

Greater Atlantic Region Commercial Cost Survey: Correspondence Materials

Below is a summary table of materials to be sent to commercial fishing vessel owners in the Greater Atlantic Region as part of our survey. The letters, emails, FAQ sheet, and summary sheet can be found in this document. The survey instruments and instruction sheet will be provided in January 2022. We intend on making the FAQ and summary sheet a double-sided handout.

The four emails can be found first in this document, followed by the four letters, and lastly the FAQ and survey results summary sheets.

| Sequence of Events | Electronically Sent items | Mailed items | | Time of Mailing |
|---|----------------------------------|--|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Email 1 | Letter 1: Pre notification letter | | Initial contact |
| 2 | Email 2 | Letter 2: Reminder letter 1 | | One week after letter 1 |
| 3 | Email 3 | Letter 3: Reminder letter 2 | Survey Packet | Two weeks after letter 2 |
| 4 | Email 4 | Letter 4: Final contact letter | Survey Packet | Two weeks after letter 3 |
| <p>**Survey packet shall include a summary of previous cost survey results, a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) sheet, survey instructions, the survey instrument (1 of 10 possible gear versions) and a postage-paid reply envelope.</p> | | | | |

Dear [Title] [First Name],

We are writing to ask for your help in improving the region's commercial fishing cost data by completing the Greater Atlantic Region Commercial Fishing Business Cost Survey for 2021. Improved cost data can help economists at the Northeast Fisheries Science Center analyze the impacts of proposed regulations in Fisheries Management Plan frameworks and amendments. This voluntary survey asks for significant costs you have incurred on your vessel [Vessel Name] such as repair and maintenance, trip expenditures, overhead costs, and crew/captain payments.

Please access and respond the survey by clicking on the following the unique web link:
[www.(insert_unique_link_here).com]

The survey will take approximately 60 minutes to complete your responses and participation will be kept confidential.

If you prefer to take the survey through a phone or web interview with an NEFSC staff member or if you have any questions regarding this letter, the survey, or the survey questions, please call [XXX-XXX-XXXX] so we may assist you.

For more additional information on the cost data, cost data tools, or to view cost summaries from previous years, you may also visit our cost data website at [www.(insert_website_here).com].

Your participation is crucial for incorporating cost data into policy analyses.
Thank you for your time and consideration.

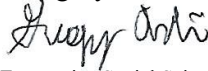
Sincerely,

Samantha Werner



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Gregory Ardini



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Dear [Title] [First Name],

Last week, we sent you an email asking for your participation in the Greater Atlantic Region Commercial Fishing Business Cost Survey for 2021. Your participation is vital to improving the region's cost data used in commercial fishing economic analyses.

If you have already responded to the survey, we thank you and sincerely appreciate your help. If you have not yet responded to the survey, we hope that providing a unique link to your survey will make it easier for you to respond to the survey.

You can access the survey by clicking on the unique link found here:
[www.(insert_unique_link_here).com]

The survey will take approximately 60 minutes to complete and your responses and participation will be kept confidential.

If you prefer to take the survey through a phone or web interview with an NEFSC staff member or if you have any questions regarding this letter, the survey, or the survey questions, please call [XXX-XXX-XXXX] so we may assist you. For more additional information on the cost data, cost data tools, or to view cost summary results from previous years, you may also visit our cost data website at [www.(insert_website_here).com].

Your participation is critical for obtaining accurate cost information for our economic analyses, so we thank you for your time and consideration.

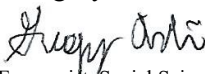
Thank you,

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Month Day, 20XX

Dear [Title] [First Name],

Recently, we sent you an email requesting your participation in the Greater Atlantic Region Commercial Fishing Business Cost Survey for 2021. The information you provide in this survey can help analysts capture the predicted and realized economic impacts of various fisheries management actions on commercial fishing.

To the best of our knowledge, you have not yet responded to the survey and we are reaching out again given the importance of your participation.

You can access and respond the survey by clicking on the link provided here:
[www.(insert_unique_link_here).com]

Some people have asked if they could respond to the survey using a paper version rather than online. The answer is yes, and we will be sending you a paper version of the survey along with a prepaid return envelope in hopes it may make it easier for you to respond to the cost survey.

Your individual responses and participation will be kept confidential.

If you prefer to take the survey through a phone or web interview with an NEFSC staff member or if you have any questions regarding this letter, the survey, or the survey questions, please call [XXX-XXX-XXXX] so we may assist you.

For more additional information on the cost data, cost data tools, or to view cost summaries from previous survey years, you may also visit our cost data website at [www.(insert_website_here).com].

Your participation is extremely important for obtaining accurate cost information for commercial fishing economic analyses which can inform fisheries management.

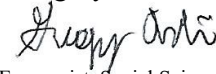
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Month Day, 20XX

[Title] [First Name] [Last Name]
[Street Address]
[City] [State] [Zip Code]

Dear [Title] [First Name] [Last Name],

In recent weeks, we have asked you for your participation in the Greater Atlantic Region Commercial Fishing Business Cost Survey for 2021. We plan to start summarizing results later this month but we are hoping you will still consider completing this important survey. The information you provide is critical for understanding the economic state of the region's commercial fishing fleets.

You can access and respond the survey by clicking the web link provided below:

[www.(insert_unique_link_here).com]

or by completing a paper version of the survey which will be sent to you by mail along with a prepaid return envelope.

Your individual responses and participation will be kept confidential.

If you prefer to take the survey through a phone or web interview with an NEFSC staff member or if you have any questions regarding this letter, the survey, or the survey questions, please call [XXX-XXX-XXXX] so we may assist you.

For more additional information on the cost data, cost data tools, or to view cost results from previous survey years, you may also visit our cost data website at [www.(insert_website_here).com].

This is the last email and mail survey packet we will be sending you. We thank you again for considering to respond to this survey as your participation is vital for obtaining accurate cost information for commercial fishing economic analyses.

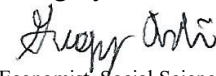
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Month Day, 20XX

[Title] [First Name] [Last Name]
[Street Address]
[City] [State] [Zip Code]

Dear [Title] [First Name] [Last Name],

Commercial fishing cost data play an important role in informing fisheries regulatory actions in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic. Cost data can help economists at the Northeast Fisheries Science Center analyze the impacts of various alternatives in Fisheries Management Plan frameworks and amendments. Without these data, economists are limited in what they can infer about the economic impacts of various actions or the economic health of regional fisheries as a whole.

We are asking you to help the Northeast Fisheries Science Center improve the region’s economic data by completing the Greater Atlantic Region Commercial Fishing Business Cost Survey for 20XX. This voluntary survey asks for significant costs you may have incurred on your vessel [Vessel Name] such as repair and maintenance, trip expenditures, overhead costs, and crew/captain payments.

Please access and respond the survey by typing the unique web link into your web browser:
[www.(insert_unique_link_here).com]
or by accessing the survey using the unique QR Code towards the bottom of this letter.

The survey will take approximately 60 minutes to complete and your responses and participation will be kept confidential.

If you prefer to take the survey through a phone or web interview with an NEFSC staff member, or if you have any questions regarding this letter, the survey, or the survey questions, please call [XXX-XXX-XXXX] so we may assist you.

For additional information on the cost data, cost data tools, or results from previous years, please visit our cost data website at [www.(insert_website_here).com].

Your participation is crucial for incorporating cost data into policy analyses.
Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Samantha Werner

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To access the cost survey using the QR code:

1. Open the camera function of your smart phone device.
2. Point the camera at the QR code until the camera focuses on the code (do not take a picture).
3. By hovering over the QR code in your camera app, a link will appear in your smart phone’s web browser, follow the link to the mobile version of the cost survey.



Month Day, 20XX

[Title] [First Name] [Last Name]
[Street Address]
[City] [State] [Zip Code]

Dear [Title] [First Name] [Last Name],

Last week, we sent you a letter asking for your help in improving commercial fishing cost data in your region by responding to the Greater Atlantic Region Commercial Fishing Business Cost Survey for 20XX.

If you have already taken the survey online or through an interview with a Northeast Fisheries Science Center Staff member, we offer our sincere thanks.

If you have not yet responded to the survey, please consider responding online. You can access and respond to the survey by typing the unique web link into your web browser:

[www.(insert_unique_link_here).com]

or by accessing the survey using the unique QR Code towards the bottom of this letter.

The survey will take approximately 60 minutes to complete and your responses and participation will be kept confidential.

If you prefer to take the survey through a phone or web interview with an NEFSC staff member or if you have any questions regarding this letter, the survey, or the survey questions, please call [XXX-XXX-XXXX] so we may assist you.

For additional information on the cost data, cost data tools, or results from previous years, please visit our cost data website at [www.costdata.website.com].



Your participation is critical for obtaining accurate cost information for our economic analyses.

Thank you,
Samantha Werner

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Month Day, 20XX

[Title] [First Name] [Last Name]
[Street Address]
[City] [State] [Zip Code]

Dear [Title] [First Name] [Last Name],

About three weeks ago, we sent you a letter requesting your participation in the Greater Atlantic Region Commercial Fishing Business Cost Survey for 20XX. The information you provide in this survey can help Northeast Fisheries Science Center Staff predict and summarize the economic impacts of various fisheries management actions. To the best of our knowledge, you have not yet responded to the survey.

We are contacting you again given the importance of your participation in improving the quality of the region's cost data. The data can only be fully utilized if nearly everyone we contact participates in the survey. We would greatly appreciate your time and participation.

You can access and respond the survey by typing the unique web link into your web browser:

[www.(insert_unique_link_here).com]

or by accessing the online survey version using the unique QR Code towards the bottom of this letter.

Some people have asked if they could respond to the survey using a paper version rather than responding to the survey online.

The answer is yes, and we are enclosing a paper version of the survey along with a prepaid return envelope in hopes it may make it easier for you to respond to the cost survey

Your individual responses and participation will be kept confidential.

If you prefer to take the survey through a phone or web interview with an NEFSC staff member or if you have any questions regarding this letter, the survey, or the survey questions, please call [XXX-XXX-XXXX] so we may assist you.

For more additional information on the cost data, cost data tools, or results from previous survey years, you may also visit our cost data website at [www.costdata.website.com].

Your participation is crucial for obtaining accurate cost information for our economic analyses used to inform management.

Thank you,
Samantha Werner

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Month Day, 20XX

[Title] [First Name] [Last Name]
[Street Address]
[City] [State] [Zip Code]

Dear [Title] [First Name] [Last Name],

In recent weeks, we have asked you for your participation in the Greater Atlantic Region Commercial Fishing Business Cost Survey for 20XX. We plan to start summarizing results later this month so we are hoping you will still consider completing this important survey. The information you provide is critical for understanding the economic state of the region’s commercial fishing fleets.

You can access and respond the survey by typing the unique web link into your web browser:
[www.(insert_unique_link_here).com]
or by accessing the online survey version using the unique QR Code towards the bottom of this letter.

We have received requests from participants for a paper version of the survey. For this reason, we are enclosing a paper version of the survey along with a prepaid return envelope in hopes it may make it easier for you to respond to the cost survey.

Your individual responses and participation will be kept confidential.

In addition, if you prefer to take the survey through a phone or web interview with an NEFSC staff member or if you have any questions regarding this letter, the survey, or the survey questions, please call [XXX-XXX-XXXX] so we may assist you.

For more additional information on the cost data, cost data tools, and results from previous survey years, you may also visit our cost data website at [www.costdata.website.com].

This is the last letter and survey packet we will be sending you. We thank you again for responding to this survey as your participation is vital for obtaining accurate cost information for commercial fishing economic analyses.

Thank you,
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Greater Atlantic Region Commercial Fishing Business Cost Survey FAQs

Who is conducting this survey?

- This survey is being conducted by a team of economists within the Social Sciences Branch of the Northeast Fisheries Science Center in Woods Hole, MA.

Why are these data being collected?

- The cost data can help economists at the Social Sciences Branch analyze the impacts of various alternatives in Fisheries Management Plan frameworks and amendments, as well as to better capture the economic performance of regional fisheries over time.

What data are being collected?

- This survey serves as the primary source of cost information for commercial vessels in the Greater Atlantic region collected by NMFS. These costs include: vessel repairs and upgrades, vessel insurance, crew payment information, and overhead costs.
- As this survey was last conducted in 2016, up-to-date cost information is necessary for accurate economic analyses.
- At-sea observers collect information on trip costs, such as fuel, bait, and ice. However, there are other costs that fishermen face not collected by observers which we collect in this survey.

How can filling out this survey benefit the fishing industry?

- The primary goal of the survey data is to provide a more accurate representation of vessel-level profitability for regional fisheries.
- Fishery managers will be able to use cost and profit information to more fully consider the impacts that management actions may have on commercial fishing businesses.
- Aggregated data summaries can also be used by fishermen for business planning purposes (see the back of this sheet for information on the SSB's interactive cost data tool).

Who are we asking to take this survey?

- We are asking all owners of active federally permitted commercial fishing vessels in the Greater Atlantic Region to fill out a survey. If an individual owns multiple active vessels, they will be asked to complete a single survey for only one of their vessels.

How can I be updated on the data that are being collected?

- Data summaries will be available at the following website (www.costdata.website.com), which currently contains results from previous Social Sciences Branch cost surveys.

What about confidentiality?

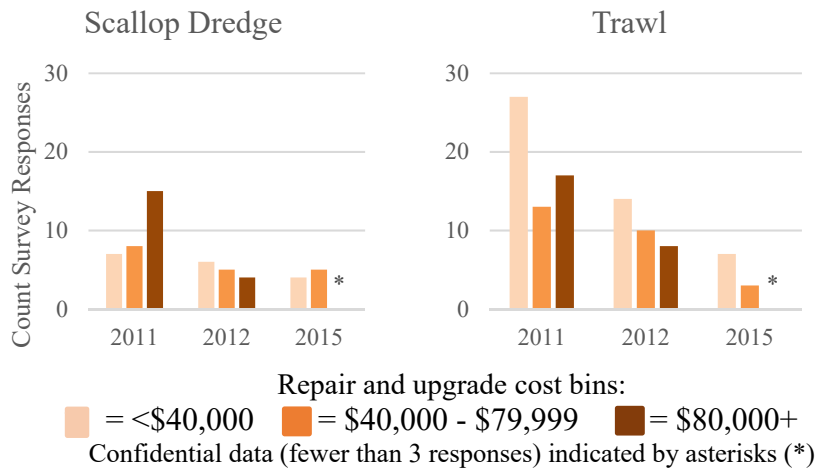
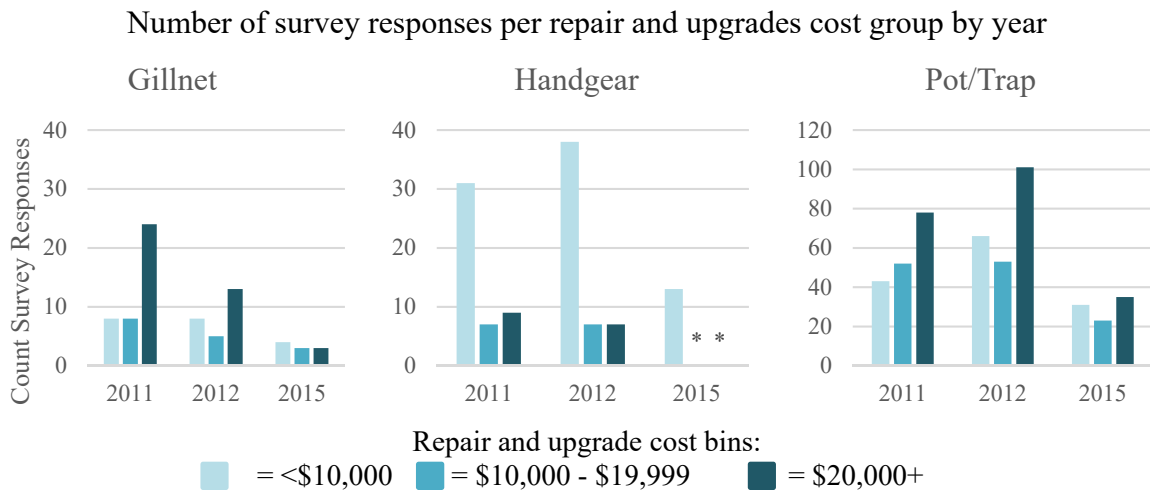
- Your participation and responses to this survey are completely confidential. All data appearing on the website and in reports will be presented in a manner that protects confidentiality. Data can only be accessed by NOAA fisheries staff and affiliates with non-disclosure agreements

Questions? Please contact Social Sciences Branch staff economists Samantha Werner (508) 645-6435, Samantha.Werner@noaa.gov) or Greg Ardini (508-645-6255, Gregory.Ardini@noaa.gov) for additional details.

Greater Atlantic Region Commercial Fishing Business Cost Survey Data Summary Sheet

- The Greater Atlantic Regional Commercial Fishing Business Cost Survey collects a variety of cost information from commercial vessel owners in our region.
- The cost data collected in the cost survey can be used by NEFSC economists to analyze the economic impacts of proposed fisheries management actions.
- The Social Sciences Branch of the NEFSC has developed a cost website, which summarizes results from previous survey years to be used by management and industry.
- The website can be used by vessel owners to visualize how their costs compare to aggregated results. The website currently summarizes three years of data, and will be updated as new survey data are collected.
- Data summary tables, and results by fishery, are also available on the website.
- Below is a summary of one substantial cost faced by vessel owners: repairs and upgrades, with data represented for five different gear types.

Vessel Repair and Upgrade Cost Histograms: 2011, 2012, and 2015 Survey Results



For additional data summaries, and to use the interactive cost tool, visit (www.costdata.website.com). Please consider responding to the cost survey so that we may continue to improve our economic data analyses and cost summaries.