



Contact: Monica Allen
301-713-2370
Monica.allen@noaa.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Nov. 18, 2008

**NOAA Announces Up to \$5 Million for Massachusetts, Maine, and New Hampshire
for Red Tide Disaster**

NOAA's Fisheries Service today announced the states of Massachusetts and Maine will each be eligible for up to \$2 million and New Hampshire will be eligible for up to \$1 million in disaster aid to assist the shellfishing industries affected by this year's closures due to the harmful algal bloom, commonly known as a red tide.

"The assistance we are announcing today will help the states and their shellfish industries find long-term solutions to outbreaks of harmful algal blooms," said Jim Balsiger, acting NOAA assistant administrator for NOAA's Fisheries Service. "We encourage the states to use this aid for scientific research to better understand the causes and improve monitoring of harmful algal blooms. Aid should also be used to find ways to minimize the economic effects of these outbreaks on the shellfish industry."

The states will now submit plans to NOAA's Fisheries Service outlining how the funds will be used.

Shellfish closures due to the harmful algal bloom began in the waters off Massachusetts in May and spread north into the waters off New Hampshire and Maine. Fishermen were unable to harvest clams, mussels, oysters and other shellfish in areas closed after tests showed the shellfish was infected with a single cell algae that when ingested by humans can lead to potentially lethal paralytic shellfish poisoning.

Although some closures have been lifted, many areas remain closed. When a similar outbreak occurred in 2005, the Department of Commerce determined a commercial fishery failure.

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