



Northeast Region Bulletin

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Limited Access Monkfish Permit Holders

Establishment of a Control Date in the Monkfish Fishery

Effective Date: May 9, 2012

On February 2 and February 16, 2012, the Mid-Atlantic and New England Fishery Management Councils, respectively, requested that we publish a “control date” for the monkfish fishery. This control date is intended to inform the public that the Councils are considering action that may affect the accumulation of monkfish permits and fishing privileges, and that fishing activity occurring after the control date may be treated differently from activity before that date. Based on this request, we published an Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (ANPR) in the *Federal Register*, announcing that the control date for the monkfish fishery is May 9, 2012, the date of the ANPR's publication.

Although this control date, by itself, does not affect you at this time, the Councils could use it as part of the development of any future action, including to:

- Limit the accumulation of fishing privileges in the monkfish fishery. The control date could be used to determine the maximum number of monkfish permits, days-at-sea (DAS), or landings share that any one entity could own or control.
- Develop an allocation-based management regime (sectors or an individual fishing quota). The control date could be used to determine who participated in the monkfish fishery to calculate a permit’s share of monkfish DAS used or monkfish landed.
- Qualify individuals to vote in a referendum. The control date could be used to identify who is participating in the monkfish fishery (owners and/or crew) to specify who could vote in a referendum to approve/disapprove any proposed individual fishing quota programs that may be developed in the future by the Councils.

Frequently Asked Questions

When will this control date be used?	This control date could be used to develop measures as part of Amendment 6 to the Monkfish Fishery Management Plan (currently under development), or another future action. The Councils are not obligated to use this or any other date to develop management measures.
Will this affect my permit?	This control date, by itself, does not affect your permit or fishing privileges. If the Councils rely on it in Amendment 6 or another action, it may or may not affect your permit. It depends upon the measures developed by the Councils and your permit’s specific DAS use and landings history. You are encouraged to participate in the development of such actions by the Councils to better understand how such measures may affect you in the future.

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.

How could it affect my permit?	If the Councils limit ownership of monkfish fishing privileges (DAS, permits, quota, etc.), any fishing privileges obtained after that control date could be affected, restricted or even nullified. The control date is intended to discourage speculative entry into the monkfish fishery while the Councils develop future measures.
What do I need to do?	Find and keep all documents associated with your Federal monkfish permit, including dealer slips/receipts and logbook pages from trips that you landed monkfish from Federal waters. The Councils may use any range of fishing years in a future action, so you may want to preserve all monkfish-related documents that you have.