



New England Fishery Management Council

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PRESS CONTACT: Janice Plante
(607) 592-4817, jplante@nefmc.org

Groundfish – Draft Framework 59 Update: Council Posts Preferred Alternatives, Revised Tables on Website

The New England Fishery Management Council has posted a revised draft of the preferred alternatives for Framework Adjustment 59 to the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan on its website. The draft includes updated tables that reflect the Scientific and Statistical Committee's (SSC) acceptable biological catch (ABC) recommendations for groundfish stocks for the 2020-2022 fishing years and the annual catch limits (ACLs) and sub-ACLs that stem from those recommendations.

A copy of the revised preferred alternatives is available [here](#). The revised sub-ACLs are reflected in the tables at right and on page 2.

The Council signed off on Framework 59 during its December 2019 meeting. At the time, the Council approved 2020-2022 catch limits for most of the stocks in the groundfish complex based on the SSC's ABC recommendations.

However, the Council voted to send four stocks back to the SSC for reconsideration – Gulf of Maine haddock, Georges Bank haddock, American plaice, and pollock. All four stocks are healthy and well above their spawning stock biomass targets based on the latest assessments.

The Council agreed in advance to accept the SSC's final recommendations "without objection" in order to prevent a delay in the framework's anticipated May 1, 2020 implementation.

Commercial Groundfish Sub-Annual Catch Limits (sub-ACLs) in Metric Tons with Percentage Change Fishing Year 2019 vs. Proposed Fishing Year 2020

Commercial groundfish sub-ACL

1. Sub-ACLs are for sectors/common pool combined.
2. Georges Bank cod reflects updated information from the NEFSC.

Stock		FY2019 (adjusted for FY2017 overages*)	Proposed FY2020	% Change
Allocated Stocks	GB Cod	1,568	1,073	-32%
	GOM Cod*	360	275	-24%
	GB Haddock	53,276	121,864	+129%
	GOM Haddock	8,312	12,057	+45%
	GB Yellowtail Flounder	85	95	+12%
	SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder	32	15	-53%
	CC/GOM Yellowtail Flounder	398	688	+73%
	American Plaice	1,467	2,937	+100%
	Witch Flounder	854	1,310	+53%
	GB Winter Flounder	774	522	-33%
	GOM Winter Flounder	355	287	-19%
	SNE/MA Winter Flounder	518	539	+4%
	Redfish	10,972	11,231	+2%
	White Hake	2,735	2,019	-26%
	Pollock	37,400	23,989	-36%
Non-allocated Stocks	GOM/GB Windowpane Flounder	63	38	-40%
	SNE/MA Windowpane Flounder	53	48	-9%
	Ocean Pout	94	92	-2%
	Atlantic Halibut	75	77	+3%
	Atlantic Wolffish	82	82	0%

KEY: Georges Bank (GB); Gulf of Maine (GOM); Southern New England (SNE); Mid-Atlantic (MA); and Cape Cod (CC). – NEFMC graphic



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- Justification for why the Council remanded these four stocks to the SSC can be found in the December 2019 [news release](#).
- The SSC's January report and presentation to the Council are available [here](#).
- Visit the Framework 59 [webpage](#) to track future developments.

Framework Adjustment 59

As a reminder, Framework 59 also contains:

- Total allowable catches (TACs) for three groundfish resources on Georges Bank that the U.S. shares with Canada (see table at right);
- Revised allocations between the commercial and recreational fisheries for Gulf of Maine cod and Gulf of Maine haddock based on the new 2019 assessments for those stocks, which used updated data from the Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP);
- A revised Georges Bank cod incidental catch TAC that removes the allocation to the Closed Area I Hook Gear Haddock Special Access Program; and
- An increase in the Atlantic herring midwater trawl fishery's sub-ACL for Georges Bank haddock from 1.5% to 2% of the U.S. ABC for the stock.

Next, the Council will be submitting Framework 59 to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS/NOAA Fisheries) for review, approval, and implementation by the May 1 start of the 2020 groundfish fishing year.

➤ **QUESTIONS?** Contact Dr. Jamie Cournane, the Council's groundfish plan coordinator, at (978) 465-0492, ext. 103, jcournane@nefmc.org. Also visit the Council's groundfish [webpage](#) for additional information.

Groundfish Sub-Annual Catch Limits (sub-ACLs) for Other Fisheries in Metric Tons with Percentage Change Fishing Year 2019 vs. Proposed Fishing Year 2020

Fishery	Stock	FY2019 sub-ACL	Proposed FY2020	% Change
Recreational Groundfish	GOM Cod	220	193	-12%
	GOM Haddock	3,194	6,210	+94%
Sea Scallop	GB Yellowtail Flounder	17	19	+12%
	SNE/MA Yellowtail Flounder	15	2	-87%
	GOM/GB Windowpane Flounder	18	12	-33%
	SNE/MA Windowpane Flounder	158	143	-9%
Midwater Trawl	GB Haddock	811	2,447	+202%
	GOM Haddock	116	183	+58%
Small-Mesh	GB Yellowtail Flounder	2	2	0%
Other Sub-Component ¹	SNE/MA Windowpane Flounder	218	196	-10%

¹The other sub-component for SNE/MA Windowpane Flounder is used to evaluate AMs for large-mesh non-groundfish trawl fisheries (e.g., summer flounder and scup trawl fisheries).

Proposed Fishing Year 2020 U.S./Canada Total TACs in Metric Tons (mt)

Total Allowable Catches (TACs)	Eastern Georges Bank Cod	Eastern Georges Bank Haddock	Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder
Total Shared Catch	650 mt	30,000 mt	162 mt
U.S. TAC and Percentage Share	188.5 mt 29% of total	16,200 mt 54% of total	120 mt 74% of total
Canada TAC and Percentage Share	461.5 mt 71% of total	13,800 mt 46% of total	42 mt 26% of total

Percentage shares for Georges Bank yellowtail flounder and for the management units of Eastern Georges Bank cod and Eastern Georges Bank haddock are determined as follows: historical catches are weighted 10%; and resource distribution based on trawl surveys is weighted 90%.