



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

November 8, 2002

AMERICAN LOBSTER -ADDENDUM I/HISTORICAL PARTICIPATION

Dear Federal American Lobster Permit Holder:

This letter is to inform you that NOAA Fisheries announces the availability of a Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (FSEIS) that evaluates modifications to Federal lobster management in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ). This FSEIS evaluates American lobster management measures recommended by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) following approval of Addendum I to Amendment 3 of the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American Lobster (Addendum I). If implemented, these measures will impact all Federal lobster permit holders, including those whose permits are in confirmation of permit history status.

On August 3, 1999, the Commission approved Addendum I and subsequently recommended that NOAA Fisheries implement compatible regulations in Federal waters. Addendum I recommendations in the FSEIS include the evaluation of historical participation as a basis for restricting trap harvest of lobsters in the offshore EEZ, Lobster Conservation Management Area 3 (LCMA 3), as well as in nearshore EEZ areas between New York and North Carolina (LCMA 4 and 5). Additional action recommended by the Commission includes the modification of trap limits for Federal permit holders who also hold a New Hampshire state lobster license, and modification of LCMA boundary line coordinates in Massachusetts state waters.

NMFS is seeking public comment on the management approach in this FSEIS. **Written comments will be accepted until 5 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on December 9, 2002**, and should be sent to: Harold C. Mears, Director, State, Federal, and Constituent Programs Office, Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries, One Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930. You may also submit comments via fax to (978) 281-9117. Comments cannot be accepted via e-mail or Internet.

You are encouraged to obtain a complete copy of the FSEIS, either by contacting NOAA Fisheries at **(978) 281-9278**, or by accessing the document via the Northeast Regional Office web site at: "<http://www.nero.nmfs.gov/ro/doc/com.htm>".

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Patricia A. Kurkul".

Patricia A. Kurkul
Regional Administrator

