



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
NORTHEAST REGION
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

January 13, 2005

Small Entity Compliance Guide

Dear Limited Access Northeast (NE) Multispecies Permit Holder:

This letter is to inform you that the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) is re-opening the Eastern U.S./Canada Area to limited access Northeast (NE) multispecies days-at-sea (DAS) vessels and removing the prohibition on the harvest, possession, and landing of Georges Bank (GB) yellowtail flounder by NE multispecies vessels within the entire U.S./Canada Management Area, as of **12:00 AM on January 14, 2005**. In addition, NOAA Fisheries is removing the yellowtail flounder daily poundage limit in the entire U.S./Canada Management Area, and the cod daily poundage limit in the Eastern U.S./Canada Area, effective **12:00 AM on January 14, 2005**. Thus, vessels will be subject to a 15,000-lb yellowtail flounder trip limit in the U.S./Canada Management Area, and a 5,000-lb cod trip limit in the Eastern U.S./Canada Area. Trawl vessels fishing in the Eastern U.S./Canada Area may only fish with a haddock separator net, as described in § 648.85(a)(3)(iii)(A), in order to reduce bycatch of both GB cod and GB yellowtail flounder for the purpose of allowing greater access to the remaining GB haddock Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for the remainder of the fishing year.

NOAA Fisheries is implementing this action in order to allow the TAC of GB yellowtail flounder, GB cod, and GB haddock to be fully harvested. The removal of the daily poundage limits for GB yellowtail flounder and GB cod in the U.S./Canada Management Area and Eastern U.S./Canada Area, is to provide flexibility to fishing vessels that come into port prematurely (due to an unexpected event, such as poor weather conditions) with the intent of continuing their trip without offloading the fish because the vessel is not subject to a daily poundage limit while in port.

Yellowtail flounder landings will be closely monitored through the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) and other available information and, once 100 percent of the TAC allocation for GB yellowtail flounder is projected to be harvested, the Eastern U.S./Canada Area will be closed to NE multispecies DAS vessels and the harvesting, possession, and landing of yellowtail flounder by NE multispecies vessels in the U.S./Canada Management Area will be prohibited.

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

Sincerely,

Patricia A. Kurkul
Regional Administrator



