



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

February 7, 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 Service) is reducing the Georges Bank (GB) yellowtail flounder trip limit from 15,000 lb per trip to **5,000 lb per trip** for limited access Northeast (NE) multispecies days-at-sea (DAS) vessels fishing in the U.S./Canada Management Area, as of **February 9, 2005**.

NOAA Fisheries Service is taking this action due to the large amount of GB yellowtail flounder that has been harvested since the January 14, 2005, re-opening of the Eastern U.S./Canada Area. Recent data indicate that many more vessels are targeting GB yellowtail flounder in the U.S./Canada Management Area than we initially projected. Reduction of the GB yellowtail flounder trip limit is intended to help prevent premature closure of the Eastern U.S./Canada Area, thereby allowing vessels a greater likelihood of being able to harvest the remaining GB haddock and GB cod Total Allowable Catches (TACs) for the remainder of the fishing year. Vessels that have already departed on a trip and crossed the Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) demarcation line prior to 12:00 AM on February 9, 2005, are authorized to land 15,000 lb of GB yellowtail flounder.

Yellowtail flounder landings will be closely monitored and, if 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,

for Patricia A. Kurkul
Regional Administrator

