



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

December 29, 2003

### **Small Entity Compliance Guide**

Dear Permit Holder:

This letter is to inform you that the Northeast (NE) multispecies management measures (for both the commercial and recreational fisheries) that were implemented through a final emergency rule that was published in the Federal Register on June 27, 2003, have been continued for a second 180-day period. Furthermore, we anticipate that the Secretary of Commerce will take subsequent action to ensure that sufficient measures to reduce overfishing remain in place, or to implement Amendment 13 to the NE Multispecies Fishery Management Plan, which is expected on or about May 1, 2004. You will be informed of any future action through publication of a rule in the Federal Register and an additional small entity compliance guide (letter).

The June 27, 2003, final emergency rule continued the majority of management measures implemented through an interim action on August 1, 2002, consistent with the Settlement Agreement and adopted by a Court Order in Conservation Law Foundation, et al. v. Evans, et al., and continued through a Notice of Continuation of Regulations published in the Federal Register on January 22, 2003. In addition, in response to public comment on the proposed rule, the final emergency rule implemented measures pertaining to haddock, including reducing the haddock minimum size limit for private recreational and party/charter vessels to 21 inches (52.5 cm), and relaxing the haddock trip limit (also known as bag limit) for charter/party and open access Handgear permit vessels.

For additional information regarding current multispecies regulations call (978) 281-9315, or visit the Northeast Regional Office's website at: <http://www.nero.noaa.gov/>.

Sincerely,

Patricia A. Kurkul  
Regional Administrator

