



Northeast Region Bulletin

National Marine Fisheries Service, Northeast Regional Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930

For Information Contact:
Analysis and Program Support Division
(978) 282 – 8438

<http://www.nero.noaa.gov/>
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Atlantic Mackerel Fishery

Limited access program application deadline reminder
Applications for limited access permits due February 28, 2013

There is still time to apply for a limited access mackerel permit!

Applications must be submitted by February 28, 2013. We will not consider applications that are postmarked after that date, so be sure that your application is received or postmarked by February 28, 2013. Applications and a full application guide are available online at www.nero.noaa.gov.

Fish Hold Certification – Current Requirement

If you are issued a Tier 1 or Tier 2 limited access mackerel permit, you must submit a fish hold volume certification to NMFS in writing by December 31, 2012, or at the first vessel replacement after qualifying for a Tier 1 or Tier 2 permit, whichever is sooner. If you do not submit a fish hold certification by December 31, 2012, you will not be eligible to renew your limited access mackerel permit for the 2013 permit year (starting April 1, 2013).

Written documentation certifying your fish hold capacity measurement can be obtained from:

- An individual credentialed by the National Association of Marine Surveyors (NAMS) as a Certified Marine Surveyor with a fishing specialty.
- An individual credentialed by the Society of Accredited Marine Surveyors (SAMS) as an Accredited Marine Surveyor with a fishing specialty.

Vessels that are sealed by the Maine State Sealer of Weights and Measures will be deemed to meet this requirement. Simply submit documentation that notes your hold volume and proves that your vessel has been sealed in Maine.

We are still working with the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council on its recommendation to expand the list of individuals allowed to complete fish hold certifications. We may need to extend the December 31, 2012, deadline to allow vessels enough time to get the certification, and will provide additional information about this as soon as we can.

Proposed Rule for Framework Adjustment 5

We recently published a proposed rule for Framework Adjustment 5 to the Atlantic Mackerel, Squid, and Butterfish Fishery Management Plan. This rulemaking proposes to expand the list of individuals qualified to certify fish hold volume. To allow vessels to make use of the expanded

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.

list of individuals, the rulemaking also proposes extending the due date for the certification to December 31, 2013, or the first vessel replacement, whichever is sooner. We will keep you informed about these possible changes.

If this rulemaking is not approved, your fish hold certification will still be due on December 31, 2012.

Comments on the rulemaking are due no later than 5 pm, Eastern Standard Time, October 22, 2012, and can be submitted in the following ways:

- 1) **By electronic submission** through the Federal e-Rulemaking Portal <http://www.regulations.gov>. To submit comments via the e-Rulemaking Portal, first click the “Submit a Comment” icon, then enter NMFS-NOAA-2012-0103 in the keyword search. Locate the document you wish to comment on from the resulting list, and click the “Submit a Comment” icon on the right of that line.
- 2) **By fax** to (978) 281-9135, Attn: Comments on MSB Framework 5.
- 3) **By mail and hand delivery** to John K. Bullard, Regional Administrator, NMFS, Northeast Regional Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. Mark the outside of the envelope: “Comments on MSB Framework 5.”

Where to get more information

- Contact the NERO Permits Office at (978) 282-8438 about the permit application or limited access program requirements.
- Contact Sustainable Fisheries at (978) 281-9315 about possession limits and other mackerel fishery restrictions.