



August 30, 2013

Terry Stockwell, Chairman
Groundfish Oversight Committee
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Re: New England Fishery Management Council Priorities

Dear Terry:

On behalf of our members whose businesses rely upon a sustainable and stable groundfish fishery, the NSC strongly requests that the Groundfish Oversight Committee recommend to the New England Fishery Management Council for inclusion in the Council's future priorities that alternative management approaches for setting catch advice be explored, analyzed and considered for stocks managed under the groundfish fishery management plan. Such strategies should be considered as an alternative for managers who have relied solely upon the existing stock assessment models which, for many stocks, have proven over the past ten years to yield wildly fluctuating if not unreliable results. This has rendered both the business and management of the groundfish fishery virtually impossible.

NSC strongly believes that the time for exploring alternative management approaches is now. The groundfish fishery, which is now only four months away from the original 2014 rebuilding targets, is already in a state of disaster.

NSC looks forward to working with your Committee and the Council on this important endeavor to achieve sustainability and stability in the groundfish fishery.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jackie Odell".

Jackie Odell
Executive Director

Cc: Tom Nies, Executive Director, New England Fishery Management Council
Jamie Cournane, Groundfish Plan Coordinator, New England Fishery Management Council