



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

APR 29 2002

Small Entity Compliance Guide
ATTENTION--IMPORTANT NOTICE

Dear Permit Holder:

The Federal District Court for the District of Columbia issued a Remedial Order on April 26, 2002 in a multispecies lawsuit known as Conservation Law Foundation, et al. v. Evans. In addition to all of the new measures for May 1, 2002, that we described in a recent letter to you, the Court ordered the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to implement the measures described below. The Court also ordered NMFS to implement another regulation with an effective date of August 1, 2002, that would substantially change many measures. The government is considering whether to appeal the Court's Order. In the meantime, to comply with the Order, the additional measures, as outlined below, go into effect on May 1, 2002. This letter only addresses the May 1 measures. A separate letter will be sent to you in the near future outlining the August 1, 2002 measures ordered by the Court.

These measures are effective from May 1, 2002 through July 31, 2002. All other multispecies management measures remain in effect.

MINIMUM MESH SIZE REQUIREMENTS - EFFECTIVE DATE CHANGED TO MAY 1, 2002

Increased minimum mesh size requirements for otter trawl vessels and gillnet vessels, as described below, are now effective May 1, 2002, not May 15, 2002. These requirements apply when fishing in the Gulf of Maine Regulated Mesh Area during any part of a trip under a multispecies day-at-sea (DAS).

Otter Trawl Vessels: Vessels using otter trawls will be required to fish with a minimum of 6.5-inch diamond or 6.5-inch square mesh in the codend.

Gillnet Vessels: Vessels that apply for and obtain an annual designation as a Trip gillnet vessel will be required to fish with nets with a minimum of 6.5-inch mesh. Vessels that apply for and obtain an annual designation as a Day gillnet vessel must fish with nets with a minimum mesh size of 6.5 inches when fishing with roundfish gillnets, or 7 inches when fishing with flatfish gillnet gear.

All vessels that have begun a multispecies DAS trip prior to the start of the May 1, 2002, fishing year, will be allowed to fish under the previous minimum mesh size restrictions for the remainder of that trip.

MINIMUM COD FISH SIZE INCREASE FOR COMMERCIAL VESSELS

The minimum length for cod retained by federally permitted commercial vessels is increased to 22 inches from the current size limit of 19 inches.

CLOSED AREAS

Pursuant to the Court Order, two additional areas in the Gulf of Maine are closed to all fishing vessels for the entire duration of this action, unless otherwise exempted (please refer to the exemptions described for



the Cashes Ledge Area Closure that were specified in the previous letter to you outlining May 1, 2002, measures). These closure areas, designated as Cashes Ledge West and Cashes Ledge East, are adjacent to the Cashes Ledge Area Closure and are also referred to as area blocks 128 and 130. The Cashes Ledge Area Closure also remains in effect.

Cashes Ledge West and Cashes Ledge East are defined by straight lines connecting the following points:

Cashes Ledge West		
Point	N. Lat.	W. Long.
CL7	43°00'	69°30'
CL8	43°00'	69°00'
CL9	42°30'	69°00'
CL10	42°30'	69°30'
CL7	43°00'	69°30'

Cashes Ledge East		
Point	N. Lat.	W. Long.
CL11	43°00'	68°30'
CL12	43°00'	68°00'
CL13	42°30'	68°00'
CL14	42°30'	68°30'
CL11	43°00'	68°30'

GEAR RESTRICTIONS - HOOK VESSELS

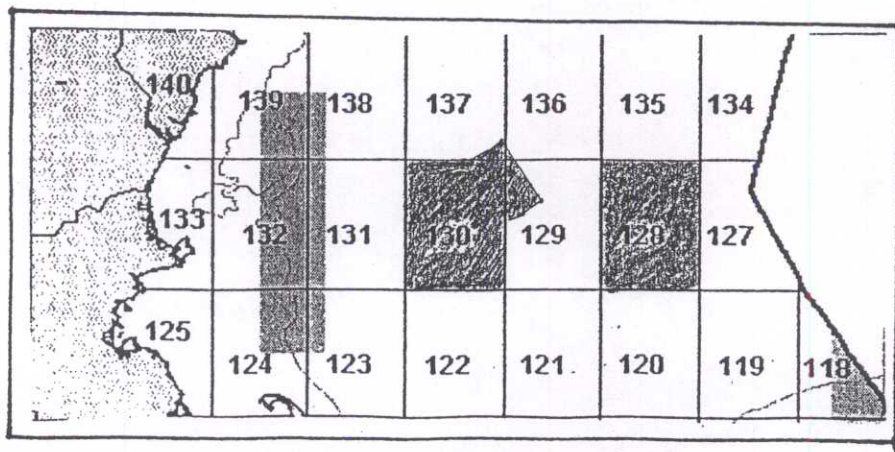
New gear restrictions on the hook-gear sector of the industry are imposed in order to discourage de-hooking strategies that may reduce survival of discarded fish. Specifically, this action prohibits the use of fairlead rollers with less than 6-inch spacing between the rollers.

This letter is only a summary of the regulations that have been implemented. To read these regulations in their entirety, you are encouraged to obtain a complete copy by calling (978) 281-9278, or by accessing the Northeast Regional Office's web page at: <http://www.wh.who.edu/ro/doc/nero.html>

This Small Entity Compliance Guide complies with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement and Fairness Act of 1996.

Sincerely,

Patricia A. Kurkul
 Patricia A. Kurkul
 Regional Administrator



Western Gulf of Maine and Cashes Ledge Area Closures