

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Multispecies

Sector Final Rule

On May 2, we approved sector operations plans for 2013, allocated quota for 15 groundfish stocks to each sector, and granted the sector vessels a number of exemptions. Seventeen sectors will operate, 16 of which will have active fishing vessels, and one sector that is a private permit bank. Additionally, the New Hampshire and Maine state-operated permit banks have been allocated quotas. In addition to the universal sector exemptions, we granted sectors 18 exemptions previously granted in 2012, as well as five new exemptions for 2013 as described below (the last 2 of which are now obsolete due to approved regulatory changes made in Framework 48 and Framework 50).

- Seasonal restrictions for the Eastern U.S./Canada Haddock SAP;
- Seasonal restrictions for the Closed Area II Yellowtail Flounder/Haddock SAP;
- Sampling exemption;
- Dockside Monitoring requirements for vessels using hand-operated jig gear; and
- Prohibition on fishing in the SNE/MA winter flounder stock area with winter flounder onboard

Spiny Dogfish Exempted Fishery

We approved an exempted fishery, effective June 1, 2013, for vessels fishing with a NE Federal spiny dogfish permit in two separate areas.

East of Cape Cod, MA

-Gillnet and longline gear from June through December

-Handgear from June through August

West of Cape Cod, MA

-Longline gear and handgear from June through August.

Vessels participating in this exempted spiny dogfish fishery that hold a Federal spiny dogfish permit may land up to 4,000 lb of spiny dogfish per trip outside the confines of the NE multispecies regulations.

Proposed Rule Considering the Opening of Several Groundfish Closed Areas

We are developing a proposed rule that would consider opening up several year-round groundfish closed areas. This is in response to several sector exemption requests following the partial approval of Framework 48. The rule is expected to publish in late June.

Temporary Final Rule Adjusting Groundfish Sub-ACLs for Final Sector Rosters

[If the rule has filed as of RA Report]

We recently published a temporary final rule that adjusted the 2013 annual catch limits for commercial groundfish vessels, as well as sector annual catch entitlements for groundfish stocks, based on the final sector rosters submitted as of May 1, 2013. The adjustments were very minor.

[If the rule has not filed as of RA Report]

We are developing a temporary final rule that would adjust the 2013 annual catch limits for commercial groundfish vessels, as well as sector annual catch entitlements for groundfish stocks, based on the final sector rosters submitted as of May 1, 2013. Adjustments are expected to be minor.

Renewal of Paper Work Reduction Act Collection: Days-At Sea Leasing

From time to time, we need to extend our information collections related to our fishery management plans. In this case, we would like to extend the collections that are part of the Northeast Multispecies Days-At-Sea Leasing Program. We published a Notice in the Federal Register on June 10, 2013 and I am taking this opportunity to invite the general public and other Federal agencies to comment on continuing that information collection. Comments submitted in response to the Notice will be summarized and provided to the Office of Management and Budget for approval of the information collection.