



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
NORTHEAST REGION
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2276

October 23, 2008

Small Entity Compliance Guide

Dear Limited Access Northeast (NE) Multispecies Permit Holder:

This letter is to inform you that NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is decreasing the Georges Bank (GB) yellowtail flounder trip limit for the remainder of the 2008 fishing year. **As of October 23, 2008, the GB yellowtail flounder trip limit is reduced from 5,000 lb per trip to 2,500 lb per trip for limited access NE multispecies days-at-sea (DAS) vessels fishing in the U.S./Canada Management Area.**

NMFS is authorized to make changes to the trip limits in the U.S./Canada Management Area to prevent over- and under-harvesting the total allowable catch (TAC) allocation. The TAC for GB yellowtail flounder for the 2008 fishing year is set at 1,950 mt, in accordance with the regulations implemented by Amendment 13 to the NE Multispecies Fishery Management Plan. Despite the fact that the 2008 TAC for GB yellowtail flounder is substantially larger than the 2007 TAC (a 217-percent increase from 2007), projections of harvest rates in the fishery indicate that the 5,000-lb trip limit may result in the over-harvest of the GB yellowtail flounder TAC before the end of the 2008 fishing year. Therefore, this action will provide opportunities to more fully harvest the TACs for GB cod, haddock, and yellowtail flounder in the Eastern U.S./Canada Area.

Should 100 percent of the TAC allocation for GB yellowtail flounder be projected to be harvested, the Eastern U.S./Canada Area would close to limited access NE multispecies DAS vessels, and all vessels would be prohibited from harvesting, possessing, or landing yellowtail flounder from the entire U.S./Canada Management Area for the remainder of the fishing year. If the TAC is projected to be either over-harvested or under-harvested by the end of the fishing year, additional in-season adjustments to the trip limit are possible. The rate of harvest of the GB cod, haddock, and yellowtail flounder TACs in the U.S./Canada Management Area are updated weekly on the internet at <http://www.nero.noaa.gov>.

This small entity compliance guide complies with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996.

This notice is authorized by the Administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service, Northeast Region.

