

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration****50 CFR Part 648**

[Docket No. 051104293-5344-02; I.D. 102706A]

Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Commercial Quota Harvested for New York

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Closure of commercial fishery.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces that the summer flounder commercial quota available to New York has been harvested. Vessels issued a commercial Federal fisheries permit for the summer flounder fishery may not land summer flounder in New York for the remainder of calendar year 2006, unless additional quota becomes available through a transfer from another state. Regulations governing the summer flounder fishery require publication of this notification to advise New York that the quota has been harvested and to advise vessel permit holders and dealer permit holders that no commercial quota is available for landing summer flounder in New York.

DATES: Effective 0001 hours, November 4, 2006, through 2400 hours, December 31, 2006.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Douglas Potts, Fishery Management Specialist, (978) 281-9341.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Regulations governing the summer flounder fishery are found at 50 CFR part 648. The regulations require annual specification of a commercial quota that is apportioned on a percentage basis among the coastal states from North Carolina through Maine. The process to set the annual commercial quota and the percent allocated to each state is described in § 648.100.

The initial total commercial quota for summer flounder for the 2006 calendar year was set equal to 14,154,000 lb (6,420 mt) (70 FR 77061, December 29, 2005). The percent allocated to vessels landing summer flounder in New York is 7.64699 percent, resulting in a commercial quota of 1,082,355 lb (490,948 kg). The 2006 allocation was reduced to 935,943 lb (424,537 kg) due to research set-aside and quota overage from 2005.

Section 648.101(b) requires the Administrator, Northeast Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator) to monitor state commercial quotas and to determine when a state's commercial quota has been harvested. NMFS then publishes a notification in the **Federal Register** to advise the state and to notify Federal vessel and dealer permit holders that, effective upon a specific date, the state's commercial quota has been harvested and no commercial quota is available for landing summer flounder in that state. The Regional Administrator has determined, based

upon dealer reports and other available information, that New York has harvested its quota for 2006.

The regulations at § 648.4(b) provide that Federal permit holders agree, as a condition of the permit, not to land summer flounder in any state that the Regional Administrator has determined no longer has commercial quota available. Therefore, effective 0001 hours, November 4, 2006, further landings of summer flounder in New York by vessels holding summer flounder commercial Federal fisheries permits are prohibited for the remainder of the 2006 calendar year, unless additional quota becomes available through a transfer and is announced in the **Federal Register**. Effective 0001 hours, November 4, 2006, federally permitted dealers are also notified that they may not purchase summer flounder from federally permitted vessels that land in New York for the remainder of the calendar year, or until additional quota becomes available through a transfer from another state.

Classification

This action is required by 50 CFR part 648 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: October 31, 2006.

James P. Burgess,

Acting Director, Office Of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.
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