



NOAA FISHERIES

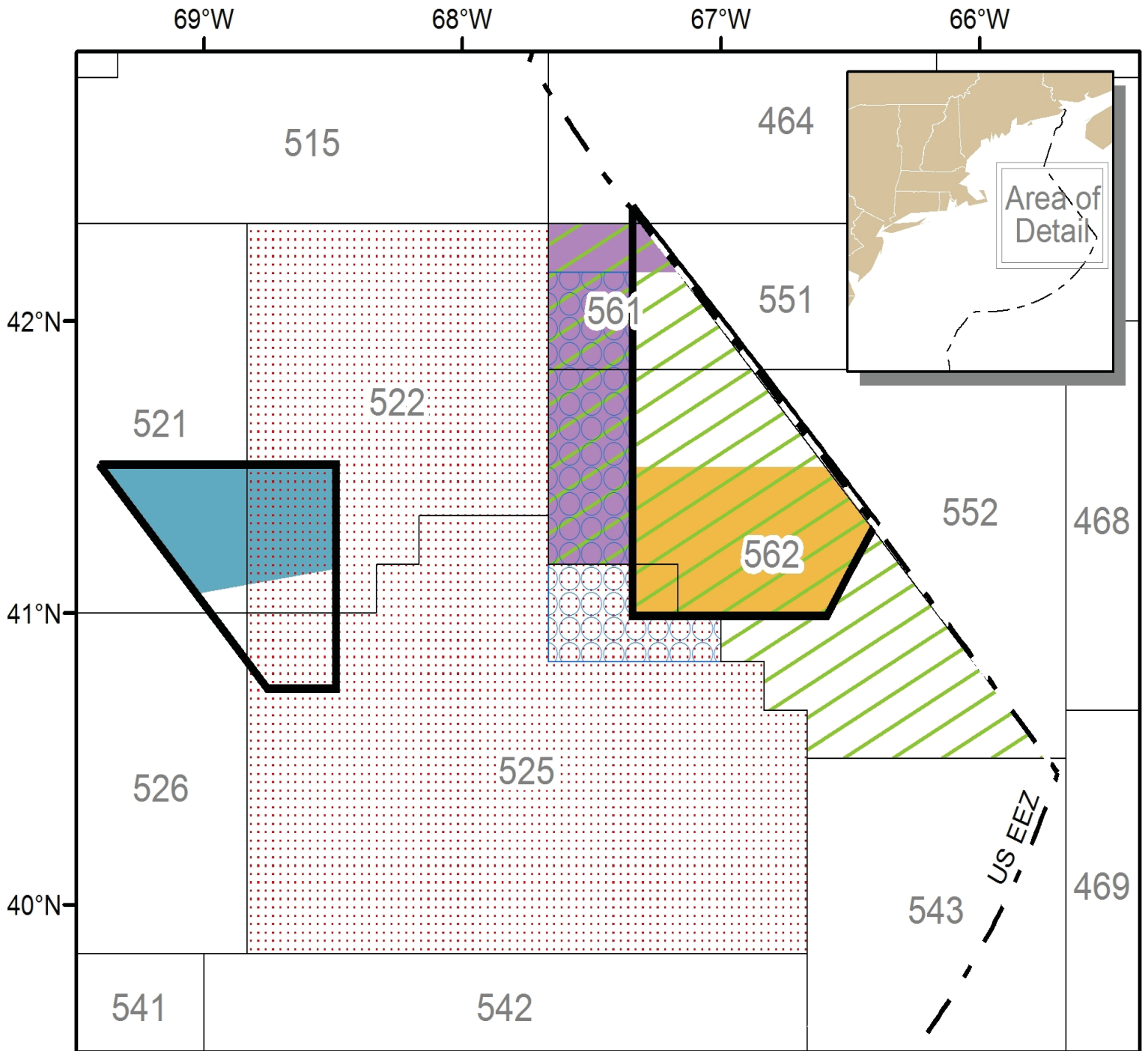
Sustainable
Fisheries

*This summary provides a broad overview of restrictions and requirements; the regulations summarized here may be found at 50 CFR part 648. Please contact the Sustainable Fisheries Division at (978) 281-9315 for more information.
Updated May 21, 2015*




U.S./Canada Management and Special Access Programs for Sector Vessels

Within the U.S./Canada Management Area, Georges Bank (GB) cod, GB haddock, and GB yellowtail flounder are managed under Total Allowable Catches (TACs), which are developed with Canada. The U.S./Canada Management Area is divided into the Western Area and the Eastern Area. The Eastern Area encompasses the U.S. portion of the U.S./Canada shared stock of GB cod and GB haddock, as well as a portion of GB yellowtail flounder stock. The Western Area encompasses the remaining area of the U.S./Canada GB yellowtail flounder stock. Within the Eastern Area, there are two special access programs (SAPs), and a third SAP that sits partially within the Western Area.

In fishing year (FY) 2015, sectors have been granted several exemptions that can be used in the U.S./Canada Management Area, including an exemption from trawl gear restrictions. However, be aware that accountability measure (AMs) are effective May 1, 2015, for the entire FY 2015 groundfish fishery, due to northern windowpane flounder catch limits being exceeded in FY 2014. The AM for this overage is a restricted gear area; the northern windowpane flounder AM lies within the U.S./Canada Management Area and supersedes any gears exemptions given to sectors. You should review each section of information to determine how it applies to your vessel.



-  Statistical Area (with ID#)
-  Groundfish Closed Area
-  Eastern U.S./Canada Area
-  Western U.S./Canada Area
-  Northern Windowpane Flounder Large Accountability Measure Area

- Special Access Program (SAP) Areas**
-  Closed Area I Hook Gear Haddock SAP
 -  Closed Area II Yellowtail Flounder-Haddock SAP
 -  Eastern US/Canada Haddock SAP

General Requirements of the U.S./Canada Management Area

What are the coordinates of the areas?

The Western and Eastern U.S./Canada Management Areas are defined by lines connecting the following points:

| Western U.S./Canada Area | | |
|--------------------------|---------|----------|
| Point | N. Lat. | W. Long. |
| USCA 1 | 42°20' | 68°50' |
| USCA 2 | 39°50' | 68°50' |
| USCA 3 | 39°50' | 66°40' |
| USCA 4 | 40°40' | 66°40' |
| USCA 5 | 40°40' | 66°50' |
| USCA 6 | 40°50' | 66°50' |
| USCA 7 | 40°50' | 67°00' |
| USCA 8 | 41°00' | 67°00' |
| USCA 9 | 41°00' | 67°20' |
| USCA 10 | 41°10' | 67°20' |
| USCA 11 | 41°10' | 67°40' |
| USCA 12 | 42°20' | 67°40' |
| USCA 1 | 42°20' | 68°50' |

| Eastern U.S./Canada Area | | |
|--------------------------|---------|----------|
| Point | N. Lat. | W. Long. |
| USCA 12 | 42°20' | 67°40' |
| USCA 11 | 41°10' | 67°40' |
| USCA 10 | 41°10' | 67°20' |
| USCA 9 | 41°00' | 67°20' |
| USCA 8 | 41°00' | 67°00' |
| USCA 7 | 40°50' | 67°00' |
| USCA 6 | 40°50' | 66°50' |
| USCA 5 | 40°40' | 66°50' |
| USCA 4 | 40°40' | 66°40' |
| USCA 15 | 40°30' | 66°40' |
| USCA 14 | 40°30' | 65°44.3' |
| USCA 13 | 42°20' | 67°18.4' |
| USCA 12 | 42°20' | 67°40' |

What is the FY 2015 season?

The portions of the Western and Eastern U.S./Canada Areas that are outside of Closed Areas I and II, are open year-round.

How do I declare a U.S./Canada trip?

Under the groundfish sector declaration screen on your vessel monitoring system (VMS) unit, you must declare one or more of the defined sub-areas (Eastern Area, Western Area, or SAPs) of the U.S./Canada Management Area in Step 4, and one or more broad stock areas (BSAs) in Step 5, prior to leaving the dock. If necessary, call our VMS team at 978-281-9213 for assistance with your VMS declaration.

Can I flex at-sea into any areas?

Yes, a flex is allowed once per trip by adding areas to the initial declaration while you're out fishing and away from the dock. Meaning, your new declaration must include the initial program area(s) and BSA(s) you declared from the dock, in addition to the other information (e.g., gear, DAS type) that was in your initial declaration. Most areas are available to flex into with a few exceptions.

1) You're not allowed to flex into the Eastern Area (outside of the SAPs) if your initial declaration didn't include the CA-2 Yellowtail/Haddock SAP or the Eastern U.S./Canada Haddock SAP. Meaning, if your initial declaration is only an Open Area, or an Open Area + Western Area, you can't flex into the Eastern Area. However, you can start in an Open Area and/or the Western Area and flex into any of the three SAPs.

2) The same exception applies to the Western Area. You're not allowed to flex into the Western Area if your initial declaration didn't include any of the three SAPs or the Eastern Area. Meaning, if your initial declaration is only an Open Area, you can't flex into the Western Area. However, you can start in an Open Area and flex into any of the three SAPs.

What are my VMS reporting requirements after I declare into the Eastern Area?

If you're declared into the Eastern Area, including the CA-2 Yellowtail/Haddock SAP or the Eastern U.S./Canada Haddock SAP, you must submit a **daily catch report** via VMS. The report must be submitted by 9 AM the following day and include all fields. You must enter each chart area fished under Step 4 on the form, and report all groundfish and non-groundfish kept.

If you do not declare the Eastern Area from the dock, and instead use the sector exemption to declare the CA-2 Yellowtail/Haddock SAP or the Eastern U.S./Canada Haddock SAP while at sea (known as flexing), you're required to submit a report indicating all of your catch from that trip up until the time you declared into the SAPs. Once you've declared into either of these SAPs, you must submit **daily reports for the remainder of the trip**.

Beginning FY 2015, vessels that declare their intent to fish within and outside of the Gulf of Maine Broad Stock Area on the same trip must submit daily VMS catch reports for the duration of the trip.

What are my VMS reporting requirements if I do not declare into the Eastern Area?

If you're declared into the Western Area only and do not flex at sea into either of the Eastern Area SAPs, you must submit a trip level report via VMS. If you only fish in a single broad stock area, only fill out Steps 1 and 2. If you fish in more than one broad stock area, you must fill out all fields, including Step 4 for each chart area fished.

What are my vessel trip report (VTR) requirements?

You must submit a VTR for each gear type, mesh/ring size, or chart area fished. In the event that tows or placement of fixed gear (gillnets, long lines, etc.) crosses chart area boundaries, you must fill out a VTR for each area and apportion your catch based upon a good faith estimate.

EXAMPLE: If you're a trawler and your tow goes across areas 515 and 521, with 80% of your time spent in area 515, you would allocate 80% of your total catch for the tows to chart area 515 and the remaining 20% to area 521. The same basic method applies to fixed gear. If your

gillnet string or long line straddles a chart area boundary, you must apportion the total catch based upon what percentage of the string was in each chart area. Please contact the VTR Support Team at 978-281-9246 if you require clarification of this requirement.

How are my VTRs and VMS catch reports used for catch attribution?

We use the chart areas reported on VMS catch reports and VTRs to apportion catch to specific stock allocations. For example, cod caught in area 562 is attributed to Eastern Area cod, while cod caught from area 515 is attributed to Gulf of Maine cod.

Do I have groundfish landing limits?

You remain exempt from trip limits for most groundfish species, however, you are allowed one halibut per trip, and may not possess Atlantic wolffish, ocean pout, or windowpane flounder.

What are my gear restrictions this year?

Because of a sector exemption, you may use all approved gear types that are allowed in the GB Regulated Mesh Area (RMA) in areas that do not overlap with the northern windowpane flounder AM. When fishing in the northern windowpane flounder AM area, you are required to use one of the following selective trawl gears: 1) Haddock separator trawl; 2) Ruhle trawl; or a 3) rope separator trawl. If you are using a haddock separator trawl or Ruhle trawl, you are allowed to use a cod end as small as 6-inches, otherwise, you must use a cod end of at least 6.5-inches. The chart on the first page depicts the northern windowpane flounder AM area; the coordinates are below.

| N. Windowpane Flounder AM Area | | |
|--------------------------------|---------|----------|
| Point | N. Lat. | W. Long. |
| 1 | 42°10' | 67°40' |
| 2 | 42°10' | 67°20' |
| 3 | 41°00' | 67°20' |
| 4 | 41°00' | 67°00' |
| 5 | 40°50' | 67°00' |
| 6 | 40°50' | 67°40' |
| 1 | 42°10' | 67°40' |

Do I get a DAS credit for fishing only in the Eastern Area?

Yes, if you declare and fish exclusively in the Eastern Area, your DAS are charged only for the time inside the area. If you fish inside and outside of the Eastern Area on the same trip, DAS are charged normal.

Eastern U.S./Canada Haddock SAP

What are the coordinates of the areas?

The Eastern U.S./Canada Haddock SAP Area is defined by lines connecting the following points, in order:

| Point | N. Lat. | W. Long. |
|-------|---------|----------|
| 1 | 42°22' | 67°20' |
| 2 | 42°20' | 67°20' |
| 3 | 42°20' | 67°40' |
| 4 | 41°10' | 67°40' |
| 5 | 41°10' | 67°20' |
| 6 | 42°10' | 67°20' |
| 7 | 42°10' | 67°10' |
| 1 | 42°22' | 67°20' |

What is the FY 2015 season?

The Eastern U.S./Canada Haddock SAP is open May 1 through December 31.

What are my gear restrictions this year?

You may use all approved gear types that are allowed in the GB RMA in areas that do not overlap with the northern windowpane flounder restricted gear area AM. When fishing in the northern windowpane flounder AM area, you are required to use one of the following selective trawl gears: 1) Haddock separator trawl; 2) Ruhle trawl; or a 3) rope separator trawl. If you are using a haddock separator trawl or Ruhle trawl, you are allowed to use a 6-inch cod end, otherwise, you must use 6.5-inch cod end.

Closed Area II Yellowtail Flounder/Haddock SAP

What are the coordinates of the areas?

The CA II Yellowtail Flounder/Haddock SAP is defined by lines connecting the following points in the order listed:

| Point | N. Lat. | W. Long. |
|-------|----------|----------|
| 1 | 41°30' | 67°20' |
| 2 | 41°30' | 66°34.8' |
| 3 | 41°18.6' | 66°24.8' |
| 4 | 41°00' | 66°35.8' |
| 5 | 41°00' | 67°20' |
| 1 | 41°30' | 67°20' |

What is the FY 2015 season?

The CA II Yellowtail Flounder/Haddock SAP is open May 1 through January 31.

What are my gear restrictions this year?

With the exception of a flounder trawl, you may use all approved gear types that are allowed in the GB RMA in areas that do not overlap with the northern windowpane flounder restricted gear area AM. When fishing in the northern windowpane flounder AM area, you are required to use one of the following selective trawl gears: 1) Haddock separator trawl; 2) Ruhle trawl; or a 3) rope separator trawl. If you are using a haddock separator trawl or Ruhle trawl, you are allowed to use a 6-inch cod end, otherwise, you must use 6.5-inch cod end.

Closed Area I Hook Gear Haddock SAP

What are the coordinates of the area?

The CA I HGH Access Area is defined by lines connecting the following points:

| Point | N. Lat. | W. Long. |
|-------|---------|----------|
| 1 | 41°09' | 68°30' |
| 2 | 41°30' | 68°30' |
| 3 | 41°30' | 69°23' |
| 4 | 41°04' | 69°01' |

What is the FY 2015 season?

The CA I Hook Gear Haddock SAP is open May 1 through January 31.

What are my gear restrictions this year?

If you are declared into and fishing in this SAP, you may only possess on board and fish with demersal longline gear or tub trawl gear.

What is the overall haddock TAC?

For FY 2015, there is a shared Sector and common pool haddock TAC of 5,396,916 lb for this SAP. Once this TAC is caught, the SAP shall be closed to all NE multispecies vessels.

What are my VMS reporting requirements?

You must submit a daily catch report for each day fished in the CA I HGH SAP Area in 24-hr intervals, measured from 0000 hr to 2400 hr. If your sector does not have an exemption from the daily reporting requirement, then the report must be sent to your sector manager. If your sector has an exemption from this requirement, you must submit your daily catch report to us.

Beginning FY 2015, vessels that declare their intent to fish within and outside of the Gulf of Maine Broad Stock Area on the same trip must submit daily VMS catch reports for the duration of the trip.

What are my sector's reporting requirements?

The sector manager must submit daily reports to us summarizing the sector's: Total pounds of haddock, cod, yellowtail flounder, winter flounder, witch flounder, American plaice, and white hake kept; total pounds of haddock, cod, yellowtail flounder, winter flounder, witch flounder, American plaice, and white hake discarded; date fish were caught; and VTR serial numbers of each trip. Some sectors have an exemption from this requirement, so refer to your operation's plan.

Gear Definitions

Haddock separator trawl:

A haddock separator trawl is defined as a groundfish trawl modified to a vertically oriented trouser trawl configuration, with two extensions arranged one over the other, where a codend is attached only to the upper extension, and the bottom extension is left open and does not have a codend attached. A horizontal large-mesh separating panel constructed with a minimum of 6.0-inch diamond mesh must be installed between the selvages joining the upper and lower panels, extending forward from the front of the trouser junction to the aft edge of the first belly behind the fishing circle. Either a two-seam or a four-seam bottom trawl net may be used, provided they meet the requirements below.

-Two-seam bottom trawl nets: For two-seam nets, the separator panel must be constructed such that the width of the forward edge of the panel is 80-85 percent of the width of the after edge of the first belly of the net where the panel is attached. For example, if the belly is 200 meshes wide (from selvedge to selvedge), the separator panel must be no wider than 160-170 meshes wide.

-Four-seam bottom trawl nets: For four-seam nets, the separator panel must be constructed such that the width of the forward edge of the panel is 90-95 percent of the width of the after edge of the first belly of the net where the panel is attached. For example, if the belly is 200 meshes wide (from selvedge to selvedge), the separator panel must be no wider than 180-190 meshes. The separator panel must be attached to both of the side panels of the net along the midpoint of the side panels. For example, if the side panel is 100 meshes tall, the separator panel must be attached at the 50th mesh.

Ruhle trawl:

A Ruhle trawl is defined as a four-seam bottom groundfish trawl with large meshes in the forward panels, reducing in size toward the trawl's codend. All meshes in the forward panels, except for the square and square side panels, must measure at least 7.9 ft. The square and square side panel meshes, and those panel meshes immediately aft of the fishing circle, must measure at least 31.5 inches. The first bottom belly must contain meshes measuring at least 7.9 ft. The second bottom belly meshes must measure at least 31.5 inches. All remaining panels must contain meshes measuring at least 7.9-inches. For complete construction parameters, including fishing circle, sweep, and kite requirements, please see § 648.85(b)(6)(iv)(I)(3).

Flounder trawl:

A flounder trawl net is defined as bottom trawl gear meeting one of the following two net descriptions:

-A two-seam, low-rise net constructed with 6-inch diamond mesh or 6.5-inch square mesh, where the maximum footrope length is not greater than 105 ft and the headrope is at least 30 percent longer than the footrope. The footrope and headrope lengths shall be measured from the forward wing end. The codend must be either 6.5-inch diamond or 6.5-inch square mesh.

-A two-seam, low-rise net constructed with 6-inch diamond mesh or 6.5-inch square mesh, with the exception that the top panel of the net contains a section of mesh at least 10 ft long and stretching from selvedge to selvedge, composed of at least 12-inch mesh that is inserted no farther than 4.5 meshes behind the headrope. The codend must be either 6.5-inch diamond or 6.5-inch square mesh.