



NOAA FISHERIES SERVICE NORTHEAST REGION

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NOAA

Reporting and Monitoring Workshops Held

At its June meeting, the New England Fishery Management Council voted to approve 17 new fishing sectors and expand the provisions for the Georges Bank (GB) cod hook and the GB cod fixed gear sectors in the groundfish fishery for 2010 through Amendment 16 to the Northeast Multispecies Fisheries Management Plan. In order for sectors to be ready to go by the start of the 2010 fishing year, new monitoring and reporting systems and procedures have to be designed and implemented. Thus, sector proponents, sector managers, scientists, vessel owners and NOAA Fisheries Service staff came together for two workshops, the first in June and the second in July, at the Northeast Regional Office (NERO). The intent was to come to a shared understanding of reporting requirements for fishing sectors and to provide information to help sector managers complete their Sector Operations Plans (SOPs), which are required under the new system and due September 1, 2009. Outlined in Amendment 16 is a sector monitoring program including notification procedures, dockside and at-sea monitoring, and weekly sector manager reports. So, during the workshops, the group spent considerable time fleshing out these various components of the monitoring program.



During Workshop I, Sector managers and members provided input into a draft sector manager's report template that was prepared by NERO staff. Strawman documents on dockside monitoring and at-sea monitors were presented by the Gulf of Maine Research Institute (GMRI). A description of a sector manager's tool for keeping track of sector operations was given by the Cape Cod Commercial Hook Fishermen's Association. A considerable amount of time was spent mapping out how the data from various sources (landings, trip reports, discards, VMS, etc.) would flow in order for NOAA Fisheries Service and the industry to meet reporting requirements. Electronic vessel trip reports (eVTR) were discussed in detail, including the data reporting requirements that each system will be required to meet. The agency and industry will be conducting a pilot study of these systems beginning in the fall. During the second workshop, participants heard a preliminary report on how a GMRI/Environmental Defense Fund dockside monitoring pilot was going. Participants were also provided with a tool for calculating minimum at-sea monitoring program coverage and an explanation of how assumed discard rates would be calculated by NOAA Fisheries Service scientists. Further specifics of what will be required for SOPs were provided, as were more technical discussions on eVTRs and requirements for at-sea monitors and providers.

Post Workshop Assignments and Target Completion Dates

Government:

- Determine if Moratorium Right ID (MRIs) are subject to sanctions similar to vessels enrolled in a sector 7/23/09
- Confidential data release to sectors 7/23/09
- Develop a template for vendors to ensure compliance with Amendment 16 requirements, which will be inserted into the SOP – output at August Workshop III
- Work with industry to make sure the August workshop will cover at-sea and dockside requirements training for potential vendors 7/23/09
- Determine when total catch – landed as well as discarded – is counted against Annual Catch Entitlement (ACE) 7/23/09
- Determine the format of the data sent out for daily discard rates 7/23/09





NEPA Priorities to Get Sectors Online in 2010

On June 29-30, regional National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) staff met one-on-one with sector representatives tasked to prepare the Environmental Assessments (EAs) required by NEPA. NOAA has hired a contractor, ENTRIX, to assist sectors in preparing their EAs. During the one-on-one meetings, sector representatives described their sector's current enrollment, explained the associated proposed operations/harvesting rules, and answered questions from ENTRIX on how they foresee their sector operating. We are very pleased to add ENTRIX to the regional NEPA team and are confident they will do an excellent job helping sectors analyze the environmental effects of their SOPs. If you have any questions, please contact Cheryl Quaine at: Cheryl.Quaine@noaa.gov or 978-281-9174.

Reporting & Monitoring Workshop Assignments cont'd from page 1

- Clarify whether captains need to sign the SOPs, as well as the permit holders 7/23/09
- Provide advice on how SOPs should document that there are at least 3 distinct owners in each sector roster 7/23/09
- Decide on a processing time for ACE transfers TBD
- Formally adopt a modified strawman for program requirements and resolve the question of when to notify vessels whether their vessel will have a dockside monitor -- output at Aug Workshop III

Industry:

- Provide to NOAA a list of at-sea monitoring vendors who should be at the August workshop to Amy.VanAtten@noaa.gov by 7/23/09
- Identify who will notify the Northeast Fisheries Observer Program (NEFOP) and vendors regarding vessel selection TBD

For further information on sectors please visit our website: <http://www.nero.noaa.gov/sfd/sfdmultisector.html>

Highlights of Sector Measures in Amendment 16

(approved by NEFMC in June)

Revised Sector Definition	- Limited Access Permits, including HA & CPH - 3 or more persons to start sector, with no ownership overlap
Potential Sector Contribution (PSC)	- Based on landings from 1996-2006 for all stocks* - *GB cod based on landings from 1996-2001 for Hook and Fixed Gear sector vessels only that committed to these sectors as of March 1, 2008 - Determines ACE for each stock for each sector
Sector Allocation: Annual Catch Entitlement (ACE)	- Allocated ACE for all stocks but halibut, ocean pout, windowpane flounder, wolffish, SNE/MA winter flounder - ACE for E. U.S./CA Area cod & haddock proportional to sector's overall share of GB cod & haddock stocks
Trip limits	- Prohibited species (0 landings): SNE/MA winter flounder, windowpane, ocean pout, Atl. wolffish - Halibut 1 fish/trip
Sectors can transfer ACE	- Each transfer must be submitted to and approved by NOAA Fisheries Service before it is finalized
Individual Overage Penalty	- Quota reduction if vessel leaves sector & joins another sector - Comparable Days-at-Sea (DAS) reduction if vessel returns to common pool
Sector Operations Plans (SOPs)	- Description of operational issues, submitted annually by 9/1
Sectors must report landings/discards weekly to NOAA	- Should a sector's ACE be exceeded, vessels must cease fishing in applicable stock area - NOAA Fisheries Service to validate sector catch to ensure monitoring accuracy
Monitoring Measures	- 50% dockside monitoring coverage in 2010, 20% thereafter - At-sea monitoring program for all sectors by 2012, with coverage levels determined by NOAA Fisheries Service - Assumed discard rate based upon sector-specific observer data from previous year applies to sector trips unless sector develops at-sea monitoring program - Discards from observed trips based on observed discards, not assumed rate, regardless of whether the sector has an at-sea monitoring program*
Universal Exemptions	- Trip limits on allocated stocks, groundfish DAS restrictions, GB Seasonal Closure Area, portions of GOM Rolling Closure Areas, 6.5" mesh requirement when using a separator or Ruhle trawl on GB (i.e., sector vessels can use 6" mesh codends for gears)
Joint Liability measures between sectors and members	- Sector quota overages - Discarding of legal-sized fish - Misreporting of catch

* Revision to DEIS on pg 108, but was not included in Council discussion