



# Northeast Region Bulletin

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## Northeast Multispecies Fishery

Change to Catch Limits

Revised Fishing Year 2011 Gulf of Maine Winter Flounder Catch Limits

*Effective Date: February 7, 2012*

We have increased the Gulf of Maine (GOM) winter flounder catch limits for the remainder of the 2011 fishing year (FY) through an emergency action recently filed with the Federal Register. This includes increases to the Northeast multispecies fishery sub-Annual Catch Limit (sub-ACL), the common pool sub-ACL, and sector Annual Catch Entitlements (ACEs). To be consistent with the best available science, we have updated the status and catch limits for the GOM winter flounder stock based on information from a new assessment completed in June 2011. The new catch limits and sector ACEs for the remainder of the fishing year are shown in the tables below.

Table 1. Revised GOM Winter Flounder Catch Levels for FY 2011

GOM Winter Flounder Catch Limit	Old Catch Limit (mt)	New Catch Limit (mt)
Overfishing Level (OFL)	570	1,458
Acceptable Biological Catch (ABC)	239	1,078
Total ACL	231	524
State Waters sub-component	60	163
Other sub-component	12	32
Groundfish sub-ACL	159	329
Sector sub-ACL*	150	313
Common Pool sub-ACL*	8	16

\*Final rule that updated sector membership (76 FR 34903; June 15, 2011)

Table 2. Revised GOM Winter Flounder ACEs by Sector for FY 2011

Sector	Old ACE (mt)	New ACE (mt)*
Fixed Gear Sector	3.49	7.26
Maine Permit Bank Sector	1.38	2.87
Northeast Coastal Communities Sector	1.43	2.98
Northeast Fishery Sector 2	33.34	69.43
Northeast Fishery Sector 3	17.37	36.16
Northeast Fishery Sector 4	7.45	15.51
Northeast Fishery Sector 5	0.51	1.06
Northeast Fishery Sector 6	5.84	12.15
Northeast Fishery Sector 7	1.38	2.87
Northeast Fishery Sector 8	5.33	11.09
Northeast Fishery Sector 9	3.85	8.02

*For small entity compliance guides, this bulletin complies with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement and Fairness Act of 1996. This notice is authorized by the Regional Administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service, Northeast Region.*

Northeast Fishery Sector 10	43.21	89.97
Northeast Fishery Sector 11	3.20	6.66
Northeast Fishery Sector 12	0.50	1.04
Northeast Fishery Sector 13	1.98	4.12
Port Clyde Community Groundfish Sector	2.03	4.22
Sustainable Harvest Sector I	9.37	19.52
Sustainable Harvest Sector III	5.15	10.72
Tri-State Sector	3.29	6.86
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>313</b>

\*Note: New ACE shown does not incorporate carry-over.

<i><b>Frequently Asked Questions</b></i>	
<b>Why have you changed the catch limits?</b>	The new assessment completed for GOM winter flounder in June 2011 showed that overfishing was not occurring in 2010 and catches could be increased within sustainable levels. The New England Fishery Management Council requested we revise the FY 2011 catch limits as soon as possible to be consistent with this new information and their recommended catch limits for FY 2012-2014.
<b>I am in a sector. What is my new harvest share?</b>	The new ACEs shown in Table 2 are allocated to the entire sector. We will provide your sector manager this updated ACE so they can update individual member allocations. To find out how this new ACE changes the share allocated to you by your sector, <b>contact your sector manager.</b>
<b>I am in the common pool. Has the GOM winter flounder trip limit changed?</b>	The common pool trip limit has not changed. <b>The GOM winter flounder trip limit remains 250 lb/trip.</b> We will continue to monitor GOM winter flounder landings in the common pool fishery and will increase the trip limit, as needed, to help provide an opportunity for full harvest of the ACL, while preventing an overage.
<b>Where can I get more information?</b>	A public notice published in the <u>Federal Register</u> on February 10, 2012, explains the reasons for these new catch limits and summarizes the expected biological, economic, and social impacts. A copy of the notice and the complete Environmental Assessment are available online at <a href="http://www.nero.noaa.gov/sfd/sfdmulti.html">www.nero.noaa.gov/sfd/sfdmulti.html</a> or by calling the Sustainable Fisheries Division at <b>978-281-9315</b> .