

CORRESPONDENCE



New England Fishery Management Council

50 WATER STREET | NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS 01950 | PHONE 978 465 0492 | FAX 978 465 3116
John F. Quinn, J.D., Ph.D., Chairman | Thomas A. Nies, *Executive Director*

October 27, 2016

Dr. Roy E. Crabtree
Regional Administrator
NOAA Fisheries
Southeast Regional Office
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Dear Dr. Crabtree:

On Tuesday, September 27, 2016, a Proposed Rule (*81 Federal Register 66244*) was published that would establish a for-hire control date of June 15, 2016. The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council may use the proposed control date in an amendment to limit entry in the Federal for-hire recreational sectors of the coastal migratory pelagics fishery in the Atlantic, dolphin and wahoo fishery in the Atlantic, and snapper-grouper fishery in the South Atlantic.

The New England Fishery Management Council has recently heard concerns from the New England recreational for-hire industry about the control date given the increasing presence of dolphin and wahoo in our waters. If possible, we suggest the control date be revisited to allow for additional comments from New England fishermen. We hope the amendment will provide reasonable access to these species for New England recreational for-hire fishermen.

Please contact me if you have questions.

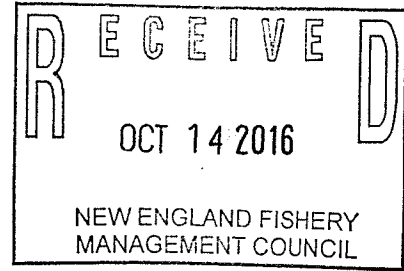
Sincerely,

John F. Quinn, J.D., Ph.D.
Chairman

cc: Dr. Michelle Duval, SAFMC Chair
Mr. Greg Waugh, SAFMC Executive Director

Joan O'Leary

From: Cody Gillis <cagillis@gwi.net>
Sent: Friday, October 14, 2016 6:45 PM
To: Joan O'Leary
Cc: Laura DiBiase
Subject: FY 2017 Haddock regulation



Good Evening,

As we close out another fishing season I wanted to take a moment to weigh in on this years haddock regulations. We are strictly recreational anglers and fish on the northern end of Jeffreys ledge almost every weekend from May – October. This was by far our most successful season yet. I did notice that as the season went on the number of keeper haddock seemed to dwindle quite a bit. I also noticed the number of sub legal haddock dropped as well. When the council convenes to set the regulations for fishing year 2017 I'd like to propose keeping the size at 17" but dropping the possession limit from 15 to 8. We participate in the Maine volunteer log book program and have detailed records of all the fish caught. I'd be happy to share our data with you if you wish. I honestly feel the party boats that fish 7 days a week put a lot of pressure on the fish and effectively cleaned out the keeper size fish. Reducing the possession limit could certainly help in keeping a few more legal fish around. I appreciate you taking the time to read this. Thank You,

Cody A. Gillis
127 Jordan Ave.
Brunswick, Me. 04011
207-522-9529

jc - 10/14/16



Commonwealth of Massachusetts

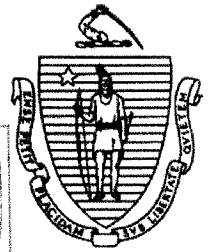
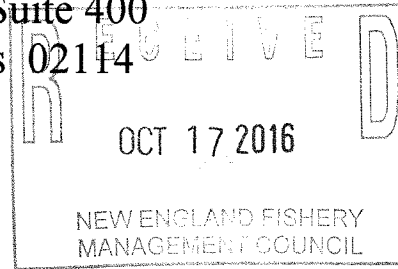
Division of Marine Fisheries

251 Causeway Street, Suite 400

Boston, Massachusetts 02114

(617) 626-1520

(617) 626-1509



David E. Pierce, Ph.D.
Director

Charles D. Baker
Governor
Karyn E. Polito
Lieutenant Governor
Matthew A. Beaton
Secretary
George N. Peterson, Jr.
Commissioner
Mary-Lee King
Deputy Commissioner

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

Dear Tom:

I offer this perspective admittedly after-the-fact on the 2016 Georges Bank yellowtail flounder assessment, but with a focus on the relevance of the TRAC assessment to management of both the groundfish and scallop fisheries in 2017. There are a few things to highlight about the yellowtail assessment that are disturbing, and they will have implications for fisheries management in 2017.

We approved the TMGC recommendation for a 300 mt TAC for FY 2017 (17/0/0). We really had no choice in the matter. I bristle at the lack of choice. We followed that decision by adopting the SSC recommendation of a 354 mt ABC for FY 2018 (13/4/0). Let's examine how we got to these numbers and why there was another alternative we were not provided.

Georges Bank yellowtail flounder is assessed using an "empirical approach." The average area swept biomass from three trawl surveys (DFO, NEFSC spring, NEFSC fall) is used to estimate stock size. This approach requires an assumption about how efficient the survey gear is at catching yellowtail flounder (and other flounders/flatfish).

The TRAC Working Group was provided with new information on the catchability of the Bigelow survey trawl for yellowtail flounder, but chose not to use this new information in the 2016 assessment. Consider the Term of Reference that was not met: "***Catch advice based on the empirical approach should consider information on survey catchability, if available.***"

I understand at the 2016 TRAC meeting there was discussion about catchability because NEFSC completed a twin trawl study in the fall of 2015 when the sweep of the Bigelow survey net was modified. One side of the survey net was rigged with the rockhopper sweep that is used during the NEFSC spring and fall surveys, while the other half of the survey trawl was rigged with a chain sweep that was designed to maximize bottom contact and flatfish catch.

Results showed that the chain sweep had a higher catch efficiency than the rockhopper sweep for yellowtail flounder (and other flatfish). On average, the chain sweep was approximately three times more efficient than the rockhopper sweep for yellowtail flounder.

The TRAC review panel decided not to use this new, experimentally-derived information on survey catchability in the 2016 assessment. The review panel justified this decision by stating

je-10/19/16

they did not have enough time to fully process the new information, and the experimental methods and results were not provided in enough detail.

Given there was an explicit Term of Reference to consider new information on survey catchability, I'm troubled these experimental data (including information on wingspread and doorspread) were not fully considered by the TRAC prior to and during the meeting. The presentation about survey catchability given to the TRAC in July was nearly identical to a presentation given to the Trawl Advisory Panel on June 1st. Consequently, this indicates data were available for at least a month and a half before the TRAC. It appears there was a lack of coordination between the TRAC co-chairs and the NEFSC survey branch to present these data in a manner that could have been considered by the TRAC prior to and during the assessment.

As a consequence, the average area swept biomass from the three most recent surveys was 1,532 mt (assuming $q = 0.37$). Applying a range of exploitation rates from 2-16% produced a 2017 quota range of 31 mt to 245 mt, which the TRAC put forth as catch advice.

I clearly understand all signals in the data indicate the yellowtail stock is in poor condition. However, the recent experiments suggest the catchability value of 0.37 is an overestimate, perhaps by as much as 300 to 400%.

Consequently, the empirical approach is underestimating the biomass of yellowtail flounder. Recommended quotas were lower than what would have been presented had the new information on catchability been used in the calculations. **If the new information on catchability had been used, catch advice coming out of the 2016 TRAC assessment likely would have ranged from approximately 110 to 860mt.**

So, here we are with 300 mt for FY 2017. The implications of this low number are known to all of us. We're continuing to hamstring the groundfish fishery and likely very negatively impacting the scallop fishery especially when it will have access to Closed Area II. The low catch advice for yellowtail flounder resulting from an assessment that ignored new information on catchability provides a sub-ACL to the scallop fishery of ~30 mt for FY2017 when there will likely be an access area trip allocated in Closed Area II. There is a strong possibility that the scallop fleet could exceed their sub-ACL and possibly trigger Accountability Measures.

The current proposal for removal of the AM trigger associated with the scallop fishery catching more than 150% of their sub-ACL should be considered in context with the low sub-ACL resulting from an assessment that ignored the catchability study.

This catchability issue must be resolved with the Council and advisors having a greater say about values used in the assessment. Otherwise, this year and next our groundfish and scallop fisheries will suffer the socioeconomic consequences of our failure to recognize that the Bigelow net is very inefficient at catching flounders.

Sincerely yours,



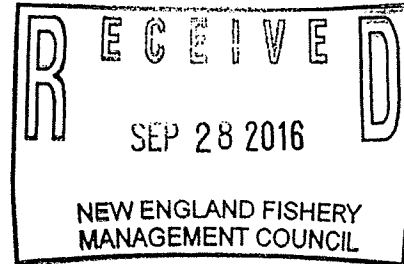
David E. Pierce, Ph.D.
Director

cc. John Quinn, Melanie Griffin, Cate O'Keefe,
Greg DeCelles, Jonathan Peros & Jamie Cournane



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Northeast Fisheries Science Center
166 Water Street
Woods Hole, MA 02543-1026

September 23, 2016



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

Dear Tom:

Thank you for highlighting this assessment need. We will discuss the Council's request with the NRCC as part of our joint priority-setting process.

Sincerely,

William A. Karp, Ph.D.
Science and Research Director

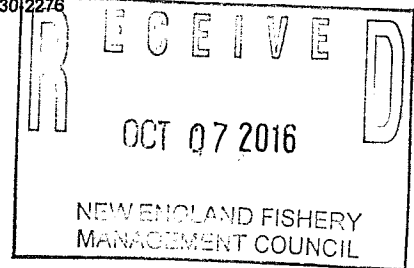
cc: R. Beal
C. Moore
J. Bullard





UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
 NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
 GREATER ATLANTIC REGIONAL FISHERIES OFFICE
 55 Great Republic Drive
 Gloucester, MA 01930-2276

OCT 5 2016



Marc Stettner
 91 Fairview Ave
 Portsmouth, NH 03801

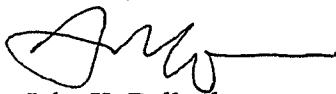
Dear Marc,

Thank you for your request to adjust common pool trimester total allowable catches (TACs) allocations based on the most recent 5-year period. I agree that the fishery has changed significantly since Amendment 16 was implemented in 2010. However, any changes to the allocation of common pool sub-annual catch limits must be made through the biennial rulemaking that the New England Fishery Management Council uses to adjust the specifications. The Council has one such rulemaking underway, Framework Adjustment 56. The Council did not discuss including adjustments to the common pool trimester TACs in Framework 56 at its September 2016 meeting.

The Council intends to revise specifications for all 20 groundfish stocks following the 2017 groundfish assessment updates, and in time for the 2018 fishing year. In addition, the Council is considering adding adjustment to the common pool TACs to its list of priorities for 2017. I urge you to communicate the importance of adjusting the trimester TACs to you and other handgear vessel owners/operators to the Council so that it considers this issue as part of the 2018 specifications.

Thank you again for reaching out and expressing your concerns regarding the common pool Trimester TACs. If you have additional questions or concerns, please contact Sarah Heil, Groundfish Team Lead in our Sustainable Fisheries Division, at (978) 281-9257.

Sincerely,


 John K. Bullard
 Regional Administrator

jes 10/7/16



For information about the public meeting: Ms. Shannon L. Watson, Senior Policy Advisor, Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE., Washington, DC 20590, by telephone at 202-366-2551, or by email at Shannon.Watson@dot.gov. If you have questions on viewing or submitting material to the docket, contact Docket Services at 202-366-9826. Business hours are from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. ET, Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background:

On August 31, 2016, FMCSA published a notice of intent concerning the lease and interchange of passenger-carrying commercial motor vehicles (CMVs) (81 FR 59951). The purpose of the notice of intent was to inform the public about the Agency's decision concerning the 37 petitions for reconsideration which have been filed in the public docket referenced above. Upon review of these petitions, FMCSA concluded that some have merit. FMCSA, therefore, extended the compliance date of the final rule from January 1, 2017, to January 1, 2018 (82 FR 13998; March 16, 2016), to allow the Agency time to complete any rulemaking action to amend the rule where necessary.

FMCSA Decision

FMCSA plans to issue a rulemaking notice to address the four areas of concern in the August 31, 2016, notice of intent:

- (1) Exclusion of "chartering" (*i.e.*, subcontracting) from the leasing requirements;
- (2) Amending the CMV requirements for the location of temporary markings for leased/interchanged vehicles;
- (3) Changing the requirement that carriers notify customers within 24 hours when they subcontract service to other carriers; and
- (4) Expanding the 48-hour delay in preparing a lease to include emergencies when passengers are not actually on board a bus.

The Agency believes that less burdensome regulatory alternatives that would not adversely impact safety could be adopted before the January 1, 2018, compliance date.

Public Roundtable

FMCSA will hold a public roundtable on Monday, October 31, 2016, to discuss these four issue areas. The public will have an opportunity to speak about these issues and provide the Agency with information on how to address them. All public comments will be

placed in the docket of this rulemaking. The agenda for this meeting will be posted on the FMCSA Web site www.fmcsa.dot.gov in the near future.

Issued on: September 15, 2016.

Larry W. Minor,
Associate Administrator for Policy.

[FR Doc. 2016-23253 Filed 9-26-16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-EX-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 622

[Docket No. 160815741-6741-01]

RIN 0648-BG30

Fisheries of the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and South Atlantic; Atlantic Coastal Migratory Pelagic Fishery; Atlantic Dolphin and Wahoo Fishery; and South Atlantic Snapper-Grouper Fishery; Control Date

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Advanced notice of proposed rulemaking; consideration of a control date.

SUMMARY: This proposed rule announces the establishment of a control date of June 15, 2016. The South Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) may use this control date if it decides to create restrictions limiting participation in the exclusive economic zone for the Federal charter vessel/headboat (for-hire) component of the recreational sectors of the coastal migratory pelagics fishery in the Atlantic, dolphin and wahoo fishery in the Atlantic, and snapper-grouper fishery in the South Atlantic. Anyone obtaining a Federal for-hire permit for these recreational sectors after the control date will not be assured of future access should a management regime that limits participation in the sector be prepared and implemented. This announcement is intended, in part, to promote awareness of the potential eligibility criteria for future access so as to discourage speculative entry into the Federal for-hire component of the recreational sectors of the Atlantic coastal migratory pelagics, Atlantic dolphin and wahoo, or the South Atlantic snapper-grouper fisheries, while the Council and NMFS consider whether and how access to these recreational sector components should

be managed. NMFS invites comments on the establishment of this control date.

DATES: Written comments must be received by October 27, 2016.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments identified by "NOAA-NMFS-2016-0121" by either of the following methods:

- *Electronic Submission:* Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to www.regulations.gov /#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2016-0121, click the "Comment Now!" icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.

- *Mail:* Submit written comments to Mary Janine Vara, NMFS Southeast Regional Office, 263 13th Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33701.

Instructions: Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered by NMFS. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (*e.g.*, name, address, etc.), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter "N/A" in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mary Janine Vara, NMFS Southeast Regional Office, telephone: 727-824-5305, or email: mary.vara@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The coastal migratory pelagics fishery in the Atlantic is managed under the Fishery Management Plan for Coastal Migratory Pelagic Resources in the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic Region (CMP FMP). The dolphin and wahoo fishery in the Atlantic is managed under the FMP for the Dolphin and Wahoo Fishery off the Atlantic States (Dolphin and Wahoo FMP). The snapper-grouper fishery in the South Atlantic is managed under the FMP for the Snapper-Grouper Fishery of the South Atlantic Region (Snapper-Grouper FMP). The CMP FMP was prepared jointly by the Gulf of Mexico and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils. The Dolphin and Wahoo and Snapper-Grouper FMPs were prepared by the Council. The FMPs are implemented by NMFS under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act) through regulations at 50 CFR part 622.

The Council voted at the June 2016 meeting to establish a control date of June 15, 2016, for the Federal for-hire component of the recreational sectors of the Atlantic coastal migratory pelagics, Atlantic dolphin and wahoo, and South Atlantic snapper-grouper fisheries. The Federal charter vessel/headboat permit for these recreational for-hire components is currently open access, available to anyone with a valid vessel registration. The control date enables the Council to inform current and potential participants that it is considering whether to create restrictions that limit fishery participation in the Federal for-hire component of the recreational sectors for Atlantic coastal migratory pelagics, Atlantic dolphin and wahoo, and South Atlantic snapper-grouper.

This proposed rule informs current and potential fishery participants in the Federal for-hire component of the recreational sectors for Atlantic coastal migratory pelagics, Atlantic dolphin and wahoo, and South Atlantic snapper-grouper that begin participating after June 15, 2016, they may not be ensured participation under future management of these fisheries. If the Council decides to amend the FMPs to restrict participation in the Federal for-hire component of the recreational sectors of the Atlantic coastal migratory pelagics, Atlantic dolphin and wahoo, or South Atlantic snapper-grouper fisheries in relation to this control date, an analysis of the specific administrative, biological, economic, and social effects will be prepared at that time.

Publication of the control date in the **Federal Register** informs participants of the Council's considerations, and gives notice to anyone obtaining a Federal for-hire permit for the Atlantic coastal migratory pelagics, Atlantic dolphin and wahoo, or South Atlantic snapper-grouper recreational sectors after the control date that they would not be assured of future access to the recreational sector components should management changes be implemented that would restrict participation. Implementation of any such management changes by the Council would require preparation of amendments to the respective FMPs and publication of a notice of availability and proposed rule in the **Federal Register** with public comment periods, and if approved by the Secretary of Commerce, issuance of a final rule.

Fishermen are not guaranteed future participation in a fishery, sector, or component within a sector regardless of when they obtained their permits or their level of participation in the fishery, sector, or component within a

sector before or after the control date under consideration. The Council subsequently may choose a different control date or they may choose different management approaches without using a control date. The Council also may choose to take no further action to control entry or access to the Federal for-hire component of the recreational sectors of the Atlantic coastal migratory pelagics, Atlantic dolphin and wahoo, or South Atlantic snapper-grouper fisheries, in which case the control date may be rescinded.

This notification also gives the public notice that interested participants should locate and preserve records that substantiate and verify their participation in the Federal for-hire component of the recreational sectors of the Atlantic coastal migratory pelagics, Atlantic dolphin and wahoo, or South Atlantic snapper-grouper fisheries.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: September 20, 2016.

Samuel D. Rauch III,
*Deputy Assistant Administrator for
Regulatory Programs, National Marine
Fisheries Service.*

[FR Doc. 2016-23226 Filed 9-26-16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 648

[Docket No. 160706587-6814-01]

RIN 0648-BG21

Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fisheries; Amendment 16

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Proposed rule, request for comments.

SUMMARY: NMFS proposes regulations to implement measures in Amendment 16 to the Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fishery Management Plan. The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council developed Amendment 16 to protect deep-sea corals from the impacts of commercial fishing gear in the Mid-Atlantic. Amendment 16 management measures include: A deep-sea coral protection area; a prohibition on the use of bottom-tending commercial fishing gear within the deep-sea coral protection area; an exemption for American lobster and deep-sea red crab

pots and traps from the gear prohibition; a vessel monitoring system requirement for limited access *Illex* squid moratorium permit holders; provisions for vessels transiting through the deep-sea coral area; and expanded framework adjustment provisions for future modifications to the deep-sea coral protection measures. These proposed management measures are intended to protect deep-sea coral and deep-sea coral habitat while promoting the sustainable utilization and conservation of several different marine resources managed under the authority of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council.

DATES: Public comments must be received by November 1, 2016.

ADDRESSES: Copies of supporting documents used by the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, including the Environmental Assessment (EA) and Regulatory Impact Review (RIR)/Initial Regulatory Flexibility Analysis (IRFA), are available from: Dr. Christopher M. Moore, Executive Director, Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, 800 North State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901, telephone (302) 674-2331. The EA/RIR/IRFA is also accessible online at <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov>.

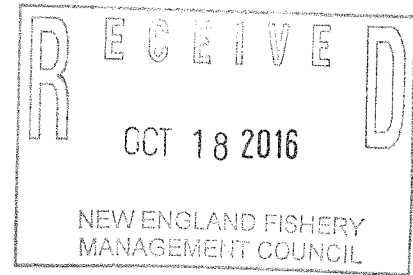
You may submit comments, identified by NOAA-NMFS-2016-0086, by either of the following methods:

- **Electronic Submission:** Submit all electronic public comments via the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal. Go to www.regulations.gov /#!docketDetail;D=NOAA-NMFS-2016-0086, click the "Comment Now!" icon, complete the required fields, and enter or attach your comments.

- **Mail:** Submit written comments to NMFS, Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope "Comments on MSB Amendment 16 Proposed Rule."

Instructions: Comments sent by any other method, to any other address or individual, or received after the end of the comment period, may not be considered by NMFS. All comments received are a part of the public record and will generally be posted for public viewing on www.regulations.gov without change. All personal identifying information (e.g., name, address, etc.), confidential business information, or otherwise sensitive information submitted voluntarily by the sender will be publicly accessible. NMFS will accept anonymous comments (enter "N/A" in the required fields if you wish to remain anonymous).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Peter Christopher, Supervisory Fishery



October 17, 2016

Ms. Mary Vara
NOAA Fisheries
Southeast Regional Office
Sustainable Fisheries Division
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, FL 33701

Attention: Ms. Mary Vara

Re: Public Comment NOAA-NMFS-2016-0121-0001 (via regulations.gov)

Dear Ms. Vara,

The American Bluefin Tuna Association (ABTA) appreciates the opportunity to provide public comment regarding the control date for the Federal for-hire recreational sector of the Atlantic Dolphinfin and Wahoo, Atlantic Coastal Migratory Pelagics and South Atlantic Snapper-Grouper Complex. Please note that our comments will be focused exclusively on the dolphinfin/wahoo fishery, specifically dolphinfin.

ABTA (<http://www.theabta.com>) represents handgear, hook and line, commercial, charter/headboat (CHB) and recreational fishermen who target Atlantic *bigeye*, *yellowfin*, *bluefin* and *albacore* tunas. In 2015, approximately 27,000 HMS permits were issued of which approximately 3,600 permits were issued to charter boat and headboat vessels.

ABTA is deeply involved in the domestic and international management of these fish stocks. In addition, ABTA has a vested interest in the management of other pelagic fish stocks that are an inextricable part of our Atlantic EEZ tropical tunas multi-species fishery including *wahoo*, *swordfish*, *skipjack tuna* and *dolphinfin*.

The American Bluefin Tuna Association P.O. Box 854 Norwell MA 02061 (603) 898-8862

jc - 10/21/16

ABTA advocates for management of these fisheries to be strictly guided by the best available science, to achieve optimum or maximum sustainable yield and an equitable distribution of the resource to the participants, equally.

Actions taken in last 18 months

Discussion regarding a control date for the for-hire recreational sector in the dolphinfish fishery should be viewed in the context of other decisions, rulemaking and management actions taken in the recent past. Here is a list of such actions taken by the SAFMC in the last 18 months:

- The commercial sector of the dolphinfish fishery was closed on June 30, 2015 for the balance of the season because of early utilization of commercial ACL.
- FMP allocations were changed as follows:
Commercial – changed from 7.3% to 10% of ACL;
Recreational – changed from 92.7% to 90% of ACL.
(This action was initiated prior to the fishery closure.)
- A control date was set for the commercial sector of June 30, 2015 (sent to NMFS 11/17/15)
- A commercial trip limit was imposed of 4,000 lbs./trip after 75% of the commercial ACL has been harvested. This is the fourth attempt to impose commercial trip limits since 2003 (sent to NMFS 2/16/16).
- A control date was set for the “for-hire” component in the recreational sector of June 15, 2016.

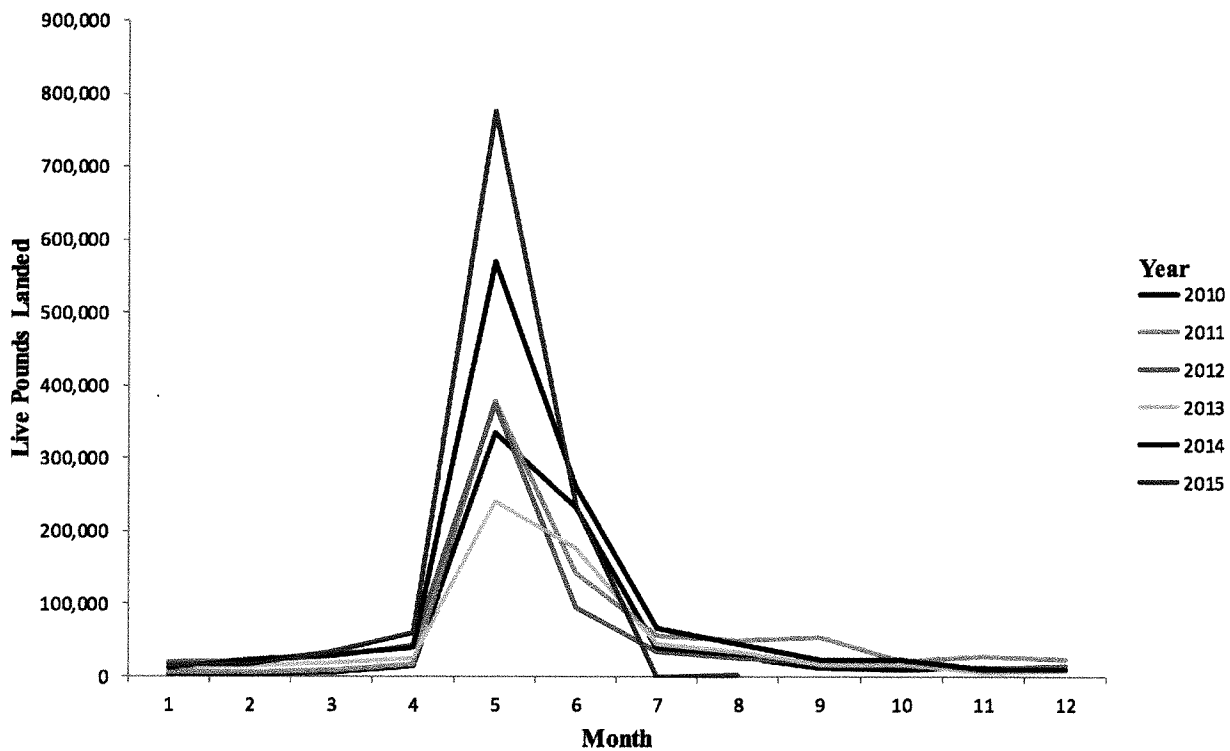
Dolphinfish migratory/foraging movements and landings

The seasonal ingress of dolphinfish off the U.S. East Coast is correlated to temperature and to a voracious appetite to sustain its rapid growth rate. Dolphinfish are present in waters off the coast of Florida year-round whereas further north, ingress begins later in the second quarter in the mid Atlantic and at the beginning of the third quarter in the Northeast, in a northerly progression. Landings in general are heaviest in the second quarter (see Table 1) and these landings are mostly concentrated in the South Atlantic. Overwhelmingly, the volume of landings for all gear types and sectors is dominated by the South Atlantic fishery.

If the greatest percentage of annual commercial and recreational landings is concentrated in the South Atlantic in the second quarter, it is easy to understand why the newly established commercial trip limit is prejudicial to Northeast and Mid Atlantic fishermen and consequently a violation of National Standard 4. To wit: it is highly unlikely that trip limits, if implemented in a given season, will negatively affect South Atlantic longliners but it is a foregone conclusion that trip limits, if implemented, will negatively affect Mid-Atlantic and New England longliners. Further, significant regulatory discarding will be an undesirable consequence and a violation of National Standard 9.

With far better and more equitable alternatives available, the decision to implement commercial trip limits was a poorly-considered management strategy embraced by the SAFMC and NOAA at the same time. It appeared to be a reflexive response to the early closure of the fishery in 2015, the only early closure in the fishery’s history.

Table 1: Dolphinfish landings in live weight by month/year, 2010-2015



(Source: Statistics Division, SEFSC)

Landings by sector/gear type

Charter/Headboat (CHB) landings are applied against the recreational ACL. Landings of CHB for the period 2005-2015 have averaged 19% of total recreational ACL whereas recreational (private sportfishing) landings have averaged 33% of total recreational ACL for the same period. (See Table 2)

The recreational sector has significantly under-utilized its ACL for years. Average ACL utilization for the period 2005-2015 is 52%. On the strength of this fact alone, one wonders why a control date would be needed for the CHB fleet?

Table 2
2005-2015 Dolphinfish Landings: Recreational Sector

Year	Charter (lbs)	Headboat (lbs)	Total (lbs)	% of Rec ACL (%)	Private (lbs)	% of Rec ACL (%)	Total (lbs)	% of Rec ACL (%)
2005	4,774,368	23,783	4,798,151	34%	4,772,694	34%	9,570,845	67%
2006	4,137,957	25,903	4,163,860	29%	5,370,256	38%	9,534,116	67%
2007	4,089,276	47,122	4,136,398	29%	6,300,261	44%	10,436,659	74%
2008	3,246,604	12,825	3,259,429	23%	4,964,915	35%	8,224,344	58%
2009	1,820,523	24,138	1,844,661	13%	5,672,189	40%	7,516,850	53%
2010	2,353,472	19,442	2,372,914	17%	3,814,986	27%	6,187,900	44%
2011	2,219,071	20,128	2,239,199	16%	4,289,061	30%	6,528,260	46%
2012	2,201,492	20,437	2,221,929	16%	3,886,531	27%	6,108,460	43%
2013	1,642,566	21,159	1,663,725	12%	3,472,341	24%	5,136,066	36%
2014	1,312,959	27,801	1,340,760	9%	3,886,885	27%	5,227,645	37%
2015	2,046,413	28,018	2,074,431	15%	5,336,824	38%	7,411,255	52%
Average				19%		33%		52%

- Area: New England to e FL
- MRFSS data from 2004 to 2013; MRIP data for 2014 and 2015

In the commercial sector (see Table 3), longline landings dominate with an average of 62% of commercial landings for the period 2005-2015. Hook and line represents an average of 37% of commercial landings for the same period.

The American Bluefin Tuna Association P.O. Box 854 Norwell MA 02061 (603) 898-8862

Table 3
2005-2015 Dolphinfish Landings: Commercial Sector

Year	Longline (lbs)	% of Coml ACL (%)	Hook/Line (lbs)	% of Coml ACL (%)	Total (lbs)	% of Coml ACL (%)
2005	248,443	46%	287,277	54%	535,720	46%
2006	321,170	53%	281,875	47%	603,045	52%
2007	546,131	63%	317,498	37%	863,629	75%
2008	479,179	63%	281,616	37%	760,795	66%
2009	743,138	65%	394,878	35%	1,138,016	98%
2010	415,912	63%	245,360	37%	661,272	57%
2011	352,991	47%	392,740	53%	745,731	64%
2012	394,941	64%	218,561	36%	613,502	53%
2013	347,914	62%	209,278	38%	557,192	48%
2014	759,506	75%	252,449	25%	1,011,955	87%
2015	960,570	83%	148,763	13%	1,109,333	96%
Average		62%		37%		68%

- Area: New England to e FL
- MRFSS data from 2004 to 2013; MRIP data for 2014 and 2015

The summary (Table 4) shows that all commercial landings for the period represented an average of 5.1% of total annual dolphinfish ACL, and all recreational landings represented an average of 49% of total annual dolphinfish ACL for the period.

Table 4
2005-2015 Dolphinfin Landings: Summary by sector

Year	Rec landings (lbs)	% of total ACL (%)	Coml landings (lbs)	% of total ACL (%)	Total ACL used (lbs)	Total ACL not used (lbs)	Total ACL not used (%)
2005	9,570,845	62%	535,720	3.5%	10,106,565	5,238,281	34%
2006	9,534,116	62%	603,045	3.9%	10,137,161	5,207,685	34%
2007	10,436,659	68%	863,629	5.6%	11,300,288	4,044,558	26%
2008	8,224,344	54%	760,795	5.0%	8,985,139	6,359,707	41%
2009	7,516,850	49%	1,138,016	7.4%	8,654,866	6,689,980	44%
2010	6,187,900	40%	661,272	4.3%	6,849,172	8,495,674	55%
2011	6,528,260	43%	745,731	4.9%	7,273,991	8,070,855	53%
2012	6,108,460	40%	613,502	4.0%	6,721,962	8,622,884	56%
2013	5,136,066	33%	557,192	3.6%	5,693,258	9,651,588	63%
2014	5,227,645	34%	1,011,955	6.6%	6,239,600	9,105,246	59%
2015	7,411,255	48%	1,109,333	7.2%	8,520,588	6,824,258	44%
Average		49%		5.1%			46%

- Area: New England to eFL
- MRFSS data from 2004 to 2013; MRIP data for 2014 and 2015

Optimum Yield

“Optimum yield” is mandated in National Standard 1. The foregoing data suggests that optimum yield - or the conditions necessary to achieve optimum yield – has not been a priority for management of the dolphinfin fishery.

Biological

Dolphinfin is a highly fecund, fast growing, highly migratory epipelagic species that is found throughout the tropical and subtropical regions of the Atlantic Ocean, and is widely subject to commercial and recreational exploitation. According to NOAA, dolphinfin is not overfished, nor is overfishing taking place. Dolphinfin has a natural mortality of 3-5 years, spawns continuously and is capable of growing from fingerling to market size in three months.

The American Bluefin Tuna Association P.O. Box 854 Norwell MA 02061 (603) 898-8862

Stock Assessment

A proper, bona fide, peer-reviewed stock assessment of dolphinfish has never been held by NOAA/NMFS, nor is dolphinfish presently on the list of upcoming SEDAR assessments, notwithstanding the fact that dolphinfish is at the top of the South Atlantic Council's list of species in need of an assessment or an update to an existing assessment. Some will point to Praeger 2000 as an assessment of dolphinfish. Praeger 2000 is not in our view a proper stock assessment. Rather, it is a survey that discusses some of the scientific literature, expresses ideas regarding a future stock assessment and makes some preliminary observations regarding spawning stock biomass based upon longline landings for the period 1986-1997. Praeger 2000 did not evaluate the impact of the recreational fishery on the dolphinfish population, notwithstanding the fact that the recreational sector has historically dominated in volume of landings. In fairness to the author, he identified these and other limitations in his report.

The present management of dolphinfish is based solely upon this survey.

Some important reasons for the SAFMC to place a stock assessment for dolphinfish on a "fast track":

- Absent a bona fide, peer reviewed stock assessment, stock status is a matter of speculation, not a result of recent scientific enquiry.
- There have been several important contributions to the scientific literature on dolphinfish since 2000. In addition, a conventional and electronic tagging program was undertaken in the mid-2000's. Further, other Atlantic fishing countries regularly collect data on dolphinfish.
- Praeger 2000 places undesirable emphasis on longline landings data. To be fair, it was the only data available at the time that could be used for the purpose intended. Longliners do not fish in the same areas as recreational, CHB or hook and line commercial fishermen, so observations based upon longline landings data alone cannot be considered indicative of abundance throughout the fishery. Further, it is understood that for a highly migratory epipelagic species which primarily inhabits offshore areas, catch reports in general, used in this case as an indicator of dolphinfish distribution and abundance, are

inherently biased due to the non-random nature of fishing fleet distribution. More recently developed geostatistical modeling techniques and, in particular, species distribution models (SDM) can address this bias.

Management Considerations – ACL

The 2003 FMP states that MSY is between 14.1 and 34.9 million pounds and dolphinfish ACL is set at 75% of the lower value. [ICCAT/SCRS scientists utilize the *median* MSY value in their assessments.] These statistics are highly speculative and perhaps overly precautionary, having been derived only from longline landings data that has not been updated since 2000.

Management Considerations – Fishery management structure

The New England, Mid Atlantic and South Atlantic Fishery Management Councils entered into an agreement in which the SAFMC is to manage dolphinfish as one “management unit” for its entire range on the U.S. East Coast. We agree that dolphinfish should be managed as one “management unit” provided the South Atlantic Council is responsive to the needs of all dolphinfish fishermen on the U.S. East Coast. However, our observation based recent decisions and based upon transcripts of recent meetings and webinars would suggest that the SAFMC is more focused upon the needs of South Atlantic fishermen, in particular, recreational fishermen, to the detriment of fishermen from the Mid Atlantic and New England.

Charter/Headboat when operating “for hire”

Until recently, cod was a dependable “mainstay” of the Northeast CHB for-hire fishery. For decades, many CHB fishermen built their business plans around the availability of cod. Today, with the dramatic regulatory changes to the cod fishery, this is no longer a possibility. This has had a significant negative effect on the CHB business.

Dolphinfish are carried to the Northeast by the Gulf Stream and by the annual warming trend of oceanic waters seaward of the Continental Shelf. Eddies, large masses of water, spin off the Gulf Stream in the direction of the Mid Atlantic and

The American Bluefin Tuna Association P.O. Box 854 Norwell MA 02061 (603) 898-8862

Northeast coasts, bringing warm water, laden with tropical fish to the edge of the Continental Shelf. These events populate the Canyons Region with tropical species. In more recent years, however, these movements of warm water are influencing SST west of the Shelf edge, on the Continental Shelf, bringing dolphinfish much closer to the coast. Dolphinfish therefore become a viable and badly needed replacement species for cod for those CHB fishermen in the southern New England, New York and New Jersey area who fish exclusively on the Continental Shelf. Should this trend continue - the increased proximity of dolphinfish to the coast - dolphinfish may become a more important species for CHB vessels that fish closer to the coast in other areas in the Northeast and Mid Atlantic (RI, MD, DE, VA and NC).

Dolphinfish have always been an important species for CHB vessels that fish in the Canyons Region.

Charter/Headboat when operating as a commercial vessel

Dolphinfish is a desirable food fish that has been well known in the Southeast for a very long time. This has not been the case to the same degree in the Northeast. Recently, dolphinfish is increasingly appearing on restaurant menus in the Northeast and demand for the fish is increasing. In actual fact, the demand in the Northeast for fresh dolphinfish often exceeds the supply in this region. ABTA's commercial and CHB fishermen (when operating as commercial vessels) are consequently interested in developing the dolphinfish business. This should not be a problem for the fishery managers, as there is significant unutilized ACL in each year.

Control Date

Establishing a control date for CHB fishermen who fish for dolphinfish therefore becomes a matter of great concern. A control date can only be used to constrain the growth of a fishery. With such a large percentage of unused ACL each year in the recreational sector, there can be no valid reason for establishing this control date.

Why is ACL not more equitably distributed among the user groups?

Why does the recreational sector hold so tenaciously to their unutilized ACL? The explanation most frequently given is the “paper fish” argument.

“Paper fish” refers to a theory held by some of the recreational fishermen that they will realize a higher “CPUE” as a direct result of maintaining a relatively high percentage of unused ACL. The theory holds, conversely, that catch or “CPUE” will diminish if the amount of unutilized ACL diminishes. In other words, it is believed that it is important to “leave a certain amount of ACL in the water” to ensure sufficient abundance that is expected to support a higher CPUE.

This singular theory has driven dolphinfish management for years.

There is no scientific basis for the “paper fish” argument. The “paper fish” concept might be more applicable to benthic species or species that inhabit a specific region throughout their life cycle, such as yellowtail snapper. High growth rate, early maturity and high fecundity are the conditions that typically enable sustained high exploitation rates for a highly migratory species such as dolphinfish.

Praeger 2000 states, “..targeting, especially on a schooling species, can cause catchability to increase with declining abundance”. Clearly, there is much that we need to learn about dolphinfish.

If we truly want to understand the effect that U.S. East Coast fishing effort has on dolphinfish, we must have a bona fide, peer reviewed stock assessment.

Summary

It should be obvious that dolphinfish fishery management is having difficulties. There is no valid rationale for setting a control date for the charter/headboat fishery. Recent discussion in a scoping process regarding conversion of the commercial fishery to a limited access model is another example of how management is looking far afield for exotic solutions. The issue of “optimum yield” is an important issue barely ever mentioned by the Council. Further, we can only assume that the long-standing lack of a recent, bona fide, peer-reviewed stock assessment is deliberate.

We believe that it is time for NOAA and all three Councils to take stock of the current situation with dolphinfish management with a view toward setting it on a course that will result in equitable fishing opportunity for all sectors, gear types and regions.

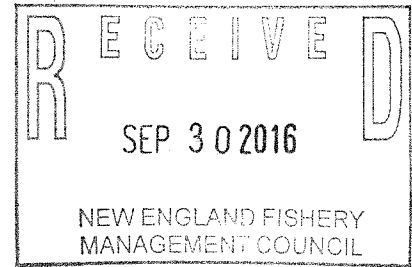
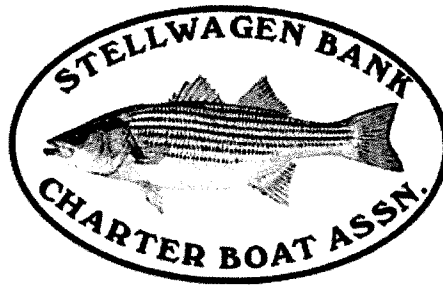
We thank you for the opportunity to comment on NOAA-NMFS-2016-0121-0001.

Cordially,

David Schalit, Vice President
American Bluefin Tuna Association

Cc: Tom Nies, Executive Director, NEFMC
Chris Moore, Executive Director, MAFMC
Greg Waugh, Executive Director, SAFMC
Dr. John Quinn, Chairman, NEFMC
Mike Luisi, Chairman, MAFMC
Dr. Michelle Duval, Chairman, SAFMC

Margo Schulz-Haugen, HMS Management Division, NOAA
Dr. Clay Porch, Sustainable Fisheries Division, NOAA



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

Mr. Terry Stockwell, Chairman, NEFMC Groundfish Committee
Maine Department of Marine Resources
21 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0021

Sept 30, 2016

Control Date for the Federal For-Hire Recreational Sector of Fisheries for the Atlantic Dolphin and Wahoo, Atlantic Coastal Migratory Pelagics, and South Atlantic Snapper-Grouper

Dear Terry,

I am writing to you representing the members of the Stellwagen Bank Charter Boat Association and other For Hire Owners/Operators located throughout New England regarding a proposed rulemaking by the Southeast Regional Office. This proposed rulemaking was published after the South Atlantic Regional Fishery Council set a control date of June 15, 2016, for the federal charter vessel/headboat (for-hire) component of the recreational sectors of the coastal migratory pelagics fishery in the Atlantic, dolphin and wahoo fishery in the Atlantic, and snapper-grouper fishery in the South Atlantic

Historically dolphin/mahi and wahoo were species that were typically landed well offshore at the Canyons (100 miles) southeast of Cape Cod. Few charter boats have the ability to safely navigate such distances. As a result of increasing water temperatures and/or the climatic shift south of Cape Cod these species are now being encountered closer to the near shore waters safely within reach of smaller vessels.

The New England for-hire fleet is adjusting to an unprecedented disruption in the groundfish fishery, specifically cod, which has historically been the mainstay of our business. With a bleak prospect for a near-term cod recovery, the charter boat fleet is looking for alternative species to

market their trips. As a result, the June 15, 2016 control date for the for-hire component of the recreational dolphin and wahoo fishery would unfairly penalize the New England for-hire fleet.

The need for a control date is inconstant with the fact that the recreational dolphin/mahi fishery historically does not exceed its ACL and ultimately results in a significant under harvesting of dolphin/mahi each year. In addition, an updated dolphin/mahi stock assessment is well overdue and recommended before any action or control dates are implemented.

If a control date is required for management purposes, we urge the SAFMC to consider a control date later in 2016 that would allow those New England for-hire vessels who anticipate targeting dolphin/mahi, coastal migratory pelagics, and South Atlantic snapper-grouper as a future component of their business model, proper time to secure the permit. To do otherwise would be punitive to an entire region for whom dolphin/mahi may well represent an important part of future business.


http://safmc.net/sites/default/files/meetings/pdf/Council/2016/09_2016/SAFMC_MeetingReport_September2016.pdf

http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov/fishery_bulletins/2016/065/index.html

We are respectfully requesting the NEFMC send a letter to the SAFMC outlining the problem for the New England for hire operators and that under the current circumstances they extend the comment period and the control date for later this calendar year.

If you have any additional questions, please contact me anytime.

Respectfully,



David Waldrip

President, Stellwagen Bank Charter Boat Assoc

cc: Ms. Jamie Cournine, NEFMC Groundfish Coordinator
Dr. David Pierce, Director, Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries
Mr. Tom Nies, Executive Director, NEFMC
Mr. Barry Gibson, Chairman, Recreational Advisory Panel, NEFMC
Ms. Moira Kelly, GARFO Recreational Fisheries Coordinator

Cpt. Michael J. Pierdinock
CPF Charters "Perseverance"
176 Sandy Beach Road, Plymouth, MA 02360
Mobile Phone (617) 291-8914
cpfcharters@yahoo.com
www.cpfcharters.com

October 1, 2016

Ms. Mary Vara
NOAA Fisheries Southeast Regional Office
Sustainable Fisheries Division
263 13th Avenue South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701

RE: **Control Date for the Federal For-Hire Recreational Sector of Fisheries for the Atlantic Dolphin and Wahoo, Atlantic Coastal Migratory Pelagics, and South Atlantic Snapper-Grouper**

Dear Ms. Vara:

Historically dolphin/mahi and wahoo were species that were typically landed well offshore at the Canyons (100 miles) southeast of Cape Cod. Few charter boats have the ability to safely navigate such distances. As a result of increasing water temperatures and/or the climatic shift south of Cape Cod these species are being encountered closer to the Cape and/or near shore that was not historically the case in the past.

The New England for-hire fleet is adjusting to an unprecedented disruption in the groundfish fishery, specifically cod, which has historically been the mainstay of our business. With a bleak prospect for a near-term cod recovery, the charter boat fleet is looking for alternative species to market their trips.

As a result, the June 15, 2016 control date for the for-hire component of the recreational dolphin and wahoo fishery would unfairly penalize the New England for-hire fleet. The need for a control date is inconsistent with the fact that the recreational dolphin/mahi fishery historically does not exceed its ACL and ultimately results in a significant under harvesting of dolphin/mahi each year. In addition, a dolphin/mahi stock assessment is well overdue and recommended before any action or control dates is implemented.

If a control date is required for management purposes, I urge you to consider a control date later in 2016 that would allow those New England for-hire vessels who anticipate targeting dolphin/mahi as a future component of their business model proper time to secure the permit. To do otherwise would be punitive to an entire region for which dolphin/mahi may well represent an important part of future business.

I would like to note that I presently possess an Atlantic Dolphin-Wahoo Charter/Headboat permit prior to the control date therefore, the decision does not impact me personally. In my opinion the control date is premature as a result of the potential negative impact to the fleet; the fact that an updated stock assessment is well overdue and

Cpt. Michael J. Pierdinock
CPF Charters "Perseverance"
176 Sandy Beach Road, Plymouth, MA 02360
Mobile Phone (617) 291-8914
cpfcharters@yahoo.com
www.cpfcharters.com

recommended before any action or control dates are implemented; and the fact that the recreational dolphin/mahi fishery historically does not exceed its ACL

If you have any questions or comments, please email or give me a call.

Very truly yours,



Capt Michael J. Pierdinock
CPF Charters "Perseverance" – New Bedford
Recreational Fishing Alliance - Massachusetts Chairman
Stellwagen Bank Charter Boat Association - Board of Directors
Massachusetts Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission – Commissioner
NMFS - Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Advisory Panel
New England Fishery Management Council - Recreational Advisory Panel

Cc: Ms Margo Schulze-Haugen, NOAA, HMS AP
Ms. Jamie Cournane, NEFMC Groundfish Coordinator
Dr. David Pierce, Director, Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries
Mr. Tom Nies, Executive Director, NEFMC
Mr. Barry Gibson, Chairman, Recreational Advisory Panel, NEFMC
Mr. Terry Stockwell, Groundfish Committee Chairman, NEFMC
Ms. Moira Kelly, GARFO



September 30, 2016

Mr. Terry Stockwell
Chairman, NEFMC Groundfish Cttee.
Maine Dept. of Marine Resources
21 State House Station. Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Terry:

As you are aware, the South Atlantic Fishery Management Council recently proposed a control date of June 15, 2016, for the party/charter sector of the dolphin/wahoo fishery.

Due to changing water temperatures and migration patterns of dolphin and wahoo, a number of New England for-hire vessels have been catching these species this season. Dolphin and wahoo historically have primarily been caught out in the canyons, but this year they have been encountered much closer to shore, well within range of many in the for-hire fleet.

Since this is a relatively new fishery, many operators were unaware they needed a dolphin/wahoo permit, provided by the Southeast Regional Office. In addition, many who did purchase a D/W permit did so after encountering these species for the first time, after the proposed control date.

Given that the comment period ends October 27th, and realizing that the NEFMC will not meet until November, I am requesting that the Groundfish Committee review the issue and perhaps recommend to the Executive Committee that a letter from NEFMC to the SAFMC/SRO be sent asking (1) that consideration be given to the 30 to 50 (estimate provided to me by several P/C participants) New England for-hire vessels that currently target D/W but either do not have a permit or purchased one after the proposed control date, and (2) the SAFMC/SRO facilitate an extension of the comment period to accommodate the northern operators who were unaware of the control date until a few days ago.

I realize that this issue is not really the Groundfish Committee's bailiwick, but since the Council's Recreational Advisory Panel reports to your committee, I think under the circumstances the request is appropriate. And, no doubt the RAP will be taking up the issue at its next meeting on October 26th.

Thanks very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Barry Gibson

New England Regional Director
cc: Dr. Jamie Cournane, NEFMC Staff



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
 NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
 GREATER ATLANTIC REGIONAL FISHERIES OFFICE
 55 Great Republic Drive
 Gloucester, MA 01930-2276

SEP 27 2016

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

Dear Tom:

We recently completed Northeast (NE) multispecies year-end accounting for the 2015 fishing year, and the final report is attached to this letter.

In fishing year 2015, the total annual catch limits (ACLs) for both northern and southern windowpane flounder were exceeded by more than 20 percent. For both stocks, the overage was greater than the management uncertainty buffers, i.e., catch exceeded the acceptable biological catches (ABCs). As a result, the accountability measures (AMs) for these stocks will take effect in 2017, and are described in more detail below. The total ACL for Atlantic halibut was exceeded by 5 percent, or 5 mt. However, the overage was not greater than the management uncertainty buffer, and therefore the halibut AM is not triggered. Table 1 summarizes these ACL overages.

Table 1. Fishing Year 2015 Windowpane Flounder and Halibut ACLs and Catch

Stock	ABC (mt)	Total ACL (mt)	Catch (mt and percent of ACL or sub-ACL)					
			Total		Groundfish Fishery	Scallop Fishery	State Waters	Other sub-Component
Northern windowpane flounder	151	144	196	136%	75%	-*	84%	275%
Southern windowpane flounder	548	527	643	122%	135%	115%	71%	138%
Atlantic halibut	119	97	102	105%	92%	-	137%	65%

*Scallop catch of northern windowpane flounder is counted toward the other sub-component.

Windowpane Flounder

As you know, the total ACL for northern windowpane flounder has been exceeded for the past 3 fishing years, and as a result the AM for this stock was implemented for the first time in 2014. Unlike previous years, the groundfish fishery did not exceed its sub-ACL for northern windowpane in 2015. Catch from the other sub-component, primarily the scallop fishery, caused the overage. Because no other fishery receives an allocation of this stock, the groundfish fishery



will be held responsible for the overage. The ACL was exceeded by more than 20 percent; and therefore the large AM areas will take effect for all groundfish trawl vessels on May 1, 2017. The Council should consider this information when developing northern windowpane management measures in Framework Adjustment 56 to the NE Multispecies Fishery Management Plan.

The total ACL overage for southern windowpane flounder was due to overages by the groundfish fishery, the scallop fishery, and the other sub-component. Because the ACL was exceeded by more than 20 percent, the large AM areas will take effect on May 1, 2017, for all groundfish trawl vessels, and for non-groundfish trawl vessels fishing with a codend mesh size of 5 inches or greater. The scallop fishery AM restricts the use of dredge gear in the area west of 71° W. longitude, excluding the Mid-Atlantic scallop access areas, for the month of February 2018.

As you know, the size of the windowpane AM area restrictions can be reduced if the stock is rebuilt and the biomass criterion is met. The biomass criterion is defined as the most recent 3-year average of catch per tow from the fall surveys multiplied by 75 percent of F_{MSY} (fishing mortality at maximum sustainable yield). Northern windowpane flounder is not rebuilt, and thus, does not meet the first criterion for this provision. However, because southern windowpane flounder is rebuilt, we reviewed the biomass criterion for this stock. Based on the 2013-2015 fall surveys, the most recent 3-year average catch per tow is 0.32 kg, and when applied to 75% F_{MSY} (1.52), results in 483 mt, which is less than the 2015 catch. As a result, the biomass criterion is not met, and the size of the AM cannot be reduced for southern windowpane flounder at this time. When the 2016 fall survey data become available, we will revisit this determination.

Halibut

The halibut ACL overage is due to catch by non-Federally permitted vessels fishing in state waters, primarily Maine. As the Groundfish Committee has recently discussed, the increasing trend of halibut catch by Maine's state fishery is a concern. We encourage the Council to continue to work with the State of Maine regarding this issue. An overage in the 2016 fishing year is likely if catch increases from 2015 levels. If total catch exceeds the ABC in 2016, it will trigger the AM for the Federal fishery, which includes area restrictions and a prohibition on possession. We will continue to work with the Council on halibut management measures, as well as addressing scientific issues identified in the most recent 2015 operational assessment update.

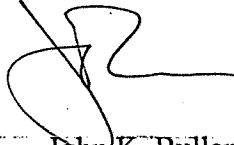
Sub-ACL Overages

The midwater trawl herring fishery exceeded its sub-ACL for Georges Bank haddock by approximately 4 percent in fishing year 2015. Therefore, the incidental catch cap will be reduced by the overage of 8.5 mt in fishing year 2016.

In fishing year 2015, the recreational sub-ACL for Gulf of Maine (GOM) haddock was exceeded by less than 3 percent. As you know, we already adjusted recreational measures for the 2016 fishing year for GOM cod and GOM haddock. Therefore, this overage does not trigger additional AMs for the recreational fishery.

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

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'JB', written over a horizontal line.

John K. Bullard
Regional Administrator

cc: Terry Stockwell, Chair, NEFMC Groundfish Committee
Dr. Jamie Cournane, NEFMC Groundfish Plan Coordinator
Dr. Bill Karp, Director, Northeast Fisheries Science Center

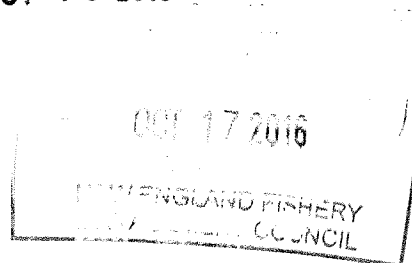
Enclosure



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
GREATER ATLANTIC REGIONAL FISHERIES OFFICE
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2276

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

OCT 13 2016



Dear Tom:

We recently completed the Northeast multispecies year-end catch accounting for the 2015 fishing year. We sent a letter conveying the report on September 27, 2016; however, the report contained some errors. A corrected report is attached.

An error in calculations resulted in the overestimation of discards by the scallop fishery for many of the groundfish stocks. The correction results in a decrease to total catch for some stocks. The largest is a 9.4-mt decrease in the Cape Cod/Gulf of Maine yellowtail flounder catch. The largest percentage decrease in annual catch limit (ACL) percentage is for northern windowpane flounder, from 135.8 percent to 131.8 percent. There are no changes for stocks that have an allocated sub-ACL for the scallop fishery. The corrections do not change any determinations regarding accountability measures, as described in our September 27 letter.

My previous letter addressed the scallop fishery's accountability measure for southern windowpane flounder. I need to clarify that the accountability measure applies not only to dredge gear, but also to trawl gear, which may not be used to fish for scallops in the area west of 71° W. longitude, for the month of February.

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

Sincerely,

for John K. Bullard
Regional Administrator

cc: Terry Stockwell, Chair, NEFMC Groundfish Committee
Dr. Jamie Cournane, NEFMC Groundfish Plan Coordinator
Dr. Jon Hare, Acting Director, Northeast Fisheries Science Center

Enclosure

jc - 10/19/16



Northeast Multispecies Fishery

Final Year-End Results for Fishing Year 2015

- Tables 1 through 5: Total groundfish caught, landed, and discard estimates
- Table 6: Estimated state water catch
- Tables 7-9: Other sub-component catch detail
- Table 10: FY 2013 through FY 2015 GOM cod and haddock recreational catch evaluation
- Table 11: Sector carryover
- Tables 12 through 17: U.S./Canada stocks catch evaluation

In this report: a table cell value of "0" or "0.0" indicates a non-zero value in the cell. "-" is displayed for values exactly equal to zero. Blanks are shown when there are no values. "NA" is displayed when no value is applicable.

Table 1: FY 2015 Northeast Multispecies Percent of Annual Catch Limit Caught (%)

Stock	Components with ACLs and sub-ACLs: With Accountability Measures (AMs)										Sub-components: No AMs	
	Total	Groundfish Fishery	Sector	Common Pool	Recreational	Midwater Trawl Herring Fishery	Scallop Fishery	Small Mesh Fisheries	State Water	Other		
GB Cod	A to H	A+B+C	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H		
GB Cod	97.3	91.6	91.6	95.8					230.0	193.2		
GOM Cod	88.8	82.6	90.2	86.3	69.8				181.2	58.8		
GB Haddock	25.9	23.3	23.5	0.1		103.9			10.3	68.6		
GOM Haddock	82.9	83.6	76.8	24.8	102.7	-			38.2	116.8		
GB Yellowtail Flounder	28.4	18.9	19.3	0.2			98.8	1.0	NA	0.1		
SNE Yellowtail Flounder	49.0	48.9	37.9	91.7			79.1		15.4	22.5		
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	88.9	84.1	85.0	64.0					137.1	101.9		
Plaice	96.9	98.0	98.9	51.5					75.5	70.6		
Witch Flounder	85.1	88.0	87.8	98.7					171.2	53.0		
GB Winter Flounder	45.4	45.9	46.4	0.0					NA	29.3		
GOM Winter Flounder	42.1	30.9	31.7	16.3					92.0	49.1		
SNE/MA Winter Flounder	55.2	52.7	50.9	65.6					72.6	61.6		
Redfish	46.4	47.9	48.2	0.5					3.6	1.2		
White Hake	35.8	36.8	37.1	0.8					1.5	7.2		
Pollock	25.2	21.3	21.1	54.4					44.3	54.2		
Northern Windowpane	131.8	75.1	NA	NA					84.1	262.3		
Southern Windowpane	122.1	134.9	NA	NA			115.1		71.3	137.5		
Ocean Pout	34.7	26.8	NA	NA					74.3	94.7		
Halibut	105.2	92.2	NA	NA					137.1	63.1		
Wolfish	30.4	30.1	NA	NA					99.3	12.6		

Source: NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
September 30, 2016, run dates of June 20, 2016 and August 10, 2016

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 2: FY 2015 Northeast Multispecies Annual Catch Limits (mt)

Stock	Components with ACLs and sub-ACLs: With Accountability Measures (AMs)										Sub-components: No AMs		
	Total ACL	Groundfish	Sector	Common Pool ¹	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	1,886	1,787	1,748	37					20				
GOM Cod	366	328	201	6	121				26				
GB Haddock	23,204	21,759	21,566	193		227			244				
GOM Haddock	1,375	1,330	946	12	372	14			11				
GB Yellowtail Flounder	240.0	202.9	199.0	3.9			30.1	5.0	NA				
SNE Yellowtail Flounder	666	579	460	119			44		14				
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	524	458	437	21					38				
Plaice	1,470	1,408	1,381	27					31				
Witch Flounder	751	610	596	14					23				
GB Winter Flounder	1,952	1,891	1,873	18					NA				
GOM Winter Flounder	489	392	371	21					87				
SNE/MA Winter Flounder	1,607	1,306	1,147	159					117				
Redfish	11,393	11,034	10,970	64					120				
White Hake	4,484	4,343	4,311	32					47				
Pollock	15,878	13,720	13,634	86					996				
Northern Windowpane	144	98	NA	98					2				
Southern Windowpane	527	102	NA	102			183		55				
Ocean Pout	220	195	NA	195					2				
Halibut	97	64	NA	64					30				
Wolffish	65	62	NA	62					1				

¹The GB cod common pool sub-ACL was reduced mid-year to account for an overage of the 2014 Eastern GB cod common pool sub-ACL.

Values in metric tons of live weight

Source: NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
September 30, 2016

Table 3: FY 2015 Northeast Multispecies Total Catch (mt)

Stock	Total Catch		Groundfish Fishery	Sector	Common Pool		Recreational	Midwater Trawl/Herring Fishery	Scallop Fishery ¹	Small Mesh Fisheries	State Water	Other
	A to H	A+B+C			A	B						
GB Cod	1,835.4	1,636.8	1,601.1		35.8						45.5	153.0
GOM Cod	324.8	270.9	181.6		4.8	84.5					46.4	7.5
GB Haddock	6,003.5	5,074.7	5,074.4		0.3			235.5			25.0	668.3
GOM Haddock	1,139.9	1,111.2	726.2		3.1	381.9		-			4.0	24.6
GB Yellowtail Flounder	68.2	38.4	38.4		0.0				29.8		-	0.0
SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder	326.6	283.5	174.4		109.2				34.6		2.2	6.3
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	465.6	385.1	371.7		13.4						52.6	27.9
Plaice	1,425.1	1,379.9	1,366.0		13.9						23.3	21.8
Witch Flounder	639.4	536.9	523.2		13.8						40.2	62.3
GB Winter Flounder	886.5	868.8	868.8		0.0						-	17.7
GOM Winter Flounder	205.8	121.0	117.6		3.5						79.8	5.0
SNE/MA Winter Flounder	886.7	688.0	583.4		104.6						85.2	113.5
Redfish	5,291.8	5,284.6	5,284.3		0.3						4.3	2.8
White Hake	1,606.6	1,599.1	1,598.8		0.3						0.7	6.8
Pollock	3,995.1	2,923.9	2,876.9		47.0						441.5	629.7
Northern Windowpane	189.8	73.6	73.6		0.0						1.3	114.9
Southern Windowpane	643.4	137.6	90.4		47.2			210.6			39.1	256.1
Ocean Pout	76.3	52.3	44.1		8.2						1.7	22.3
Halibut	102.0	59.0	58.5		0.4						41.1	1.9
Wolfish	19.7	18.7	18.7		-						0.7	0.4

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 wolfish.

Based on scallop fishing year March 2015 through February 2016
 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 30, 2016, run dates of June 20, 2016 and August 10, 2016

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 4: FY 2015 Northeast Multispecies Landings (mt)

Stock	Total Landings		Groundfish Fishery	Sector	Common Pool	Recreational	Midwater Trawl Herring Fishery	Scallop Fishery	Small Mesh Fisheries	State Water	Other
	A to H	A+B+C									
GB Cod	1,790.3	1,608.5	1,573.6	A	35.0			E	F	G	H
GOM Cod	229.3	176.9	168.1		4.3	4.5					136.8
GB Haddock	4,461.4	4,217.9	4,217.7		0.2		235.0			6.6	6.5
GOM Haddock	924.8	921.4	680.1		3.0	238.3				2.5	1.8
GB Yellowtail Flounder	36.5	36.5	36.5		-					-	0.9
SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder	274.7	272.7	172.4		100.2					1.2	-
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	420.6	366.3	353.4		12.9					52.1	0.9
Plaice	1,318.4	1,296.1	1,284.9		11.2					20.4	2.2
Witch Flounder	527.3	488.2	481.1		7.1					38.6	2.0
GB Winter Flounder	865.4	864.7	864.7		-					-	0.6
GOM Winter Flounder	197.7	119.0	115.6		3.4					78.2	0.6
SNE/MA Winter Flounder	762.3	679.4	579.1		100.4					77.4	0.5
Redfish	5,184.0	5,182.7	5,182.4		0.3					0.5	5.5
White Hake	1,586.1	1,584.7	1,584.4		0.3					0.2	0.8
Pollock	3,207.8	2,848.2	2,801.1		47.0					146.0	1.3
Northern Windowpane	0.3	-	-		-					0.3	213.7
Southern Windowpane	22.7	0.2	-		0.2					22.1	-
Ocean Pout	0.1	0.0	-		0.0					-	0.5
Halibut	62.2	22.0	21.6		0.4					39.5	0.1
Wolffish	0.1	-	-		-					-	0.7

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 30, 2016, run dates of June 20, 2016 and August 10, 2016

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.

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.

Table 5: FY 2015 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						
GB Cod	45.1	28.3	27.5	0.8							0.6	16.2
GOM Cod	95.5	94.0	13.5	0.5	80.0						0.5	1.0
GB Haddock	1,542.2	856.7	856.7	0.0		0.6					18.4	666.5
GOM Haddock	215.1	189.8	46.2	0.0	143.6	-					1.5	23.7
GB Yellowtail Flounder	31.7	1.9	1.9	0.0				29.8		0.1	-	0.0
SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder	51.8	10.9	1.9	8.9				34.6			1.0	5.4
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	45.0	18.8	18.3	0.5							0.5	25.7
Plaice	106.6	83.9	81.2	2.7							3.0	19.8
Witch Flounder	112.1	48.8	42.1	6.7							1.7	61.7
GB Winter Flounder	21.1	4.1	4.1	0.0							-	17.0
GOM Winter Flounder	8.1	2.1	1.9	0.1							1.5	4.5
SNE/MA Winter Flounder	124.4	8.6	4.3	4.3							7.8	108.0
Redfish	107.8	101.9	101.9	0.0							3.9	2.0
White Hake	20.5	14.4	14.4	-							0.5	5.5
Pollock	787.3	75.8	75.8	-							295.5	416.1
Northern Windowpane	189.5	73.6	73.6	0.0							1.0	114.9
Southern Windowpane	620.6	137.4	90.4	47.0				210.6			17.0	255.6
Ocean Pout	76.2	52.3	44.1	8.2							1.7	22.2
Halibut	39.8	37.0	36.9	0.0							1.6	1.2
Wolffish	19.7	18.7	18.7	-							0.7	0.3

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 30, 2016, run dates of June 20, 2016 and August 10, 2016

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 2015 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	45.5	44.9	0.6	12.5	11.9	0.6	33.0	33.0		
GOM Cod	46.4	45.9	0.5	46.4	45.9	0.5	-*	-*	-*	
GB Haddock	25.0	6.6	18.4	25.0	6.6	18.4				
GOM Haddock	4.0	2.5	1.5	4.0	2.5	1.5	-*	-*	-*	
GB Yellowtail Flounder	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder	2.2	1.2	1.0	2.2	1.2	1.0				
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	52.6	52.1	0.5	52.6	52.1	0.5				
Plaice	23.3	20.4	3.0	23.3	20.4	3.0				
Witch Flounder	40.2	38.6	1.7	40.2	38.6	1.7				
GB Winter Flounder	-	-	-	-	-	-				
GOM Winter Flounder	79.8	78.2	1.5	51.4	51.3	0.0	28.4	26.9	1.5	
SNE/MA Winter Flounder	85.2	77.4	7.8	58.3	57.8	0.5	26.9	19.6	7.3	
Redfish	4.3	0.5	3.9	4.3	0.5	3.9				
White Hake	0.7	0.2	0.5	0.7	0.2	0.5				
Pollock	441.5	146.0	295.5	6.9	3.6	3.2	434.6	142.3	292.3	
Northern Windowpane	1.3	0.3	1.0	1.3	0.3	1.0				
Southern Windowpane	39.1	22.1	17.0	39.1	22.1	17.0				
Ocean Pout	1.7	-	1.7	1.7	-	1.7				
Halibut	41.1	39.5	1.6	41.1	39.5	1.6				
Wolfish	0.7	-	0.7	0.7	-	0.7				

*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.

¹January through April 2016 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 30, 2016, run date of Sept. 7, 2016

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 2015 Northeast Multispecies Other Sub-Component Catch Detail (mt)

Stock	Total Catch	SCALLOP ¹	FLUKE	HAGFISH	HERRING	LOBSTER/ CRAB ²	MENHADEN	MONKFISH	RESEARCH	SCUP	SHRIMP
GB Cod	153.0	8.4	0.2	0.2	0.1	NA	0.0	0.4	0.6	0.1	0.1
GOM Cod	7.5	0.0	-	0.1	0.0	NA	-	0.0	5.5	-	0.0
GB Haddock	668.3	13.5	17.9	-	23.2*	NA	0.3	0.6	1.8	18.5	26.7
GOM Haddock	24.6	0.1	-	1.6	2.0*	NA	-	0.0	0.8	-	0.2
GB Yellowtail Flounder	0.0	-*	-	0.0	-*	NA	-	-	-	-	-
SNE Yellowtail Flounder	6.3	-*	1.4	-	0.1	NA	0.0	0.0	0.2	1.0	0.1
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	27.9	16.2	-	-	0.6	NA	-	0.0	1.6	-	0.1
American Plaice	21.8	15.4	0.1	-	0.2	NA	0.0	0.0	1.1	0.1	0.2
Witch Flounder	62.3	28.0	2.3	-	1.1	NA	0.0	0.1	0.3	2.3	1.1
GB Winter Flounder	17.7	16.9	-	0.0	0.0	NA	-	-	-	-	-
GOM Winter Flounder	5.0	3.5	-	0.0	0.1	NA	-	0.0	0.3	-	0.0
SNE Winter Flounder	113.5	65.9	7.6	-	1.0	NA	0.0	0.2	0.1	6.5	1.1
Redfish	2.8	0.0	0.1	-	0.6	NA	0.0	0.0	0.4	0.1	0.1
White Hake	6.8	0.8	0.4	-	0.2	NA	0.0	0.1	0.9	0.3	0.1
Pollock	629.7	-	-	-	2.6	NA	0.0	0.1	0.1	-	0.1
Northern Windowpane	114.9	114.6	-	-	0.0	NA	-	-	0.0	-	0.0
Southern Windowpane	256.1	-*	60.0	-	1.8	NA	0.0	2.2	-	62.0	1.6
Ocean Pout	22.3	4.1	1.0	-	0.6	NA	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.7
Haitbut	1.9	1.0	-	-	0.0	NA	0.0	0.1	0.0	-	0.0
Wolfish	0.4	0.2	0.0	-	0.0	NA	0.0	-	0.0	-	0.0

Values in metric tons of live weight

¹Based on scallop fishing year March 2015 through February 2016

²Estimates not applicable. Lobster/crab bycatch was 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
September 30, 2016, run date of Sept. 7, 2016

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.

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 7: FY 2015 Northeast Multispecies Other Sub-Component Catch Detail (mt)

Stock	Total Catch	SQUID	SQUID/ WHITING	SURFCLAM	WHELK/ CONCH	WHITING	UNKNOWN	RECREATIONAL
GB Cod	153.0	0.4	0.6	0.0	2.9	0.0	7.0	132.1
GOM Cod	7.5	-	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.1	1.5	-*
GB Haddock	668.3	69.8	104.7	1.4	-	0.9	389.0	-
GOM Haddock	24.6	-	6.7	0.4	0.1	6.1	6.7	-*
GB Yellowtail Flounder	0.0	-*	-*	0.0	0.0	-	0.0*	-
SNE Yellowtail Flounder	6.3	0.3	0.2	0.0	-	0.0	2.9	-
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	27.9	-	5.2	0.1	-	2.0	2.1	-
American Plaice	21.8	0.5	0.8	0.0	-	0.0	3.3	-
Witch Flounder	62.3	3.0	4.8	0.1	-	0.3	19.0	-
GB Winter Flounder	17.7	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	-
GOM Winter Flounder	5.0	-	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.5	-
SNE Winter Flounder	113.5	3.1	2.2	0.1	-	0.0	25.5	0.1
Redfish	2.8	0.2	0.3	0.0	-	0.0	1.0	-
White Hake	6.8	0.4	0.6	0.0	-	0.0	2.9	-
Pollock	629.7	0.1	0.2	0.0	-	0.0	1.0	625.5
Northern Windowpane	114.9	0.0	0.1	0.0	-	0.0	0.1	-
Southern Windowpane	256.1	6.9	6.8	0.5	0.0	0.0	114.1	-
Ocean Pout	22.3	1.7	2.7	0.1	-	0.2	10.4	-
Halibut	1.9	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	0.0	0.7	-
Wolffish	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	0.0	0.1	-

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
September 30, 2016, run date of Sept. 7, 2016

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.

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 8: FY 2015 Northeast Multispecies Other Sub-Component Landings Detail (mt)

Stock	Total	SCALLOP ¹	FLUKE	HAGFISH	HERRING	LOBSTER/ CRAB ²	MENHADEN	MONKFISH	RESEARCH	SCUP	SHRIMP
GB Cod	136.8	0.1	0.1	-	0.0	NA	-	0.2	0.6	0.0	-
GOM Cod	6.5	-	-	-	-	NA	-	-	5.5	-	-
GB Haddock	1.8	0.0	-	-	.*	NA	-	-	1.8	-	-
GOM Haddock	0.9	-	-	-	.*	NA	-	-	0.8	-	-
GB Yellowtail Flounder	-	-	-	-	-	NA	-	-	-	-	-
SNE Yellowtail Flounder	0.9	.*	0.5	-	-	NA	-	0.0	0.2	0.0	-
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	2.2	-	-	-	-	NA	-	-	1.6	-	-
American Plaice	2.0	0.5	-	-	-	NA	-	-	1.1	0.0	-
Witch Flounder	0.6	0.3	0.0	-	-	NA	-	0.0	0.3	-	-
GB Winter Flounder	0.6	0.6	-	-	-	NA	-	-	-	-	-
GOM Winter Flounder	0.5	-	-	-	-	NA	-	-	0.3	-	-
SNE Winter Flounder	5.5	0.8	1.6	-	-	NA	-	0.0	0.1	0.3	-
Redfish	0.8	-	-	-	0.3	NA	-	-	0.4	-	-
White Hake	1.3	-	0.0	-	0.0	NA	-	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.0
Pollock	213.7	-	-	-	-	NA	-	-	0.1	-	-
Northern Windowpane	-	-	-	-	-	NA	-	-	-	-	-
Southern Windowpane	0.5	.*	0.0	-	-	NA	-	-	-	0.0	-
Ocean Pout	0.1	-	0.1	-	-	NA	-	0.0	-	0.0	-
Halibut	0.7	0.0	-	-	-	NA	-	0.1	0.0	-	-
Wolfish	0.1	-	-	-	-	NA	-	-	-	-	-

Values in metric tons of live weight

¹Based on scallop fishing year March 2015 through February 2016

²Estimates not applicable. Lobster/crab bycatch was 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

September 30, 2016, run date of Sept. 7, 2016

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.

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 8: FY 2015 Northeast Multispecies Other Sub-Component Landings Detail (mt)

Stock	Total	SQUID	SQUID/ WHITING	SURFLAM	WHELK/ CONCH	WHITING	UNKNOWN	RECREATIONAL
GB Cod	136.8	0.1	0.2	-	-	-	3.3	132.1
GOM Cod	6.5	-	-	-	-	-	0.9	-*
GB Haddock	1.8	-	-	-	-	-	0.0	-
GOM Haddock	0.9	-	-	-	-	-	0.1	-*
GB Yellowtail Flounder	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SNE Yellowtail Flounder	0.9	-	-	-	-	-	0.2	-
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	2.2	-	-	-	-	-	0.6	-
American Plaice	2.0	-	-	-	-	-	0.4	-
Witch Flounder	0.6	-	-	-	-	-	0.0	-
GB Winter Flounder	0.6	-	0.0	-	-	-	0.0	-
GOM Winter Flounder	0.5	-	-	-	-	-	0.3	-
SNE Winter Flounder	5.5	0.0	-	-	-	-	2.6	-
Redfish	0.8	-	0.0	-	-	-	0.0	-
White Hake	1.3	-	-	-	-	-	0.2	-
Pollock	213.7	-	-	-	-	-	0.1	213.5
Northern Windowpane	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Southern Windowpane	0.5	-	-	-	-	-	0.5	-
Ocean Pout	0.1	0.0	0.0	-	-	-	-	-
Halibut	0.7	-	-	-	-	-	0.5	-
Wolfish	0.1	-	-	-	-	-	0.1	-

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

September 30, 2016, run date of Sept. 7, 2016

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.

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 9: FY 2015 Northeast Multispecies Other Sub-Component Estimated Discards Detail (mt)

Stock	Total	SCALLOP ¹	FLUKE	HAGFISH	HERRING	LOBSTER/ CRAB ²	MENHADEN	MONKFISH	RESEARCH	SCUP	SHRIMP
GB Cod	16.2	8.3	0.1	0.2	0.1	NA	0.0	0.2	-	0.1	0.1
GOM Cod	1.0	0.0	-	0.1	0.0	NA	-	0.0	0.0	-	0.0
GB Haddock	666.5	13.5	17.9	-	23.2*	NA	0.3	0.6	-	18.5	26.7
GOM Haddock	23.7	0.1	-	1.6	2.0*	NA	-	0.0	0.0	-	0.2
GB Yellowtail Flounder	0.0	-*	-	0.0	-*	NA	-	-	-	-	-
SNE Yellowtail Flounder	5.4	-*	1.0	-	0.1	NA	0.0	0.0	-	1.0	0.1
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	25.7	16.2	-	-	0.6	NA	-	0.0	0.0	-	0.1
American Plaice	19.8	14.9	0.1	-	0.2	NA	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2
Witch Flounder	61.7	27.7	2.2	-	1.1	NA	0.0	0.1	0.0	2.3	1.1
GB Winter Flounder	17.0	16.3	-	0.0	0.0	NA	-	-	-	-	-
GOM Winter Flounder	4.5	3.5	-	0.0	0.1	NA	-	0.0	0.0	-	0.0
SNE Winter Flounder	108.0	65.2	6.0	-	1.0	NA	0.0	0.2	-	6.2	1.1
Redfish	2.0	0.0	0.1	-	0.3	NA	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.1
White Hake	5.5	0.8	0.3	-	0.1	NA	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.3	0.1
Pollock	416.1	-	-	-	2.6	NA	0.0	0.1	0.0	-	0.1
Northern Windovpane	114.9	114.6	-	-	0.0	NA	-	-	0.0	-	0.0
Southern Windovpane	255.6	-*	60.0	-	1.8	NA	0.0	2.2	-	62.0	1.6
Ocean Pout	22.2	4.1	0.9	-	0.6	NA	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.7
Haitbut	1.2	0.9	-	-	0.0	NA	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	0.0
Wolfish	0.3	0.2	0.0	-	0.0	NA	0.0	-	0.0	-	0.0

Values in metric tons of live weight

¹Based on scallop fishing year March 2015 through February 2016
²Estimates not applicable. Lobster/crab bycatch was 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
 September 30, 2016, run date of Sept. 7, 2016

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 9: FY 2015 Northeast Multispecies Other Sub-Component Estimated Discards Detail (mt)

Stock	Total	SQUID	SQUID/ WHITING	SURFCLAM	WHELK/ CONCH	WHITING	UNKNOWN	RECREATIONAL
GB Cod	16.2	0.3	0.4	0.0	2.9	0.0	3.7	
GOM Cod	1.0	-	0.1	0.0	-	0.1	0.6	-*
GB Haddock	666.5	69.8	104.7	1.4	-	0.9	389.0	
GOM Haddock	23.7	-	6.7	0.4	0.1	6.1	6.5	-*
GB Yellowtail Flounder	0.0	-*	-	0.0	0.0	-	0.0*	
SNE Yellowtail Flounder	5.4	0.3	0.2	0.0	-	0.0	2.7	
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	25.7	-	5.2	0.1	-	2.0	1.5	
American Plaice	19.8	0.5	0.8	0.0	-	0.0	2.9	
Witch Flounder	61.7	3.0	4.8	0.1	-	0.3	19.0	
GB Winter Flounder	17.0	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	
GOM Winter Flounder	4.5	-	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.2	-
SNE Winter Flounder	108.0	3.0	2.2	0.1	-	0.0	22.9	0.1
Redfish	2.0	0.2	0.3	0.0	-	0.0	1.0	
White Hake	5.5	0.4	0.6	0.0	-	0.0	2.8	
Pollock	416.1	0.1	0.2	0.0	-	0.0	0.9	412.0
Northern Windowpane	114.9	0.0	0.1	0.0	-	0.0	0.1	
Southern Windowpane	255.6	6.9	6.8	0.5	0.0	0.0	113.6	
Ocean Pout	22.2	1.7	2.7	0.1	-	0.2	10.4	
Halibut	1.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	0.0	0.2	
Wolffish	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	-	0.0	0.1	

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

September 30, 2016, run date of Sept. 7, 2016

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 2013 - 2015 GOM Cod and Haddock Recreational Catch Evaluation
(mt)**

Stock	Fishing Year	Recreational Catch				
		Catch A + B	Landings A	Discard B	Recreational sub- ACL	Percent of Catch Limit Taken
GOM Cod	2013	639.3	540.6	98.8	486	131.5
	2014	623.3	468.2	155.1	486	128.3
	2015	84.5	4.5	80.0	121	69.8
	Average	449.0	337.8	111.3	364	123.3
GOM Haddock	2013	231.5	231.5	NA*	74	312.2
	2014	658.6	293.1	365.5	173	380.7
	2015	381.9	238.3	143.6	372	102.7
	Average	424.0	381.5	169.7	206	205.5

*Estimates not applicable. GOM Haddock recreational discard in 2013 was not attributed to the ACL, consistent with the most recent assessments for these stocks used to set the respective quotas (GARMIID). SARC 59 for GOM haddock included recreational discards for the first time and has been used to set quotas starting in FY 2014.

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 30, 2016

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

Table 11: FY 2015 Northeast Multispecies Sector Carryover (mt)

Stock	FY 2015 Available Annual Catch Entitlement (ACE)				Available Carryover from FY 2015 to FY 2016	
	FY 2015 Initial ACE	FY 2014 Carryover	FY 2015 Total ACE	Total ACE as a Percent of Initial ACE	<i>de minimis</i>	Maximum
	A	B	A + B	C	D	E
GB Cod	1,748	94	1,842	105.4	6	32
GOM Cod	201	20	221	109.9	3	20
GB Haddock	21,566	1,162	22,728	105.4	510	2,156
GOM Haddock	945	43	987	104.5	23	93
GB Yellowtail Flounder	199.0	NA*	199.0	100.0	NA*	NA*
SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder	460	34	495	107.5	1	12
CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	437	24	461	105.5	3	18
Plaice	1,381	74	1,455	105.4	11	62
Witch Flounder	596	32	628	105.4	4	19
GB Winter Flounder	1,873	58	1,931	103.1	6	18
GOM Winter Flounder	371	21	391	105.6	5	34
SNE Winter Flounder	1,147	69	1,215	106.0	5	31
Redfish	10,955	581	11,535	105.3	93	501
White Hake	4,309	229	4,537	105.3	34	182
Pollock	13,586	722	14,308	105.3	172	938

* Carryover of GB yellowtail flounder is not allowed because this stock is jointly managed with Canada.

† There is no carryover for non-allocated stocks: Northern windowpane flounder, southern windowpane flounder, ocean pout, halibut, and wolffish.

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.

Source: NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office

Run Date: August 10, 2016

Table 12: FY 2015 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 A+B+C	Sector A	Common Pool B	Recreational C	Herring Fishery D	Scallop Fishery E	Small Mesh Fisheries F	State Water G	Other H
Eastern GB Cod	82.2	82.0	82.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.2
Eastern GB Haddock	1,185.0	1,057.9	1,057.9	-	-	66.6	-	-	-	60.4
GB Yellowtail Flounder	68.2	38.4	38.4	0.0	-	-	29.8	0.1	-	0.0

Values in live weight

Includes estimate of missing dealer reports

August 23, 2016, run date of August 10, 2016

Table 13: FY 2015 End of Year Transboundary U.S./Canada Trips, Vessels, A DAS Used, and Observers

Area ¹	Number of Vessels		Number of Trips		A DAS Used		Number of Observed Trips	
	Sector	Common Pool	Sector	Common Pool	Sector	Common Pool	Sector	Common Pool
Eastern U.S./Canada Area	47	0	263	0	1,608	0	40	0
Western U.S./Canada Area	71	NA	757	NA	4,503	NA	148	0
Total	71	NA	769	NA	4,540	NA	150	0

¹Area 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 23, 2016, run date of August 10, 2016

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 2015 End of Year Accounting of Transboundary U.S./Canada Stocks - U.S. Landings (mt)

Stock	U.S. Catch by Fishery Component																			
	U.S. Landings		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	80.1		80.1	80.1		-														0.0
Eastern GB Haddock	988.4		921.9	921.9		-		66.5												-
GB Yellowtail Flounder	36.5		36.5	36.5		-														-

Values in live weight
 Includes estimate of missing dealer reports
 Source: NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
 August 23, 2016, run date of August 10, 2016

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 15: FY 2015 End of Year Accounting of Transboundary U.S./Canada Stocks - U.S. Discards (mt)

Stock	U.S. Discards A to H	U.S. Catch by Fishery Component									
		Groundfish A+B+C	Sector A	Common Pool B	Recreational C	Herring Fishery D	Scallop Fishery E	Small Mesh Fisheries F	State Water G	Other H	
Eastern GB Cod	2.1	1.9	1.9	-							0.2
Eastern GB Haddock	196.6	136.0	136.0	-	0.2						60.4
GB Yellowtail Flounder	31.7	1.9	1.9	0.0		29.8	0.1		-		0.0

Values in live weight

Includes estimate of missing dealer reports

Source: NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office

August 23, 2016, run date of August 10, 2016

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 2015 End of Year Accounting of Transboundary U.S./Canada Stocks - U.S. TACs (mt)

Stock	Fishery Component TAC									
	U.S. TAC A to H	Groundfish A+B+C	Sector A	Common Pool B	Recreational C	Herring Fishery D	Scallop Fishery E	Small-Mesh Fisheries F	State Water G	Other H
Eastern GB Cod	124	124	121	1 ¹						
Eastern GB Haddock	17,760	17,760	17,603	157						
GB Yellowtail Flounder	248.0	202.9	199.0	3.9			30.1	5.0		2.0

¹Reduced from 2.7 mt due to an overage in fishing year 2014. Values in live weight

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.

Source: NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office August 19, 2016

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 2015 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 A+B+C	Sector A	Common Pool B	Recreational C	Herring Fishery D	Scallop Fishery E	Small Mesh Fisheries F	State Water G	Other H
Eastern GB Cod	66.3	66.1	67.6	0.0					NA	NA
Eastern GB Haddock	6.7	6.0	6.0	0.0		NA			NA	NA
GB Yellowtail Flounder	27.5	18.9	19.3	0.2			98.8	1.0	NA	0.1

Values in percent live weight (%)

Includes estimate of missing dealer reports

Source: NMFS Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office

August 23, 2016, run date of August 10, 2016

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.