



New England Fishery Management Council

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Monkfish Research Set-Aside Program Supports Two 2023-2024 Projects; Both Address a Top Research Priority

The Monkfish Research Set-Aside (RSA) Program will support two recommended projects during 2023 and 2024 that focus on one of the [highest research priorities](#) identified by the New England and Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Councils. The priority calls for:

“Research to develop a standardized catch per unit effort (CPUE) index for the commercial directed monkfish gillnet fishery to be used for stock assessment purposes.”

The New England and Mid-Atlantic Councils jointly manage the monkfish fishery. The New England Council has the administrative lead. The Councils and NOAA Fisheries work together to support the Monkfish Research Set-Aside Program. While the Councils determine the research priorities, NOAA Fisheries manages the RSA competition and administers the program.

NOAA Fisheries [announced](#) the recommended 2023-2024 awards on June 6, 2023. No federal money is used to support monkfish RSA projects. Instead, the RSA awards come in the form of monkfish days-at-sea. The Councils “set aside” 500 days-at-sea annually from the total number of monkfish days allocated to

2023-2024 Monkfish Research Set-Aside (RSA) Program Awards

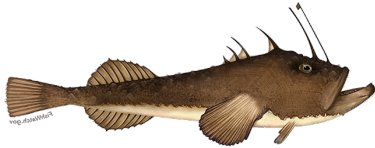
Institution	Project Title	Research Budget	Allocation in Days-At-Sea (DAS)
Cornell Cooperative Extension Association of Suffolk County (CCE)	Addressing Monkfish Management Needs by Developing a Standardized Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) Time Series	\$140,209	2023: 250 DAS 2024: 101 DAS
Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen’s Alliance, Inc. (CCFA)	Incorporating Fishermen’s Knowledge into a Standardized Catch Per Unit Effort Index for the Commercial Monkfish Gillnet Fishery	\$199,824	2023: 250 DAS 2024: 250 DAS



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limited access monkfish vessels. The money generated from compensation fishing under these days is used to fund the research and compensate industry partners.

Since the two projects address the same research priority, NOAA Fisheries said in its announcement:



“Due to the common goal for the projects and intended application of the research results, NOAA Fisheries and the grant recipients will coordinate closely to help ensure efforts are complementary and likely to support monkfish stock assessments.”



Here are the summaries for each project.

Cornell Cooperative Extension Association of Suffolk County: This project will collect and analyze fishery dependent and independent data to inform the development and utilization of an integrated statistical estimation procedure that will determine a standardized CPUE time series. This can be used to estimate the relative abundance of the stock for improved monkfish stock assessment and management purposes.

Cape Cod Commercial Fishermen’s Alliance: This project seeks to develop standardized CPUE indices for the commercial directed monkfish gillnet fishery for use in stock assessments. Investigators will work collaboratively with the commercial monkfish fishing industry throughout the region to elicit expertise on monkfish CPUE, obtain fishery dependent data, and develop CPUE standardization for contribution to upcoming monkfish stock assessments.

Questions? For more information about these awards and the Monkfish RSA Program, contact Ryan Silva at ryan.silva@noaa.gov.

- *Project principal investigators and collaborators are listed on the [2023-2024 Monkfish RSA Awards webpage](#). The NOAA Fisheries RSA Programs overview page is located [here](#).*



Monkfish captured during a Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) research trip in Closed Area II on Georges Bank in October 2022. – VIMS photo