

NOTICE OF OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET ACTION

Date 03/03/2017

Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

FOR CERTIFYING OFFICIAL: Steve Cooper
FOR CLEARANCE OFFICER: Jennifer Jessup

In accordance with the Paperwork Reduction Act, OMB has taken action on your request received 02/01/2017

ACTION REQUESTED: Extension without change of a currently approved collection

TYPE OF REVIEW REQUESTED: Regular

ICR REFERENCE NUMBER: 201701-0648-011

AGENCY ICR TRACKING NUMBER:

TITLE: Atlantic Herring Amendment 5 Data Collection

LIST OF INFORMATION COLLECTIONS: See next page

OMB ACTION: Approved without change

OMB CONTROL NUMBER: 0648-0674

The agency is required to display the OMB Control Number and inform respondents of its legal significance in accordance with 5 CFR 1320.5(b).

EXPIRATION DATE: 03/31/2020

DISCONTINUE DATE:

BURDEN:	RESPONSES	HOURS	COSTS
Previous	16,065	1,231	46,877
New	15,350	1,163	9,528
Difference			
Change due to New Statute	0	0	0
Change due to Agency Discretion	0	0	0
Change due to Agency Adjustment	-715	-68	-37,349
Change due to PRA Violation	0	0	0

TERMS OF CLEARANCE:

OMB Authorizing Official: Dominic J. Mancini
Deputy and Acting Administrator,
Office Of Information And Regulatory Affairs

List of ICs			
IC Title	Form No.	Form Name	CFR Citation
Area 2/3 open access permit renewal application	NA	Initial and renewal vessel permit	
At-sea dealer permit application renewal	NA	Initial Dealer Permit Application	
Dealer weekly reports			50 CFR 648.7
Weekly vessel trip report	NA	Vessel trip report	50 CFR 648.10
VMS operation; automated polling costs			50 CFR 548.10
VMS trip declarations			50 CFR 648.10
VMS Daily Catch Reports	NA	VMS Catch Report	
Herring Pre-Landing Notification			50 CFR 648.10
Pre-trip notification to observer program			50 CFR 648.11
Trip cancellation notification to observer program			50 CFR 648.11
Released catch affidavit	NA	Released catch affidavit	
Vessel operator notification of species lb to observer			50 CFR 648.11

PAPERWORK REDUCTION ACT SUBMISSION

Please read the instructions before completing this form. For additional forms or assistance in completing this form, contact your agency's Paperwork Clearance Officer. Send two copies of this form, the collection instrument to be reviewed, the supporting statement, and any additional documentation to: Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Docket Library, Room 10102, 725 17th Street NW, Washington, DC 20503.

1. Agency/Subagency originating request	2. OMB control number b. <input type="checkbox"/> None a. _____ - _____
3. Type of information collection (<i>check one</i>) a. <input type="checkbox"/> New Collection b. <input type="checkbox"/> Revision of a currently approved collection c. <input type="checkbox"/> Extension of a currently approved collection d. <input type="checkbox"/> Reinstatement, without change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired e. <input type="checkbox"/> Reinstatement, with change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired f. <input type="checkbox"/> Existing collection in use without an OMB control number For b-f, note Item A2 of Supporting Statement instructions	4. Type of review requested (<i>check one</i>) a. <input type="checkbox"/> Regular submission b. <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency - Approval requested by _____ / _____ / _____ c. <input type="checkbox"/> Delegated
7. Title	5. Small entities Will this information collection have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
8. Agency form number(s) (<i>if applicable</i>)	6. Requested expiration date a. <input type="checkbox"/> Three years from approval date b. <input type="checkbox"/> Other Specify: _____ / _____
9. Keywords	
10. Abstract	
11. Affected public (<i>Mark primary with "P" and all others that apply with "x"</i>) a. ___ Individuals or households d. ___ Farms b. ___ Business or other for-profit e. ___ Federal Government c. ___ Not-for-profit institutions f. ___ State, Local or Tribal Government	12. Obligation to respond (<i>check one</i>) a. <input type="checkbox"/> Voluntary b. <input type="checkbox"/> Required to obtain or retain benefits c. <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory
13. Annual recordkeeping and reporting burden a. Number of respondents _____ b. Total annual responses _____ 1. Percentage of these responses collected electronically _____ % c. Total annual hours requested _____ d. Current OMB inventory _____ e. Difference _____ f. Explanation of difference 1. Program change _____ 2. Adjustment _____	14. Annual reporting and recordkeeping cost burden (<i>in thousands of dollars</i>) a. Total annualized capital/startup costs _____ b. Total annual costs (O&M) _____ c. Total annualized cost requested _____ d. Current OMB inventory _____ e. Difference _____ f. Explanation of difference 1. Program change _____ 2. Adjustment _____
15. Purpose of information collection (<i>Mark primary with "P" and all others that apply with "X"</i>) a. ___ Application for benefits e. ___ Program planning or management b. ___ Program evaluation f. ___ Research c. ___ General purpose statistics g. ___ Regulatory or compliance d. ___ Audit	16. Frequency of recordkeeping or reporting (<i>check all that apply</i>) a. <input type="checkbox"/> Recordkeeping b. <input type="checkbox"/> Third party disclosure c. <input type="checkbox"/> Reporting 1. <input type="checkbox"/> On occasion 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-annually 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Annually 7. <input type="checkbox"/> Biennially 8. <input type="checkbox"/> Other (describe) _____
17. Statistical methods Does this information collection employ statistical methods <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	18. Agency Contact (person who can best answer questions regarding the content of this submission) Name: _____ Phone: _____

19. Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions

On behalf of this Federal Agency, I certify that the collection of information encompassed by this request complies with 5 CFR 1320.9

NOTE: The text of 5 CFR 1320.9, and the related provisions of 5 CFR 1320.8(b)(3), appear at the end of the instructions. *The certification is to be made with reference to those regulatory provisions as set forth in the instructions.*

The following is a summary of the topics, regarding the proposed collection of information, that the certification covers:

- (a) It is necessary for the proper performance of agency functions;
- (b) It avoids unnecessary duplication;
- (c) It reduces burden on small entities;
- (d) It used plain, coherent, and unambiguous terminology that is understandable to respondents;
- (e) Its implementation will be consistent and compatible with current reporting and recordkeeping practices;
- (f) It indicates the retention period for recordkeeping requirements;
- (g) It informs respondents of the information called for under 5 CFR 1320.8(b)(3):
 - (i) Why the information is being collected;
 - (ii) Use of information;
 - (iii) Burden estimate;
 - (iv) Nature of response (voluntary, required for a benefit, mandatory);
 - (v) Nature and extent of confidentiality; and
 - (vi) Need to display currently valid OMB control number;
- (h) It was developed by an office that has planned and allocated resources for the efficient and effective management and use of the information to be collected (see note in Item 19 of instructions);
- (i) It uses effective and efficient statistical survey methodology; and
- (j) It makes appropriate use of information technology.

If you are unable to certify compliance with any of the provisions, identify the item below and explain the reason in Item 18 of the Supporting Statement.

Signature of Senior Official or designee

Date

Agency Certification (signature of Assistant Administrator, Deputy Assistant Administrator, Line Office Chief Information Officer, head of MB staff for L.O.s, or of the Director of a Program or StaffOffice)

Signature

Date

Signature of NOAA Clearance Officer

Signature

Date

**SUPPORTING STATEMENT
ATLANTIC HERRING AMENDMENT 5 FAMILY OF FORMS
OMB CONTROL NO. 0648-0674**

A. JUSTIFICATION

1. Explain the circumstances that make the collection of information necessary.

This request is for a continuation of the information collection to support regulatory requirements of the Atlantic Herring Fishery Management Plan (FMP). FMPs for Federal Fisheries managed under the National Ocean and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) are developed under the authority of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (Magnuson-Stevens Act).

Amendment 5 to the Atlantic Herring FMP (Amendment 5) was developed by the New England Fishery Management Council (Council) to: improve the collection of real-time and accurate catch information for the Atlantic herring fishery; enhance the monitoring and sampling of catch at-sea; and address bycatch issues, in particular bycatch of river herrings and shads, through responsible management.

The items outlined in this information collection include:

- Provisions for renewal of open access herring Category E permits with 20,000 lb possession limit in Areas 2/3 for limited access mackerel permit holders;
- Provisions for maintaining a herring at-sea dealer permit;
- Requirement for vessels with herring permits to submit herring pre-landing notifications through onboard vessel monitoring systems (VMS);
- The option to use VMS to declare into the herring fishery in lieu of applying for a Letter of Authorization (LOA) for herring carriers;
- Gear declarations for limited access herring vessels;
- Observer notification requirement for permitted herring vessels;
- Requirement for vessel captains to submit a Released Catch Affidavit form documenting slippage events.

2. Explain how, by whom, how frequently, and for what purpose the information will be used. If the information collected will be disseminated to the public or used to support information that will be disseminated to the public, then explain how the collection complies with all applicable Information Quality Guidelines.

The information collections for Amendment 5 are being used by several offices of NMFS, the USCG, the New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC), the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC), state fishery management agencies, academic institutions, and other fishery research and management organizations to evaluate current management programs and future management proposals. All information collections are necessary for improved monitoring of the Atlantic herring fishery.

Areas 2/3 Open Access Herring Permit

Amendment 5 established an Areas 2/3 Open Access Herring (Category E) permit for vessels engaged in the mackerel fishery. This permit allows vessels to possess up to 20,000 lb of herring per trip in herring management Areas 2 and 3. The permit is intended to prevent discarding of Atlantic herring by limited access mackerel vessels that do not also have a limited access Atlantic herring permit. Vessels that do not have a limited access herring permit but have been issued a limited access mackerel permit are eligible for the Areas 2/3 Open Access Herring Permit. Vessels may hold both open access herring permits at the same time.

The Category E permit is subject to a number of the same reporting requirements as other herring permits. Permit holders are required to submit vessel trip reports (VTRs) (Form 88-30 approved under OMB Control Number 0648-0212) on a weekly basis. In addition, they are required to maintain a VMS unit on their vessels and declare intent to target Atlantic herring via VMS.

Atlantic Herring At-Sea Dealer Permit

Amendment 5 established an At-Sea Atlantic Herring Dealer Permit that is required for herring carriers that sell herring rather than deliver those fish on behalf of a harvesting vessel to a dealer for purchase. This permit requires compliance with Federal dealer reporting requirements. Vessels that have both an At-Sea Atlantic Herring Dealer Permit and a Federal fishing permit are required to fulfill the reporting requirements of both permits while in possession of both permits, as appropriate. This permit was created to minimize instances where catch is reported by harvesting vessels but then cannot be matched to dealer reports, thereby improving catch monitoring in the herring fishery.

Pre-landing notifications

Previously, vessels with Category A or B permits, and vessels with a Category C permits fishing with midwater trawl gear in Areas 1A, 1B, and/or 3 were subject to a pre-landing VMS notification requirement. Amendment 5 expanded this pre-landing VMS notification requirement to also include Category E Open Access permits and vessels declaring herring carrier trips via VMS. These vessels must notify NMFS Office of Law Enforcement via VMS of the time and place of offloading at least 6 hours prior to crossing the VMS demarcation line on their return trip to port, or if a vessel does not fish seaward of the VMS demarcation line, at least 6 hours prior to landing.

Elimination of Power-down Exemption

Amendment 5 prohibits vessels with herring permits from turning off their VMS when in port unless specifically authorized by NMFS. If a vessel will be out of the water for more than 72 hours, a vessel representative can request a letter of exemption (LOE) from NMFS to turn off its VMS. Herring vessels are not allowed to turn off their VMS until they have received an LOE from NMFS. Vessels requesting an LOE to sign a herring vessel out of the VMS program are required to sign out for a minimum of 30 days. When VMS units are turned off, consistent with an LOE, the vessel is not able to leave the dock until the VMS unit is turned back on. The power down exemption was eliminated in order to improve the enforcement of herring regulations, and helps make herring VMS regulations consistent with VMS regulations in other Northeast fisheries.

VMS Declaration for Herring Carriers

Herring vessels may enroll as herring carriers that receive and transport herring caught by another fishing vessel, provided the herring carrier has been issued a herring permit and does not have any gear on board capable of catching or processing herring.

Amendment 5 allows vessels to choose between enrolling as a herring carrier with a letter of authorization (LOA) from the NMFS Regional Administrator (RA) and declaring a herring carrier trip via VMS. In either case, the vessel is allowed to receive and transport herring caught by another fishing vessel provided the herring carrier has been issued a herring permit, does not have any gear on board capable of catching or processing fish, and only transports herring. By declaring a herring carrier trip via VMS, a vessel is exempt from the catch reporting (i.e., daily VMS reporting) associated with its herring permit and is not bound by the 7-day enrollment period of the LOA. A vessel declaring a herring carrier trip via VMS may only act as a herring carrier and may not fish for any species or transport species other than herring. This measure has increased operational flexibility by allowing vessels to schedule herring carrier trips on a trip-by-trip basis. Vessels that do not possess a VMS or choose not to declare a herring trip via VMS may still act as carriers by obtaining a herring carrier LOA from the NMFS RA and operating in accordance with the LOA requirements.

Gear declaration for limited access herring vessels

Amendment 5 expanded the VMS activity declaration requirement by adding a gear code declaration to the previously required activity declaration. Open access Category D permit holders are not currently subject to VMS requirements, and are thus not affected.

Observer notification requirements

Amendment 5 expanded and modified trip notification and VMS requirements for vessels with herring permits. The goal of this adjustment was to assist with observer deployment and provide enforcement with advance notice of trip information to facilitate enforcement monitoring of landings. Amendment 5 requires that vessels with limited access herring permits, vessels with open access Category D permits fishing with midwater trawl gear in Areas 1A, 1B, and/or 3, vessels with Category E permits, and herring carrier vessels contact NMFS at least 48 hr in advance of a fishing trip to request an observer. This measure assists NMFS in scheduling and deployment of observers across the herring fleet with minimal additional burden on the industry, and helps ensure that observer coverage targets for the herring fishery are met.

Amendment 5 also requires that when vessels issued limited access herring permits are working cooperatively in the Atlantic herring fishery, including pair trawling, purse seining, and transferring herring at-sea, they must provide to observers, when requested, the estimated weight of each species brought on board or released on each tow.

Released Catch Affidavits

Amendment 5 requires limited access vessels to bring all catch aboard the vessel and make it available for sampling by an observer. This measure was implemented to improve the quality of at-sea monitoring data by reducing the discarding of unsampled catch. If catch is discarded before it has been made available to the observer, that catch is defined as slippage. If slippage

occurs, the vessel operator must complete a Released Catch Affidavit form within 48 hr of the end of the fishing trip. The Released Catch Affidavit details: (1) Why catch was slipped; (2) an estimate of the quantity and species composition of the slipped catch; and (3) the time and location of the slipped catch.

NMFS retains control over all information and safeguards it from improper access, modification, and destruction, consistent with NOAA standards for confidentiality, privacy, and electronic information. The information collection is designed to yield data that meet all applicable information quality guidelines. Prior to dissemination, the information would be subjected to quality control measures and pre-dissemination review pursuant to Section 515 of Public Law 106-554.

3. Describe whether, and to what extent, the collection of information involves the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological techniques or other forms of information technology.

Permit renewal has been made as simple as possible for both the public and the issuing office. The information obtained from current permits is used to prepare a computer-generated, pre-printed renewal permit, which is sent to the permit holder for updating. If there are no changes in the information required on the permit, renewal requires only the applicant's signature. This feature minimizes the reporting burden on the public as well as the administrative burden on the agency. Permit information and all initial permit applications are posted as fillable Adobe Acrobat documents (PDF file format) on the Greater Atlantic Regional Office's (GARFO) web site: www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov. Posting this information on the internet makes it widely available to the public, thereby reducing both public and administrative burden. At this time, permit applications, with signature and accompanying documents, must be mailed.

Federally permitted dealers are required to submit detailed, electronic reports of all purchases from fishing vessels. Dealers submit transaction information through an online data entry form available at <http://www.accsp.org/safis.htm>.

Due to the required confidentiality of fish purchase reports, information sent from dealers to NMFS is subject to strict encryption standards and is available only to authorized agency personnel and the submitter. Dealers receive a username and personal identification number (PIN) that enables them to log onto a secure site and submit their reports. Dealers are also allowed to access, review, and edit the information they have submitted using a secure procedure similar to those in common usage throughout the banking industry. These submissions constitute the official reports as required by the various FMPs in the Northeast region.

All data submitted through the vessel's VMS unit is electronic. VMS vessel polling is automated and aside from the initial cost, does not impose any burden on commercial fishing vessels.

The observer providers and vessels submit materials to NMFS/NEFOP via email, fax, mail or phone call. Instructions for providers and vessels are available on the GARFO web site.

4. Describe efforts to identify duplication.

The information to be collected through the issuance of permits is not duplicated elsewhere.

The information collected on daily VMS catch reports is often duplicated on vessel trip reports (VTRs) which are approved under the 0648-0212 family of forms. However, VMS daily catch reports are necessary to monitor fisheries catch in real-time. VTRs are submitted to NMFS on a weekly or monthly basis, and are therefore used to cross-check the accuracy of the daily VMS catch reports.

The application processes and information submissions for the observer program and vessels are unique to the Atlantic herring observer program, and direct duplication with other collections does not exist.

None of the other information collected through this family of forms is duplicated elsewhere.

5. If the collection of information involves small businesses or other small entities, describe the methods used to minimize the burden.

Only the minimum data needed to meet the objectives of Amendment 5 are requested from all respondents. Since the respondents are small businesses, separate requirements based on the size of business have not been developed.

For renewal of vessel and dealer permits, detailed instructions are included with the application to help facilitate proper completion of the form. NMFS also sends bulletins detailing reporting requirements to all permitted entities.

NMFS has currently certified four vendors to provide VMS service to vessels participating in the fisheries that require VMS as a condition of their permits. Each vendor offers comparable equipment and services over a range of prices. This reduces the burden on the public by increasing competition among vendors, thereby decreasing costs to the fishing industry to obtain and operate a VMS unit. Further, the increased variety of VMS units may allow vessel owners/operators to select the most economical and efficient unit to purchase, therefore minimizing costs associated with VMS.

6. Describe the consequences to the Federal program or policy activities if the collection is not conducted or is conducted less frequently.

To the extent practicable, frequency of information collection under this family of forms has been minimized. To reduce the frequency any further would compromise the intent of each collection of information requirement.

Information on permit applications and renewal forms for vessels, dealers, and operators, is necessary for accurately tracking information about who is issued permits annually, gathering data on permit holders, and ensuring compliance with fishing regulations. Furthermore, this

information (in a consolidated form) is used by a variety of researchers, students, and managers when making important fisheries policy decisions

All information is required for the efficient operation of the Atlantic herring observer program, and must be submitted in the time frame requested. Collecting this information less frequently would jeopardize the goals and objectives of the observer program and the effective management of the Atlantic herring fishery.

VMS units are crucial for enforcing area based fishing regulations; without VMS tracking of fishing vessel activity, it would be nearly impossible to monitor compliance of fishing vessels with regulations. VMS catch reporting is vital to gaining real-time data on fish catch. Without such information, or if the information was collected less frequently, it would be problematic to monitor fisheries quotas and prevent overfishing.

7. Explain any special circumstances that require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with OMB guidelines.

The data collection is consistent with 5 CFR 1320.6 guidelines except that it requires information to be reported more frequently than quarterly. The need for this is described in Question 6.

8. Provide information on the PRA Federal Register Notice that solicited public comments on the information collection prior to this submission. Summarize the public comments received in response to that notice and describe the actions taken by the agency to obtain their views on the availability of data, frequency of collection, the clarity of instructions and recordkeeping, disclosure, or reporting format (if any), and on the data elements to be recorded, disclosed, or reported.

A Federal Register Notice published on October 25, 2016 (81 FR 73382) solicited public comment. In addition, in effort to encourage comments, NMFS sent all fishery stakeholders an email message notifying them of the public comment period, and also announced the comment solicitation at a New England Fisheries Management Council meeting (report included as a supplementary document). This message was also prominently posted on the GARFO website to further encourage public comment.

9. Explain any decisions to provide payments or gifts to respondents, other than remuneration of contractors or grantees.

No payment or gift has been or will be made to respondents.

10. Describe any assurance of confidentiality provided to respondents and the basis for assurance in statute, regulation, or agency policy.

All data will be handled in accordance with NOAA Administrative Order 216-100, Confidentiality of Fisheries Statistics, and will not be released for public use except in aggregate statistical form (and without identifying the source of data, i.e., vessel name, owner, etc). In addition, any information collected under the Permit Family of Forms would be considered

confidential and would not be disclosed except as provided in Section 402(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

11. Provide additional justification for any questions of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.

There are no questions of a sensitive nature involved in this collection of information.

12. Provide an estimate in hours of the burden of the collection of information.

The time burden of this information collection is presented in Table 1. The total number of vessels affected by this collection is 172 (48 Category A & B, 45 Category C, 54 Category E, 25 Herring Carrier/Dealer). **The total annual responses are 15,310 and annual time burden is 1,159 hours.**

Category E Herring Permit Renewal

The application process to renew a Category E permit takes an estimated 1 minute to complete. From 2014-2016, an average of 54 vessels obtained Category E permits, for a total annual burden **of 1 hour (54 applications * 1 minute).**

VTR and VMS Reporting

This collection requires that vessels issued Category E herring permits comply with existing catch reporting requirements for Category C vessels, which were approved under OMB Control No. 0648-0202. The requirements include the submission of weekly VTRs and daily VMS reports. The weekly VTR report is estimated to take 5 minutes to complete. Vessel that have category D herring permits are currently required to fill out weekly VTRs, so those vessels holding those permits are not affected by this collection. Only one vessel currently holds a Category E permit without a category D permit. And since all Category E vessels had already been submitting monthly reports related to their limited access mackerel permits (currently approved under OMB Control No. 0648-0212), this information collection only requires 40 (52 minus 12) reports per year. Thus, the annual time burden for weekly VTR reports is **3 hr (40 weeks * 5 minutes * 1 vessels)**. Category E Permit holders are also required to submit a daily VMS catch report that takes an estimated 5 minutes to complete. If each vessel is estimated to make five trips per year, the total annual time burden for daily VMS catch reports is **45 hours (5 minutes per catch report * 5 trips * 2 days per trip * 54 vessels)**.

Atlantic Herring At-Sea Dealer Permit

It is estimated to take 5 minutes to complete the At-Sea Herring Dealer Permit renewal, and approximately 25 vessels per year are likely to maintain the At-Sea Herring Dealer Permit. The annual burden estimate to renew an At-Sea Herring Dealer Permit is 5 minutes to complete the renewal, for a total burden of **2 hours (25 renewal applications * 5 minutes)**. Vessels issued the At-Sea Herring Dealer permit are also required to submit dealer reports. Dealer reports take 15 minutes to complete and must be submitted weekly (52 times per year), for a total burden of **325 hours (25 reports * 15 minutes * 52 per year)**.

Pre-landing notifications

This collection requires vessels with limited access herring permits, Category E permits, and vessels declaring herring carrier trips via VMS to submit a pre-landing notification to the NMFS Office of Law Enforcement via VMS and provide a gear declaration. Each VMS pre-landing notification is estimated to take 5 minutes to complete. From 2014-2016, an average of 45 Category C vessels were affected by this regulation. Category C vessels are estimated to take an average of 13 trips per year, so the total annual burden for Category C vessels making VMS pre-landing notifications is estimated to be **49 hours (13 trips * 45 vessels * 5 minutes)**. Category E vessels will take an estimated 5 trips per year, so the total burden for Category E vessels making VMS pre-landing notifications is estimated to be **23 hours (5 trips * 54 vessels * 5 minutes)**. Herring carriers are estimated to take an average of 4 trips per year, so the total annual burden for herring carriers making VMS pre-landing notifications is estimated to be **8 hours (4 trips * 25 vessels * 5 minutes)**. The gear declaration applies to limited access herring vessels. There is no additional reporting burden associated with the gear declaration.

VMS Declaration for Herring Carriers

Amendment 5 allows vessels to choose between enrolling as a herring carrier with LOA and declaring a herring carrier trip via VMS. There is no additional reporting burden associated with this measure because both the LOA and the VMS pre-trip notifications are existing requirements for herring vessels under other data collections.

Observer notification requirements

Amendment 5 increased the reporting burden for measures designed to improve at-sea sampling by NMFS-approved observers. All limited access herring vessels, vessels issued a Category E permit, and herring carrier vessels are required to call NMFS to request an observer at least 48 hr in advance of a herring trip. Prior to Amendment 5, only vessels with Category A or B permits, or vessels fishing with midwater trawl gear in Areas 1A, 1B, and/or 3, were required to contact NMFS advance of a fishing trip to request an observer. This pre-trip observer notification requirement is estimated to affect 156 vessels, each of which is estimated to take 25 trips per year. The phone call is estimated to take 5 minutes to complete. If a vessel takes an estimated 25 trips per year, the total annual reporting burden associated with the pre-trip observer notification is estimated to be **325 hours (156 vessels * 25 trips * 5 minutes)**. If a vessel has already contacted NMFS to request an observer and then decides to cancel that fishing trip, they are required to notify NMFS of the trip cancellation. The call to notify NMFS of a cancelled trip is estimated to take 1 minute to complete. Since each vessel has the potential to cancel every trip for which it submitted notification, the total annual burden of the cancellation call is **65 hours (156 vessels * 25 trips * 1 minute)**

Amendment 5 requires that when vessels issued limited access herring permits are working cooperatively in the Atlantic herring fishery, including pair trawling, purse seining, and transferring herring at-sea, **vessels must provide to observers, when requested, the estimated weight of each species brought on board or released on each tow**. This is generally done for each trip, and not on a tow by tow basis. Since vessel operators already tally this information for trip reports, they should have the information available to report to the observer, so NMFS estimates the response to take 1 minute. The total annual burden for this requirement is **18 hours (42 vessels * 25 trips * 1 minute)**.

Released Catch Affidavits

This collection requires a Released Catch Affidavit form be completed for limited access vessels that discard catch before the catch has been made available to an observer for sampling (slipped catch). The reporting burden for completion of this form is estimated to average 5 minutes. The affidavit requirement affects an estimated 93 limited access herring vessels. If those vessels slipped catch once per trip with an observer onboard, and take an estimated 38 trips per year, **the total annual reporting burden for the Released Catch Affidavit is 295 hours (93 vessels * 38 trips per year * 5 minutes)**. This collection also requires vessels fishing with midwater trawl gear in Groundfish Closed Areas to complete a Released Catch Affidavit if catch is discarded before it is brought aboard the vessel and made available for sampling by an observer. At this time, there are no known Category D vessels that fish with midwater trawl gear; therefore, there is no additional reporting burden, beyond that described above, for this affidavit associated with Groundfish Closed Areas.

13. Provide an estimate of the total annual cost burden to the respondents or record-keepers resulting from the collection (excluding the value of the burden hours in Question 12 above).

The cost burden of this information collection is presented in Table 1. **The total annual cost for all requirements in this information collection is \$2,745.**

Areas 2/3 Open Access Herring Permit

The application process to renew a Category E permit cost \$0.49 to mail, for a total cost of **\$26 (54 applications * \$0.49)**.

The Category E Herring Permit requires vessels to maintain a VMS. Because a prerequisite for obtaining a Category E herring permit is ownership of a valid limited access mackerel permit (which also requires VMS), there is no additional cost burden for VMS maintenance and operation associated with this collection.

Category E permit holders are also required to submit weekly VTRs (40 reports per year in addition to the monthly reports previously required). VTRs cost \$0.49 to mail, for a total annual cost of **\$20 (40 reports * \$0.49 * 1 vessels)**.

Atlantic Herring At-Sea Dealer Permit

The cost for mailing the renewal application for the at-sea dealer permit is \$0.49 per application, for a total cost of **\$12 (\$0.49 * 25 applications)**. There is no cost associated with this collection for the weekly dealer reports, which are submitted electronically (start-up costs covered in another submission).

Pre-landing notifications

Each VMS pre-landing notification cost \$1. Category C vessels are estimated to take an average of 13 trips per year, so the total cost for a Category C permits is **\$585 (13 trips * 45 vessels * \$1)**. Each Category E vessels takes an estimated 5 trips per year, so the total cost for Category E vessels making VMS pre-landing notifications is **\$270 (5 trips * 54 vessels * \$1)**. Herring

carriers are estimated to take an average of 4 trips per year, so the total cost for herring carriers making VMS pre-landing notifications is **\$100 (4 trips * 25 vessels * \$1)**.

VMS Declaration for Herring Carriers

Amendment 5 allows vessels to choose between enrolling as a herring carrier with LOA and declaring a herring carrier trip via VMS. Vessels may declare a herring carrier trip via VMS or continue to request an LOA. There is no additional cost associated with this measure because both the LOA and the VMS pre-trip notifications are existing requirements for herring vessels.

Observer notification requirements

The pre-trip observer notifications, as well as the trip cancellation notification, are calls to NMFS. The cost of these calls is negligible, so there is no additional cost for these requirements.

There is no cost for vessels to provide to observers the estimated weight of each species brought on board or released on each tow.

Released Catch Affidavits

The Released Catch Affidavit forms must be submitted by mail, for \$0.49 per submission. If each of the 93 vessels required to submit the affidavits slipped catch once per trip with an observer onboard, and took an estimated 38 trips per year, the total annual cost for the Released Catch Affidavit is **\$1,731 (93 vessels * 38 trips per year = 3,534 * \$0.49)**.

14. Provide estimates of annualized cost to the Federal Government.

The total annualized cost to the Federal government from the herring observer program is **\$111,532** and is detailed in Table 1. This is the cost to the Federal government based on 4,461 hours at a rate of \$25 per hour.

15. Explain the reasons for any program changes or adjustments.

A reduction in the number of responses (16,065 to 15,310) and burden hours (1,231 to 1,159) is due to requirements which are no longer applicable to the industry. These include:

1) burdens associated with purchase, installation, and registry of VMS devices; 2) burdens associated with obtaining herring Category E and at-sea dealer permits; 3) in addition, burdens and costs associated with obtaining internet access for submission of reports were removed because free avenues to internet access are common and abundant.

16. For collections whose results will be published, outline the plans for tabulation and publication.

Results from this collection may be used in scientific, management, technical, or general informational publications such as Fisheries of the United States, which follows prescribed statistical tabulations and summary table formats. Data are available to the general public on request in summary form only. Data are available to NMFS employees in detailed form on a need-to-know basis only.

17. If seeking approval to not display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection, explain the reasons why display would be inappropriate.

Vessel trip declarations and VMS catch report for Atlantic herring are presented through an electronic prompt on VMS units. Thus, the OMB control number will not be displayed.

18. Explain each exception to the certification statement.

Not Applicable.

B. COLLECTION OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

No statistical methods are employed in the information collection procedures. The requirements are mandatory for all participants in the indicated fisheries.

Table 1.

				Public				Government		
	Number of entities	Items per entity	Total # of items	Response time (minutes)	Total time burden (hours)	Cost per item	Total Public cost	Response time per item (minutes)	Total Government Response Time	Total Government Cost
Category E Open Access Permit										
Permit Renewal Application	54	1	54	1	1	\$0.49	\$26	15	13.5	\$338
Herring at-sea dealer permit										
Permit Renewal Application	25	1	25	5	2	\$0.49	\$12	60	25	\$625
Dealer Reports	25	52	1300	15	325	\$0.00	\$0	60	1300	\$32,500
Reporting Requirements for Category E Herring Permit										
Weekly VTR	1	40	40	5	3	\$0.49	\$20	60	52	\$1,300
Daily VMS Catch Reports	54	10	540	5	45	\$0.00	\$0	10	90	\$2,250
Herring Pre-Land Notification										
Category C vessels	45	13	585	5	49	\$1.00	\$585	15	146.25	\$3,656
Category E vessels	54	5	270	5	23	\$1.00	\$270	15	67.5	\$1,688
Herring Carrier	25	4	100	5	8	\$1.00	\$100	15	25	\$625
Observer reporting changes for vessels										
Pre-trip Notification to Observer Program	156	25	3900	5	325	\$0.00	\$0	10	650	\$16,250
Trip Cancellation Notification to Observer Program	156	25	3900	1	65	\$0.00	\$0	5	325	\$8,125
Released Catch Affidavit	93	38	3534	5	295	\$0.49	\$1,732	30	1767	\$44,175
Vessel Operator Notification of Species lb to Observer	42	25	1050	1	18	\$0.00	\$0	0	0	\$0
TOTALS			15,310		1,159		\$2,745		4,461	\$111,532

+



National Marine Fisheries Service
Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
Sustainable Fisheries Division
www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov



Status Report of Greater Atlantic Region Actions

Prepared for the January 24-26, 2017
Meeting of the
New England Fishery Management Council

January 23, 2017

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New England Council Actions

Small-Mesh Multispecies

None at this time

Groundfish

Amendment 18 to the Northeast Multispecies Plan

On December 20, 2016, NMFS published a proposed rule for Amendment 18 in the Federal Register (81 FR 92761). Amendment 18 was developed to promote fleet diversity in the groundfish fishery and enhance sector management. The Amendment proposes to limit the number of permits and annual groundfish allocation that an entity could hold. This action also removes several effort restrictions to increase operational flexibility for limited access handgear vessels. Comments on Amendment 18 must be received on or before February 3, 2017. For additional information, please contact William Whitmore at (978) 281-9182 or email at William.whitmore@noaa.gov.

Reimbursement of Sector At-Sea Monitoring Costs

For the 2016 fishing year, NMFS has been able to fully fund our SBRM monitoring program and are using remaining funds to offset some of industry's costs for the groundfish at-sea monitoring program through a cooperative agreement with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. The ASMFC has been reimbursing sectors for 85 percent of their ASM and electronic monitoring costs for sector trips beginning on or after July 1, 2016. To date, all 14 sectors actively fishing have submitted invoices and been reimbursed for ASM trips, on a total of 663 days, that occurred from July through December, including applicable EM trips. We are actively monitoring and evaluating the spend-down of available funds consistent with projected effort for the remainder of the fishing year. For additional information, please contact Mark Grant at (978) 281-9145 or email at Mark.Grant@noaa.gov.

Approval of At-Sea Monitor Providers for Groundfish Sectors in Fishing Years 2017 and 2018

On December 9, 2016, NMFS published a Federal Register notice (81 FR 89065) approving at-sea monitoring providers for the Northeast multispecies fishery for fishing years 2017 and 2018. Five companies, all of which are currently approved to provide at-sea monitoring services to sectors, submitted applications and have been approved for the next two fishing years. There will be an opportunity for additional providers to apply to provide services for 2018. For additional information, please contact Kyle Molton at (978)281-9236 or email at Kyle.Molton@noaa.gov.

Inseason Action to Modify Common Pool Possession and Trip Limits for Southern New England/Mid Atlantic Yellowtail Flounder and Georges Bank Cod

On December 22, 2016, NMFS filed a temporary rule in the Federal Register increasing the possession and trip limit for SNE/MA yellowtail flounder to 500 lb per day-at-sea, and 1,000 lb per trip through the end of the fishing year, April 30, 2017. NMFS also lowered the common pool possession and trip limits for Georges Bank cod to 25 lb per day-at- sea, up to 50 lb per trip, for the remainder of the fishing year. NMFS took these actions to provide additional fishing opportunities for SNE/MA yellowtail flounder and to prevent a quota overage for GB cod. For additional information, please contact Kyle Molton at (978) 281-9236 or Kyle.Molton@noaa.gov.

Inseason Action to Prohibit Common Pool Possession of Georges Bank Cod and to Close the Georges Bank Cod Trimester Total Allowable Catch Area to Common Pool Fishing

On January 9, 2017, NMFS filed a temporary rule in the Federal Register prohibiting the possession of GB cod by common pool vessels and closing the GB cod Trimester Total Allowable Catch Area (statistical areas 521, 522, 525, and 561) to common pool vessels on a groundfish trip. NMFS took these actions because data indicated that the common pool quota for GB cod had already been exceeded for fishing year 2016. For additional information, please contact Kyle Molton at (978) 281-9236 or Kyle.Molton@noaa.gov.

Monkfish

None at this time

Scallops

Proposed Rule for Framework 28

NMFS published a proposed rule for Framework 28 in the Federal Register on January 19, 2017 (82 FR 6472). Framework 28 would: set specifications for the scallop fishery for fishing year 2017; revise the way we allocate catch to the limited access general category individual fishing quota fleet to reflect spatial management of the scallop fishery; and implement a 50-bushel shell stock possession limit for limited access vessels inshore of the days-at-sea demarcation line north of 42° 20' N. lat. The comment period on this rule closes on February 3, 2017. For additional information, please contact Travis Ford at (978) 281-9233 or email at travis.ford@noaa.gov.

Herring

Adjustments to the 2017 Management Area Annual Catch Limits

On December 28, 2016, NMFS published a final rule in the Federal Register (81 FR 95494) adjusting the 2017 catch limits in the four herring management areas (Areas 1A, 1B, 2, and 3) to account for underages in those areas during 2015. In order to ensure that the carryover of underages do not cause overfishing of the herring resource, management area-specific carryover does not increase the stock-wide annual catch limit. This action was necessary to ensure that NMFS accounts for herring catch consistent with the requirements of the Atlantic Herring Fishery Management Plan. For additional information, please contact Shannah Jaburek at (978) 282-8456 or email at Shannah.Jaburek@noaa.gov.

Inseason Adjustment to the Herring Management Area 1A Sub-Annual Catch Limit

NMFS published an inseason adjustment in the Federal Register on December 29, 2016, allocating an addition 1,000 mt of Atlantic herring to the Management Area 1A Sub-Annual Catch Limit due to an underharvest in the New Brunswick weir fishery. This action was necessary to comply with the 2016-2018 specifications and management measures for the Atlantic Herring FMP, and to ensure that accounting of the annual catch limit is accurate for fishing year 2016. The allocation was not large enough to reopen the herring fishery in Area 1A. For additional information, please contact Daniel Luers at (978) 282-8457 or email at Daniel.Luers@noaa.gov.

Skate

None at this time

Atlantic Deep-Sea Red Crab

Atlantic Deep-Sea Red Crab Specifications for Fishing Years 2017-2019

NMFS published a proposed rule in the Federal Register on December 1, 2016, (81 FR 86703) proposing the 2017 Atlantic deep-sea red crab quota and proposing projected quotas for 2018-2019. The New England Fishery Management Council's recommendation is to continue the existing red crab fishery quota of 1,775 metric tons for fishing years 2017-2019. This action is necessary to establish allowable red crab harvest levels that will prevent overfishing and allow harvesting of optimum yield. The comment period closed on January 3, 2017. The final rule is in development. If the final rule does not publish before the start of the 2017 fishing year (March 1, 2017), rollover specifications will go into place until replaced by the final rule. For additional information, please contact Allison Murphy at (978) 281-9122 or email at Allison.Murphy@noaa.gov.

Mid-Atlantic Council Actions

Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass

Summer Flounder Safe Harbor Quota Transfer – New Jersey to Virginia

NMFS published a temporary rule in the Federal Register on December 9, 2016, (81 FR 89010) allowing New Jersey to transfer 226 pounds of summer flounder commercial quota to Virginia. The revised summer flounder quotas for calendar year 2016 are: New Jersey, 1,381,653 lb; and Virginia, 1,759,787 lb. This transfer was requested by New Jersey to repay landings by a New Jersey-permitted vessel that landed in Virginia under a safe harbor agreement. For additional information, please contact Cynthia Hanson at (978) 281-9180 or email at Cynthia.hanson@noaa.gov.

Atlantic Bluefish

Commercial Bluefish Quota Transfer – Maine to Rhode Island

NMFS published a temporary rule in the Federal Register on November 22, 2016 (81 FR 83715) allowing a transfers of 32,000 lb of commercial bluefish quota from Maine to Rhode Island. The revised bluefish quotas for calendar year 2016 are: Maine, 655 lb; Rhode Island, 464,561lb. This transfer was prompted by the diligent efforts of state officials in Rhode Island not to exceed the commercial bluefish quota. For additional information, please contact Reid Lichwell at (978) 281-9112 or email at Reid.Lichwell@noaa.gov.

Commercial Bluefish Quota Transfer – Virginia to New York

NMFS published a temporary rule in the Federal Register on November 29, 2016 (81 FR 85904) allowing two transfer totaling 80,000 lb of commercial bluefish quota from Virginia to New York. The revised bluefish quotas for calendar year 2016 are: Virginia, 370,287 lb; New York, 877,289 lb. This transfer was prompted by the diligent efforts of state officials in New York not to exceed the commercial bluefish quota. For additional information, please contact Reid Lichwell at (978) 281-9112 or email at Reid.Lichwell@noaa.gov.

New York Commercial Bluefish Closure

NMFS filed a temporary rule published in the Federal Register on December 6, 2016 (81 FR 87844) as notification that the 2016 commercial bluefish quota allocated to the State of New York has been harvested and the fishery has been closed for the remainder of the fishing year. Vessels holding Federal commercial permits are prohibited from landing bluefish, effective 0001 hours, December 2, 2016 for the remainder of the 2016 calendar year. This closure is concurrent with the State of New York's closure of its commercial bluefish fishery to state permitted vessels and dealers. For additional information, please contact Reid Lichwell at (978) 281-9112 or email at Reid.Lichwell@noaa.gov.

Commercial Bluefish Quota Transfer – Maryland to New York

NMFS published a temporary rule in the Federal Register on December 12, 2016 (81 FR 89396) allowing a transfer of 50,000 lb of commercial bluefish quota from Maryland to New York. The revised bluefish quotas for calendar year 2016 are: Maryland, 96,631 lb; New York, 927,289 lb. This transfer was prompted by the diligent efforts of state officials in New York not to exceed the commercial bluefish quota. For additional information, please contact Reid Lichwell at (978) 281-9112 or email at Reid.Lichwell@NOAA.gov.

Spiny Dogfish

None at this time

Surfclam and Ocean Quahog

Surfclam and Ocean Quahog ITQ Cost Recovery

The 2017 fishing year marks the start of the new cost recovery program for the surfclam and ocean quahog individual transferable quota (ITQ) fisheries. At the end of 2017, ITQ shareholders will be responsible for a fee based on how many of their 2017 cage tags are used to land surfclams or ocean quahogs throughout the year. The fee to the ITQ shareholder will be based on the cage tag numbers initial allocated to each shareholder, even if some or all of those tags are leased or otherwise transferred to another individual who uses them to land clams. NMFS will announce the new fees per tag in March 2017, and will issue bills in March 2018 once we know which tags were used. Details about the new cost recovery program were published in the Atlantic Surfclam and Ocean Quahog Amendment 17 final rule (81 FR 38969; June 15, 2016). For additional information, please contact Doug Potts at 978-281-9341 or Douglas.Potts@noaa.gov.

Surfclam and Ocean Quahog 2017-2018 Specifications

On December 27, 2016, we published a final rule (81 FR 95060), which set status quo harvest quotas and suspends the default surfclam minimum size limit for the 2017 fishing year. Eight comments were received on the proposed rule, and are addressed in the final rule. The summary of a new stock assessment for surfclams was released in November 2016, and a new ocean quahog assessment is underway. We expect the Mid-Atlantic Council will fully consider these assessment results and recommend specifications for 2018 through 2020. For additional information, please contact Doug Potts at 978-281-9341 or Douglas.Potts@noaa.gov.

Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish

Amendment 16 (Deep-Sea Coral Amendment)

NMFS published a final rule for Amendment 16 in the Federal Register on December 14, 2016 (81 FR 90246). Amendment 16 protects deep-sea corals from the effects of commercial fishing gear in the Mid-Atlantic. The management measures implemented in this rule are intended to protect deep-sea coral and deep-sea coral habitat while promoting the sustainable utilization and conservation of several different marine resources managed under the authority of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council. For additional information, please contact Travis Ford at (978) 281-9233 or email at travis.ford@noaa.gov.

Tilefish

2016 Tilefish IFQ Cost Recovery

As in previous years, the annual tilefish individual fishing quota (IFQ) cost recovery bills for 2016 will be sent in March 2017. We anticipate the 2016 cost recovery fee percentage will be somewhat higher than previous years as a result of higher than usual costs and lower than usual total ex-vessel value of the fishery. The higher costs are primarily the result of work conducted on the 5-year review of the tilefish IFQ program required by the Magnuson-Stevens Act. Details about the recoverable costs, the fee percentage, and how it is calculated will be provided in an annual tilefish IFQ cost recovery report, which will be released with the bills. For additional information, please contact Douglas Potts at (978) 281-9341 or e-mail at Douglas.Potts@noaa.gov.

Tilefish Framework 2:

This action would modify the incidental possession limit, clarify allowed gear for recreational fishing, and make several improvements to the tilefish individual fishing quota (IFQ) program. We are currently reviewing the framework environmental assessment document and preparing a proposed rule. Because of anticipated delays related to the change in administration, a proposed rule may not publish until March 2017. For additional information, please contact Doug Potts at 978-281-9341 or email at Douglas.Potts@noaa.gov.

Blueline Tilefish Amendment:

This action would add blueline tilefish to the Mid-Atlantic Council's existing Tilefish Fishery Management Plan and establish management measures for the blueline tilefish fishery north of the North Carolina/Virginia border. Proposed measures include permitting and reporting requirements and possession limits for both the commercial and recreational sectors of the fishery along with other details of the management process. We are currently reviewing the amendment environmental assessment document and preparing a proposed rule and notice of availability. Because of anticipated delays related to the change in administration, a proposed rule may not publish until March 2017. For additional information, please contact Doug Potts at 978-281-9341 or email at Douglas.Potts@noaa.gov.

Other Actions

Paperwork Reduction Act

Comment Period for the Extension to the Greater Atlantic Region Gear Identification Collections
On December 27, 2016, a notice was published in the Federal Register (81 FR 95119) announcing a 60-day comment period on a proposed extension to the Greater Atlantic Region Gear Identification collection of information as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden. Regulations require that Federal fisheries permit holders using certain types of fishing gear, mark the gear with specified information for the purposes of vessel and gear identification. The regulations also specify how the gear is to be marked for the purposes of visibility. These gear marking requirements aid fishery law enforcement, make the gear more visible to other vessels to aid in navigation, and provide other fishermen with information regarding the gear type being used to help prevent gear conflicts. The public comment period is currently open, and ends on February 27, 2017. Direct all written comments to Jennifer Jessup, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 6616, 14th and Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at JJessup@doc.gov). For additional information, please contact Cynthia Hanson at (978) 281-9180, or email at Cynthia.hanson@noaa.gov.

Comment Period for Atlantic Herring Amendment 5 and Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Amendment 14 Data Collections

NMFS published a notices in the Federal Register on September 25, 2016, requesting comments on the data collection associated with Amendment 5 to the Atlantic Herring Fishery Management Plan (81 FR 73382) and Amendment 14 to the Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish (FMP 81 FR 73380). The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 requires the Department of Commerce to attempt to reduce paperwork and respondent burden on proposed and continuing data collections. Comments are invited on the necessity of the collections, the accuracy of the agency's estimate of burden, ways to enhance the collection, and ways to minimize the burden on respondents. Direct all written comments to Jennifer Jessup, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 6616, 14th and Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at JJessup@doc.gov). For additional information, please contact Daniel Luers at (978) 282-8457 or email at Daniel.Luers@noaa.gov.

Comment Period for Renewal of Atlantic Sea Scallop Amendment 10 Data Collections

We published a notice in the Federal Register on January 17, 2017 (82 FR 4859), requesting comments to renew the collection of information requirements associated with Amendment 10 to the Atlantic Sea Scallop Fishery Management Plan. The Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 requires the Department of Commerce to attempt to reduce paperwork and respondent burden on proposed and continuing data collections. Comments are invited on the necessity of the collections, the accuracy of the agency's estimate of burden, ways to enhance the collection, and ways to minimize the burden on respondents. The comment period for the information collection is open through March 20, 2017. Direct all written comments to Jennifer Jessup, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 6616, 14th and Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at JJessup@doc.gov). For additional information, please contact Shannah Jaburek at (978) 282-8456 or email at Shannah.Jaburek@noaa.gov.

Lobster

None at this time

Jonah Crab

None at this time

Blueline Tilefish

None at this time

Industry Funded Monitoring Omnibus Amendment

None at this time

Protected Resources Actions

None at this time

Research Document Applications Under Review

None at this time

Research Document Application Review Completed

On November 21, 2016, NMFS issued an Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) to the Commercial Fisheries Research Foundation and the Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management in support of a black sea bass sampling study. Black sea bass will be sample by vessels utilizing different gear types, including trawlers, lobster pots, gillnet, and hooks and line gear. This EFP authorizes eight vessels to retain black sea bass with exemptions from the minimum size requirements and the possession limit requirements while catch is measured before discarding. [For additional information, please contact Reid Lichwell at \(978\) 281-9112 or email at Reid.Lichwell@noaa.gov.](#)

On December 2, 2016, NMFS issued an LOA to Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary to conduct monthly research trawls for northern sand lance within Stellwagen Bank National Marine Sanctuary to study the life history, abundance, and distribution of the sand lance; and evaluate the potential impact of ocean acidification on the species' larval development. Study trawls are conducted monthly in within the sanctuary, and two days a year in two additional locations off Race Point and on Cape Cod Slope to provide a comparison. Each trawl will be towed at two to four knots with a target catch of roughly 100 to 200 sand lance per trip. No species caught during the surveys will be retained for commercial purposes, and no take of marine mammals is expected. [For additional information, please contact Cynthia Hanson at \(978\) 281-9180, or email at Cynthia.hanson@noaa.gov.](#)

Status Report of Greater Atlantic Region Regulatory Actions

On December 22, 2016, NMFS issued a Letter of Acknowledgement (LOA) to the United States Army Corps of Engineers to conduct a lobster monitoring study at the Isles of Shoals North Disposal Site, off the New Hampshire coast. All lobsters below the legal size limit will be returned to the sea as soon as possible after data is collected. Legal size lobsters will be retained and sold by the participating vessel in compliance with their lobster permit. For additional information, please contact Reid Lichwell at (978) 281-9112 or email at Reid.Lichwell@noaa.gov.

On January 10, 2017, NMFS issued an LOA to The Virginia Institute of Marine Science to conduct the Northeast Area Monitoring and Assessment Program (NEAMAP) Nearshore Trawl Survey. This survey consists of two research cruises: one in the spring, and one in the fall of 2017. Each cruise will conduct 150 20-minute tows using bottom trawl gear to sample fishes and select invertebrates in the coastal ocean from Cape Hatteras, NC to Montauk, NY. No species caught during the surveys will be retained for commercial purposes, and no take of marine mammals is expected. For additional information, please contact Cynthia Hanson at (978) 281-9180, or email at Cynthia.hanson@noaa.gov.



United States Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930
Phone: (978) 282-8438

Initial Dealer Permit Information

Dear Federal Greater Atlantic Region Seafood Dealer:

Why are we writing to you?

You requested a Federal Greater Atlantic Seafood Dealer initial permit application. You will need to complete the enclosed application and ownership form, include the required documentation, and return it to the Greater Atlantic Permit Office.

This package includes a(n):

- Initial permit application
- Owner form
- Application instructions
- Application checklist
- Port Office contact list

Application requirements

You must submit a complete and accurate application. Failure to meet all of the requirements of the application will delay the issuance of your permit(s).

Reporting Requirements

When your permit is issued, you must submit trip-level reports of all lobster, shellfish, and fish purchased or received. Go to: http://www.nero.noaa.gov/dealer_er/ for information on reporting requirements. For questions on the Federal dealer reporting requirements, contact your area Port Agent (list enclosed).

Highly Migratory Species

If you purchase highly migratory species (HMS), specifically Atlantic bigeye, albacore, yellowfin and skipjack (BAYS) tunas, Atlantic sharks and/or Atlantic swordfish, and hold another federal Greater Atlantic Region seafood dealer permit, you must report HMS electronically as well. Beginning January 1, 2013, dealers with a permit for only Atlantic tunas were required to electronically report their purchases of BAYS tunas and other HMS. Atlantic tuna dealers who purchase or receive domestic Atlantic Bluefin tuna have separate reporting requirements. Call (978) 281-9140 if you have questions about Bluefin tuna reporting, and (301) 427-8590 for questions about reporting for other HMS.

Dealers that trade bluefin tuna, swordfish, southern bluefin tuna, or frozen bigeye tuna internationally are required to obtain a Highly Migratory Species International Trade Permit. Information on this permit can be found at: www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/ITP/index.htm or by calling (727) 824-5326 and pressing 3.

Do I need a dealer permit?

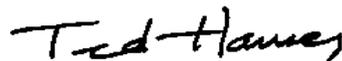
You need to have a Greater Atlantic dealer permit for each managed species that you purchase from a vessel that is required to have a Greater Atlantic Region vessel permit. Additionally, you must have that permit in your possession. Therefore, you need a Greater Atlantic Region dealer permit if:

- You purchase any of the fish or shellfish listed below that are harvested from federal waters (EEZ) or;
- You purchase Atlantic Tunas harvested from Federal or State waters or;
- You purchase these fish or shellfish from a vessel issued a Federal Greater Atlantic Region vessel permit.

List of managed species that require a Greater Atlantic Federal Dealer Permit		
American lobster	Northeast Multispecies continued -	NE Skate continued -
Atlantic bluefish	Atlantic Cod	Clearnose skate
Atlantic deep-sea red crab	Atlantic halibut	Little skate
Atlantic herring	Haddock	Rosette skate
Atlantic mackerel	Offshore hake	Smooth skate
Atlantic sea scallop	Ocean Pout	Thorny skate
Atlantic tunas -	Pollock	Winter skate
Atlantic bluefin tuna	Redfish (ocean perch)	Squids -
Albacore tuna	Red hake (ling)	<i>Illex</i> squid
Bigeye tuna	Silver hake (whiting)	<i>Longfin</i> squid
Skipjack tuna	White hake	Ocean quahog
Yellowfin tuna	Windowpane flounder (sand dab)	Scup
Black sea bass	Winter flounder (blackback)	Spiny dogfish
Butterfish	Witch flounder (grey sole)	Summer flounder
Monkfish	Yellowtail flounder	Surfclam
Northeast Multispecies -	Northeast Skate complex	Tilefish
American plaice (dab)	Barndoor skate	Atlantic Hagfish

If you have any questions, please contact the Greater Atlantic Permit Office at 978-282-8438.

Sincerely,



Ted Hawes
Section Chief
Permits and Limited Access Programs

Enclosures

OMB# 0648-0202 - Expiration Date: 08/31/2019



**National Marine Fisheries Service
Greater Atlantic Regional Office**



**Application Instructions
Federal Fisheries Dealer Permit**

Mail completed application packages to: NOAA Fisheries Service (NMFS), Greater Atlantic Region Permit Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. **Note:** There is a 30-day processing period for all application packages. This 30-day processing period begins when a **correct and complete** application package has been received by the Greater Atlantic Region Permit Office and all required reports have been submitted and accepted by NMFS. Failure to provide the required information will delay processing of your dealer permit.

For further information, call the Greater Atlantic Permit Office at (978) 282-8438

➤ **Section 1 - Dealer Information**

If you already have a NE dealer permit, enclosed is a pre-printed application, which is partially completed for you.

If you are applying for an Atlantic Mackerel or Atlantic Herring at Sea Processor permit, you must enter a vessel name and hull number where indicated and include a copy of the vessel's current Coast Guard Documentation or State Registration.

Before submitting your application, review the dealer information placed in Section 1 to ensure it is correct. Make any corrections on the lines provided.

➤ **Section 1A - Additional Dealer Information**

If your company or business purchases or receives regulated species at more than one location, each address must be listed on the application. Space is available on the back of the dealer permit application form for the required listing of additional addresses. You do not need a separate dealer number for the additional locations as long as the businesses at these locations are all the same business entity.

➤ **Section 2 - Selected Fisheries**

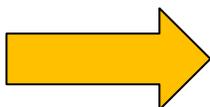
If not already marked, place an 'X' next to each of the fisheries for which you are requesting a Federal Fisheries Dealer Permit.

To **add** a fishery not currently held, mark an "X" next to the permit on the application.

To **cancel** a fishery which you currently hold, write "cancel" next to each permit you wish to cancel.

➤ **Section 3 – Applicant's Signature**

Before mailing, carefully review the application form for accuracy and completeness. Sign and date the application in Section 3 and return it to the address listed above.



Please read the important information on the reverse
before mailing your application

Additional Information for Dealers Submitting an Annual Renewal Application

All dealers, whether operating as a corporation, partnership, or sole proprietorship, must submit the enclosed Owner Form with the annual renewal application. The Owner Form must list the full name of **every** individual who has an ownership interest in a corporation, partnership, or sole proprietorship. **Failure to include a completed Owner Form with your Initial application may delay permit issuance.**

A note on Dealer Reporting

All Federally permitted Greater Atlantic Seafood Dealers must submit weekly trip-level reports required under either CFR § 648.7, § 697.6 and § 635.5 Failure to do so will bar the future issuance of any Greater Atlantic dealer permit. If you have any questions concerning your compliance with the reporting regulations for Greater Atlantic managed species, please contact your local NMFS Port Agent (list enclosed). Questions concerning reporting for bluefin tuna [CFR § 635.5], should be directed to the Highly Migratory Species Office at (978) 281-9140.

The Analysis and Program Support Division may refer dealers to the NOAA Fisheries Service Office of Law Enforcement for:

- Failure to submit all reports
- Submitting incomplete or inaccurate reports
- Failure to report in a timely fashion

Activities that do not comply with the provisions of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act may subject the violator to fines and/or permit sanctions.

OMB# 0648-0202 Expiration Date: 08/31/2019



United States Department of Commerce
 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
 National Marine Fisheries Service
 Greater Atlantic Region
 55 Great Republic Drive
 Gloucester, MA 01930

Federal Greater Atlantic Seafood Dealer Initial Dealer Permit Application

SECTION 1 - DEALER INFORMATION

Southeast Dealer # (if available) _____

Company name: _____

Owner's Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ State : _____ Zip Code: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax Number: _____

**Vessel Name: _____ **Vessel Hull Number: _____

**** (if you are applying for an Atlantic Mackerel at Sea Processor permit or an Atlantic Herring at Sea Processor permit, you must enter a vessel name and hull number above and include a copy of the vessel's current Coast Guard Documentation or State Registration.)**

All corporations, LLCs, and partnerships must provide a copy of the Certificate of Incorporation listing the names of all partners, officers, and/or shareholders in the company. Failure to provide this information WILL DELAY the processing of your application.

If regulated species are purchased or received for commercial purposes at more than one place of business, each address must be listed. List those additional addresses on the back of this form in Section 1A.

SECTION 2 - FISHERIES

Select the fisheries desired by placing an (X) in the boxes provided. Select all fisheries that apply.

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Atlantic bluefin tuna | <input type="checkbox"/> Northeast multispecies | <input type="checkbox"/> Scup |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Atlantic Tunas
(Yellowfin, Bigeye, Skipjack,
Albacore) | <input type="checkbox"/> American lobster | <input type="checkbox"/> Black sea bass |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Surfclam/Ocean quahog - Dealer | <input type="checkbox"/> Skate | <input type="checkbox"/> Monkfish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Surfclam/Ocean quahog - Processor | <input type="checkbox"/> **Atlantic mackerel at sea
processor | <input type="checkbox"/> Atlantic bluefish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Summer flounder | <input type="checkbox"/> Squid, Atlantic mackerel, butterfish | <input type="checkbox"/> Spiny Dogfish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Atlantic sea scallop | <input type="checkbox"/> Atlantic herring - Dealer | <input type="checkbox"/> Tilefish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Atlantic Hagfish | <input type="checkbox"/> **Atlantic herring At Sea Processor | <input type="checkbox"/> Atlantic Deep-sea Red Crab |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> ** Atlantic herring At Sea Dealer | |

SECTION 3 - OWNER'S NAME AND SIGNATURE

I affirm, subject to the penalties provided in 18 USC 1001, that all information I have given in obtaining this permit is true and correct.

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

SECTION 1A - ADDITIONAL DEALER INFORMATION. If regulated species are purchased or received for commercial purposes at more than one place of business, each address must be listed below.

Company Address

Street:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Telephone:		

Company Address

Street:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Telephone:		

Company Address

Street:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Telephone:		

Company Address

Street:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Telephone:		

For further information, call Greater Atlantic Permit Office at (978) 282-8438

Owner name, business officers and members, address, phone number, fax number, and permit information may be released via a NOAA Fisheries website. All other data submitted will be handled as confidential material in accordance with NOAA Administrative Order 216-100, Protection of Confidential Fishery Statistics.

The Paperwork Reduction Act requires potential respondents for a dealer/processor permit be notified of certain information regarding their rights and the burden associated with applying for a Federal dealer/processor permit. One of the regulatory steps taken by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to carry out conservation and management objectives is the requirement of a permit for users of the resources. All the fisheries included on this application require a permit to purchase, or otherwise receive for transport for a commercial purpose, other than solely for transport on land, species harvested by the owner or operator of a fishing vessel issued a Federal fisheries permit for these species. Section 303(b)(1) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA) specifically recognizes the need for permit issuance.

The purpose and use of permits is to: (1) register fish dealers and processor, (2) list the characteristics of dealer/processor operations, (3) exercise influence over compliance (e.g. withhold issuance pending collection of unpaid penalties and / or required reports), (4) provide a mailing list for the dissemination of important information to the industry, (5) provide a universe for data collection samples, and (6) obtain first purchase information on landings to evaluate the biological, economic and social implications of management measures.

Notwithstanding any other provision of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining data needed, and completing and reviewing the information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or suggestions for reducing this burden to: National Marine Fisheries Service, Permit Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930-2276.



Owner Form

- List all persons who have an ownership interest in the business that is the subject of this application.
- Owners or persons who have an ownership interest in a business are defined as and include, but are not limited to, corporations, partnerships, LLCs, persons who are shareholders in a corporation, persons who have formed a partnership (general or limited), and any other entities that have ownership interest in the business.

Section A – Person(s) or Business applying for permit

Name:	Permit Number:
-------	----------------

Section B - All persons who have an ownership interest in the business must be listed below. Do not include employees of the business unless they are also an owner or shareholder.

Mr/Mrs/Ms	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix Name
Check all that apply - Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Shareholder <input type="checkbox"/>				

Mr/Mrs/Ms	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix Name
Check all that apply - Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Shareholder <input type="checkbox"/>				

Mr/Mrs/Ms	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix Name
Check all that apply - Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Shareholder <input type="checkbox"/>				

I, the undersigned, am the owner or legally authorized agent of the owner of the business named in *Section A* above. I affirm, subject to the penalties provided in 18 U.S.C. 1001, that all information that I have given in obtaining this permit is true and correct. OMB# 0648-0202 Expires 08/31/2019

Name of Applicant (print clearly) _____

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

Please use the back of this form to provide information on all persons with an ownership interest in the business.

Page 2 - Section B Continued - All persons who have an ownership interest in the business must be listed below. Do not include employees of the business unless they are also an owner or shareholder.

Mr/Mrs/Ms	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix Name
Check all that apply - Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Shareholder <input type="checkbox"/>				

Mr/Mrs/Ms	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix Name
Check all that apply - Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Shareholder <input type="checkbox"/>				

Mr/Mrs/Ms	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix Name
Check all that apply - Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Shareholder <input type="checkbox"/>				

Mr/Mrs/Ms	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix Name
Check all that apply - Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Shareholder <input type="checkbox"/>				

Mr/Mrs/Ms	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix Name
Check all that apply - Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Shareholder <input type="checkbox"/>				

I, the undersigned, am the owner or legally authorized agent of the owner of the business named in *Section A* above. I affirm, subject to the penalties provided in 18 U.S.C. 1001, that all information that I have given in obtaining this permit is true and correct. OMB# 0648-0202 Expires 08/31/2019

Name of Applicant (print clearly) _____

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

Please copy this form as needed to provide information on all persons with an ownership interest in the business in Section A.



United States Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930

Revised 11/23/16

Permit Application for Vessels Fishing in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)

Greater Atlantic Region

General Information

If you are a new owner of a vessel or your vessel is new to our region, please review and complete the initial vessel application provided herein.

Applicants with specific questions are encouraged to contact the Permit Office at **(978) 282-8438** between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. ET or by email at: NMFS.GAR.Permits@noaa.gov. Applicants are also encouraged to visit our website at <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/aps/permits>



What to include with your application

1. Signed and dated **initial application**;
2. Signed and dated **owner form** with the names of each owner and/or shareholder of the vessel and;
3. A copy of the vessel's valid **Coast Guard Documentation or State Registration**. Expired USCG Documentation or State registrations will not be accepted.
4. **For party/charter permits**: include a copy of your **valid** Captain's License **or** a copy of your Coast Guard Documentation with a *Coastwise* endorsement.
5. If the vessel is owned by a company or LLC, include a copy of the articles of incorporation or organization showing the members of the business.
6. **If applying for a NE multispecies category A, E, or F or a limited access monkfish** permit and you intend to fish with gillnets or you need to order more tags, request a gillnet tag form.
7. If applying for a **letter of authorization (LOA)**, complete and request an LOA Form.

If your application is not complete when we receive it, we will return it to you for completion or correction. This will delay the issuance of your permit. You cannot fish without an active permit.



Where to send your completed application (email, fax or mail)

Fax completed forms to: (978) 281-9161

Mail completed forms to: NMFS Permit Office
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930

Email scanned forms to: NMFS.GAR.Permits@noaa.gov

Reporting Requirements

The owner or operator of a fishing vessel that has been issued a Greater Atlantic Region Fishing Vessel Permit has VTR reporting requirements for all fishing trips taken, regardless of species targeted or waters fished. Federal surf clam and ocean quahog permit holders must complete clam/quahog log reports when fishing for those species. Vessels that only possess an American lobster permit are not required to submit VTRs. For more information, please call the Vessel Reporting Office at (978) 281-9246 or visit our website at: www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/aps/evtr/doc/vtr_inst.pdf

Federal Vessel Operator Permit

It is the responsibility of the vessel owner to ensure that his/her vessels issued Greater Atlantic Region permits are operated by an individual with a valid Federal Vessel Operator Permit. Any individual operating a vessel issued Greater Atlantic Federal Fishing Vessel Permit is subject to the vessel operator permit requirements. Vessel operators are required to report their operator permit number when completing their VTRs.

The Federal Vessel Operator Permit is a photo ID that must be carried by the operator of the vessel. Operator permits are issued for a 3-year period and renewal applications are mailed 35 to 45 days before the expiration of the permit. If you already have an operator permit issued by the Southeast Region (SERO), you do not need to get one from us, the Greater Atlantic Region. Either permit is valid for all of the Southeast and Greater Atlantic fisheries that require an operator permit.

Be sure to keep your address up to date. This will ensure you receive your renewal at the correct address and in a timely manner. Address changes can be made by sending us a written request signed and dated by the owner.

To ensure that your operator has a valid operator permit or to obtain an application, please call the Permit Office at 978-282-8437, or online at <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/aps/forms.html>.

Tuna Permit Holders

Atlantic tuna vessel permits are issued through a separate permitting system, which can be accessed by phone at (888) 872-8862 (888-USA-TUNA) or via the Internet at <https://hmspermits.noaa.gov/>. Atlantic tunas regulations can also be found on this same website, or can be answered at 978-281-9260.

Sale of Your Catch Requirements

All vessels issued a Federal Greater Atlantic Region Fishing Vessel Permit are required to sell their catch of federally managed species only to seafood dealers with a valid Federal Greater Atlantic Region dealer permit for that species. Federally permitted vessels with Greater Atlantic Region permits may not sell their catch of federally managed species to persons or seafood dealers that do not have valid Federal Greater Atlantic Region dealer permits.

Federal Regulations: This letter and the enclosures only summarize the legal requirements. Please consult the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations whose guidance for application requirements, permit eligibilities, and related information will always prevail. For a complete understanding of your obligations, consult the regulations at: www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/regs/fr.html or call 978-281-9315.

Greater Atlantic Region Federal Fisheries Initial Permit Application



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
 NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
 NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
 PERMIT OFFICE
 55 Great Republic Drive
 GLOUCESTER, MA 01930-2276
 Tel: (978) 282-8438



Section 1 - Vessel/Owner Information

Is this application for a vessel permit transfer? Yes No

If **Yes**, complete the vessel replacement portion of the Vessel Replacement, Upgrade, and Confirmation of Permit History Application.

Enter information in the spaces provided. All items must be completed.

Vessel Name:		Owner Name:	
Mailing Address:			
City:	State:	Zip:	Telephone:
CG Doc. or State Registration Num:		Alternate Phone:	
Home Port: City	ST	Principal Port: City	ST
Previously permitted Vessel Permit # _____ (if applicable)			

Section 2 - Vessel Information

Enter information in the spaces provided. All applicable items must be completed.

Vessel Length: _____ Overall length in feet.	Dredge Size: _____ Dredge size in feet.
Crew Size: _____ Average number or crew, including the captain.	Number of Dredges: _____ Total number of dredges aboard the vessel.
Gross Tonnage: _____ As recorded on US Coast Guard Documentation.	Pump Horsepower: _____ This item applies to surf clam/ocean quahog vessels only.
Year Built: _____ The year the vessel was built.	Construction: Please check the number that applies to your vessel. 1=Wood 2=Fiberglass 3=Steel 4=Other
Engine HP: _____ The vessel engine horsepower.	Propulsion: Please check the number that applies to your vessel. 1=Gasoline 2=Diesel 3=Other
Fish Hold Capacity: _____ Measured to the nearest 100 pounds.	Number of Charter/Party Passengers: _____ Number of passengers the vessel is licensed to carry. (See page 3 of instructions for additional documents required)

Section 3 – Fishery Information

Gear Codes	120 – Purse Seine	210 – Beach Seine	220 – Boat Seines	310 – Bottom Trawl	320 – Midwater Trawl
330 – Other Trawl	410 – Dredge	700 – Gill/Entangling Nets	800 – Pots & Traps	911 – Hand Lines	912 – Rod & Reel
913 – Tub Trawl	1010 – Harpoons	920 – Longlines / Setlines	1400 – Diving Gear	1200 – Other Gears	

Circle or check the number or letter of the fishery category for which you are applying. Clearly print the associated gear code(s) from the list above. Refer to the instructions for allowable gear code(s) per category.

If you select a fishery category and gear code combination(s) for which your vessel is not eligible, the processing of your permit may be delayed. See instructions for further details or call the Permit Office at (978) 282-8438.

Fisheries	Open Access Categories	Limited Access Categories Qualified Vessels Only	Gear Code(s)
Atlantic Sea Scallop		2 3 4 5 reset 6 7 8 9	
Atlantic Sea Scallop – General		A B C reset	
Northeast Multispecies	HB I* J K	A C D reset E F HA	
Monkfish	E	A B C D F G H reset	
Surf Clam/Ocean Quahog	1 6		410 – Dredge only
Maine Mahogany Quahog		7	410 – Dredge only
Summer Flounder	2*	1	
Scup	2*	1	
Black Sea Bass	2*	1	
Squid, Mackerel, Butterfish	2* 3 4	1 5 T1 T2 T3 reset	
Incidental HMS Squid Trawl		1	
Spiny Dogfish	1		
Atlantic Bluefish	1 2*		
Atlantic Herring	D E	A B C	
Tilefish	1 2*		
Atlantic Deep-Sea Red Crab	A	B C reset	
Skate	1		
American Lobster – Non Trap		1 2*	
American Lobster - Trap		A1 A2 A3 A4 A5 A6 AOC	800 – Pots and Traps only

* *Charter/Party permit categories*

Section 4 – Application Checklist & Signature

➔ Please include the applicable forms below with your signed and dated application

- _____ **All vessels:** copy of current (not expired) **US Coast Guard (CG) Documentation** or **State Registration**.
- _____ **Corporations, LLCs, Partnerships:** signed and dated list of current owners/officers/partners and their addresses.
- _____ **All vessels:** Vessel Ownership Form with each vessel application.
- _____ **Charter/Party requests:** CG Documentation must state “coastwise” or include a copy of a valid Captain’s license.

I, the undersigned, am the owner or legally authorized agent of the owner of the vessel named in Section 1. I affirm, subject to the penalties provided in 18 USC 1001, that all information provided obtaining this permit is true and correct.

Print Name: _____ **Signature:** _____ **Date:** _____

Public reporting burden for the collection of information on this application is estimated to average 45 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, gathering needed data and documents, and completing the application. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or suggestions for reducing this burden to: NOAA Fisheries, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. The Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) requires that potential respondents for this permit be notified of certain information regarding their rights and the burden associated with applying for Federal fisheries permits. Notwithstanding any other provision of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the PRA, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number. Owner name, vessel characteristics, address, phone, and permit information will be released via a NOAA Fisheries website. All other data submitted will be handled as confidential material in accordance with NOAA Administrative Order 216-100, Protection of Confidential Fishery Statistics.

Revised 11/23/2016 OMB # 0648-0202 Expires: 8/31/19



Owner Form

- Completion of this form is required with each application for a Greater Atlantic Federal Vessel or Dealer permit.
- List all persons who have an ownership interest in the business that is the subject of this application.
- Owners or persons who have an ownership interest in a business are defined as and include, but are not limited to, corporations, partnerships, LLCs, persons who are shareholders in a corporation, persons who have formed a partnership (general or limited), and any other entities that have ownership interest in the business.

Section A – Dealer or Vessel name and Federal Permit Number. If this application is for a new or initial permit, then leave permit number blank.

Dealer or Vessel Name:	Permit Number:
------------------------	----------------

USCG documentation or State Registration Number (Vessel Permit Applicants):

Section B - All persons who have an ownership interest in the business must be listed below. Do not include employees of the business unless they are also an owner or shareholder.

Mr/Mrs/Ms	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix: Jr, Sr, III, etc
Check all that apply - Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Shareholder <input type="checkbox"/>				

Mr/Mrs/Ms	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix: Jr, Sr, III, etc
Check all that apply - Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Shareholder <input type="checkbox"/>				

Mr/Mrs/Ms	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix: Jr, Sr, III, etc
Check all that apply - Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Shareholder <input type="checkbox"/>				

Additional space provided on the back of this form to list all persons with an ownership interest in the business.

<p>I, the undersigned, am the owner or legally authorized agent of the owner of the business named in <i>Section A</i> above. I affirm, subject to the penalties provided in 18 U.S.C. 1001, that all information that I have given in obtaining this permit is true and correct.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">OMB# 0648-0202 Expires 08/31/2019</p> <p>Name of Applicant (print clearly) _____</p> <p>Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____</p>

Page 2 - Section B Continued - All persons who have an ownership interest in the business must be listed below. Do not include employees of the business unless they are also an owner or shareholder.

Mr/Mrs/Ms	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix: Jr, Sr, III, etc
Check all that apply - Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Shareholder <input type="checkbox"/>				

Mr/Mrs/Ms	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix: Jr, Sr, III, etc
Check all that apply - Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Shareholder <input type="checkbox"/>				

Mr/Mrs/Ms	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix: Jr, Sr, III, etc
Check all that apply - Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Shareholder <input type="checkbox"/>				

Mr/Mrs/Ms	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix: Jr, Sr, III, etc
Check all that apply - Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Shareholder <input type="checkbox"/>				

Mr/Mrs/Ms	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix: Jr, Sr, III, etc
Check all that apply - Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Shareholder <input type="checkbox"/>				

Mr/Mrs/Ms	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Suffix: Jr, Sr, III, etc
Check all that apply - Owner <input type="checkbox"/> Officer <input type="checkbox"/> Shareholder <input type="checkbox"/>				

I, the undersigned, am the owner or legally authorized agent of the owner of the business named in *Section A* above. I affirm, subject to the penalties provided in 18 U.S.C. 1001, that all information that I have given in obtaining this permit is true and correct.

OMB# 0648-0202 Expires 08/31/2019

Name of Applicant (print clearly) _____

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

Please copy this form as needed to provide information on all persons with an ownership interest in the business in Section A.



National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
Northeast Permit Office (978) 282-8438

Review checklist for Initial Vessel Applications



- ✓ Ensure your application is complete
- ✓ Please review the list below
- ✓ Failure to include this information with your application will result in processing delays or a possible return of your application.

Include with your signed and dated initial vessel permit application:

- A copy of your **valid** Coast Guard Documentation or a copy of your **valid** State Registration. Expired registrations will not be accepted.
- A completed NMFS vessel ownership form listing all persons who have an ownership interest in the vessel.
- If the vessel is owned by a company, LLC or a partnership, please include a copy of the articles of incorporation, articles of organization, or your partnership agreement.
- To be eligible for a Federal party/charter permit you must include a copy of your Captain's License **or** a copy of your U.S. Coast Guard Documentation with a *Coastwise* endorsement.
- If applying for a NE multispecies category A, E, or F permit or a limited access monkfish permit with the intention of fishing with gillnet gear, you must complete the NMFS Gillnet Form and obtain gillnet tags. Call the Permit Office to obtain a gillnet tag application or go to <http://www.nero.noaa.gov/permits/forms.html>



National Marine Fisheries Service



Initial Vessel Application

Instructions for Greater Atlantic Federal Fishing Vessel Permits

Enclosed are the instructions for completing the Initial Fishing Vessel Application for Federal Greater Atlantic fishing permits. This package contains definitions for each field on the application, the additional documents required for a complete application, and a brief definition of the fishery permits. These instructions do not contain all the regulatory provisions that pertain to each fishery, and are not a substitute for the regulations. A copy of the regulations can be obtained through NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service NERO web site: <http://www.nero.noaa.gov>. If you have further questions, please contact the Sustainable Fisheries Division at (978) 281-9315.

Please read and follow the application instructions carefully. Failure to provide all required information and additional documentation will result in the application being returned to you for completion. You cannot fish without a current and valid permit.

Walk-in application processing service is not available. There is a 30-day processing period for all application packages. This 30-day processing period begins when a **correct and complete** application package is received in the Northeast Region Permit Office. Questions? Please refer to the NMFS Northeast Region Web Page at <http://www.nero.noaa.gov/permits/> for applications, instructions, fisheries regulations, and other important information, or call 978-282-8438 or e-mail Permits.ne@noaa.gov.

Mail the completed application package to:

National Marine Fisheries Service
Greater Atlantic Permit Office
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2276

Section 1 - Vessel and Owner Information (all items must be filled in)

Vessel Name

Current name of vessel, or enter "unnamed" if not applicable.

Owner Name

Include the owner name (business name or person name) **exactly** as it appears on the United States Coast Guard Documentation, State Registration, or Title of Vessel Ownership. If your vessel's state registration does not list all owners of the vessel, also provide a copy of the vessel's title, or other documentation from the appropriate state agency that identifies all vessel owners. If the vessel is owned by a company, LLC, or partnership, you must provide the full name and mailing address of all officers and shareholders in the business (see page 3 for further details).

Address and Telephone Number

Provide primary address and include 4-digit addition to zip code (if known). Also provide area code and phone number (additional phone numbers may be provided).

U.S. Coast Guard Documentation or State Registration Number

Provide United States Coast Guard Documentation Number or State Registration for your vessel. A copy of the USCG Documentation or State Registration is also required, see page 3 for further details.

Home Port

City and State where vessel is moored

Principal Port

City and State where the majority of your landings occur

Section 2 - Additional Vessel Information

(Except where noted, all items on must be completed)

Vessel length:	Overall length in feet
Crew Size:	Average number of crew, including the captain
Gross Tonnage:	As recorded on US Coast Guard Documentation or estimated gross tonnage for state registered vessels
Year Built:	Year vessel was built
Main Engine HP:	Vessel engine horsepower
Fish Hold Capacity:	Measured to the nearest 100 pounds
Dredge Size:	Dredge size in feet (not required if vessel does not use dredge gear)
Number of Dredges:	Total number of dredges aboard the vessel (not required if vessel does not use dredge gear)
Pump Horsepower:	This item applies to surf clam/ocean quahog vessels only
Construction:	1=Wood, 2=Fiberglass, 3=Steel, 4=Other (Circle applicable number)
Propulsion:	1=Gasoline, 2=Diesel, 3=Other (Circle applicable number)
Charter Passengers:	Number of charter/party/headboat passengers the vessel is licensed to carry (see page 3 for additional documents required)

Section 3 - Fishery Information

Except as noted for limited access fisheries, circle a fishery category and enter the applicable gear codes in the spaces provided. Refer to Northeast Fisheries Regulations for further restrictions – <http://www.nero.noaa.gov/ro/doc/the648.htm>

Category

For each fishery you want to apply for, select the category that best describes your fishing operations, and circle the category numbers or letters in the column marked "Category". A description of Northeast fisheries permits and categories is contained in this document on pages 4 – 10.

Gear Code

For each fishery permit and category you select, you must write in the applicable gear codes from the Gear Code table on the application. Write the gear code numbers in the column marked "Gear Code". For certain permit categories, you are restricted on the gear type you can use. For this information, see the description of each fishery below. Where applicable, you may select more than one gear code for a category. **If you do not write in any gear codes, the application cannot be processed and will be returned to you.**

Section 4 – Signature of Owner or Authorized Agent

Sign and date the form. Unsigned, or otherwise incomplete applications, will be returned. Your signature is an affirmation that, under penalty of perjury, all the information provided in order to obtain this permit is true and correct. Submitting false information in connection with an application could subject you to criminal/civil penalties or permit sanctions [18 U.S.C. 1001].

Additional Documents Required

USCG Documentation/State Registration

With each application, submit a copy of your current (not expired) United States Coast Guard (USCG) Certificate of Documentation. If the vessel is not documented, send a copy of a valid (not expired) state vessel registration for the vessel. Do not send your original. We cannot accept a bill of sale or an application for renewal of the USCG Documentation. If your vessel's state registration does not list all owners of the vessel, also provide a copy of the vessel's title, or other documentation from the appropriate state agency that identifies all vessel owners. A permit application will not be accepted if the vessel registration or documentation has expired before we receive it.

Business/Corporate Information

If the vessel is owned by a business, corporation, LLC, or a partnership, the following information must be submitted with the application form:

- A copy of the Certificate of Incorporation/Organization with the initial application.
- Partnerships must submit a copy of the partnership agreement each year which includes the full name and current mailing address of each partner.

Owner/Shareholder Information via the Vessel Ownership Form

All applicants must attach a completed NMFS vessel ownership form listing and identifying all owners and officers. Applicants must provide the full name of each owner and officer regardless of their percentage ownership in the vessel.

Charter/Party/Headboat Vessels

If you are applying for a charter/party/headboat permit, submit a valid copy (not expired) of at least one of the following:

- State license showing the vessel is authorized to carry charter/party passengers.
- US Coast Guard Documentation showing vessel is documented for "Coastwise" trade.
- US Coast Guard license to operate or navigate passenger-carrying vessels.

Gillnet Vessels applying for Limited Access NE Multispecies and Monkfish

If applying for a NE multispecies category A, E, or F permit with the intention of fishing with gillnet gear, you must complete sections 1 and 3 of the NMFS Gillnet Form. If you wish to order gillnet tags for either the NE multispecies or monkfish gillnet fishery, you must also submit a completed NMFS Gillnet Form.

Description of Northeast Fisheries Permits – Categories Are Shaded

❖ **Atlantic Sea Scallop**

Limited Access Permit Categories: These permits may only be issued to vessels that have previously held them or to approved replacements of such vessels. All permits issued will be valid for the entire fishing year. A vessel owner has 45 days from the first effective date of the permit within a permit year to make a change to the limited access Sea Scallop permit category. Further restrictions may apply. Refer to Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regulations.

2*	Full-Time: This category is limited to dredge gear where the combined width in use or in possession does not exceed 31 feet.
3*	Part-Time: This category is limited to dredge gear where the combined width in use or in possession does not exceed 31 feet.
4	Occasional: This category is limited to dredge gear where the combined width in use or in possession does not exceed 31 feet.
5*	Full-Time Small Dredge: Category 3 (Part-Time) vessel may elect this category for the entire year if the vessel uses one dredge no larger than 10.5 ft. and with no more than five people on board. This category is limited to dredge (gear code 410) gear only.
6*	Part-Time Small Dredge: Category 4 (Occasional) vessel may elect this category for the entire year if the vessel uses 1 dredge no larger than 10.5 ft. and with no more than five people on board. This category is limited to dredge (gear code 410) gear only.
7*	Full-Time: Authorized to use trawl nets: This category is authorized to use bottom trawl nets (gear code 310) to fish for scallops under a scallop DAS.
8*	Part-Time: Authorized to use trawl nets: This category is authorized to use bottom trawl nets (gear code 310) to fish for scallops under a scallop DAS.
9	Occasional: Authorized to use trawl nets: This category is authorized to use bottom trawl nets (gear code 310) to fish for scallops under a scallop DAS.

* An approved Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) is required as a condition of this permit.

Limited Access General Category (LAGC) Scallop permit categories: These permits may only be issued to qualified vessels or to approved replacements of such vessels. Further restrictions may apply. Refer to Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regulations. Owners of vessels issued an NGOM or Incidental scallop permit shall have one opportunity each fishing year to request a change in its permit category by submitting an application within 45 days of the effective date of the vessel's permit. After that date, the vessel must remain in that permit category for the duration of the fishing year.

A*	LAGC – Individual Fishing Quota (IFQ permit)
B*	LAGC – Northern Gulf of Maine (NGOM permit)
C*	LAGC – Incidental Catch (Incidental permit)

* An approved Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) is required as a condition of this permit.

VMS Information

For further information on the Greater Atlantic Region Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) Program, please go to this link: <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/vms/index.html>.

❖ **Northeast Multispecies**

“Regulated” species (NE multispecies requiring regulated mesh): Cod, haddock, yellowtail flounder, pollock, redfish (ocean perch), winter flounder (blackback), American plaice (dab), witch flounder (grey sole), windowpane flounder (sand dab), white hake, Atlantic halibut, and Atlantic wolffish.

Other NE multispecies: Silver hake (whiting), red hake (ling), offshore hake, and ocean pout.

Limited Access Permit Categories: These permits may only be issued to vessels that have previously held them or to approved replacements of such vessels. All permits issued will be valid for the entire fishing year. A vessel owner has 45 days from the first effective date of his/her permit within a permit year to make a change to the NE multispecies permit category. Further restrictions may apply to specific categories. Refer to Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regulations.

A*	Day-at-Sea (DAS): This category includes all gear types except dredge gear.
C	Small Vessel Exemption (less than or equal to 30 feet): This category includes all gear types except dredge gear.
D*	Hook Gear: (Vessels in this category may not change category) This category is limited to handlines (gear code 911), rod and reel (gear code 912), tub trawl (gear code 913) and longlines (gear code 920) gear only.
E*	Combination Vessels: This category includes all gear types except dredge gear and is only applicable for vessels that have a limited access scallop permit. Vessels in this category may not change category.
F*	Large Mesh Individual DAS: Category A (Individual DAS) or E (Combination) vessels may elect this category for the entire year provided the vessels meet the following requirements. Category A DAS for vessels fishing under this permit category will be increased by 36%. These vessels must fish with either gillnets or trawl nets having a minimum of 8.5-inch square or diamond mesh when fishing in the Gulf of Maine, Georges Bank, or Southern New England Regulated Mesh Areas, and 7.5-inch diamond or 8.0-inch square mesh when fishing in the Mid-Atlantic Regulated Mesh Area. This category is limited to gear types/codes 120, 210, 220, 310, 320, 330 and 700 only.
HA**	Handgear A: This category is limited to rod and reel (gear code 912), handline (gear code 911) or tub trawl (gear code 913) gear only. Vessels in this category may not change category.

* An operational VMS is required to be on board the vessel to fish for groundfish under a NE multispecies DAS or on a sector trip.

** A Handgear A vessel in the common pool must declare its trips using the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system, unless it intends to fish in more than one broad stock area (BSA) on a single trip, in which case, it would need a VMS unit to declare its trips.

Open Access Permit Categories: Further restrictions may apply to specific categories. Refer to Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regulations.

HB	Handgear B: This category includes rod and reel (gear code 912), handline (gear code 911) or tub trawl (gear code 913) gear only.
I	Charter/Party: The vessel may possess and land multispecies in the EEZ when carrying passengers for hire (See page 3, additional documents required). This category is limited to rod and reel (gear code 912) and handline (gear code 911) gear only.
J	Scallop Multispecies Possession Limit: The vessel may possess and land up to 300 lb of regulated species while fishing under a scallop DAS. Vessel must have a Limited Access Scallop Permit (Categories 2 – 9) to qualify for this category. This category includes all gear types.
K	Open Access Multispecies: The vessel may participate in an exempted fishing program to fish for small-mesh multispecies such as silver hake (whiting), red hake (ling), or offshore hake, among other species. This category includes all gear types.

- See page 3 for a list of Greater Atlantic Fisheries gear types and their codes

❖ **Monkfish**

Limited Access Permit Categories: These permits may only be issued to vessels that have previously held them or to approved replacements of such vessels. Further restrictions may apply to specific categories. Refer to Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regulations.

A	Vessels may elect this category if they do not possess a limited access multispecies (with the exception of a Handgear A) permit or a limited access scallop permit. This category includes all gear types except dredge gear.
B	Vessels may elect this category if they do not possess a limited access multispecies (with the exception of a Handgear A) permit or a limited access scallop permit, and that are less than 51 Gross Registered Tons (GRT) and do not qualify for a Category A permit. This category includes all gear types except dredge gear.
C	Vessels may elect this category if they possess a limited access multispecies permit or a limited access scallop permit. This category includes all gear types except dredge gear.
D	Vessels may elect this category if they possess a limited access multispecies permit or a limited access scallop permit, and are less than 51 GRT and do not qualify for a Category C permit. This category includes all gear types except dredge gear.
F*	Offshore Fishery Program: Vessels may elect this category if they are eligible for monkfish limited access permit categories A, B, C, or D and have an operational Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) installed on the vessel. Monkfish permit category A, B, C, and D vessels may opt into this program for an entire fishing year, which begins on May 1 and ends on April 30. The request to opt into the offshore fishery must be completed within 45 days of the effective date of the monkfish permit. Vessels in this program are restricted to fishing under a monkfish Days At Sea during the specified season of October 1–April 30 each year and within the Offshore Fishery Program Area. This category includes all gear types except dredge gear.

* An approved Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) is required as a condition of this permit.

Limited Access Permit Categories for Vessels Fishing in the Southern Fishery

Management Area (SFMA) – Vessels issued a limited access Category H permit are restricted to fishing under a monkfish DAS in the monkfish SFMA.

H	Vessels may elect this category if they were issued permits in this category in the previous fishing year and that did not qualify for a category G permit. This category includes all gear types.
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Area Declaration: Please note that vessels without an operational VMS unit fishing exclusively in the Northern Fishery Management Area (NFMA) for monkfish must request a SFMA Exemption Certificate in order to be exempt from the more restrictive management measures of the SFMA. Contact the Permit Office at 978-282-8438. Vessels with an operational VMS unit must declare the appropriate code to indicate they intend to fish exclusively in the NFMA.

Open Access Permit Categories: This permit may be issued to any vessel not issued a monkfish limited access permit—to fish for, possess, or land monkfish. Further restrictions may apply to this category. Refer to Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regulations.

E	Incidental Catch: Allows a vessel to possess and land a limited amount of monkfish, depending on fishing year, area fished, and gear fished. For specific limit amounts, contact the Sustainable Fisheries Division at 978-281-9315. This category includes all gear types.
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- See page 3 for a list of Greater Atlantic Fisheries gear types and their codes

❖ **Surfclam/Ocean Quahog/Maine Mahogany Quahog**

Surfclam and ocean quahog vessels, as well as Maine mahogany quahog vessels, are required to have an operational vessel monitoring system (VMS) on board their vessel. Maine mahogany quahog permitted vessels are not required to install a VMS unit until they fish for, land, take, possess, or transfer ocean quahogs under a limited access Maine mahogany quahog permit. For more information on VMS requirements, call 978-281-9315.

Open Access Permit Categories: Further restrictions may apply to specific categories. Refer to Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regulations.

1*	Surfclam: The vessel may fish for surfclams. This category is limited to dredge (gear code 410) gear only. VMS required.
6*	Ocean Quahog: The vessel may fish for ocean quahogs. This category is limited to dredge (gear code 410) gear only. VMS required.

To possess and land surfclams or ocean quahogs from the EEZ, an allocation of quota is required.

Limited Access Permit Categories: This permit may only be issued to vessels that have previously held it or to approved replacements of such vessels. Further restrictions may apply to this category. Refer to Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regulations.

7*	Maine Mahogany Quahog: The vessel may harvest and land ocean quahogs without an allocation from the EEZ in the area north of 43° 50' N. latitude. This category is limited to dredge (gear code 410) gear only.
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* An approved Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) is required as a condition of this permit.

❖ **Summer Flounder (Fluke)**

Limited Access Permit Categories: This permit may only be issued to vessels that have previously held it or to approved replacements of such vessels. Further restrictions may apply to this category. Refer to Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regulations.

1	Summer Flounder Commercial Moratorium: This category includes all gear types.
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Open Access Permit Categories: Further restrictions may apply to this category. Refer to Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regulations.

2	Charter/Party: May fish for or possess summer flounder in the EEZ while carrying passengers for hire. This category includes all gear types.
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❖ **Scup (Porgy)**

Limited Access Permit Categories: This permit may only be issued to vessels that have previously held it or to approved replacements of such vessels. Further restrictions may apply to this category. Refer to Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regulations.

1	Scup Commercial Moratorium: This category includes all gear types.
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Open Access Permit Categories: Further restrictions may apply to this category. Refer to Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regulations.

2	Charter/Party: May fish for or possess scup in the EEZ while carrying passengers for hire. This category includes all gear types.
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❖ **Black Sea Bass**

Limited Access Permit Categories: This permit may only be issued to vessels that have previously held it or to approved replacements of such vessels. Further restrictions may apply to this category. Refer to Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regulations.

1	Black Sea Bass Commercial Moratorium: This category includes all gear types.
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❖ **Black Sea Bass (continued)**

Open Access Permit Categories: Further restrictions may apply to this category. Refer to Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regulations.

2	Charter/Party: May fish for or possess black sea bass in the EEZ north of 35° 15.3´ N. latitude while carrying passengers for hire. This category includes all gear types.
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❖ **Squid, Atlantic Mackerel, and Butterfish**

Limited Access Permit Categories: These permits may only be issued to vessels that have previously held them or to approved replacements of such vessels. Further restrictions may apply to specific categories. Refer to Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regulations.

1*	Longfin squid/Butterfish Moratorium: This category includes all gear types.
5	Illex Squid Moratorium: This category includes all gear types.
T1*	Atlantic Mackerel Tier 1: May fish commercially in the EEZ for unlimited amounts of mackerel. This category includes all gear types.
T2*	Atlantic Mackerel Tier 2: May fish commercially in the EEZ for up to 135,000 lb of mackerel per trip. This category includes all gear types.
T3*	Atlantic Mackerel Tier 3: May fish commercially in the EEZ for up to 100,000 lb of mackerel per trip. This category includes all gear types. Vessels issued Tier 3 permits will be limited to no more than 7% of the annual commercial mackerel quota.

* An approved Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) is required as a condition of this permit.

Open Access Permit Categories: Further restrictions may apply to specific categories. Refer to Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regulations.

2	Squid/Mackerel/Butterfish Charter/Party: May fish for or possess unlimited amounts of Longfin or Illex squid, mackerel or butterfish in the EEZ while carrying passengers for hire. This category includes all gear types.
3	Squid/Butterfish Incidental Catch: May fish commercially in the EEZ for up to 2,500 lb of Longfin squid per trip, 10,000 lb of Illex squid per trip, or 600 lb of butterfish per trip. This category includes all gear types.
4	Atlantic Mackerel Incidental Catch: May commercially fish for Atlantic mackerel in the EEZ for up to 20,000 lb of mackerel. This category includes all gear types.

Note: Atlantic mackerel at-sea processing vessels must apply for a permit as a dealer/processor.

❖ **Incidental Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Squid Trawl**

Limited Access Permit Categories: Further restrictions may apply to specific categories. Refer to Atlantic Highly Migratory Species Fisheries Regulations.

1	Incidental Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Squid Trawl Permit: Allowed only for vessels issued a valid Illex Squid Moratorium permit. Authorizes the limited retention of incidentally-caught swordfish. This category only includes trawl gear.
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❖ **Spiny Dogfish**

Open Access Permit Categories: Further restrictions may apply to specific categories. Refer to Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regulations.

1	General: May commercially fish for, possess, or land spiny dogfish caught in or from the EEZ. This category includes all gear types.
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❖ **Atlantic Bluefish**

Open Access Permit Categories: Further restrictions may apply to specific categories. Refer to Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regulations.

1	Commercial: May possess or harvest Atlantic bluefish from the EEZ. This category includes all gear types.
2	Charter/Party: May fish for or possess Atlantic bluefish from the EEZ while carrying passengers for hire. This category includes all gear types.

❖ **Atlantic Herring**

Limited Access Permit Categories: These permits may only be issued to qualified vessels or to approved replacements of such vessels. Further restrictions apply to specific categories. Refer to Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regulations.

A*	All Areas: Authorizes the harvest of herring in any management area, without being subject to possession limits during the time when the sub-annual catch limit (ACL) in the defined management area has not been reached. This category includes all gear types.
B*	Areas 2/3: Authorizes the harvest of herring only in Areas 2 or 3, without being subject to possession limits during the time when the sub-ACL in the defined management area has not been reached. This category includes all gear types.
C*	Incidental Catch: Authorizes the harvest of up to 55,000 lb of herring in any management area during the time when the sub-ACL in the defined management area has not been reached, with a limit of one landing per calendar day. This category includes all gear types.

* **An approved Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) is required as a condition of this permit.**

Open Access Permit Categories: Further restrictions may apply to specific categories. Refer to Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regulations.

D	Open Access: Authorizes the harvest of up to 6,600 lb of herring in any management area during the time when the sub-ACL in these management areas has not been reached, with a limit of one landing per calendar day. This category includes all gear types.
E*	Open Access Areas 2/3: Authorizes a vessel to possess up to 20,000 lb of herring per trip, limited to one landing per calendar day, in or from Herring Management Areas 2 and 3. Allowed only for vessels issued a valid limited access mackerel permit but not a limited access herring permit. A vessel may hold both the All Areas Open Access Herring Permit (Category D) and the new Category E permit at the same time. This category includes all gear types.

* **An approved Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) is required as a condition of this permit.**

❖ **Tilefish**

Open Access Permit Categories: A vessel must fish under the authorization of an Individual Fishing Quota Allocation permit to possess more than the incidental trip limit. Further restrictions may apply to these categories. Refer to Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regulations.

1	Open Access Commercial/Incidental: May possess or land tilefish in or from the EEZ, north of the VA/NC border, up to 500 lb whole weight, or 458 lb head-on and gutted, per trip. In order for any vessel to possess more than 500 lb of tilefish per trip, the vessel must also fish under the authorization of an IFQ Allocation permit. This category includes all gear types.
2	Open Access Charter/Party: May fish for or possess tilefish in the EEZ, north of the VA/NC border, while carrying passengers for hire. This category includes all gear types.

❖ **Skate**

Northeast Skate Complex (Skate) - The following species of skates comprise the NE skate complex and are included under the Federal skate permit: Winter skate; barndoor skate; thorny skate; smooth skate; little skate; clearnose skate; and rosette skate.

Open Access Permit Categories: Further restrictions may apply to this category. Refer to Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regulations.

1	General: May commercially fish for, possess, or land skate caught in or from the EEZ. This category includes all gear types.
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VMS Information

For further information on the Greater Atlantic Region Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) Program, please go to this link: <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/vms/index.html>.

❖ **Atlantic Deep-Sea Red Crab**

Limited Access Permit Categories: These permits may only be issued to vessels that have previously held them or to approved replacements of such vessels. Further restrictions may apply to this category. Refer to Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regulations.

B	This category is limited to pots and traps (gear code 800) gear only.
C	This category is limited to pots and traps (gear code 800) gear only.

Open Access Permit Categories: This permit may be issued to any vessel not issued a red crab limited access permit—to fish for, possess, or land red crab in or from the EEZ.

A	May possess or land red crab in or from the EEZ up to 500 lb per trip. This category includes all gear types.
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❖ **American Lobster**

Limited Access Permit Categories: These permits may only be issued to vessels that have previously held them or to approved replacements of such vessels. If eligible, you may select more than one category. Note, if you designate more than one category, you will be subject to the most restrictive management measures, including trap allocations, of all of the categories selected. A vessel owner has 45 days from the first effective date of his/her permit within a permit year to make a change to the American Lobster permit category. Further restrictions may apply to specific categories. Refer to Greater Atlantic Fisheries Regulations at 50 CFR 697.

1	Commercial Non-Trap: May harvest lobster in the EEZ. This category includes all gear types except pots and traps. If you plan to fish with non-trap gear only, you are not required to elect trap gear areas.
2	Charter/Party Non-Trap: May harvest lobster in the EEZ while carrying passengers for hire. This category includes all gear types except pots and traps.
A1	Commercial Trap Gear Area 1: May harvest lobster in Federal Lobster Management Area 1. This category is limited to pots and traps (gear code 800) gear only. Must have Area1 trap gear eligibility.
A2	Commercial Trap Gear Area 2: May harvest lobster in Federal Lobster Management Area 2. This category is limited to pots and traps (gear code 800) gear only. Must have a valid historic allocation to elect this area. Includes Area 2/3 overlap.
A3	Commercial Trap Gear Area 3: May harvest lobster in Federal Lobster Management Area 3. This category is limited to pots and traps (gear code 800) gear only. Must have a valid historic allocation to elect this area. Includes Area 2/3 overlap.
A4	Commercial Trap Gear Area 4: May harvest lobster in Federal Lobster Management Area 4. This category is limited to pots and traps (gear code 800) gear only. Must have a valid historic allocation to elect this area.
A5	Commercial Trap Gear Area 5: May harvest lobster in Federal Lobster Management Area 5. This category is limited to pots and traps (gear code 800) gear only. Must have a valid historic allocation to elect this area.
A6	Commercial Trap Gear Area 6: May harvest lobster in Federal Lobster Management Area 6. Vessel owner must possess a valid CT or NY state lobster license to be eligible for this category. This category is limited to pots and traps (gear code 800) gear only.
AOC	Commercial Trap Gear Outer Cape Area: May harvest in Outer Cape Federal Lobster Management Area. This category is limited to pots and traps (gear code 800) gear only. Must have a valid historic allocation to elect this area.

Public reporting burden for the collection of information on the initial vessel application is estimated to average 45 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining data needed, and completing and reviewing the information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or suggestions for reducing this burden to: National Marine Fisheries Service, Permit Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. The Paperwork Reduction Act requires that potential respondents for a fishing vessel permit be notified of certain information regarding their rights and the burden associated with applying for Federal fisheries permits.

One of the regulatory steps taken by the National Marine Fisheries Service to carry out its conservation and management objectives is the requirement of a permit for users of the resources. All the fisheries included on this application require a permit to fish for or retain these species in or from the EEZ. Section 303(b)(1) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act specifically recognizes the need for permit issuance. The purpose and use of these permits are to: (1) Register industry participants and fishing vessels; (2) list the characteristics of fishing vessels; (3) exercise influence over compliance; (4) provide a mailing list for the dissemination of important information to the industry; (5) register participants to be considered for limited access; and (6) provide a pool of participants for data collection samples. Notwithstanding any other provision of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number. Owner names, vessel characteristics, address, phone, and permit information will be posted on a public NOAA Fisheries website or released upon request. All other data submitted will be handled in accordance with NOAA Administrative Order 216-100, Protection of Confidential Fishery Statistics and Section 402(b) of the MSA.

OMB# 0648-0202 Expires: 8/31/2019



United States Department of Commerce
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
Greater Atlantic Region Fisheries Office (GARFO)
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930

February 10, 2016

GARFO Vessel Permit Holders

Your Vessel Trip Reporting and Logbook Requirements

Reporting regulations require that the owner or operator of any vessel issued a Federal fishing permit by the Greater Atlantic Region must submit an accurate and timely VTR for each trip, regardless of area fished, species targeted or permit used. These requirements also pertain to trips made in State waters fishing with State permits. The only exception to this is for vessels that are issued only an American Lobster permit.

As of August 26, 2015, we no longer require the submission of Did Not Fish (DNF) reports for the weeks or months in which you are inactive. DNF reports for weeks and months prior to August 26, 2015 are still required and may be submitted on the NMFS issued paper VTR or through our secure webpage, "Fish-On-Line" at www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/apps/login/login

If your vessel is issued a permit from the Greater Atlantic Region and you are fishing outside of it (e.g. in the Gulf of Mexico or off the coast of Florida or on the High Seas for Tuna) you are required to submit a VTR to us regardless of where the fishing activity took place or the species targeted. As stated above, the one exception to this is for vessels that are only permitted for American Lobster.

If within a trip you fish in multiple chart areas, change gear or switch to a different mesh/ring size, a separate VTR must be completed for each area, gear or mesh combination. It is extremely important that the correct gear, species and chart area codes be used to record your fishing activity. Incorrect or missing information impacts our processing of your VTR and can result in us having to return it to you for correction.

Additional VTR information:

- **Weekly VTRs** - any vessel issued a Federal Northeast Multispecies, Surf Clam/Ocean Quahog, Atlantic Mackerel, Squid & Butterfish or an Atlantic Herring permit, regardless of category (limited access, open access or Charter/Party), **must submit VTRs on a weekly basis**. VTRs must be submitted by midnight of the Tuesday following the reporting week (Sunday through Saturday).
- **All other vessels**, except those possessing the permits listed above, are required to submit their VTRs on a **monthly basis**. VTRs must be received or postmarked by the 15th day of the month following the month in which the trip occurred. Contact the Vessel Trip Reporting office at **(978) 281-9246** for any VTR reporting requirement questions that you may have.



- Vessels that only possess an American Lobster permit are not required to submit VTRs.
- If you need your confidential vessel PIN or cannot access Fish-On-Line please contact NMFS at (978) 281- 9188.
- If submitting paper reports, send the white original (NMFS Copy) to:

NMFS
Vessel Trip Reporting Office
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2276

- Failure to comply with reporting requirements may result in non-renewal of fishing permits and referral to the Office of Law Enforcement for appropriate action. The timely, accurate reporting of your vessel's fishing activity on the VTR represents an integral part of the scientific information required to achieve the goal of sustainable fisheries.

Please visit the NOAA Fisheries Service Greater Atlantic Regional Office (GARFO) online at www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/aps and click on "Vessel Reporting".

This guide contains a summary of your Vessel Trip Reporting (VTR) requirements. For more comprehensive information please refer to the regulations at 50 CFR part 648.7 at <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/regs/fr.html>.

Please feel free to contact the Vessel Trip Reporting office at 978-281-9246 for any VTR reporting requirement questions that you may have.

HERRING DAILY CATCH REPORT
Form Layout

Submit this daily report for your Herring trip by 9 AM of the following day.

1. Vessel Operator's Permit Number: _____
2. Vessel Trip Report (VTR) Serial Number:
(reported to dealer) _____
3. Date fish caught (MMDDYY): _____
4. Herring (lbs)
 AREA 1A AREA 1B AREA 2 Area 3
Kept: _____ _____ _____ _____
Discard: _____ _____ _____ _____
5. Did slippage occur with an observer onboard (Y or N) _____
 If yes, select the reason: (one only)
 _____ Safety
 _____ Mechanical Failure
 _____ Dogfish
 _____ Other - Reason

6. Are you fishing mid-water trawl gear or bottom trawl gear
 (Y or N) _____
 If 'Y', complete step 7.
 If 'N', send this report.
7. Total Fish Kept (lbs)(Incl Herring)
Stat Area: _____ _____ _____ _____
Kept: _____ _____ _____ _____

HERRING PRE-LANDING NOTIFICATION
Form Layout

Submit this report from sea for your Herring trip at least 6 hours before arrival.

Note: If fishing ends less than 6 hours before arrival, send the report as soon as the vessel stops fishing.

1. Vessel Operator's Permit Number: _____
2. Vessel Trip Report (VTR) Serial Number: _____
(reported to dealer)
3. Estimated Arrival: _____
(Report in: MMDDYYHHMI)(HH=00-23)
4. Landing Port City: _____
5. Landing State (abbreviated): _____



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
NORTHEAST REGION
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RELEASED CATCH AFFIDAVIT

If you are fishing with midwater trawl gear in the groundfish closed areas or your limited access herring, mackerel, or squid/butterfish vessel is carrying a NMFS observer, you must bring all catch aboard the vessel and make it available to the observer for sampling.

You may release catch before it is brought aboard if: (1) You determine there is a compelling safety reason preventing the catch from being brought aboard, (2) mechanical failure prevents the catch from being brought aboard, or (3) spiny dogfish clog the pump and prevent the catch from being pumped aboard.

If you release catch, even for one of the reasons described above, you are required to complete this released catch affidavit form. The completed and signed form must be mailed to the following address within 48 hours of the end of the fishing trip: **National Marine Fisheries Service, Sustainable Fisheries Division, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA, 01930.**

To be Completed by Vessel Captain

Vessel Name	Permit Number	Date & Time
Vessel Trip Report Serial Number		
Primary Reason for Release:	<input type="checkbox"/> Vessel Safety	<input type="checkbox"/> Mechanical Problems
	<input type="checkbox"/> Dogfish	
Please provide additional details on why the codend was released:		

	Pounds
Estimated total weight of tow:	
Estimated total weight of all fish released:	

Signature



Signature of this form certifies that the vessel operator attests that the information provided on this form is true, complete and correct to the best of their knowledge, and made in good faith (18 U.S.C. 1001). Making a false statement on this form is punishable by law.

Information obtained from the affidavit is held confidential as required by NOAA Administrative Order 216-100, Confidentiality of Fisheries Statistics, and would be used only in summarized form (without identifying the source of data, i.e., vessel name, owner, etc.) for management of the fishery in the future.

Notwithstanding any other provision of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 5 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or suggestions for reducing this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information to NMFS, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930.

OMB Approval No. 0648-0602, expires 3/31/16; OMB Approval No. 0648-0674, expires 2/28/17; OMB Approval No. 0648-0679, expires 2/28/17



National Marine Fisheries Service
Northeast Regional Office / Northeast Permit Office



**Initial/Renewal* Application for a Northeast
Vessel Operator Permit**

Operator cards are required for any operator of a charter/party boat and or a commercial vessel (including carrier and processor vessels) issued a vessel permit from the Northeast Region and possessing or fishing for Atlantic Sea Scallops, Northeast Multispecies, Spiny Dogfish, Monkfish, American Lobster, Atlantic Herring, Atlantic Surfclam, Ocean Quahog, Maine Mahogany Quahog, Atlantic Mackerel, Loligo Squid, Illex Squid, Butterfish, Scup, Black Sea Bass, Golden Tilefish, Skates, Atlantic Deep-Sea Red Crab, or Atlantic Bluefish, in or from the EEZ.

FIRST TIME APPLICANTS: fill in Section 1 below, sign and date the back of this application and return it to us with one (1) passport or ID sized photo (see back).

IF USING THIS APPLICATION AS A RENEWAL: fill in Section 1 below, write your 8 digit number on the line below, sign and date the back of this application, and return it to us with one (1) passport or ID sized photo (see back).

Your vessel operator number _____

*Preprinted renewal applications are automatically mailed to the address on file approximately 35 days prior to the expiration date, but you may use this application to renew your permit (see below).

Please complete all sections of this application.

Incomplete applications will be returned and will be not be processed.
Submission of all application information is required.

Section 1

Last Name _____ First Name _____ MI _____ SUFFIX _____

Mailing Address _____

City / ST / Zip Code _____ / _____ / _____

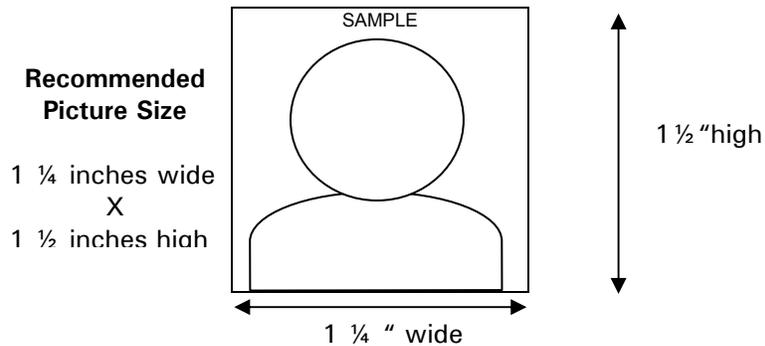
Phone Number _____ - _____ - _____ Date of Birth ____/____/____ (MO/DAY/YR)

Eye Color _____ Hair Color _____

Weight (lbs) _____ Height (ft/in) ____/____

You must sign and date this application in Section 2 on back.

Please enclose **ONE** color passport or I.D. sized photo of yourself, which is recent (taken no more than 1 year prior to the date of this application).



Section 2

I affirm that all information I have given on this application is true and correct. Making a false statement on this application is punishable by law [18 USC 1001]. I understand that violations of Federal fisheries laws and regulations may subject me to criminal and civil penalties including fine and/or revocation of license. Further, as a condition of this operator's permit, I agree that if this permit is suspended or revoked pursuant to 15 CFR part 904, I will not be on board a Federally permitted fishing vessel in any capacity while the vessel is at sea or engaged in offloading.

Signature of Applicant:

Date:

Return completed applications to:

**Northeast Permit Office
 55 Great Republic Drive
 Gloucester, MA 01930-2276
 Telephone: (978) 282-8437**

Permit holder name, address, phone number, and the status of the holder's permit will be released via a NOAA Fisheries website. All other data submitted will be handled as confidential material in accordance with NOAA Administrative Order 216-100, Protection of Confidential Fishery Statistics.

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining data needed, and completing and reviewing the information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or suggestions for reducing this burden to: NMFS, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930-2276. The purpose and use of these permits are to (1) register industry participants and fishing vessels, (2) exercise influence over compliance, (3) provide a mailing list for the dissemination of important information to the industry, (4) register participants to be considered for limited entry, and (5) provide a universe for data collection samples. Both the MSFCMA and Executive Orders 12866 et al, require the determination of this information. Notwithstanding any other provision of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number.



Control Dates for Greater Atlantic Region Fisheries



What is a Control Date?

Date Revised: March 21, 2016

A control date is a date that may be used by a fishery management council, fisheries commission or by NOAA Fisheries in establishing eligibility criteria for determining levels of future access to fisheries, or sectors of fisheries. Establishing a control date does not commit the Councils, Commission, or NOAA Fisheries to develop any particular management system or criteria for participation in these fisheries. The Councils or Commission or NOAA may choose a different control date, or may choose to establish a management program that does not make use of such a date.

This fact sheet is a summary of the current control dates established for fisheries in the Greater Atlantic Region. Control dates, once established, are rarely rescinded, but new ones can be established, and older dates are sometimes updated. The control dates below have been established and may potentially be used to determine future participation in the fishery. In the event a limited access program is established or modified in the future, you may wish to locate and preserve records to substantiate and verify fishery participation.

Publication of the control dates informs the fishery participants sector that the Council or NOAA Fisheries is considering management measures in its jurisdictional area that could limit eligibility in a fishery. Implementation of any program would require preparation of an amendment to the fishery management plan and publication of a notice of availability and proposed rule with pertinent public comment periods.

Current Greater Atlantic Fisheries Control dates – see pg. 2 for additional species and information.

Species	Control Date	Council	Current status of management action
Ocean pout	9/9/96	NEFMC	No action currently underway.
Bluefish	5/29/97	MAFMC	No action currently underway.
Spiny dogfish	5/18/98	MAFMC (lead)/ NEFMC	No action currently underway.
Capacity Control Scallop and Multispecies DAS	9/10/99	NEFMC	No action currently underway.
Multispecies charter/party	3/30/06	NEFMC	No action currently underway.
Multispecies	4/7/11	NEFMC	Amendment 18 to the NE Multispecies FMP is currently under development and it considers, among other things, preventing excessive consolidation and/or excessive shares of fishing privileges that may use the control date in question.
Hagfish	8/28/02	NEFMC	No action currently underway.

Control Dates for Northeast Fisheries

Date Revised: March 21, 2016

Species	Control Date	Council	Current status of management action
Whiting/ red hake/ offshore hake	11/28/12	NEFMC	An amendment to the Northeast Multispecies FMP is under development and may establish some form of limited access for the whiting (small-mesh multispecies) fishery.
Jonah crab	6/2/15	ASMFC	We are considering developing regulations for the Jonah crab fishery in federal waters that may include permitting. This control date may be used in determining historical or traditional participation in the Jonah crab fishery.
American lobster	1/27/14	ASMFC	This control date may be applicable, but not limited to, potential future action by NMFS to limit the number of permits or traps a business entity may own in Lobster conservation Management Area 3, or in any other lobster conservation management area.
Skate bait	7/30/09	NEFMC	No action currently underway.
Monkfish	5/9/12	NEFMC MAFMC	Amendment 6 to the Monkfish FMP is under development by the councils and may include additional measures, such as catch shares, that rely on a control date to determine eligibility or degree of participation in the fishery.
Longfin squid/ butterfish	5/16/13	MAFMC	No action currently underway.
Illex squid	8/2/13	MAFMC	No action currently underway.
Black sea bass	6/5/01	MAFMC	Would have established different classes of permits for the fishery; considered in Amendment 13 but not adopted by Council.
Blueline tilefish	12/14/15	MAFMC	The Council may consider an action to limit the number of participants in the fishery in the future. The control date applies to any commercial fisherman or party/charter vessel owner who has caught blueline tilefish north of the VA/NC border.

For further information, please contact us or the appropriate fishery management council or commission:

<p>New England Fishery Management Council (NEFMC) On the web: www.nefmc.org Telephone: 978-465-0492</p>	<p>Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (MAFMC) On the web: www.mafmc.org Telephone: 302-674-2331</p>
<p>Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) On the web: www.asmfc.org Telephone: 703-842-0740</p>	<p>National Marine Fisheries Service On the web: www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov Telephone: 978-281-9315</p>



SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that Heather E. Liwanag, Ph.D. (California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo, CA 93407-0401) has withdrawn an application for a permit to conduct research on Weddell seals (*Leptonychotes weddellii*) near McMurdo Station, Antarctica.

ADDRESSES: The application and related documents are available for review upon written request or by appointment in the Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, NMFS, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 13705, Silver Spring, MD 20910; phone (301) 427-8401; fax (301) 713-0376.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sara Young or Amy Sloan, (301) 427-8401.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On August 3, 2016, notice was published in the *Federal Register* (81 FR 51189) that a request for a permit to conduct research on Weddell seals had been submitted by the above-named applicant.

The applicant has withdrawn the application from further consideration.

Dated: October 20, 2016.

Julia Harrison,

Chief, Permits and Conservation Division, Office of Protected Resources, National Marine Fisheries Service.

[FR Doc. 2016-25764 Filed 10-24-16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Proposed Information Collection; Comment Request; Atlantic Herring Amendment 5 Data Collection

AGENCY: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

DATES: Written comments must be submitted on or before December 27, 2016.

ADDRESSES: Direct all written comments to Jennifer Jessup, Departmental Paperwork Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 6616, 14th and Constitution Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20230 (or via the Internet at Jjessup@doc.gov).

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument and instructions should be directed to Daniel Luers, Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office, 55 Great Republic Dr., Gloucester, MA 01930, (978) 282-8457, Daniel.luers@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

This request is for extension of a current information collection. Under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the Secretary of Commerce has the responsibility for the conservation and management of marine fishery resources. Much of this responsibility has been delegated to NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). Under this stewardship role, the Secretary was given certain regulatory authorities to ensure the most beneficial uses of these resources. One of the regulatory steps taken to carry out the conservation and management objectives is to collect information from users of the resources.

Data collection for Amendment 5 to the Atlantic Herring Fishery Management Plan requires renewal of Category E permits for limited access herring permit holders. This collection also requires herring carrier vessels that sell herring (rather than deliver those fish on behalf of a dealer for purchase) to obtain or maintain an At-Sea Atlantic Herring Dealer Permit. Vessels that have both an At-Sea Atlantic Herring Dealer Permit and a Federal fishing permit are required to fulfill the reporting requirements of both permits as appropriate.

This collection has several vessel monitoring system (VMS) and vessel trip reporting (VTR) components. Category E vessels must submit daily VMS reports, weekly VTRs, and maintain a VMS unit on their vessels and declare intent to target Atlantic herring via VMS. This collection allows a vessel that opts to enroll as a herring carrier to do so via VMS rather than obtaining a letter of authorization (LOA). By declaring a herring trip via VMS, a vessel is exempt from daily VMS catch reporting, and is not bound by the 7-day enrollment period required by the herring carrier LOA. Vessels with limited access herring permits, Category E permits, and vessels declaring herring carrier trips via VMS also must give a pre-landing notification to the NMFS Office of Law Enforcement via VMS. In addition, vessels are prohibited from turning off VMS units while in port. A

vessel representative must request a letter of exemption (LOE) from NMFS to turn off its VMS if that vessel will be out of the water for more than 72 hours. A vessel owner is able to sign a herring vessel out of the VMS program for a minimum of 30 days by requesting and obtaining an LOE from NMFS. A vessel is not able to leave the dock unless the VMS unit is turned back on.

This collection also requires that vessels with limited access herring permits, vessels with open access Category D permits that are fishing with midwater trawl gear in Areas 1A, 1B, and/or 3, vessels with open access category E permits, and herring carrier vessels contact NMFS at least 48 hours in advance of fishing to request an observer. Vessels currently contact NMFS via phone, and selection notices or waivers are issued by NMFS via VMS. Vessels with limited access herring permits, Category E permits, and vessels declaring herring carrier trips via VMS must notify NMFS via VMS of their intent to participate in the herring fishery prior to leaving port on each trip by entering the appropriate activity and gear codes in order to harvest, possess, or land herring on that trip.

Additionally, this collection requires vessels issued limited access permits working cooperatively in the herring fishery to provide NMFS-approved observers with the estimated weight of each species brought on board or released on each tow.

Finally, this collection requires that all herring vessels (*i.e.* any area throughout the EEZ, any gear type) bring all catch aboard the vessel and make it available for sampling by an observer. If catch is not made available to an observer before discard, that catch is defined as slippage, and the vessel operator must complete a "Released Catch Affidavit" form within 48 hours of the end of the fishing trip which details why catch was slipped, estimates the quantity and species composition of the slipped catch, and records the time and location of the slipped catch.

II. Method of Collection

Information is collection on paper forms, by telephone, or electronically.

III. Data

OMB Control Number: 0648-0674.

Form Number(s): None.

Type of Review: Regular (extension of a current information collection).

Affected Public: Business or other for-profit organizations; individual or households, state, local, or tribal government.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 16,065.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 1,231.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$46,877 in recordkeeping/reporting costs.

Estimated Time per Response: Category E permit renewal, 1 minute; At-Sea Herring Dealer Permit renewal, 5 minutes; weekly dealer reports, 15 minutes; VMS activity declarations, 5 minutes; VMS power-down exemption letter, 5 minutes; VMS pre-landing notification and gear declaration, 5 minutes; catch reports and vessel trip reports, 5 minutes; request for an observer prior to a trip, 5 minutes; cancellation of trip, 1 minute; estimate of catch/discard provision, 1 minute; documentation of slippage, 5 minutes.

IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: October 20, 2016.

Sarah Brabson,

NOAA PRA Clearance Officer.

[FR Doc. 2016-25733 Filed 10-24-16; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-22-P

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

Patent and Trademark Office

[Docket No. PTO-P-2016-0040]

Request for Comments on Examination Time Goals

AGENCY: United States Patent and Trademark Office, Commerce.

ACTION: Request for comments.

SUMMARY: The United States Patent and Trademark Office (Office or USPTO) is soliciting public feedback as part of an effort to reevaluate its examination time goals. Examination time goals vary by technology and represent the average

amount of time that a patent examiner is expected to spend examining a patent application in a particular technology. The Office plans to use the public feedback as an input to help ensure that the Office's examination time goals accurately reflect the amount of time needed by examiners to conduct quality examination in a manner that responds to stakeholders' interests. In addition to accepting public feedback through the submission of written comments, the Office will provide the following avenues for increased interactive participation: IdeaScale®, a Web-based collaboration tool that allows users to post comments and interact with the posted comments of others; and five roundtables that the Office will be conducting in: Alexandria, Virginia; Detroit, Michigan; Denver, Colorado; Dallas, Texas; and San Jose, California.

DATES: *Written Comments Deadline:* To be ensured of consideration, written comments must be received on or before December 27, 2016.

ADDRESSES: Written comments should be sent by electronic mail addressed to *ExternalExaminationTimeStudy@USPTO.gov*. Comments also may be submitted by postal mail addressed to: Mail Stop Comments—Patents, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, marked to the attention of Raul Tamayo, Senior Legal Advisor, Office of Patent Legal Administration, Office of the Deputy Commissioner for Patent Examination Policy.

Although comments may be submitted by postal mail, the Office prefers to receive comments by electronic mail in order to facilitate posting on the USPTO's Internet Web site (<http://www.uspto.gov>). Electronic comments may be submitted in plain text, ADOBE® portable document format, or MICROSOFT WORD® format. Comments not submitted electronically should be submitted on paper in a format that facilitates digital scanning into ADOBE® portable document format.

The comments will be available for viewing via the USPTO's Internet Web site (<http://www.uspto.gov>). The comments also will be available for public inspection at the Office of the Commissioner for Patents, currently located in Madison East, Tenth Floor, 600 Dulany Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314. Because the comments will be made publicly available, information that the submitter does not desire to make public, such as an address or phone number, should not be included in the comments.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: *Roundtable information, including roundtable registration information:* Elizabeth Magargel, Strategic Planning Project Manager, Office of the Assistant Deputy Commissioner for Patent Operations, by telephone at (571) 270-7248.

Written comments: Raul Tamayo, Senior Legal Advisor, Office of Patent Legal Administration, Office of the Deputy Commissioner for Patent Examination Policy, by telephone at (571) 272-7728.

Examination time goals: Daniel Sullivan, Director Technology Center 1600, by telephone at (571) 272-0900.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Office has a staff of approximately 8,400 patent examiners who examine patent applications in hundreds of technology areas. Each technology area is assigned an examination time goal. The goals are used by the Office for a variety of purposes, including forecasting pendency and staffing needs and evaluating individual examiner performance. The goals originally were assigned over 40 years ago and have been adjusted twice.

Since the examination time goals were originally assigned, significant changes to the examination process have occurred, including increased use of electronic tools, changes in law due to court decisions, a growing volume of prior art, and progress in technology, which results in increasingly complex subject matter in applications. In addition, the Office recently transitioned from the United States Patent Classification (USPC) system to the Cooperative Patent Classification (CPC) system. Because the current examination time goals were assigned based on the USPC system, implementation of the CPC system has caused the Office to reconsider and reassess the assignments of examination time goals. Furthermore, the Office is (i) implementing the Enhanced Patent Quality Initiatives in order to provide a higher quality examination to our stakeholders and (ii) assessing the relationship between examination time and value-added examination activities, such as best practices for enhancing the clarity of the record with respect to claim interpretation, interview summaries, and reasons for allowance. All of these factors warrant a reevaluation of the Office's examination time goals.

To help inform public comments responsive to this request for comments (RFC), the Office has prepared background material illustrating the use of examination time goals in the context