope this will be the beginning of a productive effort to advance these issues into meaningful change.

The table at the end of the report summarizes the discussions.

Key Issues

The key issues with New England recreational fisheries management were summarized into seven categories: Stability; timing; consistency; data; communication; effectiveness; and accounting for different needs among user groups. These issues are connected and should be addressed holistically, where appropriate.

Stability, Timing, Consistency, and Effectiveness

Regulations that change annually, that are not final in advance of the fishing season, and different regulations in different parts of the ocean make planning difficult for businesses and customers alike. The ability of the for-hire fleet to market and book trips in advance of the fishing season is paramount to long-term business planning and security.

Workshop participants suggested the following ideal scenario: Multi-year management measures that maximize the season length and

provide for pre-planned adjustments, if necessary, that are announced at the start of the calendar year, and that are designed with a high probability to prevent overfishing but achieve long-term stability of the fishery. Participants suggested that the current management plan, the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, competing priorities among the public, the risk of over- or under-utilizing a species, and data limitations are key hurdles to overcome to get to the ideal scenario. Recommended solutions were Council action to revise management, and redirecting resouces from surveying for-hire boats to improving private angler surveys, while using validated vessel trip reports as a census of for-hire information.

Data

Underlying our entire fishery management process are the recreational catch data. Primarily, recreational data come from the Marine Resource Information Program, or MRIP, a federal-regional-state partnership to collect recreational fisheries data and estimate total recreational catch. Concerns about the validity of the data make coming to consensus on management measures difficult. Participants identified a transparent, fine-scale dataset built on electronic reporting and as much data as possible as the goal scenario. Challenges include cost, fishing community and scientific buy-in on various data collection tools and sources, the scale of the fishing community, and a sense of "not knowing enough to know what to ask" to understand the data and the collection process. Potential solutions include using recreational fishing license fees to increase data collection, a review of the current survey methods with an eye towards cost effectiveness, real-time public data input, education and outreach on the importance of accurate data, training on reporting tools, and several suggestions on outreach materials or workshops on improving the understanding of how MRIP works and how the estimates are calculated (i.e., "show your work").

Communication

Transparent and frequent communication between fisheries managers and for-hire captains and private anglers is critical to the success of our management program. The ideal scenarios suggested by workshop participants included regular, formalized, and representative mid-season engagement with captains to understand not only what they are catching, but what they are seeing on the water, enhanced coordination between NOAA Fisheries and our state partners, increased scientist participation in discussions with fishery participants, and support recruiting participants (captains and anglers) into the fishery. Challenges include time and resources, complicated topics that are hard to summarize and distill, the regulatory process, and business uncertainty, among others.

Accounting for Differences in User Groups

One of the more controversial aspects of recreational fisheries management is trying to ensure fair and appropriate management measures for user groups with different needs and preferences. Private anglers, charter/6-pack captains, and party boat captains likely have different ideas on what "successful" management looks like. The ideal state to accounting for these differences may include increased enforcement (patrols and penalties), accounting for stock movement and jurisdictional issues, and designing different regulations for each sector of the recreational community. The Magnuson-Stevens Act, lack of money, and value judgement differences were noted as challenges. An agreed upon standard probability of achieving a catch target across all modes and an agreed upon percent contribution to the overall target were suggested as potential solutions.

Summary of Participant Discussions

Issue	Ideal State	Challenges	Solutions
Stability	Multi-year plan * Fixed or Decision Tree * % change w/in plan	* FMP Structure/Council Process * MSA Limitations * Risk of under/over-utilization	Amendment Council Action
	Maximize season (at least for for-hire)	* Need better data for better decisions * Low/inaccurate quotas * Public tolerance/competing priorities	Census of for-hire catch, with validation; redirect resources to private angler surveys
	Time Horizon * Set number of years * Between stock assessments	* Need to change FMP * Risk of under/over-utilization * Data limitations/no confidence	
Timing	By January 1 (no later than March 1)	* Data availability/cycle * NEPA	* Electronic reporting * Adjust cycle by 1 quarter
Consistency	Strive for consistency		
	Between Feds and States	* Communications * Timing * Process/bureaucratic inconsistencies	* Ensure measures available soon enough for all parties to implement for start of fishing year * Communication * Coordination
	Across States	* State sovereignty * Competing needs between states	
	Between stock assessments	* Sufficient data quality for projections and harvest monitoring * Assessment prioritization	
	Balance between stocks (ecosystem accounting)	* Too many data gaps * MSA single species focus	
	Transparency	* Regulatory Process	
Data	Enhanced ability to use MRIP at finer scale	Cost	* Use rec license fees to improve data * Cost efficiency review of current methods (both state and Fed)
	Census	* Scientist buy-in on data * Cost prohibitive/scale for private anglers * Accurate self-reporting	* Real-time public data input

Summary of Participant Discussions

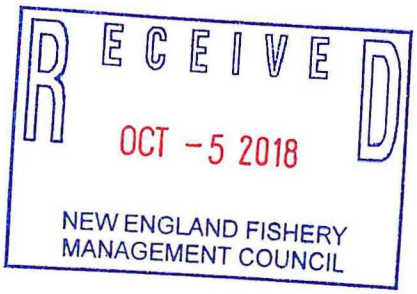
Issue	Ideal State	Challenges	Solutions
	Validity -- quality vs timeliness	* Scale/cost * Ability to validate self-reporting on private boats	Educate captains on the importance of accurate data
	Multi-year aggregation		
	Use electronic reporting appropriately * Training (how) * Understanding (why)	* Accurate reporting (completeness) * Scientist buy-in * Industry buy-in	Require training and reporting to be issued license
	Transparency	* Each state and Fed have a unique process * Don't know what to ask for	* Workshop on MRIP and high-level resource manual on how MRIP works * Make formulas available * Clear estimation method * Show your work in an accessible manner * Release all data (to allow for recreation of estimates) * Use plain language
Effectiveness	Perception of/actual opportunity	No/low quota	
	Slot limits, where appropriate	* Enforcement/lack of compliance * Year class fluctuations	
	Point-system (each sps = # of points, limits on total points)	* Complicated enforcement * FMP/MSA limits * Projection complications	
	Provide more model output options to Council	* Time * NEPA	
	Flexibility in the bag limit by season (vs closure)	* Analyses * Compliance * Risk of overfishing	
	No unlimited bag limits	* Arbitrary (need a reasoned decision)	
	Higher probability options	* Inaccurate predictions of success * Changing conditions * Less popular options	
	Strive for effective measusres to prevent overfishing, maintain access		

Summary of Participant Discussions

Issue	Ideal State	Challenges	Solutions
Communication	Manager/captain engagement * What are you catching? * What are you seeing? * Representative survey--not all the highliners in one week	* Federal time and resources * Ensuring use of data, formalizing process	
	Explain how data are assembled and catch estimates	* Broad base with different background knowledge * Hard to summarize	
	Better outreach--enhanced coordination with states	Regulatory process is not transparent	
	Recruit anglers	* Hard to do because of a lack of faith in an improving future * Business uncertainty	
	Increased center/modelers participation in discussions	* Limited staff time * Language/communication skills	
Accounting for differences among user groups	Account for stock movement better in management body (CT, RI, MA on MAFMC)	MSA	
	Increased enforcement -- more patrols and higher penalties	* Lack of money * Lack of people	
	Potential for different regulations between private, charter, and party	Value judgement on targets	* Agreed upon standard probability of achieving catch target across modes * Agree percentage contribution to the overall target

SUSTAINABLE HARVEST SECTOR
PO Box 356, So. Berwick ME 03908 | 207-956-8497 | www.groundfish.org

October 5, 2018



Michael Pentony, Regional Administrator
GARFO
55 Great Republic Dr.
Gloucester, MA 01930

Dear Mr. Pentony,

I respond to your letters of September 25 to me, concerning low ASM coverage rates for the Sustainable Harvest sectors (currently about 6%, vs. a target of about 10%). Your letter broadly categorizes the reasons for low coverage rates as provider-related and vessel-related. I will explain my understanding of the issues and our expectation to achieve the requisite rates by the end of FY2018.

Timeline

Our sole ASM provider MRAG Americas states they became aware there could be a problem achieving the ~10% target in May of this year. MRAG realized they, and apparently other providers, were understaffed for the sum of observer work needed across the fisheries they cover.

MRAG states they and other providers requested observer certification classes from NMFS to cross-train existing staff for the ASM program, and to train new hires. MRAG states the providers were told the cumulative requested class size total did not meet the Fishery Sampling Branch's minimum attendance requirement so a class could not be held.

NMFS noticed ASM coverage rates were indeed trending too low in late July. In August, NMFS alerted all sector managers to the fleetwide systemic coverage issue and requested the managers participate in monthly conference calls NMFS routinely holds with ASM providers, to help fix the problem. (At the time our manager knew our coverage rates were subpar, but was not aware of the systemic issue.)

NMFS provided a new hire ASM training class in early October, and scheduled another for December. (As noted above MRAG stated they wanted earlier classes, but also explained to us that it does take some time to organize these and conduct them in a somewhat efficient manner.)

NMFS has discussed the issue with our manager in the two conference calls held to date, and at an in-person meeting held with all sector managers in early September.

In summary, though all parties seemed to understand there was a problem early on, by the time resources could be marshalled for a fix, we find ourselves well into the fishing year.

Provider-related issues

MRAG states they have about eight new hires planned for the two ASM training classes. They state they are confident the additional staff will have adequate work because of (a) the need to catch up on ASM trips and (b) monitoring needs in other fisheries.

MRAG and the observer program are both confident Sustainable Harvest Sector III's coverage will rebound over the next several months. We agree; many boats in that sector fish steadily through the hard winter months, and

fh, jc, nf 10/9/18

we should have 150-200 trips available for ASM selection in the last four months of the year, just as MRAG's workforce peaks.

Sustainable Harvest Sector I is more challenging (though your letter suggests the observer program is not so concerned). Of the seven active vessels enrolled there, five are now monitored with cameras. The burden of meeting the ~10% ASM coverage rate rests on the remaining two.

We conservatively project those two vessels will make 15-20 more groundfish trips this year. If so, we calculate four trips – perhaps five, if fishing activity is higher than expected - must carry an ASM to achieve the sector-level ~10% ASM coverage rate. Our manager is in regular contact with those two vessels to ensure their fishing plans match our projections. If they don't, one (non-preferred) backup plan is to turn off the cameras on some otherwise camera-equipped trips selected for ASM, to increase the number of vessels eligible for 'human ASM' and nudge the compliance rate up.

It's likely the bulk of the remaining trips will occur from the period of January-April, which again coincides with MRAG's expected peak workforce availability. MRAG will prioritize coverage of these active vessels in October and November with the additional ASM staff added from the October training. The goal is to increase ASM coverage in Sustainable Harvest Sector I to over 8% before the end of December.

It is ironic that the increased catch monitoring provided by onboard cameras creates a perceived problem with observer coverage. We understand why NMFS stratifies non-camera trips for purposes of calculating 'human ASM' coverage rates. But, over fifty additional trips in this sector have been observed with an 'electronic ASM' this year. Including those trips, Sustainable Harvest Sector I's total ASM coverage rate is around 50%. Practically speaking, it's never been higher.

Vessel-related issues

Your letters discussed several possible problems with vessels failing to comply with various observer notification requirements. The accompanying enclosures showed a compliance rate of over 99% for each of our two sectors. I interpret that to mean we have no vessel-related compliance issues; please inform me if that is incorrect.

Conclusion

Funds are in place to conduct more ASM trips. MRAG has a two-stage plan to increase its ASM manpower. Both sectors have enough available trips remaining to achieve the ~10% target rate. MRAG, NMFS, and the manager are monitoring the situation closely. We intend and expect to be compliant at the conclusion of the fishing year.

Sincerely,

Frank Patania

Frank Patania
President, Sustainable Harvest Sectors

cc: Danielle Kane, MRAG Americas
KB McArdle, Fishery Sampling Branch
New England Fishery Management Council