



# Northeast Region Bulletin

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## **NORTHEAST MULTISPECIES COMMON POOL FISHERY REGULATIONS FOR THE 2012 FISHING YEAR**

*Effective May 1, 2012*

This bulletin announces measures that apply to the common pool fishery for fishing year (FY) 2012 (May 1, 2012 through April 30, 2013), including changes from past fishing years. Please read each of the sections below for more information. For more information on these or other measures, please contact us at (978) 281-9315.

### **1) TRIP LIMITS**

Beginning May 1, 2012, a common pool vessel is subject to the trip limits that are shown in the attachment at the end of this bulletin. Please note that we may revise trip limits up or down to ensure that the common pool annual catch limits (ACLs) are fully caught, but not exceeded. We will announce any changes to trip limits as soon as possible should they be necessary.

### **2) DAYS-AT-SEA COUNTING RATE**

Beginning May 1, 2012, the FY 2012 days-at-sea (DAS) rate is 1.0 for a common pool vessel fishing on a Category A DAS. A vessel will be charged 24-hours for each DAS, or less, that is fished. We will assess the final catch totals for FY 2011 to determine if an overage occurred and if differential DAS rates need to be applied in FY 2012. We will announce any changes as soon as possible should they be necessary.

### **3) TRIMESTER TOTAL ALLOWABLE CATCH ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES**

As implemented in Amendment 16, starting on May 1, 2012, common pool vessels are subject to total allowable catch (TAC) accountability measures (AMs), including area closures and overage deductions, as described below. These measures affect all limited access DAS, Handgear A, and Small Vessel Category vessels, as well as open access Handgear B vessels.

- **Trimester TACs:** The annual common pool sub-ACL for each stock is divided into trimesters of 4 months in duration, based on the percent distribution in Table 1.
  - Trimester 1: May 1 – August 31
  - Trimester 2: September 1 – December 31
  - Trimester 3: January 1 – April 30

*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.*

- **Area closures:** If it's projected that 90% of a trimester TAC for a stock will be caught before a trimester ends, the area where that stock is predominantly caught will close to vessels fishing with a specific gear type for the rest of that trimester. For example, if Gulf of Maine winter flounder was projected to exceed 90% of the TAC in Trimester 1, then chart area 514 would close to trawl and gillnet gear for the remainder of the trimester. Table 2 and Figures 1-3 below show the chart areas that would close and the gear type that applies for each stock.

<i>Frequently Asked Questions</i>	
<b>What happens if there are uncaught fish during a trimester?</b>	The uncaught portion of the TAC for each stock carries over to the next trimester. Therefore, anything uncaught in Trimester 1 carries forward to Trimester 2, and anything uncaught in Trimester 2 carries forward to Trimester 3.
<b>What happens if there is an overage during a trimester?</b>	Any overages of the Trimester 1 or Trimester 2 TACs are deducted from the Trimester 3 TAC on a pound-for-pound basis.
<b>What happens if there is an overage/underage at the end of the year?</b>	An overage of the common pool sub-ACL at the end of the year will be deducted from the common pool sub-ACL for that stock the following fishing year. Uncaught portions of the common pool sub-ACL will <u>not</u> be carried forward into the next fishing year.

**Table 1: FY 2012 Distribution of Common Pool sub-ACLs in Each Trimester**

Stock	Percentage of Common Pool sub-ACL			POUNDS		
	Tri 1	Tri 2	Tri 3	Tri 1	Tri 2	Tri 3
<b>GOM cod</b>	27	36	37	47,632	63,509	65,273
<b>GB cod</b>	25	37	38	44,872	66,411	68,206
<b>GOM haddock</b>	27	26	47	2,754	2,652	4,794
<b>GB haddock</b>	27	33	40	44,781	54,732	66,342
<b>CC/GOM yellowtail flounder</b>	35	35	30	19,641	19,641	16,835
<b>GB yellowtail flounder</b>	19	30	52	1,047	1,653	2,865
<b>SNE/MA yellowtail flounder</b>	21	37	42	71,001	125,097	142,002
<b>GOM winter flounder</b>	37	38	25	20,082	20,625	13,569
<b>GB winter flounder</b>	8	24	69	3,472	10,417	29,948
<b>Witch flounder</b>	27	31	42	13,181	15,133	20,503
<b>American plaice</b>	24	36	40	28,987	43,480	48,311
<b>Pollock</b>	28	35	37	50,491	63,113	66,720
<b>Redfish</b>	25	31	44	18,617	23,085	32,766
<b>White hake</b>	38	31	31	22,000	17,948	17,948

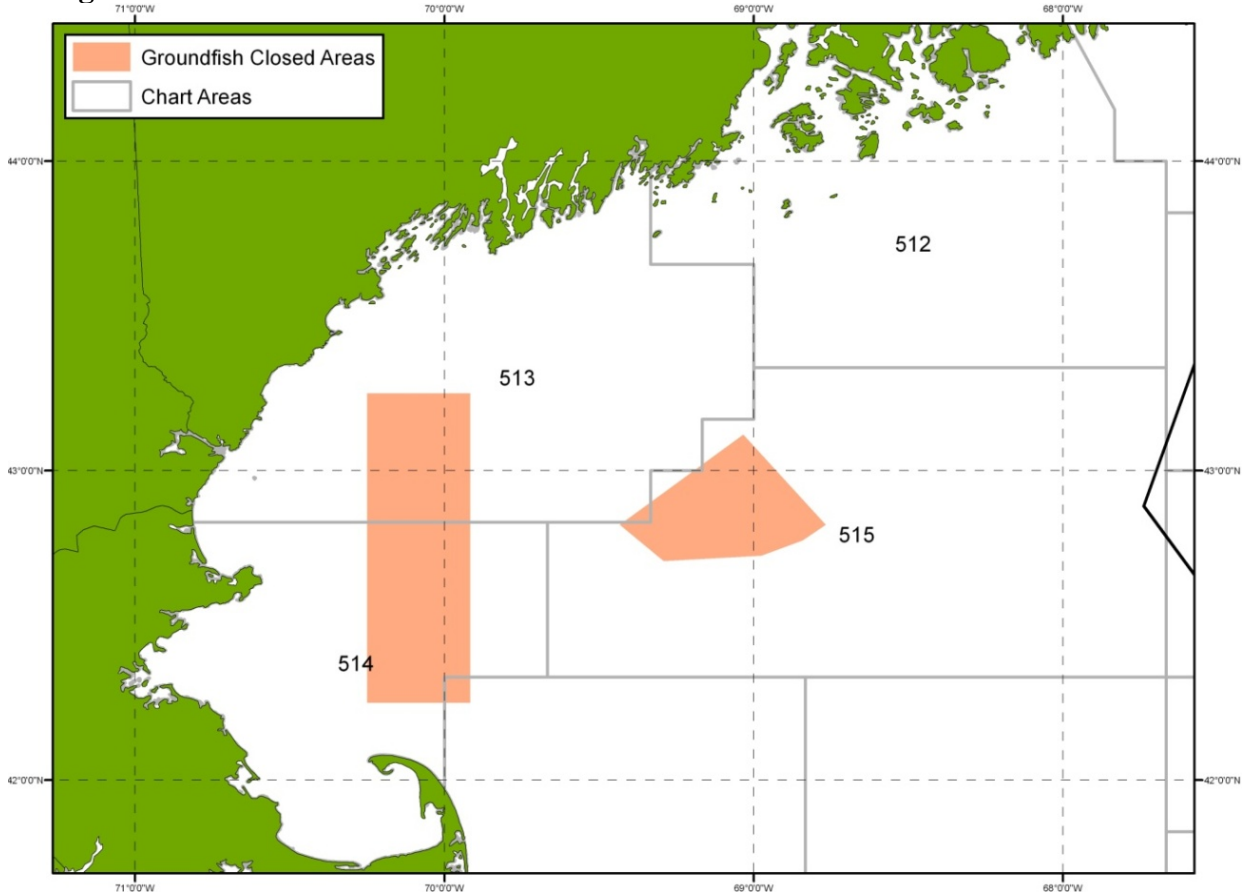
GOM=Gulf of Maine, GB=Georges Bank, CC=Cape Cod, and SNE/MA=Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic

**Table 2: Common Pool Trimester TAC Area Closures**

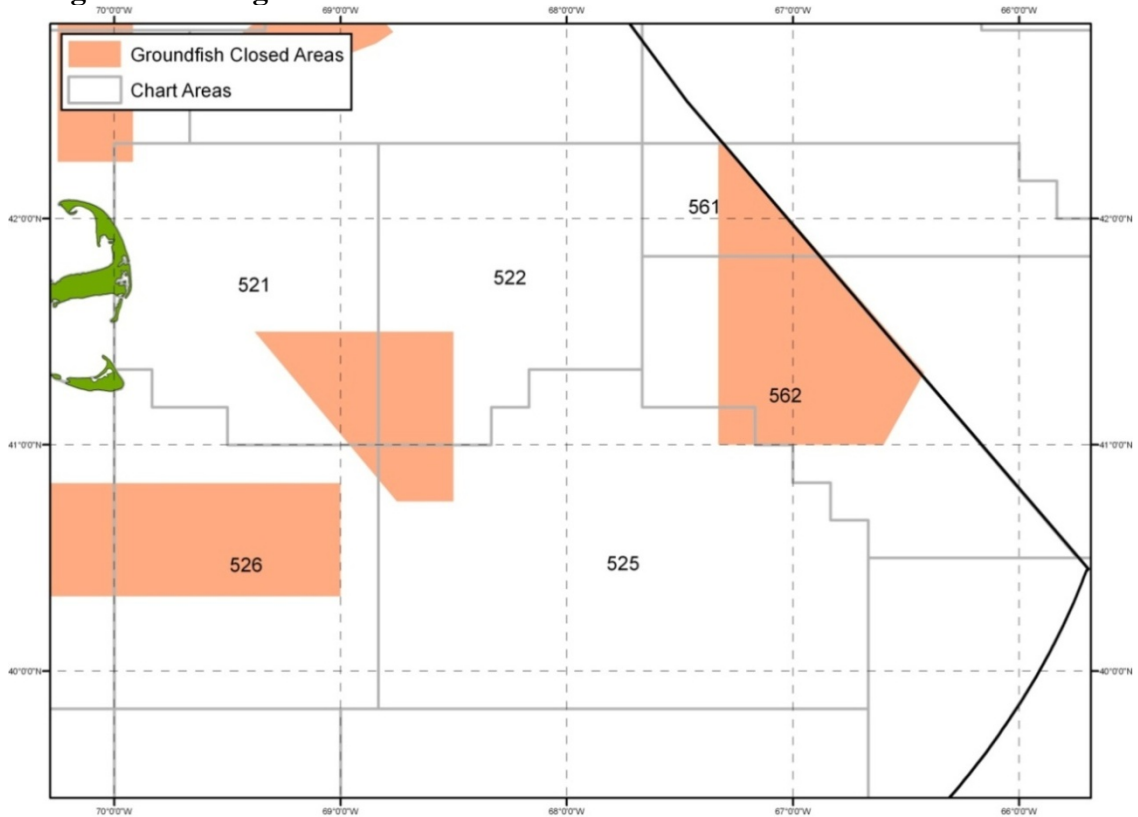
Stock	Chart Area	Gear
GOM cod	513, 514	Trawl, gillnet, longline/hook
GB cod	521, 522, 525, 561	Trawl, gillnet, longline/hook
GOM haddock	513, 514, 515	Trawl, gillnet, longline/hook
GB haddock	521, 522, 525, 561, 562	Trawl, gillnet, longline/hook
CC/GOM yellowtail flounder	514, 521	Trawl, gillnet
GB yellowtail flounder	522, 525, 561, 562	Trawl, gillnet
SNE/MA yellowtail flounder	537, 539, 538, 613	Trawl, gillnet
GOM winter flounder	514	Trawl, gillnet
GB winter flounder	522, 525, 561, 562	Trawl
SNE/MA winter flounder	521, 537, 539, 611, 612, 613	Trawl
Witch flounder	512, 513, 514, 515, 521, 522, 525	Trawl
American plaice	512, 513, 514, 515, 521, 522, 525	Trawl
Pollock	513, 514, 515, 521, 522	Gillnet, trawl, longline/hook
Redfish	513, 514, 515, 521, 522	Trawl
White hake	513, 514, 515, 521, 522	Gillnet, trawl, longline/hook

GOM=Gulf of Maine, GB=Georges Bank, CC=Cape Cod, and SNE/MA=Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic

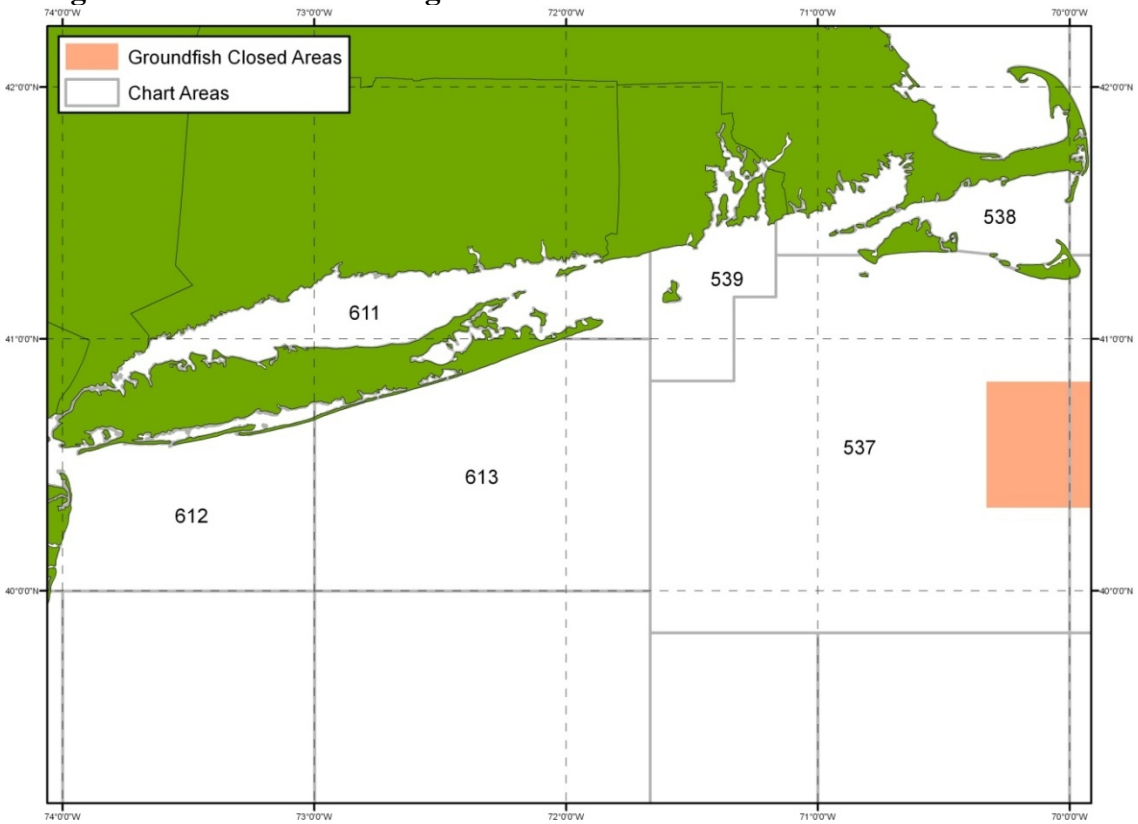
**Figure 1: Gulf of Maine Chart Areas for Trimester TACs**



**Figure 2: Georges Bank Chart Areas for Trimester TACs**



**Figure 3: Southern New England Chart Areas for Trimester TACs**



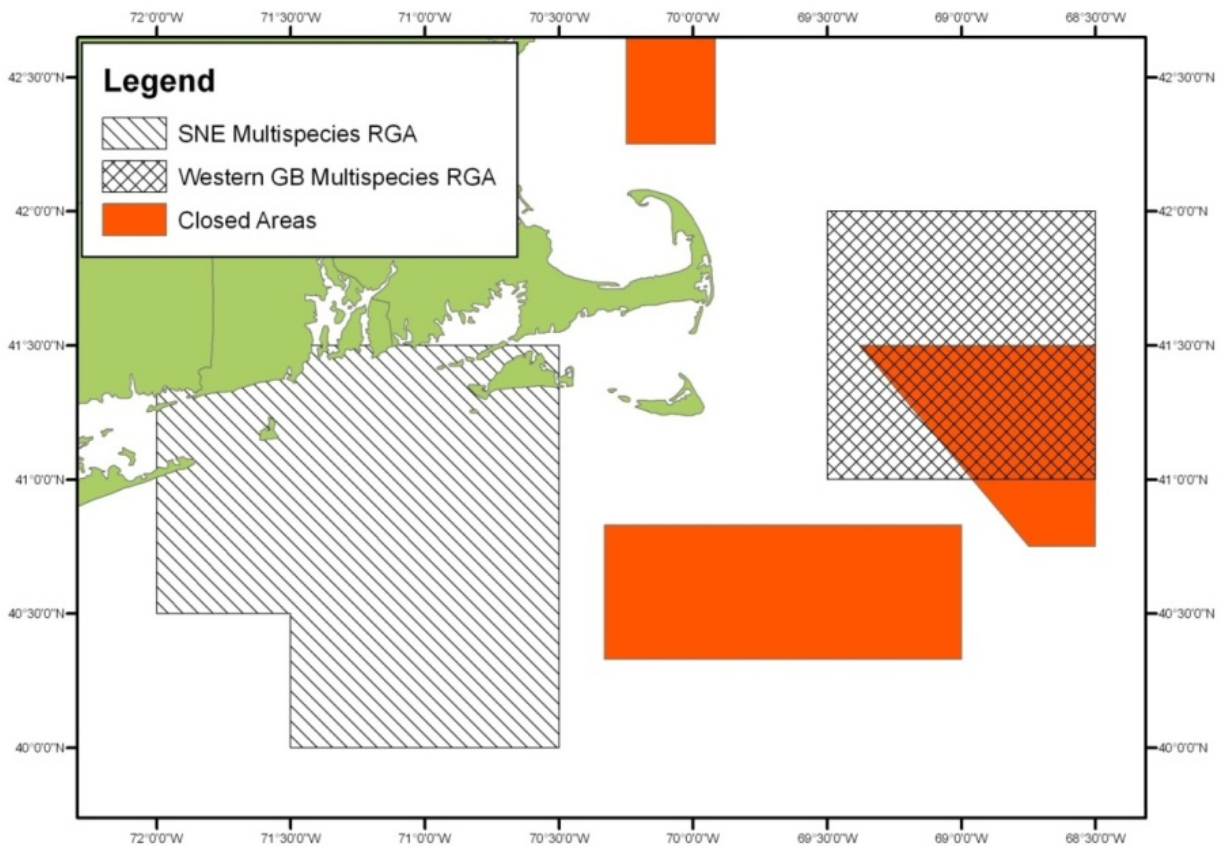
#### 4) TRAWL GEAR ALLOWED IN EASTERN U.S. /CANADA MANAGEMENT AREA

During FY 2012, a common pool vessel using trawl gear may access the Eastern U.S./Canada Management Area starting on May 1, 2012, rather than August 1, as in the past. A vessel fishing in the Eastern U.S./Canada Area with trawl gear must still use a haddock separator trawl, a Ruhl trawl, or a flounder trawl.

#### 5) REMOVAL OF COMMON POOL RESTRICTED GEAR AREAS

Framework Adjustment 47 removes the common pool restricted gear areas (RGAs) in Southern New England (SNE) and Georges Bank (GB) that have been in place since May 1, 2010. Figure 4 shows the RGAs that are removed beginning in FY 2012. These RGAs are being removed because there are sufficient fishing mortality controls for common pool vessels. The removal of these RGAs is expected to facilitate fishing in these areas.

**Figure 4: Common Pool RGAs Removed on May 1, 2012**



#### 6) ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES FOR WINDOWPANE FLOUNDER, OCEAN POUT, AND ATLANTIC HALBIUT

Framework Adjustment 47 implements accountability measures (AMs) that will apply to common pool and sector vessels if a total ACL is exceeded for windowpane flounder, ocean

pout, or Atlantic halibut. If the total ACL is exceeded for northern or southern windowpane flounder or ocean pout, an RGA will be implemented in Year 3. For example, if the total ACL for ocean pout is exceeded in FY 2012, the Ocean Pout AM Area will be implemented in FY 2014. Vessels fishing with trawl gear will be required to use selective trawl gear, such as the haddock separator trawl, the Ruhle trawl, or the rope trawl. There are no restrictions on longline or gillnet gear because these gear types make up a small amount of the total catch for these stocks. If the total ACL for Atlantic halibut is exceeded, commercial vessels will be prohibited from possessing Atlantic halibut in Year 3.

## **7) TRANSFER OF GEORGES BANK YELLOWTAIL FLOUNDER QUOTA**

By January 15 of each fishing year, we will re-estimate the expected catch of GB yellowtail flounder by the scallop fishery. If the expected catch by scallop vessels is less than 90% of the scallop fishery's sub-ACL, we can reduce the scallop fishery sub-ACL and increase the commercial groundfish fishery sub-ACL for GB yellowtail flounder. Any increase to the groundfish fishery sub-ACL will be distributed to the common pool and sectors. We will announce any changes to the GB yellowtail flounder catch limits as soon as possible after we re-estimate the scallop fishery's expected catch. This measure will allow additional GB yellowtail flounder yield for common pool and sector vessels.



## NE Multispecies Information Sheet– Landing/Possession Limits



*This summary is not a substitute for the regulations; rather it provides a broad overview of restrictions and requirements. You are strongly encouraged to read the regulations in conjunction with this information sheet to fully understand how this fishery is managed. The regulations described here can be found at 50 CFR 648.82, 648.83, 648.85, and 648.86, and 648.88 and will be updated when regulations are revised.*

Beginning May 1, 2012, common pool vessels are subject to the trip limits listed below. Under FW 44, the Regional Administrator has the authority to revise trip limits for common pool vessels to ensure that ACLs allocated to the common pool are not exceeded.

Species	Minimum Size	Stock Area <sup>1</sup>	A DAS	Handgear A	Handgear B	Regular B DAS Program	
						Separator or Ruhle Trawl <sup>4</sup>	Non-Trawl Gear
Cod	22"	GOM	650 lb/DAS, up to 2,000 lb/trip	300 lb/trip <sup>3</sup>	75 lb/trip <sup>3</sup>	100 lb/DAS, up to 1,000 lb/trip	
		OFF GB, IN GB, and SNE	2,000 lb/DAS, up to 20,000 lb/trip (outside of the Eastern U.S./Canada Area) <sup>2</sup>	300 lb/trip <sup>3</sup>	75 lb/trip <sup>3</sup>		
			500 lb/DAS, up to 5,000 lb/trip (E. U.S./Canada Area)				
		1,000 lb/trip Closed Area I Hook Gear Haddock SAP -or- Closed Area II Yellowtail Flounder/Haddock SAP (for targeting haddock)					
Haddock	18"	GOM	1,000 lb/trip				
		OFF GB, IN GB, and SNE	10,000 lb/trip				
Pollock	19"	All Areas	Unlimited			100 lb/DAS to 1,000 lb/trip	
Redfish	9"	All Areas	Unlimited				
White hake	none	All Areas	1,500 lb/trip			100 lb/DAS to 1,000 lb/trip	
Atlantic halibut	41"	All Areas	1 fish/trip				
Yellowtail flounder	13"	GOM, IN GB	500 lb/DAS, up to 2,000 lb/trip			25 lb/DAS to 250 lb/trip	
		SNE	1,500 lb/DAS, up to 4,500 lb/trip				
		OFF GB	500 lb/trip				
American plaice (dabs)	14"	All Areas	Unlimited			100 lb/DAS for each stock, up to 500 lb/trip of all flatfish combined	
Witch flounder (gray sole)	14"	All Areas	250 lb/trip				
Winter flounder	12"	OFF GB	1,000 lb/trip				
		GOM	250 lb/trip			100 lb/DAS, to 1,000 lb/trip	
		IN GB, SNE	<b>Zero – possession prohibited<sup>5</sup></b>				
Windowpane Flounder		All Areas	<b>Zero – possession prohibited</b>				
Ocean Pout							
Atlantic Wolffish							

<sup>1</sup> Broad Stock Areas: Gulf of Maine (GOM), Inshore Georges Bank (IN GB), Offshore Georges Bank (OFF GB), and Southern New England (SNE)

<sup>2</sup> Vessel must submit GOM Cod Trip Limit Exemption Form via VMS

<sup>3</sup> Unless otherwise revised by the Regional Administrator

<sup>4</sup> Gear performance trip limits of 500 lb all flatfish combined, 500 lb whole monkfish (unless restricted by the monkfish FMP), 500 lb whole skate, and zero lobsters also apply

<sup>5</sup> A vessel may transit the InGB and SNE areas with GOM or OffGB winter flounder on board, provided that fishing gear is properly stowed.