



Northeast Region Bulletin

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Northeast Multispecies and Scallop Vessels

Revised Catch Limits of Georges Bank Yellowtail Flounder for Fishing Year 2012 *Effective Date: July 13, 2012*

We have increased the Georges Bank (GB) yellowtail flounder sub-annual catch limit (ACL) for the Northeast (NE) multispecies fishery by 150.6 mt for the 2012 fishing year (FY) and decreased the GB yellowtail flounder sub-ACL for the scallop fishery by the same amount. The adjustments were requested by the New England Fishery Management Council (Council) and are based on an updated projection of potential GB yellowtail flounder catch by the scallop fishery. The new sub-ACLs, and the sector and common pool allocations for the remainder of the fishing year, are shown in the tables below.

Table 1. Revised Sub-ACLs for GB Yellowtail Flounder (in metric tons)

	Scallop	Groundfish	Sector	Common Pool
Original Sub-ACL	307.5	217.7	215.2	2.5
Adjustment Amount	-150.6	+150.6	+148.9	+1.7
Revised Sub-ACL	156.9	368.3	364.1	4.2

Table 2. Revised Allocations for Sectors and the Common Pool (in metric tons)

	Original	Revised
Fixed Gear Sector	0.0	0.0
Maine Permit Bank Sector	0.0	0.1
New Hampshire Permit Bank	0.0	0.0
Northeast Coastal Communities Sector	1.8	3.1
Northeast Fishery Sector 2	4.2	7.0
Northeast Fishery Sector 3	0.0	0.0
Northeast Fishery Sector 4	4.7	8.0
Northeast Fishery Sector 5	13.5	22.8
Northeast Fishery Sector 6	5.9	9.9
Northeast Fishery Sector 7	20.3	34.4
Northeast Fishery Sector 8	23.8	40.3
Northeast Fishery Sector 9	60.8	102.8
Northeast Fishery Sector 10	0.0	0.1
Northeast Fishery Sector 11	0.0	0.0
Northeast Fishery Sector 12	0.0	0.0
Northeast Fishery Sector 13	36.2	61.3
Port Clyde Community Groundfish Sector	0.0	0.0
Sustainable Harvest Sector I	27.2	46.0
Sustainable Harvest Sector III	1.0	1.6
Tri-State Sector	15.8	26.7
All Sectors Combined	215.2	364.1
Common Pool	2.5	4.2

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.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why have you changed the sub-ACLs in the scallop and groundfish fisheries?	We are adjusting the allocations of GB yellowtail flounder based on updated estimates of the expected GB yellowtail flounder catch in the fishery. These changes are consistent with a Council request to increase the groundfish fishery's GB yellowtail flounder FY 2012 catch limit in view of the updated catch of GB yellowtail flounder by the scallop fishery.
When was a new projection completed and what were the results?	On June 18, a revised projection by the Northeast Fisheries Science Center indicates that the scallop fishery is expected to catch between 47.6 mt and 174.3 mt of GB yellowtail in FY 2012. Based on their new projection, the Council requested that we revise the scallop sub-ACL to 156.9 mt (90 percent of the highest projected catch of 174.3 mt) of the GB yellowtail flounder scallop sub-ACL and increase the groundfish sub-ACL by 150.6 mt to 368.3 mt.
How does this affect the accountability measures for the scallop and groundfish fisheries?	The existing groundfish accountability measures (AMs) for sectors and the common pool, and the pound-for-pound payback at the overall GB yellowtail flounder fishery-level will remain in place. The Council requested that we use emergency authority to partially exempt the scallop fishery from AMs based on their reduced sub-ACL unless catch of GB yellowtail flounder exceeds the initially allocated sub-ACL of 307.5 mt.
Will you modify the scallop AMs?	We are working on a proposed rule to revise the scallop fishery AM, as requested by the Council as soon as possible; the proposed rule will include an opportunity for public comment.
Will there be any additional revisions?	We will continue to evaluate catch of GB yellowtail flounder by the groundfish and scallop fisheries and could make further adjustments by January 15, 2013. If so, we would notify you through an additional public notice and bulletin.
Where can I get more information?	A public notice, filed in the <u>Federal Register</u> on July 13, 2012, and provides our rationale for the revised sub-ACLs. You may visit www.nero.noaa.gov/sfd/sfdmulti.html or call the Sustainable Fisheries Division at 978-281-9315 for more information.