

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS TO GILLNET VESSEL OWNERS

General gillnet vessel designation and tagging requirements:

A vessel owner electing to fish with gillnet gear in the Northeast (NE) multispecies or monkfish fisheries must complete a gillnet tag form. Currently, all vessels issued a limited access NE multispecies permit intending to fish under a Northeast (NE) multispecies days-at-sea (DAS) with gillnet gear must obtain an annual designation as either a Day or Trip gillnet vessel. Declarations are to be made on a form provided by the National Marine Fisheries Service and signed by the vessel authorized representative. This form is enclosed. It can also be obtained by calling the Northeast Regional Permit Office at (978) 281-9370, or through the Northeast Regional Office's web site.

All NE multispecies Day gillnet vessels fishing for groundfish under a NE multispecies DAS and/or vessels fishing under a monkfish DAS using gillnet gear must tag their gillnets with BLUE gillnet tags. Vessels must indicate the number of gillnet tags that are being requested on the gillnet tag form provided by NOAA Fisheries and provide a check for the cost of the tags, if appropriate. Once a declaration form has been received, NOAA Fisheries Service will send a gillnet tag certificate and category designation form (one form) to the vessel owner that serves as written confirmation from the Regional Administrator that the vessel is a Day or Trip gillnet vessel. This confirmation must be retained on board the vessel when fishing under a NE multispecies DAS with gillnet gear.

Both NE multispecies Day gillnet vessels as well as monkfish Category A, B, F, G, and H vessels without limited access NE multispecies DAS permits are authorized to obtain up to 150 gillnet tags. Monkfish category C, D, F, G or H vessels with limited access NE multispecies DAS permits may obtain up to 160 gillnet tags. A vessel may have tags on board the vessel that are in excess of the number of tags corresponding to the allowable number of nets for a given Regulated Mesh Area (RMA), provided such tags are onboard the vessel and can be made available for immediate inspection.

A gillnet vessel may stow additional nets on board that are in excess of the allowable nets for a given RMA. Day gillnet vessels may stow up to 150 nets, including the number of deployed nets. Trip gillnet vessels are not restricted to the number of nets that can be stowed on board the vessel. All nets in excess of the allowable number of nets for a given RMA must be stowed according to the regulations.

General gillnet gear requirements: For purposes of gillnet gear requirements, gillnets are defined as follows:

- **Roundfish gillnet:** A gillnet constructed with floats on the float line and no tie-down twine between the float line and the lead line.
- **Flatfish gillnet:** A gillnet constructed with no floats on the float line, or with floats on the float line and that has tie-down twine between the float line and the lead line not more than 48 inches in length and spaced not more than 15 feet apart.

Vessels fishing under the Large Mesh DAS program using gillnets:

Vessels that hold a valid limited access NE multispecies Large Mesh Individual DAS category (Category F) permit will be required to fish with nets having a mesh size that is 2.0 inches larger than the current regulated mesh size when fishing under the NE multispecies DAS program.

NEW GILLNET TAG SERIES FOR FISHING YEARS 2004-2009

The current gillnet tag series (BLUE in color) will remain valid through the 2009 fishing year, unless otherwise notified. Previously issued teal green gillnet tags are no longer valid.

Current Gillnet Regulations:

Amendment 13 and Framework 40-B to the NE Multispecies Fishery Management Plan (FMP) changed some of the gillnet regulations. A summary of these changes is available in the Amendment 13 and Framework 40-B permit holder letters (April 17, 2004, and May 26, 2005, respectively). These letters are available on our website at www.nero.noaa.gov. A summary of the current gillnet gear requirements is contained in the table below.

Trip Gillnet Vessels:

Framework 40-B to the FMP eliminated the gillnet limits and tagging requirements for Trip gillnet vessels, effective June 1, 2005.

Gear Restrictions for the NE Multispecies FMP by Regulated Mesh Areas.

	Gulf of Maine	Georges Bank	Southern New England	Mid-Atlantic
NE Multispecies Day Gillnet Category*	<u>Roundfish nets</u> 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh; 50-net allowance; 2 tags/net	<u>All nets</u> 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh; 50-net allowance; 2 tags/net	<u>All nets</u> 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh; 75-net allowance; 2 tags/net	<u>Roundfish nets</u> 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh; 75-net allowance; 2 tags/net
	<u>Flatfish nets</u> 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh; 100-net allowance; 1 tag/net			<u>Flatfish nets</u> 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh; 75-net allowance; 2 tags/net
NE Multispecies Trip Gillnet Category*	<u>All nets</u> 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh	<u>All nets</u> 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh	<u>All nets</u> 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh	<u>All gillnet gear</u> 6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh
Monkfish Vessels**	10" (25.4 cm) mesh/150-net allowance			
	1 tag/net			

* When fishing under a NE multispecies DAS

** Monkfish Category C and D vessels, when fishing under a monkfish DAS

Gillnet Tag form must be completed if your vessel will be fishing with Gillnets under a Northeast (NE) Multispecies Days at Sea (DAS) or Monkfish DAS during the 2009 fishing year (May 1, 2009-April 30, 2010).

- If you have a limited access NE multispecies permit or a limited access NE multispecies permit **and** a limited access monkfish permit, you must fill out Section 1, Section 2, and Section 3.
- If you have a limited access monkfish permit only (and **no** limited access multispecies permit), you must fill out Section 2 and Section 3.

Section 1- Limited access NE multispecies permit holders who intend to use gillnet gear under a multispecies day-at-sea must declare into **one of the following** gillnet category designations by selecting one of the following two categories with a check mark: (please read the “Special Instructions to Gillnet Vessel Owners” if you do not know which category you should choose)

Trip Gillnet Category _____ **or** Day Gillnet Category _____

NOTE: Both Day and Trip Category vessels are restricted to 150 tags.

Section 2

All gillnet vessel owners must utilize BLUE gillnet tags. If you don't currently possess BLUE gillnet tags, you must purchase them. NOTE: Teal green gillnet tags are no longer valid. The BLUE gillnet tags will remain valid through the 2007 fishing year, unless otherwise notified.

Please indicate how many tags that you wish to purchase by filling out the following information.

Number of tags requested _____. (Multispecies tags are limited to 150, Monkfish tags are limited to 160 for Category A and B vessels, 150 for Category C, D, F, G, or H vessels with a limited access NE multispecies DAS permit. **The BLUE gillnet tags cost \$1.20 each.** (NOTE: An additional shipping and handling charge of \$5.00 must be included for orders of 20 or less tags.) (NOTE: The total cost for 150 tags is \$180.00.)

Total amount enclosed \$ _____

Name and Address _____

Phone Number _____

Please make checks payable to **National Band and Tag Company** and complete Section 3 below.

Initial Tags will be shipped to you directly from the tag manufacturer

Section 3

Vessel Name _____

Federal Permit # _____

Documentation # _____

or State Registration # _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Gillnet tags will be used to fish for:

Multispecies (circle) Yes No

Monkfish (circle) Yes No

Please call the NMFS Northeast Regional Office information line at (978) 281-9278 if you have any questions.

Return this form and payment to:
NMFS Permits Office, Gillnet Program
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

The information will be used in the management of the NE multispecies and monkfish fisheries. One of the regulatory steps taken by NOAA Fisheries to carry out the conservation and management objectives of these fishery management plans is limiting fishing vessel effort. The application to designate a gillnet category and order gillnet tags is meant to allow industry members to designate their appropriate gillnet category and order the appropriate number of gillnet tags in accordance with 50 CFR 648.4(c)(2)(iii) and 648.80(a)(3)(iv), 648.80(a)(4)(iv), 648.80(b)(2)(iv), and 648.80(b)(2)(v). Since this requirement has been adopted as part of the effort reduction programs under the NE Multispecies and Monkfish Fishery Management Plans (FMPs) it is viewed as consistent with the conservation goals of these FMPs.

BURDEN STATEMENT: Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 5 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or suggestions for reducing this burden to: Patricia A. Kurkul, Regional Administrator, Northeast Region, NMFS, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930-2298; and to Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC 20503.

The information collected on this form is not confidential and can be made available to the general public.

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