New England Fishery Management Council
50 WATER STREET | NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS 01950 | PHONE 978 465 0492 | FAX 978 465 3116
John Pappalardo, *Chairman* | Paul J. Howard, *Executive Director*

Herring At-Sea Processing/Observer Coverage

Public Comments
and
Correspondence Received

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Thursday, June 07, 2007 9:27 AM
To: joan
Subject: FW: Action alert: Need your Support for Herring Management

-----Original Message-----
From: Fisher, David E.,M.D. u]
Sent: Thursday, June 07, 2007 6:48 AM
To: Paul Howard
Cc: Pat Kurkul
Subject: FW: Action alert: Need your Support for Herring Management

June 7, 2007

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council 50 Water Street, Mill 2 Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Dear Captain Howard and Administrator Kurkul,

I write to you today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New England's industrial herring fleet.

The Atlantic herring fishery has serious problems that need to be addressed with a framework to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatches of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. It's time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP. The framework should include:

- Mandatory industry-funded observer coverage for midwater trawlers and USAPs
- Requirements to bring all fish aboard for sampling (no dumping of bags at sea)
- Ecosystem-based Area Total Allowable Catch (TAC) setting that takes the needs of predators into account
- A mandatory weigh-master system whenever midwater trawl ships unload that reports catch and bycatch on a daily basis

- An inshore buffer zone that keeps midwater trawl ships at least 50 miles from shore

In addition to changes to the herring FMP, action needs to be taken to keep midwater trawl ships out of Groundfish Closed Areas to protect groundfish stocks of concern. Bycatch caps, such as those instituted for haddock as part of Framework 43 to the multispecies groundfish FMP, need to be put in place to protect, at a minimum: groundfish stocks of concern and whiting.

The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. I encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

David E. Fisher

David E. Fisher MD, PhD
Director, Melanoma Program in Medical Oncology Professor, Division of Pediatric Hematology/Oncology Dana-Farber Cancer Institute Children's Hospital Boston Harvard Medical School D630, 44 Binney St.
Boston, MA 02115

administrative assistant

From: Ammegzig@aol.com
Sent: Thursday, June 07, 2007 8:06 AM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

June 7, 2007

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
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Alan Ziegler

Home Road

Great Barrington, MA 01230

6/8/2007

From: Robert More
Sent: Thursday, June 07, 2007 7:34 AM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Herring management

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill
2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

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Signed,

Robert More

6/8/2007

From: Paul Howard
Sent: Thursday, June 07, 2007 10:52 AM
To: Joan O'Leary
Subject: FW: Spam:Herring Management

-----Original Message-----
From: Grogan, Robert A [
Sent: Thursday, June 07, 2007 9:23 AM
To: Paul Howard; Pat Kurkul
Subject: Spam:Herring Management

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council 50 Water Street, Mill 2 Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

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Sincerely,

Robert Grogan

From: Paul Howard
Sent: Thursday, June 07, 2007 1:44 PM
To: Joan O'Leary
Subject: FW: Herring Fishery

From: Bob Pink Jr [ma
Sent: Thursday, June 07, 2007 1:30 PM
To: Paul Howard; Pat Kurkul
Subject: Herring Fishery

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Signed,

6/8/2007

Bob Pink Jr

162 Tappan St
Brookline, MA 02445

6/8/2007

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Thursday, June 07, 2007 10:03 AM
To: joan
Subject: FW: Action Needed to Fixx Herring Fishery

From: Eric R Zornberg
Sent: Thursday, June 07, 2007 9:51 AM
To: Paul Howard; Pat Kurkul
Subject: Action Needed to Fixx Herring Fishery

June 8, 2007

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street
Mill 2 Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

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Signed,
Eric R. Zornberg
66 Ashcroft Road
Sharon, MA 02067-1402

6/8/2007

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Thursday, June 07, 2007 9:49 AM
To: joan
Subject: FW: herring

From: Anastasi, Linda
Sent: Thursday, June 07, 2007 9:26 AM
To: Paul Howard
Subject:

June 7, 2007

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

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Signed,

Linda Anastasi
Clinton, MA

6/8/2007

From:
Sent: Thursday, June 07, 2007 8:00 AM
To: Paul Howard; Pat Kurkul
Cc:
Subject: Herring Fishery

June 7, 2007

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

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Signed,

Martin Schlager
New Jersey

6/8/2007

5, June,2007

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

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Signed,

Capt Rich Milligan, President Northeast Charterboat Captains Association
Revere, MA 02151

May 25, 2007

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

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Signed,

Cheryl Bartlett Please take action!!

Ms. Cheryl Bartlett
SBPF
P.O. Box 1248
Nantucket, MA 02554

From: Paul Howard
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2007 10:32 AM
To: Joan O'Leary
Subject: FW: Spam:proactive herring management

From: Hank DeRuiter
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 9:31 PM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Spam:proactive herring management

Dear Mr. Howard:
I am a member of MACC and I wanted you to know that I support CHOIR's effort urging proactive herring management.

From: Paul Howard
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2007 10:33 AM
To: Joan O'Leary
Subject: FW: Mid-water Help

-----Original Message-----
From: Newburyport Whale Watch
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 8:44 PM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Mid-water Help

June 5th 2007

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council 50 Water Street, Mill 2 Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

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Being an owner/operator of a whale watch vessel I see first hand the impact the mid-water boats.Not only do they take the food sourse for the whales but also birds as well as fin fish and ground fish.On many occasions we see the dumped by-catch floating next to the mid-water boats,observers onboard would elininate this.When I was in Gloucester last summer one mid-water had their nets stretched out and their ground chains were as shiny as ever (that only happens when your net is on the bottom).I urge you do only be fair and limit this fishery and moniter it so our stocks won't be wiped out as they have wiped out stocks in other countries.
Signed,

William Neelon
Newburyport Whale Watch

Our 95-foot Prince of Whales is one of the largest, fastest, and most comfortable whale watching boats north of Boston! Newburyport Whale Watch On the Boardwalk 54 Merrimac Street, Newburyport, MA 01950
800-848-1111 (outside New England call 978-499-0832) Visit our web site at http://www.WeLikeWhales.com

From: Paul Howard
Sent: Wednesday, June 06, 2007 10:33 AM
To: Joan O'Leary
Subject: FW: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

From: Bob Jencks
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 8:29 PM
To: Paul Howard; Pat Kurkul
Subject: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
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Signed,

Bob Jencks
Harwich Port, MA

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 11:01 AM
To: joan
Subject: FW: Herring Fishery

-----Original Message----
From: David.M.Wrightson
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 10:52 AM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Herring Fishery

I'm sure you've received copies of the following form letter from many others. I would like to let you know I agree with it. We have a tremendous fishery off the coast of New England and a duty to protect and properly manage it. Thoughtful management must include the aggressive protection on the base of the food chain.

Thanks,
Dave Wrightson, Andover, MA_

Dear Captain Howard and Administrator Kurkul,

I write to you today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New England's industrial herring fleet.

The Atlantic herring fishery has serious problems that need to be addressed with a framework to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatches of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. It's time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP. The framework should include:

•Mandatory industry-funded observer coverage for midwater trawlers and USAPs •Requirements to bring all fish aboard for sampling (no dumping of bags at
sea)
•Ecosystem-based Area Total Allowable Catch (TAC) setting that takes the needs of predators into account •A mandatory weigh-master system whenever midwater trawl ships unload that reports catch and bycatch on a daily basis •An inshore buffer zone that keeps midwater trawl ships at least 50 miles from shore

In addition to changes to the herring FMP, action needs to be taken to keep midwater trawl ships out of Groundfish Closed Areas to protect groundfish stocks of concern. Bycatch caps, such as those instituted for haddock as part of Framework 43 to the multispecies groundfish FMP, need to be put in place to protect, at a minimum: groundfish stocks of concern and whiting.

The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. I encourage you to take

action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Signed,
Dave Wrightson, Andover, MA_____

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 11:26 AM
To: joan
Subject: FW: Spam:Merring Management issue

-----Original Message-----
From: Brendan Blumenstiel [mailtc
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 11:02 AM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Spam:Merring Management issue

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council 50 Water Street, Mill 2 Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Dear Captain Howard and Administrator Kurkul,

I write to you today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New England's industrial herring fleet.

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Signed,

Brendan Blumenstiel
Arlington, MA

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 11:31 AM
To: joan
Subject: FW: Spam:Issue with herring management

----Original Message-----
From: Brendan Blumenstiel [
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 11:01 AM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Spam:Issue with herring management

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council 50 Water Street, Mill 2 Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

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From: Lori Steele
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 11:36 AM
To: joan
Subject: FW: Action request

From: Michael Sosik [mailto:
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 11:33 AM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Action request

June 5, 2007

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Dear Mr. Howard:

I write to you today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New England's industrial herring fleet.

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action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Respectfully,

Michael F. Sosik, Jr. (Captain)
P.O. Box 7
Sturbridge, MA 01566

Joan O'Leary

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 10:02 AM
To: joan
Subject: FW: Spam:herring management
Attachments: Herring Action Letter.doc

From: David Gittins [mailto:
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 8:17 AM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Spam:herring management

Hello Paul,

I am a board member of the Maine Charterboat Capt's Association and support CHOIR's effort urging proactive herring management. Please see the attachment which I'm sure you are familiar with by now. Thank you

Regards,

Dave Gittins
85 Bog Road
York, Maine 03909
F

June 5, 2007

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

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The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. I encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Sincerely,

Capt. Dave Gittins
85 Bog Road
York, Maine 03909

From: Paul Morlock
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2007 7:49 PM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery
Importance: High

Dear Captain Howard,

I write to you **again** today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New England's industrial herring fleet.

The Atlantic herring fishery has serious problems that need to be addressed with a framework to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatches of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. It's time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP. The framework should include:

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The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. I encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.
Best regards - Paul Morlock
803 White Cedar Blvd.
Portsmouth, NH 03801
603-319-4909

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 10:01 AM
To: joan
Subject: FW: Spam:ecosystems

-----Original Mess
From: Dinda Evans ,
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2007 4:46 PM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Spam:ecosystems

Dear Captain Howard,

The Atlantic herring fishery is currently being conducted in a manner that puts Gulf of Maine predators at risk and weakens rebuilding efforts for depleted fish stocks such as cod, haddock and tuna.
United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without observer coverage, permitting 20% of the herring catch to bypass sampling that is critical for implementing bycatch caps and for documenting the effects of trawl gear on other non-targeted species.
The bycatch that results from trawling is substantial, yet midwater trawl ships operate with minimal observer coverage and are allowed to fish in areas closed for haddock and other groundfish recovery. Though herring is a keystone prey species in the Gulf of Maine ecosystem, the Council continues to set herring catch limits based on single-species methods that do not take into account the needs of predators in the region.

Given the dire condition of many of New England's fisheries and understanding the importance of a healthy herring resource to restoring these fisheries, allowing the herring industry to continue on its present course is unacceptable. The New England Fishery Management Council must act immediately to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the management of herring.

The framework should include:

1. Mandatory observer coverage for midwater trawlers and USAPs including protocols that prevent dumping at sea so that all catches can be sampled; 2. Ecosystem-based Area Total Allowable Catch (TAC) levels that prioritize and explicitly provide an adequate prey base for predators; 3. Area closures that keep midwater trawl ships away from groundfish closed areas and sensitive nearshore habitat year-round.

Thank you for your consideration.

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 10:00 AM
To: joan
Subject: FW: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

From: donna
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2007 1:07 PM
To: Paul Howard; Pat Kurkul
Subject: RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Dear Captain Howard and Administrator Kurkul,

I write to you today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New England's industrial herring fleet.

The Atlantic herring fishery has serious problems that need to be addressed with a framework to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatches of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. It's time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP. The framework should include:

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•A mandatory weigh-master system whenever midwater trawl ships unload that reports catch and bycatch on a daily basis
•An inshore buffer zone that keeps midwater trawl ships at least 50 miles from shore

In addition to changes to the herring FMP, action needs to be taken to keep midwater trawl ships out of Groundfish Closed Areas to protect groundfish stocks of concern. Byactch caps, such as those instituted for haddock as part of Framework 43 to the multispecies groundfish FMP, need to be put in place to protect, at a minimum: groundfish stocks of concern; whiting; and dogfish.

The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. I encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Respectfully yours,
Donna McLaughlin

From: Rich Marks
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2007 10:52 PM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Spam:The All Important Hering!

Dear Captain Howard,

The Atlantic herring fishery is currently being conducted in a manner that puts Gulf of Maine predators at risk and weakens rebuilding efforts for depleted fish stocks such as cod, haddock and tuna. United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without observer coverage, permitting 20% of the herring catch to bypass sampling that is critical for implementing bycatch caps and for documenting the effects of trawl gear on other non-targeted species. The bycatch that results from trawling is substantial, yet midwater trawl ships operate with minimal observer coverage and are allowed to fish in areas closed for haddock and other groundfish recovery. Though herring is a keystone prey species in the Gulf of Maine ecosystem, the Council continues to set herring catch limits based on single-species methods that do not take into account the needs of predators in the region.

Given the dire condition of many of New England's fisheries and understanding the importance of a healthy herring resource to restoring these fisheries, allowing the herring industry to continue on its present course is unacceptable. The New England Fishery Management Council must act immediately to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the management of herring.

The framework should include:

1. Mandatory observer coverage for midwater trawlers and USAPs including protocols that prevent dumping at sea so that all catches can be sampled;
2. Ecosystem-based Area Total Allowable Catch (TAC) levels that prioritize and explicitly provide an adequate prey base for predators;
3. Area closures that keep midwater trawl ships away from groundfish closed areas and sensitive nearshore habitat year-round;
4. Consistently erring on the side of conservation of all important fishes in the fishery, and that means EVERY fish, in order to allow the top predators in the food chain to recover significant biomass and completely recover.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Richard Marks
3 Longbrook Rd.
Byfield, MA 01922
(978) 462-9961

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 9:57 AM
To: joan
Subject: FW: Action needed to fix Herring Fishery

From: michaeldoty50@comcast.net [m t]
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2007 11:09 AM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Action needed to fix Herring Fishery

Dear Captain Howard,

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An inshore buffer zone that keeps midwater trawlers at least 50 miles from shore.

In addition to changes to Herring FMP, action needs to be taken to keep midwater trawl ships out of Grounfish Closed Areas to protect groundfish stocks of concern. Bycatch caps, such as those instituted for Haddock as part of Framework 43 to the multispecies groundfish FMP, need to be put in place to protect, at a minimum: groundfish stocks of concern and Whiting.

The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New Englands healthy fisheries and rebuilding of groundfish and Whiting stocks. I encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Sincerely,

Michael Doty

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 9:57 AM
To: joan
Subject: FW: Mid Water Herring Trawlers

From: Brad Greenwood
Sent: Monday, June 04, 2007 10:36 AM
To: Paul Howard; Pat Kurkul
Subject: Mid Water Herring Trawlers

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Dear Captain Howard and Administrator Kurkul,

I am sure you have seen this letter a few times before, but I want to make sure you see it from me. I am an avid fisherman, as well as a conservationist who is deeply concerned over this topic. It seems to effect so many people and residents of our great ocean. I think it is well worth our time and efforts to help it out. I do not believe the current regulations and taking of herring from the Gulf of Maine is the right thing for everyone involved. Too much is being taken, and we need to stop it now before it is too late for future generations to witness and enjoy. Please consider stricter limits on this fishery, it is the right thing to do.

I write to you today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New England's industrial herring fleet.

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Signed,

Capt. Brad Greenwood
Kittery, ME

RECEIVED
JUN 04 2007
NEW ENGLAND FISHERY
MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

From:
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2007 4:24 PM
To: Paul Howard; Pat Kurkul
Subject: Spam:Herring

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council 50 Water Street, Mill 2 Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries One Blackburn Drive Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

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Signed,

Danny Hunter

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RECEIVED
JUN 04 2007
NEW ENGLAND FISHERY
MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

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Signed,

Robert Tomilson

6/1/07

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

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The Atlantic herring fishery has serious problems that need to be addressed with a framework to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatches of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. It's time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP. The framework should include:

- Mandatory industry-funded observer coverage for midwater trawlers and USAPs
- Requirements to bring all fish aboard for sampling (no dumping of bags at sea)
- Ecosystem-based Area Total Allowable Catch (TAC) setting that takes the needs of predators into account
- A mandatory weigh-master system whenever midwater trawl ships unload that reports catch and bycatch on a daily basis
- An inshore buffer zone that keeps midwater trawl ships at least 50 miles from shore

In addition to changes to the herring FMP, action needs to be taken to keep midwater trawl ships out of Groundfish Closed Areas to protect groundfish stocks of concern. Bycatch caps, such as those instituted for haddock as part of Framework 43 to the multispecies groundfish FMP, need to be put in place to protect, at a minimum: groundfish stocks of concern and whiting.

The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. I encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Signed,

Frank

Frank Gaul
248 Central St
Hingham, MA 02043

cc: LS(6/5)

RHODE ISLAND
SALTWATER ANGLERS
Association

6 Arnold Road, Coventry, Rhode Island 02816 401-826-2121 FAX: 401-826-3546 www.RISAA.org

June 1, 2007

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Herring Fishery

Dear Director Howard,

The Rhode Island Saltwater Anglers Association, representing over 6,000 recreational anglers and 30 affiliated clubs, urges the NEFMC to address issues of inadequate management of the New England indistrial herring fleet. We are concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and its traditional fisheries.

Midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatches of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. The New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service must initiate a framework that will fix these deficiencies in the herring FMP.

The framework should include:

- Mandatory industry-funded observer coverage for midwater trawlers and USAPs
- Requirements to bring all fish aboard for sampling (no dumping of bags at sea)
- Ecosystem-based Area Total Allowable Catch (TAC) setting that takes the needs of predators into account
- A mandatory weigh-master system whenever midwater trawl ships unload that reports catch and bycatch on a daily basis
- An inshore buffer zone that keeps midwater trawl ships at least 50 miles from shore

In addition to these changes, action needs to be taken to keep midwater trawl ships out of Groundfish Closed Areas to protect groundfish stocks of concern. Bycatch caps, such as those instituted for haddock as part of Framework 43 to the multispecies groundfish FMP, need to be put in place to protect these stocks. The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. We encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Respectfully,

Stephen J. Medeiros
President

WLS/10/10

GREENPEACE
702 H Street, NW, Suite 300, Washington, DC 20001
Tel: 202-462-1177 • Fax: 202-462-4507
www.greenpeaceusa.org

June 1, 2007

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RE: Needed Changes to Address Serious Problems with the NE Herring Fishery

Dear Captain Howard and Administrator Kurkul,

Greenpeace writes to you today on behalf of our 2.8 million members because we are extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. Our concern arises from the inadequate management of New England's industrial herring fleet. No other fishery in American waters the scale of the New England industrial herring fleet is allowed to operate with so little accountability.

The Atlantic herring Fishery Management Plan (FMP) has serious problems that urgently need to be addressed. Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without adequate monitoring or observer coverage. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatch of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. It's time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP. Immediate actions should include:

- Mandatory industry-funded observer coverage for midwater trawlers and USAPs
- Requirements to bring all fish aboard for sampling (no dumping of bags at sea)
- Ecosystem-based Area Total Allowable Catch (TAC) setting that takes the needs of predators into account
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The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and

cc: LS (6/5)

whiting stocks. Greenpeace encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Signed,

Phil Kline

Phil Kline
Senior Ocean Campaigner, Greenpeace

June 1, 2007

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Dear Captain Howard,

I write to you today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New England's industrial herring fleet.

The Atlantic herring fishery has serious problems that need to be addressed with a framework to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatches of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. It's time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP. The framework should include:

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cc: LS(6/5)

The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. I encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Signed,

Scott Almeida
24 R.F. Higgins Drive
Norwell, MA 02061

THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR HARD WORK ON THIS AND THE MANY ISSUES FACING THE FISHERY!

From: David Guerard [om]
Sent: Sunday, June 03, 2007 2:12 PM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Spam:Herring Management

I am a member of MACC and I urge you to support CHOIRS proactive herring management plan.
Thank You
Capt. Dave Guerard
1 Georgia St.
yORK me 03909

From: Glenn Justice
Sent: Sunday, June 03, 2007 9:53 AM
To: Paul Howard; Pat Kurkul

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

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Signed,
Glenn Justice
3 Florence Street
Plymouth, Ma 02360

From: Glenn Clohecy [t]
Sent: Sunday, June 03, 2007 3:57 PM
To: Paul Howard
Cc: Pat Kurkul
Subject: Spam:Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

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Signed,

Glenn Clohecy

From: Mark
Sent: Sunday, June 03, 2007 4:37 PM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Herring

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950
RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Dear Captain Howard and Administrator Kurkul,

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The Atlantic herring fishery has serious problems that need to be addressed with a framework to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatches of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. It's time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP. The framework should include:

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The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. I encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

As an active recreational angler I experience great joy in the use of our Marine fisheries. I travel through out New England and have seen and read of the devastation and impact these trawler have had on our ecosystem. It begins with herring then menhaden and on and on and on....With out action the demise of our Marine fisheries is clear. Pleas take action.
Thank You,

Mark Clancy

From: Pete
Sent: Sunday, June 03, 2007 5:20 PM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Spam:Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Dear Captain Howard,

I write to you today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New Englands industrial herring fleet.

The Atlantic herring fishery has serious problems that need to be addressed with a framework to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatches of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. Its time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP. The framework should include:

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The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New Englands healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. I encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Signed,
Pete Wells

From: F

Sent: Saturday, June 02, 2007 3:56 PM

To: Paul Howard

Subject: Herring

I am a member of MACC and support CHOIRS effort urging proactive herring management.

Regards, Ben Thomas

From: Dave Langan
Sent: Saturday, June 02, 2007 10:14 PM
To: Pat Kurkul; Paul Howard
Subject: Spam:New England's Industrial Herring Fleet

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council 50 Water Street, Mill 2 Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Dear Captain Howard and Administrator Kurkul,

I write to you today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New England's industrial herring fleet.

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The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. I encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Signed,

David A. Langan, PhD

9 Lincoln Avenue
Clifton Park, NY 12065

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 9:57 AM
To: Joan O'Leary
Subject: FW: Herring Fishery

From: Himber, Ralph [m
Sent: Sunday, June 03, 2007 9:08 PM
To: Paul Howard; Pat Kurkul
Subject: Herring Fishery

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

Captain Howard and Administrator Kurkul,

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Signed,

Ralph Himber
Outside Sales
Jackson Lumber & Millwork
617-869-5195
rhimber@jacksonlumber.com

From: Harvey Wheeler
Sent: Saturday, June 02, 2007 2:58 PM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Spam:herring management

Paul,

As a veteran Maine fishing guide and member of the Maine Association of Charter Captains, I can assure you that the herring population in the Gulf of Maine desperately needs protection. PLEASE do what you can do to assure that these important forage fish are managed properly with a look to the future.

Sincerely,

Captain Harvey Wheeler

From: Donald SPROUL
Sent: Saturday, June 02, 2007 10:25 AM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Spam:Please help with our herring fisheries!

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Dear Captain Howard:

I write to you today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New Englands industrial herring fleet.

The Atlantic herring fishery has serious problems that need to be addressed with a framework to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatches of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. Its time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP. The framework should include:

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Thanks!

Don Sproul

From: Jim McCully
Sent: Saturday, June 02, 2007 9:24 AM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: NEFMC business

Paul: I am writing to urge you to support proactive management and monitoring of herring, as part of the overall gamefish management program in New England coastal states. Most statements about fishing are based on anecdotal evidence and speculation. However, *one thing is certain: to find gamefish, you must find the natural bait - there are no predators where there are no prey*. In addition to management of gamefish species, it is essential to monitor the foodchain, and do what you can to manage baitfish such as herring.

Thank you for your time. --- Dr. J. G. McCully.

From: TODD COLWELL
Sent: Saturday, June 02, 2007 8:21 AM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Spam:Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Dear Captain Howard and Administrator Kurkul,

I write to you today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New Englands industrial herring fleet.

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Signed Todd Colwell
9 Hartshorn ave Malden M.A.
02148

From: phiggs
Sent: Saturday, June 02, 2007 12:26 PM
To: Paul Howard; pat.kukul@noaa.gov
Subject: Spam:Herring fishery

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

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fisheries.

sincerely,

Paul W. Higgins
Eastham, MA

RECEIVED
JUN 02 2007
NEW ENGLAND FISHERY
MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

From: Steve Wilson [k
Sent: Saturday, June 02, 2007 11:03 AM
To: Paul Howard
Cc: Pat Kurkul
Subject: Spam:Herring Fishery Issues

Good morning Paul and Pat,

By way of re-introduction, this is Steve Wilson of Bath, Maine. We met at a BIW Retiree Breakfast on October 4, 2001 where you were our featured speaker. I am pleased that you have continued this important work of managing New England's fisheries. I am writing this note to seek your continued support of the work of the CHOIR Coalition addressing the in-shore depletion of herring.

While much has been accomplished, including the enactment if Alternative 7 to Amendment 1 in March of this year, still more work remains. These include the establishment of coastal buffer zones south of the Gulf of Maine, capping the bycatch of haddock and put in place bycatch caps to control the bycatch mortality of cod, dog fish, striped bass, tuna, and marine mammals, and increasing the observer coverage from the present 3% to a target of 100%.

While these minimum steps will have some effect on the herring fishery, I personally believe that permitting the operation of the single and paired mid-water trawlers to continue to operate will ultimately result in the collapse of the herring fishery. When you permit the harvest of herring by paired trawling vessels up to 150ft in length capable of holding a million fish per trip, it is a fisheries disaster waiting to happen.

Thanks for listening Paul,

Steve Wilson
21 Webber Ave
Bath, ME 04530

From: gordon gillies
Sent: Saturday, June 02, 2007 9:23 AM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: protect herring

Dear Sir:

By now you will have heard from the President of the Maine Association of Charterboat Captains on the issue of measures that need to be taken to protect the herring stock.

I am not a biologist, in fact a retired English teacher, but I do know enough science to conclude that the future of recreational fishing depends upon the availability of a healthy stock of herring. Please do what you can to insure that herring schools flourish in the waters on our coastline. The recommendations of CHOIR seem to be reasonable and timely.

Sincerely,
Capt. Gordon M. Gillies

Capt. Gordon M. Gillies
Gillies&Fallon Guide Service, LLC
80 Gillies Road
Bath, Maine 04530
207-442 0077

From: Beckman, Brian @ GS
Sent: Saturday, June 02, 2007 9:54 AM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Pro Herring Management

Dear Paul,
I am MACC member and I fully support CHOIR's effort urging proactive herring management.
r/Brian Beckman
979 Middle St.
Bath, ME 04530

From: John Albin [j
Sent: Saturday, June 02, 2007 9:01 AM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Spam:Herring Management

Just wanted to send you a quick note to let you know that I am in full support of CHOIR's effort for Herring management. Herring are an important food source for many of our fish.

John Albin, MACC

From: Rick Parks
Sent: Saturday, June 02, 2007 7:07 AM
To: Paul Howard; Pat Kurkul
Subject: Spam:Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Dear Captain Howard and Administrator Kurkul,

I write to you today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New England's industrial herring fleet.
The Atlantic herring fishery has serious problems that need to be addressed with a framework to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatches of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. It's time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP. The framework should include:

•Mandatory industry-funded observer coverage for midwater trawlers and USAPs
•Requirements to bring all fish aboard for sampling (no dumping of bags at sea)
•Ecosystem-based Area Total Allowable Catch (TAC) setting that takes the needs of predators into account

•A mandatory weigh-master system whenever midwater trawl ships unload that reports catch and bycatch on a daily basis
•An inshore buffer zone that keeps midwater trawl ships at least 50 miles from shore

In addition to changes to the herring FMP, action needs to be taken to keep midwater trawl ships out of Groundfish Closed Areas to protect groundfish stocks of concern. Bycatch caps, such as those instituted for haddock as part of Framework 43 to the multispecies groundfish FMP, need to be put in place to protect, at a minimum: groundfish stocks of concern; whiting; and dogfish.

The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. I encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Signed,

Rick Parks
6 Apple Blossom Way
Groveland, MA 01834

From: DON NADEAU
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2007 7:41 PM
To: Paul Howard; Pat Kurkul
Subject: Spam:Herring

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

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Signed,
Don Nadeau

From: Marc Senechal
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2007 6:44 PM
To: Pat Kurkul
Cc: Paul Howard
Subject: Spam:Action needed to fix herring fishery

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

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Signed,

Marc Senechal

From: mtfallon
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2007 5:05 PM
To: Pat Kurkul; Paul Howard
Subject: Herring

Dear Captain Howard and Administrator Kurkul, I am sure that you have seen the above letter in many other emails from other concerned individuals, but I am sending it again and endorsing my support.

I write to you today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New England's industrial herring fleet.

The Atlantic herring fishery has serious problems that need to be addressed with a framework to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatches of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. It's time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP. The framework should include:

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Capt. Michael Fallon

From: Howard Newman [

Sent: Friday, June 01, 2007 10:41 PM

To: Paul Howard; Pat Kurkul

Subject: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

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traditional fisheries.

Signed,

Howard Newman
441 Great Elm Way
Acton, Ma 01718

From: Schmitt, William,M.D. [W
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2007 7:28 PM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Herring

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

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Signed,

Will Schmitt, MD
25 Dana St.
Cambridge, MA 02138

From: Richard Olson
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2007 5:24 PM
To: Paul Howard; Pat Kurkul
Subject: Support Herring

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

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Signed,
Richard Olson

From: Steve Flynn
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2007 4:48 PM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Herring Fishery

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Dear Captain Howard and Administrator Kurkul,

I write to you today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New England's industrial herring fleet.

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The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. I encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Signed,

Steve Flynn

From: Pinzone, Chris
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2007 4:28 PM
To: Paul Howard; Pat Kurkul
Subject: New England Herring Fishery

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

New England Herring Fishery

Dear Sirs,

I'm writing because I am really concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the fisheries it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate supervision & management of New England's commercial herring fleet.

The Atlantic herring fishery has serious problems that need to be addressed with a framework to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatches of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. It's time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate action that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP! The framework should include:

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The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. I beseach you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem for the use and enjoyment of future generations!

Thank you very much for your attention and service.

Sincerely,

Dr. C. J. Pinzone

From:
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2007 5:52 PM
To: Paul Howard
Cc: Pat Kurkul
Subject: Spam:Atlantic Herring

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council 50 Water Street, Mill 2 Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

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Captain Doug Jowett

From: DAN NORMAND
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2007 9:45 PM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

RECEIVED
JUN 01 2007
NEW ENGLAND FISHERY
MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Dear Captain Howard

As a recreational fisherman I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. I am talking about the inadequate management of New England's industrial herring fleet.

The Atlantic herring fishery has serious problems that need to be addressed with a framework to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatches of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. It's time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP. The framework should include:

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Signed,

Daniel A Normand
5 Oberlin rd
Beverly MA 01915

Maine Association of Charterboat Captains
www.mainechartercaptains.org

To:
Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RE: the Maine Association of Charterboat Captains supports CHOIR's effort in urging the NEFMC to take a proactive stance on Herring Management
6-2-07

Dear Exec. Dir. Howard and Administrator Kurkul,

The MACC Board of directors and membership fully supports CHOIR's effort urging the New England Fisheries Management Council to take a proactive stance on herring management and monitoring. Our industry depends on a healthy predator prey balance. The bullets pointed out in the attached CHOIR letter will help achieve that balance.
Thank you for your time and consideration on this very important issue,

On behalf of the MACC Board of Directors and its 55 membership

Capt. David Pecci
President,
Maine Association of Charter Captains
144 Whiskeag Rd.
Bath, ME 04530

www.mainechartercaptains.org

Attached:
MACC Membership roll
CHOIR letter dated 5-31-07

Cc: MACC Board
MACC general membership
Terry Stockwell
Bruce Joule
Jim Odlin
Dana Rice

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

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- An inshore buffer zone that keeps midwater trawl ships at least 50 miles from shore

In addition to changes to the herring FMP, action needs to be taken to keep midwater trawl ships out of Groundfish Closed Areas to protect groundfish stocks of concern. Bycatch caps, such as those instituted for haddock as part of Framework 43 to the multispecies groundfish FMP, need to be put in place to protect, at a minimum: groundfish stocks of concern and whiting.

The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. I encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

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PORTLAND	ME	04106	838-7980
JOHN	FORD	PORTLAND GUIDE SERVICE	PO BOX 10318
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7 Davis Ave.	Freeport	ME	04032
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YORK	ME	03909	363-2536
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Wells	ME	04090	646-5599
TODD	JACKSON	PENOBSCOT BAY OUTFITTERS	118 NICKERSON RD
SEARSPORT	ME	04974-3932	338-1883
DAVID	JOHNSON	PRITNEAR HEAVEN CHARTERS	28 REMINGTON WAY
KENNEBUNK	ME	04043	590-2276
DOUG	JOWETT	MAINLY CHARTERS	61 FOUR WHEEL DR
BRUNSWICK	ME	04011	725-4573
ADAM	LITTELL	LADY J SPORTFISHING CHARTERS	10 KIMBALL LN
KENNEBUNK	ME	04043	985-7304
JAY	MCGOWEN	STRIPER SWIPER CHARTERS	PO BOX 233
ORRS ISLAND	ME	04066	833-6054
JOHN	NOWINSKI	NORTH CREEK GUIDE SERVICE	74 SUMMIT TER
NORTH YARMOUTH	ME	04097	829-6792
CHRISTIAN	PETERSON	DANTILU CHARTERS	1 BROWN RD
FREEPORT	ME	04032	
PAUL	RIOUX	STONE COAST ANGLERS INC	3 MARIA LN
KENNEBUNK	ME	04043	985-6005
JEFFREY	RITTER	BINGO DEEP SEA FISHING	PO BOX 463
BOOTHBAY HARBOR	ME	04538	633-3775
CHESTER	ROWE	HILLBILLY CHARTERS	1201 SE 8TH AVE
OKEECHOBEE	FL	34974	800-472-2036
NICK	SEWALL	HERMIT ISLAND CAMPGROUND	6 HERMIT ISLAND RD
PHIPPSBURG	ME	04562	
DAVE	SINCLAIR	SEA VENTURES CHARTERS	327 WALTON RD
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TODD	STEWART	TRINA LYN FISHING CHARTERS	PO BOX 431
SACO	ME	04072	284-2352
WAYNE	TANGUAY	KAREN ANN CHARTERS	40 TENNEY LN
SCARBOROUGH	ME	04074	883-4693
JEFF	TIMS	RIVERSIDE GUIDE SERVICE	528 BISCAY RD
DAMARISCOTTA	ME	04543	338-1883
Eric	Wallace	Coastal Fly Angler	12 Royal Ave.
Freeport	ME	04032	671-4330
Thom	Watson		PO Box 710
Bath	ME	04530	443-1606
Peter	Wheelan	Shoals Fly Fishing	100 Gates St.
Portsmouth	NH	03801	603 205-5318
HARVEY	WHEELER	MAVENS GUIDING SERVICE	25 POWELL RD
CUMBERLAND	ME	04110	829-5485

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 9:55 AM
To: Joan O'Leary
Subject: FW: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

From: Hudon, Edmund [ma m]
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2007 3:25 PM
To: Paul Howard
Cc: Pat Kurkul
Subject: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

Dear Captain Howard and Administrator Kurkul,

I write to you today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New England's industrial herring fleet.

The Atlantic herring fishery has serious problems that need to be addressed with a framework to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatches of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. It's time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP. The framework should include:

- Mandatory industry-funded observer coverage for midwater trawlers and USAPs
- Requirements to bring all fish aboard for sampling (no dumping of bags at sea)
- Ecosystem-based Area Total Allowable Catch (TAC) setting that takes the needs of predators into account
- A mandatory weigh-master system whenever midwater trawl ships unload that reports catch and bycatch on a daily basis
- An inshore buffer zone that keeps midwater trawl ships at least 50 miles from shore

In addition to changes to the herring FMP, action needs to be taken to keep midwater trawl ships out of

Groundfish Closed Areas to protect groundfish stocks of concern. Bycatch caps, such as those instituted for haddock as part of Framework 43 to the multispecies groundfish FMP, need to be put in place to protect, at a minimum: groundfish stocks of concern and whiting.

The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. I encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Signed,
Ed Hudon
Byfield, MA

Ed Hudon
PMIT Infrastructure Operations - PM1
Liberty Mutual Group | Personal Market IT
603.245.9478 - voice | 603.427.6147 - fax
Edmund.Hudon@LibertyMutual.com

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 9:54 AM
To: Joan O'Leary
Subject: FW: Spam:Herring Fishery Action Required

-----Original Message-----
From: codfisher@comcast.net [m
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2007 10:17 AM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Spam:Herring Fishery Action Required

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council 50 Water Street, Mill 2 Newburyport, MA 01950

Dear Captain Howard,

As a licensed Charter Boat Captain, I am writing to you today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New Englands industrial herring fleet.

The Atlantic herring fishery has serious problems that need to be addressed with a framework to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatches of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. Its time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP. The framework should include:

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In addition to changes to the herring FMP, action needs to be taken to keep midwater trawl ships out of Groundfish Closed Areas to protect groundfish stocks of concern. Bycatch caps, such as those instituted for haddock as part of Framework 43 to the multispecies groundfish FMP, need to be put in place to protect, at a minimum: groundfish stocks of concern and whiting.

The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New Englands healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. I encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Sincerely

Capt. George A. Lemieux, Jr.
Lady Diane Charters
Wells, Maine

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 9:54 AM
To: Joan O'Leary
Subject: FW: Spam:Herring

From: Ron Cooper [m
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2007 10:24 AM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Spam:Herring

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Dear Captain Howard,

I write to you today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New England's industrial herring fleet.

The Atlantic herring fishery has serious problems that need to be addressed with a framework to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatches of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. It's time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP. The framework should include:

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•An inshore buffer zone that keeps midwater trawl ships at least 50 miles from shore

In addition to changes to the herring FMP, action needs to be taken to keep midwater trawl ships out of Groundfish Closed Areas to protect groundfish stocks of concern. Bycatch caps, such as those instituted for haddock as part of Framework 43 to the multispecies groundfish FMP, need to be put in place to protect, at a minimum: groundfish stocks of concern and whiting.

The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting

stocks. I encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Signed,

Ron Cooper

Although I live in NH...I am interested in and affected by the outcome of your meeting.

From: Evans, Tom
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2007 8:19 AM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Herring

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Dear Captain Howard and Administrator Kurkul,

I write to you today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New England's industrial herring fleet.

The Atlantic herring fishery has serious problems that need to be addressed with a framework to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatches of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. It's time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP. The framework should include:

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The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. I encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Sincerely,
Tom Evans

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 9:55 AM
To: Joan O'Leary
Subject: FW: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

From:
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2007 12:02 PM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

RECEIVED
JUN 01 2007
NEW ENGLAND FISHERY
MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Dear Captain Howard,

I write to you today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New England's industrial herring fleet.

The Atlantic herring fishery has serious problems that need to be addressed with a framework to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatches of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. It's time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP. The framework should include:

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•An inshore buffer zone that keeps midwater trawl ships at least 50 miles from shore

In addition to changes to the herring FMP, action needs to be taken to keep midwater trawl ships out of Groundfish Closed Areas to protect groundfish stocks of concern. Bycatch caps, such as those instituted for haddock as part of Framework 43 to the multispecies groundfish FMP, need to be put in place to protect, at a minimum: groundfish stocks of concern and whiting. Undocumented discards of bycatch are in my mind criminal, and monitoring and regulation of bycatch are a crucial part of successful fisheries management.

The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. I encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Signed,

Robert J. Nelson – concerned recreational angler
56 Station St.
Scituate, MA 02066

From: Joseph Johnston
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2007 6:34 AM
To: Paul Howard; Pat Kurkul
Subject: Please Help

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Dear Captain Howard and Administrator Kurkul,

I write to you today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New England's industrial herring fleet.

The Atlantic herring fishery has serious problems that need to be addressed with a framework to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatches of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. It's time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP. The framework should include:

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In addition to changes to the herring FMP, action needs to be taken to keep midwater trawl ships out of Groundfish Closed Areas to protect groundfish stocks of concern. Byactch caps, such as those instituted for haddock as part of Framework 43 to the multispecies groundfish FMP, need to be put in place to protect, at a minimum: groundfish stocks of concern; whiting; and dogfish.

The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. I encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Signed,

Joseph Johnston

RECEIVED
JUN 01 2007
NEW ENGLAND FISHERY
MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

From: Riley, Samuel [
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2007 8:12 AM
To: Paul Howard; Pat Kurkul

Dear Sirs,
I am sure that you have seen many copies of the form letter below. I am writing to express my support of the concerns listed and corrective measures detailed.
Frankly, dumping bycatch without accurate documentation is to my mind criminal.
Facts are the only way by which you will ever be able to properly access and manage your responsibilities. I believe that implementing the bullet points below would go a long way to supporting your charge.

Thank you for your time and efforts on our behalf, Sam Riley Boston, MA

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council 50 Water Street, Mill 2 Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Dear Captain Howard and Administrator Kurkul,

I write to you today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New England's industrial herring fleet.

The Atlantic herring fishery has serious problems that need to be addressed with a framework to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatches of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. It's time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP. The framework should include:

*Mandatory industry-funded observer coverage for midwater trawlers and USAPs *Requirements to bring all fish aboard for sampling (no dumping of bags at sea) *Ecosystem-based Area Total Allowable Catch (TAC) setting that takes the needs of predators into account *A mandatory weigh-master system whenever midwater trawl ships unload that reports catch and bycatch on a daily basis *An inshore buffer zone that keeps midwater trawl ships at least 50 miles from shore

In addition to changes to the herring FMP, action needs to be taken to keep midwater trawl ships out of Groundfish Closed Areas to protect groundfish stocks of concern. Bycatch caps, such as those instituted for haddock as part of Framework 43 to the multispecies groundfish FMP, need to be put in place to protect, at a minimum: groundfish stocks of concern and whiting.

The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. I encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Signed,

From: Niland, Keven GOSS [Ke]
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2007 7:40 AM
To: Pat Kurkul; Paul Howard
Subject: Herring Fishery

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Dear Captain Howard and Administrator Kurkul,

I write to you today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New England's industrial herring fleet.

The Atlantic herring fishery has serious problems that need to be addressed with a framework to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatches of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. It's time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP. The framework should include:

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The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. I

encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Signed,
Keven Niland
Madbury, NH

From: dean macfarland
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2007 6:15 AM
To: Paul Howard; Pat Kurkul
Subject: Herring Fishery

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

Dear Captain Howard and Administrator Kurkul,

I am writing to you today to express my concern over the impact of the essentially unsupervised herring fleet in the Gulf of Maine. The pair trawlers and USAPs have the potential to do great damage to GOM fish stocks through local depletion of herring inshore, and through uncounted bycatch of groundfish and other regulated species.

The Atlantic herring fishery has serious problems that need to be addressed with a framework to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they tow the largest nets with the smallest mesh. This has the potential for huge bycatch and discard of regulated groundfish species including juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. It's time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP. The framework should include:

•Mandatory industry-funded observer coverage for midwater trawlers and USAPs
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The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to

the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. I encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Signed,

Dean MacFarland
16 Hesperus Circle
Gloucester, Massachusetts

From: Larry Poirier
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2007 6:13 AM
To: Paul Howard; Pat Kurkul

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council 50 Water Street, Mill 2 Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Dear Captain Howard and Administrator Kurkul,

I write to you today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New England's industrial herring fleet.

The Atlantic herring fishery has serious problems that need to be addressed with a framework to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatches of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. It's time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP. The framework should include:

•Mandatory industry-funded observer coverage for midwater trawlers and USAPs •Requirements to bring all fish aboard for sampling (no dumping of bags at
sea)
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The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. I encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Signed, Lawrence Poirier Gill, MA

From:

Sent: Friday, June 01, 2007 5:41 AM

To: Paul Howard

Subject: herring

Dear Captain Howard and Administrator Kurkul,

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thanks for your time, Kent garland,
hook fisherman,
Swampscott Mass.

From: Walt
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2007 6:03 AM
To: Paul Howard
Cc: Pat Kurkul
Subject: Herring

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

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Signed,
Walter Koda
244 Wentworth Road
Brookfield, NH 03872
603 522-6984

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 9:53 AM
To: Joan O'Leary
Subject: FW: herring commercial fishing destroys sportfishing.....

From: douglas grant [mai :]
Sent: Friday, June 01, 2007 4:27 AM
To: Paul Howard
Subject: herring commercial fishing destroys sportfishing.....

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
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From: Lori Steele
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 9:53 AM
To: Joan O'Leary
Subject: FW: Spam:Please hear our concerns

-----Original
From: Scott
Sent: Thursday, May 31, 2007 10:39 PM
To: Paul Howard
Cc: Pat Kurkul
Subject: Spam:Please hear our concerns

Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

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action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Signed,
Scott Colleary
F/V KEEP-AH

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 9:53 AM
To: Joan O'Leary
Subject: FW:

From: Bruce "Capt. Bluefin" Bornstein
Sent: Thursday, May 31, 2007 9:03 PM
To: Paul Howard; Pat Kurkul
Subject:

5/31/2007

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

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Signed,

Bruce A. Bornstein
Fishing Vessel Sandy B II
Gloucester, AM

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Tuesday, June 05, 2007 9:53 AM
To: Joan O'Leary
Subject: FW: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

From: Tyler McLaughlin
Sent: Thursday, May 31, 2007 11:33 PM
To: Paul Howard; Pat Kurkul
Subject: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Dear Captain Howard and Administrator Kurkul,

I write to you today because I am a 19 year old commercial Tuna/ Striped bass fisherman trying to pay for college with fishing. And I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New England's industrial herring fleet.

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Signed,
Tyler McLaughlin 603-231-0551

May 25, 2007

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

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Signed,

Ms. Betsy J. Dorbian
310 South River Street
Harrisburg, PA 17104

May 25, 2007

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

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Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
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Signed,
Joan Taylor

John & Joan Taylor
88 Indian Hill Road
Chatham, MA 02633

Please take action on this issue.

May 25, 2007

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
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Signed,

John & Paula Raye
49 Barcliff Avenue
Chatham, MA 02633

May 25, 2007

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

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Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
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Signed,

Gail Hesse
Robert L Hesse

Robert & Gail Hesse
139 Powderhorn Way
Centerville, MA 02632

Hope you can help now.
Thanks.

cc: LS (5/31)

May 25, 2007

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
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Signed,

Susan Fernald

Susan Fernald
78 Townhouse Terrace
Hyannis, MA 02601

May 25, 2007

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

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Signed, Nancy Baler
G. Richard Baler M.D.

Nancy & G. Baler
145 St. Botolph Street, Apt. 14
Boston, MA 02115

We agree strongly with the position of the Cape Cod Hook Fishermen's Assoc. Please help protect the Herring fisheries

May 25, 2007

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
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- An inshore buffer zone that keeps midwater trawl ships at least 50 miles from shore

In addition to changes to the herring FMP, action needs to be taken to keep midwater trawl ships out of Groundfish Closed Areas to protect groundfish stocks of concern. Byactch caps, such as those instituted for haddock as part of Framework 43 to the multispecies groundfish FMP, need to be put in place to protect, at a minimum: groundfish stocks of concern; whiting; and dogfish.

The fleet of 100+ foot midwater trawl ships currently operating in New England poses a grave threat to the future of New England's healthy fisheries and the rebuilding of groundfish and whiting stocks. I encourage you to take action immediately to protect our marine ecosystem and our traditional fisheries.

Signed,

Karen Sweeney

Ms. Karen Sweeney
P.O. Box 145
East Orleans, MA 02643

May 25, 2007

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

Dear Captain Howard and Administrator Kurkul,

I write to you today because I am extremely concerned about the health of the Gulf of Maine ecosystem and the traditional fisheries and communities it supports. My concern arises from the inadequate management of New England's industrial herring fleet.

The Atlantic herring fishery has serious problems that need to be addressed with a framework to the Fishery Management Plan (FMP). Currently, midwater trawlers and United States At-sea Processors (USAPs) are operating without proper monitoring and insufficient observer coverage levels. In addition, midwater trawl ships are allowed to operate in groundfish closed areas even though they have a proven bycatch of groundfish, including substantial bycatches of juvenile haddock. Midwater trawl ships also operate near shore, creating substantial gear conflicts. It's time for the New England Fisheries Management Council and the National Marine Fisheries Service to initiate a framework that will fix these glaring deficiencies in the herring FMP. The framework should include:

- Mandatory industry-funded observer coverage for midwater trawlers and USAPs
- Requirements to bring all fish aboard for sampling (no dumping of bags at sea)
- Ecosystem-based Area Total Allowable Catch (TAC) setting that takes the needs of predators into account
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Signed,

Barbara Matteson
33 Pasture Lane
P.O. Box 194
Chatham, MA 02633

May 25, 2007

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

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Signed,

George & Nancy Parker

George & Nancy Parker
480 Lawsbrook Road
Concord, MA 01742

May 25, 2007

Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fisheries Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region, NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RE: Action Needed to Fix Herring Fishery

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Signed,

Carrie Leonard

Carrie Leonard
30 Gilbert Rd
PO Box 1652
Brewster, MA 02633

OCEAN SPRAY PARTNERSHIP
P.O. Box 2666
South Portland, ME 04106-2666

May 2, 2007

Ms. Patricia A. Kurkul, Regional Administrator
NMFS, Northeast Regional Office
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930 – pat.kurkul@noaa.gov

Dear Pat:

I am writing on behalf of the Ocean Spray Partnership to ask for administrative relief from the seemingly unnecessarily restrictive language contained in the Atlantic Herring Carrier Vessel Authorization Letter (LOA), issued to the F/V Sun Dragon and F/V AJ, for the participation period June 1, 2007 through April 30, 2008, following the March 12, 2007 publication of the Final Rule Implementing Approved Measures Contained in Amendment 1 to the Atlantic Herring Fishery Management Plan. We are also writing to suggest that the participation period for the LOA should end on May 30, 2008, rather than April 30, 2008, to better conform with the new herring regulations coming into effect on June 1, 2007.

Ocean Spray Partnership is a family-operated partnership, working with Atlantic Frost Seafoods, LLC. This group operates the F/V Providian, the F/V AJ, the F/V Sun Dragon, and the shore-side processing vessel Atlantic Frost.

Specifically, we are asking that the language of the LOA be amended by the agency to allow vessels carrying herring to also be allowed to carry other species, such as Atlantic menhaden or Atlantic mackerel, during the participation period defined in the LOA. It is our view that carrier vessels should be allowed to carry any species which a herring harvesting vessel may have on board, not only Northeast Multispecies transferred by limited entry herring vessels under applicable possession limits, and should also be able to switch from carrying herring one day to carrying menhaden, or some other species (pursuant to other pertinent regulations), the next day, for example, depending upon market demands and seasonal availability.

Historically, herring carrier vessels have only carried herring to market so that the restrictive language of the LOA apparently was of no concern. With today's competitive market conditions however, and with the ability to carry limited amounts of Northeast Multispecies clarified in the new regulations, we see no reason why other species of fish should not be legally possessed on board a "herring carrier" on days when that vessel may be carrying menhaden or mackerel, for example, legally harvested by another vessel. When the "herring carrier" vessel is carrying herring, other common bycatch species, such as Atlantic mackerel, should also be specifically authorized.

cc: LS (5/14)

In addition to concerns with the language in the LOA, which states that the vessel "may not … possess, transfer, or land any other species of fish except for Atlantic herring"; and "must be used exclusively as an Atlantic herring carrier vessel for the duration of the participation period", we are also concerned with the language in the LOA stating that "there is a minimum enrollment period of 7 calendar days."

In the discussion accompanying the March 12 publication of the final rule, a commenter (comment 24, page 27) "suggested that herring carrier vessels should not be prohibited from possessing species other than Atlantic herring." Another commenter pointed out that limited access herring harvester vessels may also commonly be used as carriers under some circumstances and the agency agreed that these vessels should be "able to receive transfers at sea without the limitations specified by the LOA, particularly the requirement that the vessel operated exclusively as a herring carrier vessel while issued the LOA, and the requirement for the LOA be issued for a minimum period of 7 days" (page 28).

Unfortunately, by not fully addressing the public's concern about the need for operational flexibility in using vessels to carry fish to market, the agency has created a situation where herring harvesting vessels may now carry herring (and presumably other species) under rules that are more liberal than those in place for carrier vessels, which may not "possess any fishing gear on board the vessel" (LOA, section 4). In the past, carrier vessels have received more liberal treatment since they do not carry fishing gear.

As stated above, with the competitive bait market conditions that we anticipate this season, it will be important for vessels that will be carrying herring one day to be authorized to carry species like menhaden or mackerel the next, depending upon what may have been harvested either by limited access herring vessels or by other vessels (or fixed gear, potentially) in other fisheries in the area.

The historic use of herring carriers in the herring fishery allows certain vessels to be used as "sea-going trucks", which have no impact on the harvesting capacity of the fleet or on harvesting restrictions in the fishery. In order to maximize the efficiency of our fishing operations, we intend to use one or two of our vessels (neither of which have qualified for a herring limited access A or B permit) as carriers to truck herring, menhaden and mackerel to our bait and freezing operations, depending upon seasonal availability. The restrictive language of the herring carrier LOA is an unnecessary impediment to our business.

We ask that you consider modifying the language of the LOA's as we have outlined above. We also ask that you provide us with the history of the language of sections 4 and 6 of the LOA. Finally, we would like the opportunity to meet with you and members of your staff to discuss our concerns sometime this month, before the new regulations go into effect on June 1. Thank you for your attention to our requests.

With best regards,
Jeff Kaelin (207-266-0440) – By email
Cc: ASMFC Herring Section / NEFMC Pelagics Committee

Woneta M. Cloutier

From: Tyler McLaughlin [tmcla@mail.bridgtonacademy.org]
Sent: Wednesday, May 02, 2007 12:56 PM
To: Woneta M. Cloutier; bill.hogarth@noaa.gov; pat.kurkul@noaa.gov
Subject: Support for observer coverage on the US At-Sea Processors

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I am a 19 year old commercial tuna and striped bass fisherman writing to you today to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. As you know, herring is a lynchpin species that the fish I catch such as tuna, cod, haddock, striped bass and lobster depend upon. The midwater trawl fleet that currently pursues herring is the most efficient, terminal fleet of vessels that New England has seen since the foreigners left when the Magnusson-Stevens Act was passed in 1976. A fleet this powerful that interacts with such a wide range of species needs to be observed so that we have assurances that they are not destroying the resources that we depend upon to make a living.

The one active at-sea processor in New England is the American Freedom. It is set up to take delivery of nets full of herring before the herring are brought upon the catcher vessels. Because of this fact, observers are needed on the processing vessel, as the processing vessel is the first point at which the catch can be observed out of the water and the net.

A ship this big that can take so much fish needs to be observed and everyone needs to know what they are catching. This is imperative to the health and rebuilding of the stocks I rely upon for a living.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Tyler McLaughlin

5

Dr. David Pierce, Chairman
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Lori Steele
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Support for observer coverage on the US At-Sea Processors

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I am a commercial fisherman writing to you today to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. As you know, herring is a lynchpin species that the fish I catch such as tuna, cod, haddock, striped bass and lobster depend upon. The midwater trawl fleet that currently pursues herring is the most efficient, terminal fleet of vessels that New England has seen since the foreigners left when the Magnusson-Stevens Act was passed in 1976. A fleet this powerful that interacts with such a wide range of species needs to be observed so that we have assurances that they are not destroying the resources that we depend upon to make a living.

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Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Scott Colleary
F/V Keep Ah

cc: LS, Council (5/4)

From:
Sent: Wednesday, May 02, 2007 7:55 PM
To: david.pierce@ma.state.gov
Cc: Woneta M. Cloutier
Subject: observer coverage on USAP's

Chairman David Pierce
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Woneta Cloutier
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: NEED FOR OBSERVER COVERAGE ON USAPs

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I'm a recreational fisherman writing to encourage your committee to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put a high level of federal observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. Herring is one of the most important fish in the sea for a lot of the fish I catch, especially striped bass and its essential that the Council does all it can to ensure that the stock is healthy.

USAPs that ta ke fish directly from catcher vessels without the fish going aboard the catcher vessel where an observer (if one were aboard) can count the bycatch. Because of this, not having observers on the USAPs is a tremendous loophole that thousands of dead fish (and marine mammals) can potentially slide through.

These massive industrial ships can strip so much fish out of the ocean that is imperative that they be observed. Please take action to ensure that the mid-water fleet fishing for the USAPs does not wipe out the herring or the other fish I catch.

Regards,
Joe Amato

(5)

NORTHWEST ATLANTIC MARINE ALLIANCE

May 1, 2007

Via electronic mail

Dr. David Pierce, Chairman
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Lori Steele; Woneta Cloutier
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region
NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RE: Action Needed to Require Observer Coverage on USAP Vessels

Dear Pat and David,

As the representative of groundfishermen, tuna fishermen, recreational anglers, lobstermen, scientists and conservationists from across New England, I urge you to encourage the NEFMC Pelagics Committee to pass a motion encouraging the NEFMC to request that NMFS provide observer coverage for United States At-Sea Processors (USAP) at its May 3rd meeting in Mansfield, MA.

Currently, USAP(s) are allowed to operate without a requirement for observer coverage. This is inconsistent with how these vessels operate in other parts of the country and it may be a hindrance to the health and rebuilding of New England's fish stocks. The health and rebuilding of New England's fish stocks is critically important to the commercial fishing industry in the region and the communities that depend on them.

The midwater trawl fleet that supplies fish to the USAP is known to have a bycatch of marine mammals and many finfish, including cod, haddock, bluefin tuna, striped bass, dogfish, whiting and many other important species. Given this fact, allowing USAP(s) to operate without observers onboard is unacceptable.

We call on the Pelagics Committee to recommend to the NEFMC that they request that NMFS create regulations that require 200% observer coverage on USAP(s). For this coverage to be effective, the regulations must stipulate that everything that is caught by catcher vessels intended to be transferred at sea is sampled (i.e. no dumping of partial or full bags). Having 200% observer coverage will allow one observer to be awake and observing the catch while the other is off duty. Sampling of all fish in the nets is crucial to the statistical viability of the observer program.

cc: LS, Council (5/4)

Given the state of New England's marine resources, it is imperative that USAP(s) have a high level of monitoring and observer coverage to ensure that their operations are not jeopardizing the rebuilding of stocks or the continued viability of the herring fishery while meeting the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation Act.

Sincerely,

Craig Pendleton

CC: Bill Hogarth, Deputy Director, NMFS

April 30, 2007

Via Electronic Mail

David E. Pierce, Chair, Pelagics Committee
New England Fishery Management Council
Deputy Director, Division of Marine Fisheries
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
251 Causeway Street
Boston, MA 02114

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region
NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

Re. Observer coverage for herring fishery at-sea processor(s)

Dear Mr. Pierce and Ms. Kurkul:

The Conservation Law Foundation, Ocean Conservancy, and the Natural Resources Defense Council are writing in anticipation of the Pelagics Committee meeting scheduled for May 3, 2007. At this meeting, the committee will be discussing whether observers should be required on at-sea processors in the Atlantic herring fishery. We strongly urge you to recommend to the full New England Fishery Management Council that observers be required at all times on at-sea processors in Northeast pelagic fisheries.

It is our understanding that catcher vessels working with an at-sea processor, may transfer catch in one of two ways; the catch may be brought aboard the catcher vessel and later pumped to the processor, or the catcher vessel net may be transferred directly from the water without being brought on-board the catcher vessel. We feel that policy should direct that observer coverage be deployed wherever catch is first subject to assessment and/or culling. Certainly, most herring (and other pelagics) catch will continue to be handled as it has traditionally, with a catcher vessel bringing its catch aboard to be culled for bycatch and stowed. This catch may then be transferred to any buyer, whether that is an at-sea processor, or land-based processor or buyer. We continue to urge NMFS to increase observer deployment on these vessels from current levels to document fishery characteristics.

However, the introduction of the processor American Freedom accompanied by a small fleet of catcher vessels, adds the need for new protocols for observer coverage. Currently, the at-sea processing sector is allowed to process 20,000 metric tons of herring per year, or about 15 to 20 percent of recent Atlantic herring landings. In this operation, catcher vessels may as typically tow their catch alongside the at-sea processor where the codend is transferred directly onto the processor vessel where it is first released

cc: LS (5/8)

on deck (or released over the side). The American Freedom at-sea processor vessel may accept the catch from as many as nine catcher vessels working in proximity. Because there are currently no observers required on any processing vessel, any catch transferred by passing the codend will go unmonitored. This represents a significant gap in the at-sea monitoring program and in our view is contrary to the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act.[1]

Similar at-sea processors in the Pacific and North Pacific pelagic fisheries are required to have around-the-clock observer coverage. We urge that the same standard be applied to observer coverage for at-sea processors in the New England and Mid-Atlantic pelagic fisheries. Such coverage presents an opportunity, through the establishment of appropriate observer protocols, to link data on catcher vessel effort to catch and bycatch as observed and recorded on the processor vessel. This can significantly increase the level of coverage and efficiency of the observer program for pelagic fisheries in New England and the Mid-Atlantic. As you know, current levels of observer coverage in the herring fishery run at approximately 3 percent of all trips and are inadequate to accurately account for herring catch and bycatch in the fishery. These levels and are also inconsistent with observer level coverage in similar fisheries around the country.

Atlantic herring and mackerel are keystone species in the Gulf of Maine-area ecosystem. They are a source of forage for New England's depleted populations of groundfish (cod and other fish stocks), marine mammals, sea birds and many other species of marine life. We urge you to vote to require around-the-clock observer coverage in all pelagic fisheries in order to collect the scientific data needed to monitor these fisheries and to minimize bycatch.

Sincerely yours,

Roger Fleming, Senior Attorney
Conservation Law Foundation

John Williamson, Fish Conservation Director
Ocean Conservancy

Bradford Sewell, Senior Attorney
Natural Resources Defense Council

Cc John Pappalardo, Chair, NEFMC
William Hogarth, Deputy Director, NMFS
Paul Howard, Executive Director, NEFMC
Lori L. Steele, Fishery Analyst, NEFMC
David Potter, Fisheries Sampling Branch Chief, NMFS

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[1] See 16 U.S.C. 1551(a)(2) (FMPs must be based on "the best scientific information available"); 16 U.S.C. 1851(a)(9)(FMPs must "minimize bycatch"); and 16 U.S.C. 1853(a)(11)(FMPs must "establish a standardized reporting methodology to assess the amount and type of bycatch occurring in the fishery"). National Standard 2 requires that conservation and management measures be based upon the best scientific information available. NMFS has previously acknowledged that it may take management action for reasons other than a clear biological need or resource problem, in order to improve the scientific understanding of the herring fishery. The Council has also previously noted in discussing its application of the precautionary approach to the herring resource that NMFS' Guidelines for identifying essential fish habitat (EFH) and adverse impacts on EFH, reflect the importance of keystone species like Atlantic herring to the overall health of the ecosystem as well as the importance of prey abundance for other species. See Amendment 1, sec. 6.5. (citing 50 C.F.R. 600 at 2378 (January 17, 2002)).

The CHOIR Coalition

Coalition for the Atlantic Herring Fishery's Orderly, Informed and Responsible Long Term Development
www.choircoalition.org

April 30, 2007

Via electronic mail

Dr. David Pierce, Chairman
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Lori Steele; Woneta Cloutier
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region
NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

RE: Action Needed to Require Observer Coverage on USAP Vessels

Dear Pat and David,

I write to you today on behalf of the CHOIR Coalition and the commercial and recreational fishing businesses and associations that have supported our consistent call for increasing observer coverage on the herring midwater trawl fleet. We encourage you to pass a motion at the May 3rd, 2007 meeting of the NEFMC Pelagic Committee that recommends to the full Council that action be taken to put observer coverage on United States At-Sea Processors (USAP) operating in the Atlantic herring fishery. The lack of observers on USAPs represents a major deficiency in NMFS ability to effectively observe and monitor the catch, landings, bycatch and discards occurring in the herring fishery. This major deficiency makes it effectively impossible for NMFS to implement Framework 43 to the Multispecies Groundfish Plan, which implements haddock bycatch caps for the herring fleet.

Currently, the one active USAP in New England waters, the freezer ship American Freedom, is allowed to operate with no mandate for observer coverage. The vessels spokesperson has argued in the press that this vessel should be treated just as a shoreside processing facility is treated in respect to observer coverage and monitoring. However, he fails to point out the major difference between the operations of the American Freedom and its shoreside rivals: the American Freedom receives the brailers (cod ends) directly from the catcher vessels whereas shoreside processors take fish that have already been pumped out of the net and brought aboard a catcher vessel. This difference cannot be overlooked and thus the two operations should not be treated the same. By taking nets directly from catcher vessels without the fish first being brought on board the catcher vessels, the American Freedom becomes the first point at which federal observers have an opportunity to sample the catch. In contrast, shoreside processors take fish that may have already been sampled aboard the catcher vessels.

Introduction of a processing vessel of over 380 feet into New England's fisheries without observer coverage opens up the possibility of large amounts of marine life going overboard

unseen. The midwater trawl fleet that will supply this vessel with herring has been shown to have a bycatch of marine mammals, seabirds, and many kinds of commercially and recreationally important fish stocks, including haddock, tuna, whiting, striped bass, river herring, and scup. USAPs are allowed to process 20,000 metric tons of herring, meaning that nearly one-fifth of the entire herring catch could be caught, processed and exported without ever being observed or sampled under current regulations. This is unacceptable.

The introduction of USAP into the herring fishery represents a new operation in New England. The activity undertaken is different in nature than joint ventures (JV) and the ongoing activities of catcher vessels that deliver their catch shoreside. With a new venture of this scale comes the responsibility of quantifying the catch, landings, bycatch and discards associated with it. Currently, there is no regulatory requirement to do due diligence in meeting this responsibility.

We call on the Pelagics Committee to recommend to the NEFMC that they request that NMFS create regulations that require 200% observer coverage on USAP(s). For this coverage to be effective, the regulations must stipulate that everything that is caught by catcher vessels intended to be transferred at sea is sampled (i.e. no dumping of partial or full bags). Having 200% observer coverage will allow one observer to be awake and observing the catch while the other is off duty. Sampling of all fish in the nets is crucial to the statistical viability of the observer program. This is consistent with our understanding of how similar vessels are observed in other parts of the country, including the North Pacific.

I have attached with this letter another letter that the CHOIR Coalition has sent to members of Congress encouraging them to allocate $1,500,000 in Fiscal Year 2008 to observe the midwater herring trawl fleet. The letter is signed by more than 100 associations and businesses.

In closing, given the state of New England's marine resources, it is imperative that USAP(s) have a high level of monitoring and observer coverage to ensure that their operations are not jeopardizing the rebuilding of stocks or the continued viability of the herring fishery while meeting the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation Act.

Regards,

Peter Baker, Chairman
CHOIR Coalition
210 Orleans Road
North Chatham, MA 02650

CC: Bill Hogarth, Deputy Director, NMFS

The CHOIR Coalition

Coalition for the Atlantic Herring Fishery's Orderly, Informed and Responsible Long Term Development

April 16, 2007

Dear Representative

We write today to voice our support for increased observer coverage in the herring midwater trawl fishery in New England.

These vessels employ the largest nets, with the smallest mesh, ever used by the domestic fleet in New England. Current regulations allow these vessels to operate in Groundfish closed areas and only miles from shore. More than 95% of the time they operate without any NMFS observers aboard.

For many years now CHOIR and its allies have voiced concern over the bycatch associated with the midwater trawl fishery for herring. Based on the limited information available (as well as anecdotal accounts), this bycatch includes bluefin tuna, haddock, cod, striped bass, mackerel, river herring, seals, marine mammals and a host of other species. It also includes substantial amounts of discarded herring.

In order to ensure that the data pertaining to the herring fishery is accurate and sufficient for proper management, we request that Congress provide $1.5 million in the FY 2008 budget to observe the herring midwater trawl fleet.

Currently, funding for observer coverage has been cut so that, on average, observer coverage is around 3% of all trips made, which is far below the level needed to ensure good information for management. In Canada and on the West Coast, vessels like these would have 100% observer coverage. The level of coverage that is seen now in this fleet is unacceptable and inadequate to enforce the haddock bycatch cap that was implemented in Framework 43 to the multi-species groundfish plan.

We encourage you to support a $1.5 million line item in the FY 2008 budget to provide NMFS the resources to properly observe the midwater herring fleet so they can properly enforce their own regulations and provide an accurate description of the quantity and disposition of bycatch in the Atlantic herring fishery.

Signed,

Peter Baker, Chairman, CHOIR Coalition

On behalf of the undersigned organizations and businesses:

Commercial Fishing Associations/Organizations
East Coast Tuna Association, Director Rich Ruais, Salem, NH
North Shore Community Tuna Association, Saugus, MA
General Category Tuna Association, Director Peter Weiss, Boston, MA
Cape Cod Commercial Hook Fishermen's Association, Director Paul Parker
Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance, Director Craig Pendleton, Saco, ME
Northeast Hook Fishermen's Association, President Marc Stettner, Portsmouth, NH
Georges Bank Cod Fixed Gear Sector, Manager Eric Brazer, Jr, N Chatham, MA
Georges Bank Cod Hook Sector, Manager John Pappalardo, N Chatham, MA
IFISH, Proctor Wells, Bath, ME
New Hampshire Marine Coalition
Stonington Fisheries Alliance, President Carol Bridges, Stonington, ME
Midcoast Fishermen's Association, Chairman Glen Libby, Port Clyde, ME

Recreational and Charter Fishing Associations/Organizations
Recreational Fishing Alliance, Executive Director Jim Donofrio, New Gretna, NJ
National Association of Charterboat Operators, Executive Director Bobbi Walker
Northeast Charter Boat Captain's Association, President Rich Milligan, Revere, MA
Stellwagen Bank Charter Boat Association, President Tom DePersia, Marshfield, MA
Maine Association of Charterboat Captains, Bath, ME
Rhode Island Saltwater Angler's Association, President Steve Medeiros, Coventry, RI
Coastal Conservation Association New England
Massachusetts Striped Bass Association, President Chris Lincoln, Braintree, MA
Plum Island Surfcasters, President Kevin Moore, Newburyport, MA

Charter Fishing and Guiding Companies
Bunny Clark Deep Sea Fishing, Captain Tim Tower, Ogunquit, ME
Pritnear Charters, Capt. Dave Johnson, Kennebunk, ME
Rip Tide Charters, Capt. Dave Guerard, York, ME
Bigger-N-Better Charters, Capt. Mike Sosik, York, ME
Captain Doug Jowett Fly Fishing Charters, Capt. Doug Jowett, Brunswick, ME
Asticou Charters Boat Company, Capt. Rick Savage, Northeast Harbor, ME
Lady J Sportfishing Charters, Capt. Adam Littell, Kennebunk, ME
Super Fly Charters, Capt. George Harris, Warren, ME
Lethal Weapon Fishing Charters, Capt. Bob Liston, Wells Harbor, ME
Shark Five Charters, Capt. Barry Gibson, Boothbay Harbor, ME
Offshore Adventures Sportfishing, Capt. John Pappas, Cape Elizabeth, ME
Fish Tale Charters, Capt. Dave Gittins, York, ME
Mavens Guide Service, Capt. Harvey, ME
Saco Bay Guide Service, Capt. Cal Robinson, Biddeford, ME
Portland Guide Service, Capt. John Ford, Portland, ME
Sushi Hunter Sportfishing Charters, Capt. Kevin Anderson, Portsmouth, NH
Camp Ocean Adventures, Owner Doug Anderson, Newcastle, NH
Reel Jerk Sportfishing Co., Inc., Capt. Rich Albert, Hampton, NH
Captain Bills Charters, LLC, Capt. Bill Wagner, Deerfield, NH
Triple Play Charters, Capts. Rich and Sue Kilborn, South Hampton, NH
Massachusetts Bay Guides, Capts. Greg Sears, Dave Newell, Rob Green, Jay Berggren, Don Campbell, Joe Marino, Mike Evensen, Gene Bernard, Greenbush, MA
Boston Fishstix Guide Service, Capts. John Mendleson and Jim Armstrong, Boston, MA
Striperking Charters, Capt. Vito Demetri, Gloucester, MA
Striper Moon Charters, Capt. Scott Bradley, Plymouth, MA

Outer Cape Sportfishing, Capt. Jeffrey Duncan, Provincetown, MA
Black Dog Charters, Capt. Ryan Bessette, Newburyport, MA
Sandy B Charters, Capt. Bruce Bornstein, Gloucester, MA
Kayman Charters, Capt. Kevin Twombly, Gloucester, MA
Summer Job Charters, Capt. Scott Maguire, Newbury, MA
North Shore Charters, Capt. Dave Pelletier, Beverly MA
Rings Island Charters, Capt. Gary Morin, Salisbury, MA
Fin Addiction Charters, Capt. Jeff Smith, Wellfleet, MA
Hilton Sport Dock, George Hilton, Newburyport, MA
Capeshores Charters, Capt. Bruce Peter, East Orleans, MA
Joppa Tern Charters, Capt. Dan Brown, Newbury, MA
North Coast Angler, Capts. Skip Montello, Dave Beshara, Al Montello, Allan Smith and Instructor Stephen Papows, Gloucester, MA; Salem, NH, Rockport, MA, Newbury, MA
Calexa Charters, Capt. Glen Feldmann, Eastham, MA
Maverick Charters, Ltd., Capt. Jack Riley, Harwich Port, MA
White Ghost guide Services Ltd., Capt. Jim White, East Greenwich, RI
Kerratim Charters Inc., Capt. Fred Gallagher, Shannock, RI
Block Island Sportfishing Charters, Capt. Steve Miller, Block Island, RI
Benmar Custom Charters, John Groff, Mystic, CT
Reel Crazy Sportfishing, Capt. Pat Juliano, West Haven, CT
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Researchers and Educators
Penobscot East Resource Center, Director Robin Alden, Stonington, ME
Bar Harbor Whale Museum, Curator Toby Stephenson, Bar Harbor, ME
The Whale Center of New England, Director Mason Weinrich, Gloucester, MA
Provincetown Center for Coastal Studies, Director Peter Borrelli, Provincetown, MA
Blue Ocean Society, Director Jennifer Kennedy, Portsmouth, NH
Friends of Maine Seabird Islands, President Jane Hopwood, Rockport, ME
Allied Whale, Director Sean Todd, Bar Harbor, ME
Island Institute, Robert Snyder and Jen Litteral, Rockland, ME
Audobon Society-Seabird Restoration Program, Senior Researcher Scott Hall, Belfast, ME
Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society, Regina Asmutis-Silvia, Plymouth, MA & UK

Whale Watch Companies
Cape Ann Whale Watch, Capt. Jim Douglass, Gloucester, MA
Newburyport Whale Watch, Bill Neelon, Newburyport, MA
Portuguese Princess Excursions/Whale Watch, Provincetown, MA
Boothbay Harbor Whale Watch, Mechele Vanderlaan, Boothbay Harbor, ME
Bar Harbor Whale Watch Co., Naturalist Zack Klyver, Bar Harbor, ME
Harris Whale Watch, Capt. Butch Harris, Eastport, ME
Atlantic Fishing and Whale Watch, Capt. Brad Cook, Rye Harbor, NH
Granite State Whale Watch, Pete Reynolds, Rye, NH

Ecotourism Companies
Downeast Windjammer Cruises, Capt. Steve Pagels, Cherryfield, ME
Bar Harbor Ferry Service, Capt. Steve Pagels, Bar Harbor, ME
Acadian Nature Tour & New Horizons Cruise Co., Capt. Gary Fagan, Bar Harbor, ME
Aquaterra Adventures Kayak Co., President Dave Legere, Bar Harbor, ME
Ardea EcoExpeditions, President Darrin Kelly, Gouldsboro, ME
Old Quarry Ocean Adventures, Inc., Capt. Bill Baker, Stonington, ME

Lulu Lobster Boat Ride, Inc., Capt John Nicolai, Gouldsboro, ME

Publications, shore support and other companies
Barnacle Billy's, Inc., Billy Tower, Ogunquit, ME
Maguro America, Inc., Robert Fitzpatrick, Chatham, MA
On The Water Magazine, East Falmouth, MA
Saco Bay Tackle, Saco, ME
Tightlines Tackle Co., Dave Mason, Walpole, ME
Offshore Pursuits Premium Tackle, Dave Dodsworth, MA
Elsam Corp., Andover MA & Ogunquit, ME
Boatwise, LLC., Capts. Rick and Sue Kilborn, South Hampton, NH
Northeast Merchant Systems, Inc., Sturbridge, MA
Chaliflour's Flowers, Gift & Gourmet, Ryan Abood, Manchester, NH
Offshore Pursuits, LLC., Dave Dodsworth
Gourmetgiftbaskets.com, President Ryan Abood, Manchester, NH
SAM Mechanical Services, LLC.
Blue Sea Fisheries, Inc., Capt. Dave Pelletier, Beverly, MA

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Dr. David Pierce
Chairman, Pelagics Committee
C/o Lori Steele, Fishery Analyst
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

April 30, 2007

RE: Monitoring for US At-Sea Processing (USAP)

Dear Dr. Pierce,

As you know, CCCHFA has longstanding concerns that the data gathered by NOAA Fisheries does not accurately or completely represent catch and discards in the midwater trawl fishery for Atlantic herring. Despite the best efforts of various parts of NMFS, including the Fisheries Sampling Branch, budget realities and regulatory loopholes have conspired to create the situation we are in: the best information we have does not reliably indicate the full impact of this fishery, due to low coverage rates and discarding of unpumped, unobserved catch.

The recent introduction of US At Sea Processing (USAP) to this fishery, including actual offshore activities conducted by the P/V American Freedom, has exposed additional weaknesses in the monitoring program in this fishery. Specifically, there are no requirements for USAP vessels to carry Federal fisheries observers despite the fact that they receive and process unobserved catch after taking possession of cod-ends transferred at sea from catcher vessels.

CCCHFA has always been proactive in our approach to the problems in this fishery. We have worked to increase coverage rates, including recent efforts to increase funding to the Fisheries Sampling Branch for additional observers. The CCCHFA research department has also worked with midwater trawl fishermen to test innovative video-based electronic monitoring technology (EM) that may prove a valuable tool for future monitoring efforts.

The EM feasibility test referenced above, along with the timely discussion of USAP monitoring scheduled by the NEFMC Pelagics Committee on Thursday May 3rd, has spurred CCCHFA to write to you today. CCCHFA maintains that a carefully designed and fully accountable monitoring program is needed on USAP vessels, and we therefore urge you and your committee to direct the NEFMC to work with NMFS to develop and implement such a program immediately. This program will require a high level of coverage by Federal fisheries observers, but perhaps technological tools like EM can be used to supplement the human observers, thereby increasing efficiency and reducing cost.

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As such, CCCHFA respectfully submits the attached report summarizing the results of our pilot test of EM on small-mesh midwater trawl vessels. This report is preliminary in nature and was mainly written to disseminate the results of the pilot study to the New England fishing community and to dispel misconceptions about the technology. It was prepared by our research partners at Archipelago Marine Research LTD., under a grant from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation. Despite the fact that the pilot study was cut short due to misunderstandings about the objectives, we successfully demonstrated that EM has potential to improve the monitoring of this fishery.

CCCHFA stands ready to help develop accountable monitoring in the midwater trawl fishery as well as innovative fiscal solutions to pay for it. As such we request that your committee take the initiative and request that the NEFMC direct NMFS to develop a comprehensive program which will fully account for all catch and discards in USAP operations, and contemplates the required scrutiny for both catcher and processor vessels. Please do not hesitate to ask for our assistance in this regard, and we look forward to a productive discussion on Thursday May 3rd.

Sincerely,

Tom Rudolph
Research Director
CCCHFA

Cc: John Pappalardo, Chairman, NEFMC
Peter Baker, Chairman, CHOIR Coalition
Paul Parker, Executive Director, CCCHFA
Pat Kurkul, Regional Administrator, NOAA Fisheries
David Potter, Chief, Fisheries Sampling Branch

DRAFT REPORT FOR THE FEASIBILITY OF ELECTRONIC MONITORING IN THE NEW ENGLAND SMALL MESH MIDWATER TRAWL FISHERY

Introduction

The Cape Cod Commercial Hook Fishermen's Association (CCCHFA) is a non-profit, member-based organization representing the interests of local fishermen in Chatham, Massachusetts. The CCCHFA is has a reputation for finding solutions to fisheries management problems by creating effective partnerships with government, scientists and industry stakeholders. Through exploring innovative ideas and helping to develop effective policies they have become a leader in supporting sustainable fishing practices while continuing to preserve the heritage of their community.

One of the priority issues identified by the CCCHFA is addressing the increased need for high quality at-sea data from commercial fisheries. Independent collection of at-sea data is essential to support a range of fishery-dependent information requirements associated with science, management, and compliance monitoring objectives. Traditionally, at-sea monitoring has been provided by trained fisheries observers and in many areas the level of observer coverage is increasing. The high cost and logistical difficulty of placing observers aboard domestic fishing vessels, particularly small boat fleets, has been a barrier to meeting coverage requirements. Video-based electronic monitoring (EM) is seen as an alternative to human observers and recent studies highlight the utility of EM technology (MRAG 2004, Ames 2005, McElderry et al. 2005).

In recognizing the potential for EM as an at-sea monitoring tool the CCCHFA seeks to conduct feasibility studies for the use of EM on different gear types. One such fishery is the small mesh midwater trawl fishery that targets herring and mackerel in the New England area. The CCCHFA conducted a limited pilot to assess the suitability of EM technology and expose industry participants to the capabilities of this technology. The purpose of this document is to disseminate the results of this work to the New England fishing community.

The small mesh trawl fishery involves vessels, some in excess of 100 feet, that either fish singly or as a tandem with a pair trawl net. In this high volume fishery catch is generally pumped aboard while the cod-end is gathered along side the vessel. A key concern in this fishery is the need for improved information about catch composition by species, bycatch discarded at sea and fishery interactions with protected species. Observers provide monitoring in this fishery to document catch disposition and collect biological samples. Precise coverage level data for 2006 are lacking, but an estimation may be derived by applying the known number of observed trips in 2006 (56) to the 12-year average of trips taken in the fishery (886). The result indicates that in 2006 approximately 6% of the trips in the smallmesh midwater trawl fishery had observers on-board (New England Management Council 2006, Northeast Fisheries Observer Program 2006). On monitored trips observers may not have full access to the catch. Only catch being pumped on-board can be sampled and the vessel is not required to bring all catch aboard or handle all catch in view of the observer (New England Management Council 2006). Catch not pumped aboard could be washed out and go undetected by the observer. Considering these issues, it was thought that EM technology could be used to either assist observers or provide a lower cost automated monitoring approach for this fishery.

Methods

EM Equipment

The EM system consisted of a control box; three closed circuit television (CCTV) cameras, and a sensor suite including a GPS receiver, a hydraulic pressure sensor, and a winch rotation sensor. An outboard view CCTV camera was located on a starboard boom and provided a view of the cod-end while catch was being pumped aboard. A forward deck CCTV camera, equipped with a wide angle lense, was mounted on the main boom for a view of the hopper where pumped fish were discharged and the surrounding fore deck area. The third CCTV camera, also mounted on the main boom, provided a close up view of the aft deck area where discarded species were generally culled and discharged through the scuppers. The hydraulic pressure sensor and the winch rotation sensor were both fixed to the vessel's starboard winch. EM system software was configured to start recording imagery when a hydraulic pressure threshold of 450 psi was surpassed or after two rotations of the starboard warp winch were detected. Recording was set to continue for eight hours after the last winch rotation or pressure threshold breach. The GPS receiver was mounted to the roof of the wheelhouse away from the interference of other antenna, and along with the other sensors and cameras it was wired directly to the control box.

Field Operations

An EM system was installed on one vessel of a pair trawl tandem by a technician from Archipelago, a representative from the CCCHFA and vessel crewmembers. The vessel was about 80 feet in length, and along with its partner vessel targeted mackerel and herring off the coast of New England. The EM system operated autonomously for two fishing trips and was then serviced for a general systems operations check, and a cursory examination of the data and video imagery. The second of these trips carried a NOAA Fisheries certified observer from the provider company AIS Inc., but the observer data collected were unavailable at the time this report was prepared.

During the vessel's third and final trip carrying the EM system, an Archipelago technician went to sea to more closely examine system performance. While on-board, in an effort to collect catch data that could be used in comparison with EM, the technician independently enumerated species and catch disposition. Data collection ended shortly after the completion of the trip with the complete removal of the EM system from the vessel.

Data Analysis

Archipelago staff at its head office in Victoria, BC, analyzed all sensor and image data collected during the pilot. All data were considered confidential and will not be divulged in any manner without the consent of the vessel owner.

Sensor data was analysed to identify fishing events and to evaluate the completeness of the data set. Anomalies in the data were identified, and reasons for their appearance were determined. The most significant anomalies were breaks in the data stream, which could occur if the system were powered down. These were easily evident as EM software was configured to log sensor readings every ten seconds while the system is connected to a consistent power source.

Analysis of image data consisted of initially assessing the quality of the imagery for its usability in review. Next, the trawl deck was viewed for the identification of species; catch disposition and the enumeration of discards. Finally, the imagery was thoroughly reviewed

for marine mammal and other protected species encounters whenever there was a possibility they might interact with the fishing gear.

Results

EM System Performance

Sensor and imagery data were collected with a high degree of success throughout the study period. Over 3 trips, 8.25 days and 6 sets the EM system logged 197.1 hours of sensor data and recorded 70.4 hours of imagery. The data set was nearly complete (>97%) with a few small time breaks occurring in connection with EM servicing or brief electrical power interruptions.

Sensor Data

The geo-spatial plot of the third trip of the study in Figure 1(a) clearly outlines the vessel departure; transit, fishing activity and return to port. The blue portion of the cruise track indicates areas where the EM system is recording video while the dark regions represent a hydraulic pressure of more than 450 psi on the starboard winch. The close-up in Figure 1(b) displays multiple high-pressure pulses on the winch common to fishing activity indicating the net is being set, hauled and its warp length adjusted frequently. Breaks in the cruise track are shown in yellow.

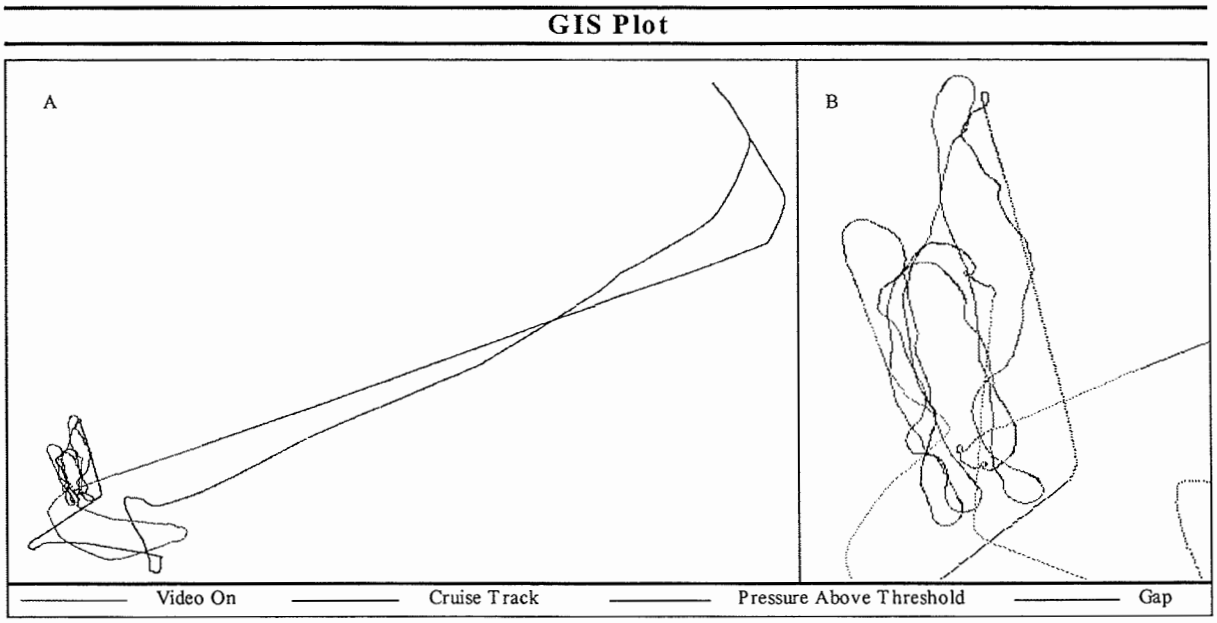

Figure 1. (A) GIS plot showing vessel cruise track for the time series data shown in Figure 2. (B) Close-up of fishing activity.

Figure 2 shows a time series graph of the data displayed in the Figure 1. Vessel speed (purple) is quite diagnostic of the vessel's activities. The sudden increase soon after cast-off indicates the vessel is getting up to speed for transit out to the fishing grounds. Large fluctuations in the signal suggest the vessel is sounding for fish while smaller fluctuations are consistent with towing activity. Where the speed is near zero the crew was most likely processing catch at sea. The second rapid increase in the speed signal at the far fight of the graph indicates the vessel is returning to transiting speed and heading back to port. The initial spikes in the rotation (red) and hydraulic (black) sensor signals associated with the large reduction in transiting speed represent the kind of high winch activity usually connected with setting events. Notice, the start of video recording (blue) is triggered by these events.

During towing the relatively infrequent spikes in the signature of the hydraulic and rotation sensors indicate the warp length adjustments necessary to effectively position the net. Hauling activity is consistent with the rapid spikes appearing in the hydraulic and rotation sensor signals directly after towing and preceding a period of very low speed. A time ramp has been added as a tool to quickly identify gaps in data collection. The ramp progresses steadily upward in one-hour increments and resets after every twenty-four.

Time Series Plot

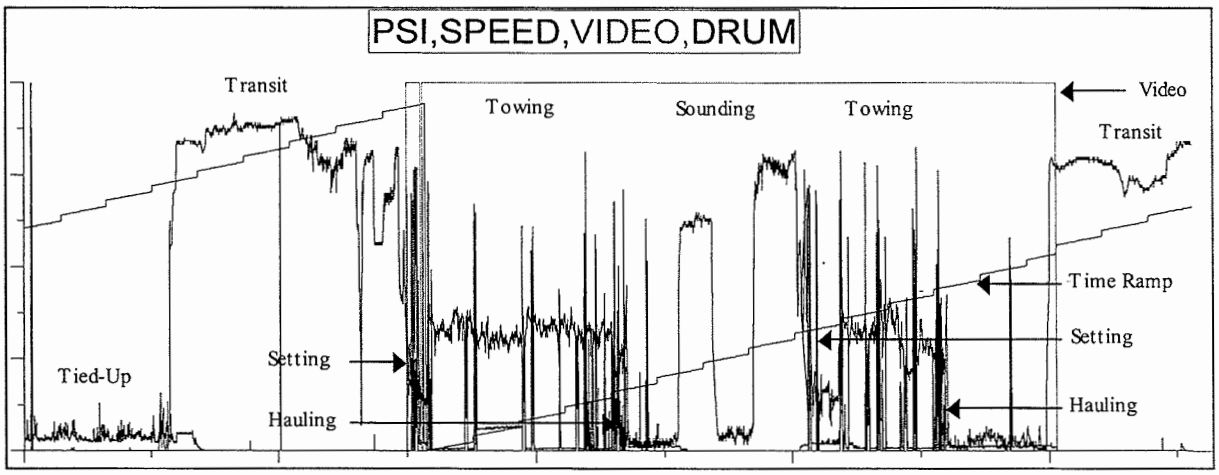

Figure 2. Time series graph for trip # 3: showing transit to grounds, setting gear, hauling gear and transit to port. Shown are winch rotation sensor (red), hydraulic pressure (black), vessel speed (purple) and image recording on (blue).

Imagery Analysis

All of the imagery collected was useable with occasional periods of sunglare or water droplets on the camera domes reducing the viewers ability to detect discarding events and to identify fish to species. Figure 3 shows the view from each camera at the same point in time.

Net and catch handling operations take place over a wide area on the vessel trawl deck and the surrounding water. After the doors are hauled in, the net begins to be wound on the drum preventing catch from spilling out of the mouth. The vessel then manoeuvres the cod-end alongside where it is partially winched on-board and a pump intake inserted. Next, the cod-end is returned to the water and the net is further wound on to the drum to concentrate the catch near the pump intake. Finally, catch in the cod-end is pumped aboard to a hopper on the forward deck where it is initially sorted. Discarded species are either sorted out towards the stern onto the aft deck and washed out the scuppers or opportunistically discarded directly over the rail. Retained catch is allowed to flow through the hopper and down chutes directing it toward mid-ship and further aft into tanks capable of being flooded with refrigerated seawater (RSW).

Imagery from the outboard camera view (Figure 3a) captured the cod-end coming up alongside the rail of the vessel and clearly shows catch floating in the cod-end throughout the pumping process. Activities such as birds interacting with the catch and species discarded over the rail were also noticeable from this view. The forward deck camera (Figure 3b) provided an unobstructed view of the main catch handling area allowing for the close monitoring of the crews sorting practices. Catch entering the hopper and moving down its associated chutes to the holding tanks was readily apparent, while species being removed from these areas also occurred in clear view. In addition, it was possible to enumerate and

identify most large fish to species, such as dogfish and pollock, from this camera. However, small fish and species opportunistically discarded were difficult to identify from this wide angle view. The aft deck camera allowed for a more detailed view of species discarded to the deck before they were washed out the scuppers. The close up view from this camera made the identification and enumeration of smaller species possible.

Simultaneous Views From All Three Cameras

Figure 3. Pictures of three simultanous camera views including: starboard side of the vessel (a); the sorting area (b) and discard area (c).

Imagery examined from all three fishing trips showed that common distinctive species such as pollock; spiny dogfish, haddock, mackerel and Atlantic herring were easily distinguished in the aft deck camera view, but less so in the fore deck view. Furthermore, the fore deck view provided a better perspective of fish handling and discarding activities around the hopper while the aft deck camera was more restricted in field of view. The camera-based estimates of discarded fish on the third trip were compared with catch data collected by the on-board technician. The on-board technicians discard estimates of 31 dogfish and 4 unknown fish were very close to those of EM, which reported 29 dogfish and 4 unknown fish as discarded. Of the 493 total pieces reported by EM as discarded, 65% were spiny dogfish, 18% were pollock, 17% were unknown fish and two were haddock. The primary reason for fish being classified as unknown was due to species being discarded by crew at the hopper. These would have been identified had they progressed to the aft camera view. Neither the observer nor EM reported any observations of fishery interactions with protected species during this study.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study was very successful in capturing a nearly complete data set from the three fishing trips. The sensor data can be used to accurately characterize vessel activities at sea and clearly define fishing operations. The imagery collected was clear and unobstructed facilitating the confirmation of catch retention; catch removals and large species interactions.

From the imagery available, we are confident of the ability of EM to document the disposition of catch pumped aboard the fishing vessel. The outboard camera view also provided a clear view of the cod-end as catch was being removed. It was not possible to confirm that the entire contents of the cod-end had been transferred from this view. Perhaps lacking in this study was a wide-angle bird's eye view of the vessel after deck and area astern, giving an overall perspective of the net and catch handling operations. Also of benefit would be to fit the fore deck camera with the same close view perspective as occurred with the aft deck camera. The pilot study was limited in scope and can be used to suggest that EM should be considered as a monitoring tool for this fishery. A more in-depth pilot study should be carried out, testing a larger component of the fleet. As well, more comparative data should be collected with EM and observers to calibrate this monitoring method.

While the resources for this pilot study would have allowed more intensive coverage, concerns raised within the small mesh trawl fleet caused this study to be cut short, highlighting the necessity for more consultation with industry, particularly concerning the goals of the study and how the data would be used.

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Northeast Fisheries Observer Program 2006, Monthly Observer Trips/Sea Days, http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/femad/fishsamp/fsb/.

April 30, 2007

Via Electronic Mail

David E. Pierce, Chair, Pelagics Committee
New England Fishery Management Council
Deputy Director, Division of Marine Fisheries
Commonwealth of Massachusetts
251 Causeway Street
Boston, MA 02114

Patricia Kurkul, Regional Administrator
Northeast Region
NOAA Fisheries
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2298

Re. Observer coverage for herring fishery at-sea processor(s)

Dear Dr. Pierce and Ms. Kurkul:

The Conservation Law Foundation, Ocean Conservancy, and the Natural Resources Defense Council are writing in anticipation of the Pelagics Committee meeting scheduled for May 3, 2007. At this meeting, the committee will be discussing whether observers should be required on at-sea processors in the Atlantic herring fishery. We strongly urge you to recommend to the full New England Fishery Management Council that observers be required at all times on at-sea processors in Northeast pelagic fisheries.

It is our understanding that catcher vessels working with an at-sea processor, may transfer catch in one of two ways; the catch may be brought aboard the catcher vessel and later pumped to the processor, or the catcher vessel net may be transferred directly from the water without being brought on-board the catcher vessel. We feel that policy should direct that observer coverage be deployed wherever catch is first subject to assessment and/or culling. Certainly, most herring (and other pelagics) catch will continue to be handled as it has traditionally, with a catcher vessel bringing its catch aboard to be culled for bycatch and stowed. This catch may then be transferred to any buyer, whether that is an at-sea processor, or land-based processor or buyer. We continue to urge NMFS to increase observer deployment on these vessels from current levels to document fishery characteristics.

However, the introduction of the processor American Freedom accompanied by a small fleet of catcher vessels, adds the need for new protocols for observer coverage. Currently, the at-sea processing sector is allowed to process 20,000 metric tons of herring per year, or about 15 to 20 percent of recent Atlantic herring landings. In this operation, catcher vessels may as typically tow their catch alongside the at-sea processor where the codend is transferred directly onto the processor vessel where it is first released

on deck (or released over the side). The American Freedom at-sea processor vessel may accept the catch from as many as nine catcher vessels working in proximity. Because there are currently no observers required on any processing vessel, any catch transferred by passing the codend will go unmonitored. This represents a significant gap in the at-sea monitoring program and in our view is contrary to the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act.[1]

Similar at-sea processors in the Pacific and North Pacific pelagic fisheries are required to have around-the-clock observer coverage. We urge that the same standard be applied to observer coverage for at-sea processors in the New England and Mid-Atlantic pelagic fisheries. Such coverage presents an opportunity, through the establishment of appropriate observer protocols, to link data on catcher vessel effort to catch and bycatch as observed and recorded on the processor vessel. This can significantly increase the level of coverage and efficiency of the observer program for pelagic fisheries in New England and the Mid-Atlantic. As you know, current levels of observer coverage in the herring fishery run at approximately 3 percent of all trips and are inadequate to accurately account for herring catch and bycatch in the fishery. These levels and are also inconsistent with observer level coverage in similar fisheries around the country.

Atlantic herring and mackerel are keystone species in the Gulf of Maine-area ecosystem. They are a source of forage for New England's depleted populations of groundfish (cod and other fish stocks), marine mammals, sea birds and many other species of marine life. We urge you to vote to require around-the-clock observer coverage in all pelagic fisheries in order to collect the scientific data needed to monitor these fisheries and to minimize bycatch.

Sincerely yours,

Roger Fleming, Senior Attorney
Conservation Law Foundation

John Williamson, Fish Conservation Director
Ocean Conservancy

Bradford Sewell, Senior Attorney
Natural Resources Defense Council

Cc John Pappalardo, Chair, NEFMC
William Hogarth, Deputy Director, NMFS
Paul Howard, Executive Director, NEFMC
Lori L. Steele, Fishery Analyst, NEFMC
David Potter, Fisheries Sampling Branch Chief, NMFS

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[1] See 16 U.S.C. 1551(a)(2) (FMPs must be based on "the best scientific information available"); 16 U.S.C. 1851(a)(9)(FMPs must "minimize bycatch"); and 16 U.S.C. 1853(a)(11)(FMPs must "establish a standardized reporting methodology to assess the amount and type of bycatch occurring in the fishery"). National Standard 2 requires that conservation and management measures be based upon the best scientific information available. NMFS has previously acknowledged that it may take management action for reasons other than a clear biological need or resource problem, in order to improve the scientific understanding of the herring fishery. The Council has also previously noted in discussing its application of the precautionary approach to the herring resource that NMFS' Guidelines for identifying essential fish habitat (EFH) and adverse impacts on EFH, reflect the importance of keystone species like Atlantic herring to the overall health of the ecosystem as well as the importance of prey abundance for other species. See Amendment 1, sec. 6.5. (citing 50 C.F.R. 600 at 2378 (January 17, 2002)).

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May 1, 2007

Dr. David Pierce, Chairman
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Lori Steele; Woneta Cloutier
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Need for observer coverage on USAP

Dear Chairman Pierce,

Greenpeace writes today to encourage the Pelagics Committee to recommend, to the NEFMC, levels of observer coverage on United States At-Sea Processors (USAP) engaged in the NE Herring fishery that will assess accurately both the landed catch and bycatch delivered and processed at sea. The only vessel that is currently permitted to operate as a USAP, the American Freedom, takes deliveries of fish directly from its catcher vessels by receiving nets full of fish. Because of this type of delivery observers aboard catcher vessels **do not** have an opportunity to sample the catch or bycatch. Thus, it is **imperative** that the American Freedom carries observers to quantify and qualify both the catch and bycatch in this sector of the fishery.

As you know, observer coverage/data collection is essential to meeting the requirements of the law in respect to measuring and minimizing bycatch. Midwater trawl vessels operating in the New England herring fishery have been shown to have a bycatch of marine mammals and various finfish, including tuna, striped bass, dogfish and haddock. The high levels of bycatch encountered by Herring vessels has management ramifications in many non-herring fisheries managed by the NEFMC. The recently adopted cap on the bycatch of Haddock by Herring vessels highlights one aspect of the bycatch problems associated with midwater trawling for Herring. The USAP sector is allowed to process 20,000 metric tons of herring per year, which equates to roughly 15 – 20% of traditional landings. All large capacity operations **must be fully observed** to meet the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Act and gather the data needed for the NEFMC to effectively manage fisheries in NE.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Phil Kline

Phil Kline, Senior Oceans Campaigner

CC: Pat Kurkul, Regional Administrator, National Marine Fisheries Service
Bill Hogarth, Deputy Director, National Marine Fisheries Service

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Wednesday, May 02, 2007 10:34 AM
To: Woneta M. Cloutier
Subject: FW: Observer Coverage on USAP Vessels Needed ASAP

From: Eric Brazer
Sent: Wednesday, May 02, 2007 10:43 AM
To: Lori Steele
Cc: Pat Kurkul; bill.hogarth@noaa.gov
Subject: Observer Coverage on USAP Vessels Needed ASAP

May 2, 2007

Via electronic mail

Dr. David Pierce, Chairman
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Lori Steele; Woneta Cloutier
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Observer Coverage on USAP Vessels Needed ASAP

Dear Chairman Pierce,

We write to you today on behalf of the GB Hook Sector and the GB Fixed Gear Sector. As you know, our Sectors have been at the cutting edge of developing monitoring and reporting systems and utilizing data generated by observers to increase knowledge about our fisheries. We encourage the Pelagics Committee to pass a motion encouraging the NEFMC to request that NMFS require the following in regards to USAP(S):

(1) 200% Federal observer coverage on all USAP(s);
(2) All fish caught for delivery to a USAP be sampled before being dumped at sea by either the catcher vessel or the USAP itself (i.e. all bags are sampled in a sufficient manner to characterize catch composition before the bag is dumped.

It is essential that NMFS provide assurances to the groundfish fishermen in our Sectors that their futures are not being dumped at sea before being sampled and characterized.

We encourage you to take action at the first available opportunity.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Eldredge, President
GB Hook Sector

Eric Brazer, Jr., Manager
GB Fixed Gear Sector

April 27, 2007

Dr. David Pierce, Chairman
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Lori Steele
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Support for observer coverage on the US At-Sea Processors

Dear Chairman Pierce,

As a commercial fisherman, I am very concerned about the fact that there are no Federal requirements for observer coverage on U.S. at-sea processing vessels. These USAP vessels, including the currently active 380 foot American Freedom, are permitted to process up to 44 million pounds of herring without inspection by Federal observers.

The American Freedom takes delivery of nets full of herring from catcher vessels which do not handle the fish in any way. Because of this fact, observers are needed on the processing vessel, as the processing vessel is the first point at which the catch can be observed out of the water and out of the net. Observers on the catcher vessels are of very limited value and should not be an acceptable substitute for careful examination of the catch.

A ship this big that can take so much fish needs to be observed and everyone needs to know what they are catching. This is imperative to the health and rebuilding of the stocks I rely upon for a living. Please take action at your committee meeting to require a high level of observer coverage on both the fish-pumping and processing activities which take place onboard these USAP vessels.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Tom Szado

Tom Szado
FV Arlie X
PO Box 248
So. Chatham, MA 02659

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Wednesday, May 02, 2007 9:16 AM
To: Woneta M. Cloutier
Subject: FW:

-----Original Message--
From: Weiner, Benjami.
Sent: Tuesday, May 01, 2007 11:42 PM
To: david.pierce@ma.state.gov
Cc: Lori Steele
Subject:

Dr. David Pierce, Chairman
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Lori Steele
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Support for observer coverage on the US At-Sea Processors

Dear Chairman Pierce,

My name is Ben Weiner, I am a commercial tuna fisherman out of Maine. I am writing to ask that the NEFMC put observers on United States At-Sea Processor (USAP) vessels fishing off the northeast and midatlantic regions and require that these types of vessels have observer coverage in the future. Just recently a herring and mackerel USAP vessel began operations off of this part of the country and this vessel is not required to have observers onboard. Myself and many other fishermen feel this is unacceptable.

In other parts of the country, such as Alaska, similar vessels would be required to have full-if not 200%-observer coverage. There is a reason for this: these types of operations are known to be problematic. In order to ensure that bycatch and discards are accounted for, it is crucial that USAP vessels off this part of the country have observers as well. This would allow for the vessel to operate while also remaining accountable. With so much fish being transferred so far from shore, it is essential that these boats have observer coverage.

It is important that the Pelagics Committee and the full Council push for vessels such as the one that is now off our coast to have proper observer coverage.

Thanks a lot for your time

Ben Weiner
Tuna Fisherman
Perkins Cove, Maine

April 27, 2007

Dr. David Pierce, Chairman
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Lori Steele
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Support for observer coverage on the US At-Sea Processors

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I am concerned about the fact that there are no Federal requirements for observer coverage on U.S. at-sea processing vessels which work with midwater trawl catcher vessels to target herring. Because these vessels, like the currently active PV American Freedom, take delivery of cod-ends directly from catcher vessels, NMFS observers are badly needed on the processing vessel. Because the processing vessel is the first point at which the catch can be observed out of the water and out of the net, the observers on the catcher vessels are of very limited value. Observers on the catcher vessels should not be considered an adequate or accountable system of monitoring.

I am a commercial fisherman who targets tuna, cod and haddock using hook and line, and conducts charters for striped bass. When I longline for cod and haddock, I carry NMFS observers, sometimes as often as every other trip, on my 35' boats. Yet a 380 foot ship capable of pumping aboard hundreds of tons of fish has no requirements for observers of any kind. This is unacceptable and I respectfully request that the Council take immediate action to rectify the situation. This is imperative to the health and rebuilding of the stocks I rely upon for a living.

Please take action at your herring committee meeting on May 3rd to require a high level of observer coverage on USAP vessels, for both their fish-pumping and processing activities.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely, Tom Barker

Tom Barker
FV Tuna Eclipse and FV Zachary T
12 Witchwood Ln
Harwich, MA 02645

April 27, 2007

Dr. David Pierce, Chairman
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Lori Steele
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Support for observer coverage on the US At-Sea Processors

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I am a commercial fisherman writing to you today to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. As you know, herring is a lynchpin species that the fish I catch such as tuna, cod, haddock, striped bass and lobster depend upon. The midwater trawl fleet that currently pursues herring is the most efficient, terminal fleet of vessels that New England has seen since the foreigners left when the Magnusson-Stevens Act was passed in 1976. A fleet this powerful that interacts with such a wide range of species needs to be observed so that we have assurances that they are not destroying the resources that we depend upon to make a living.

The one active at-sea processor in New England is the American Freedom. It is set up to take delivery of nets full of herring before the herring are brought upon the catcher vessels. Because of this fact, observers are needed on the processing vessel, as the processing vessel is the first point at which the catch can be observed out of the water and the net.

A ship this big that can take so much fish needs to be observed and everyone needs to know what they are catching. This is imperative to the health and rebuilding of the stocks I rely upon for a living.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jason Ellis
J.C. Ellis Design
F/V Hannah Iah

From: Tyler McLaughlin [ ]rg]
Sent: Wednesday, May 02, 2007 12:56 PM
To: Woneta M. Cloutier; bill.hogarth@noaa.gov; pat.kurkul@noaa.gov
Subject: Support for observer coverage on the US At-Sea Processors

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I am a 19 year old commercial tuna and striped bass fisherman writing to you today to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. As you know, herring is a lynchpin species that the fish I catch such as tuna, cod, haddock, striped bass and lobster depend upon. The midwater trawl fleet that currently pursues herring is the most efficient, terminal fleet of vessels that New England has seen since the foreigners left when the Magnusson-Stevens Act was passed in 1976. A fleet this powerful that interacts with such a wide range of species needs to be observed so that we have assurances that they are not destroying the resources that we depend upon to make a living.

The one active at-sea processor in New England is the American Freedom. It is set up to take delivery of nets full of herring before the herring are brought upon the catcher vessels. Because of this fact, observers are needed on the processing vessel, as the processing vessel is the first point at which the catch can be observed out of the water and the net.

A ship this big that can take so much fish needs to be observed and everyone needs to know what they are catching. This is imperative to the health and rebuilding of the stocks I rely upon for a living.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Tyler McLaughlin

April 30, 2007

New England Fishery Management Council
Attn: David Pierce, Chairman, Pelagics Committee
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: US at-sea processing (USAP)

Dear Mr. Pierce,

I am a commercial fisherman and I'm writing to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to mandate a high level of observer coverage on USAP vessels like the American Freedom. I operate a fixed gear vessel about 40 feet long, and I am mandated to carry Federal observers, sometimes as often as every other trip, and my fishing power is far less than the American Freedom.

I say fishing power in relation to this vessel because the American Freedom takes delivery of nets full of herring from the catcher vessels, essentially completing the fishing operation for those vessels. Because of this fact, observers are needed on the processing vessel, as the processing vessel is the first point at which the catch can be observed out of the water and the net.

A ship this big that can take so much fish needs to be observed and everyone needs to know what they are catching. This is imperative to the health and rebuilding of the stocks I rely upon for a living.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John Our Jr.
169 Indian Hill Rd
Chatham, MA. 02633

F/V Miss Fitz

April 30, 2007

New England Fishery Management Council
Attn: David Pierce, Chairman, Pelagics Committee
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Observers on At-Sea Herring Processors

Dear Mr. Pierce,

I am a commercial fisherman and I'm writing to you today about a big problem in the sea herring fishery- the lack of Federal fisheries observers on US at sea herring processors. Please encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to mandate a high level of observer coverage on these vessels, especially since there is currently one active vessel, the American Freedom, which has no requirement to carry observers.

As you know, herring are critical forage for the fish I catch such as tuna, cod, haddock, striped bass and lobster. The midwater trawl fleet that currently pursues herring is the most efficient, terminal fleet of vessels that New England has seen since the foreigners left when the Magnusson-Stevens Act was passed in 1976. A fleet this powerful that interacts with such a wide range of species needs to be observed so that we have assurances that they are not destroying the resources that we depend upon to make a living.

The American Freedom is set up to take delivery of nets full of herring before the herring are brought upon the catcher vessels. Because of this fact, observers are needed on the processing vessel, as the processing vessel is the first point at which the catch can be observed out of the water and the net.

A ship this big that can take so much fish needs to be observed and everyone needs to know what they are catching. This is imperative to the health and rebuilding of the stocks I rely upon for a living.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Michael D Russo

F/V Gulf Venture
Chatham

April 27, 2007

RECEIVED
APR 30 2007
NEW ENGLAND FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Dr. David Pierce, Chairman
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Lori Steele
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Support for observer coverage on the US At-Sea Processors

Dear Chairman Pierce,

Please take action on May 3rd to rectify the current lack of any Federal observer coverage on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. I am a commercial fisherman with a 40 foot fixed gear vessel who fishes for cod and other groundfish and I am subject to mandatory Federal observer coverage.

The one active at-sea processor in New England is the American Freedom. It is set up to take delivery of nets full of herring from catcher vessels which do not handle the fish in any way. Because of this fact, observers are needed on the processing vessel, as the processing vessel is the first point at which the catch can be observed out of the water and the net

A ship this big that can take so much fish needs to be observed and everyone needs to know what they are catching. This is imperative to the health and rebuilding of the stocks I rely upon for a living.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kenneth A. Tolley

Ken Tolley
FV Hunter
Harwichport, MA 02646

April 28, 2007

Chairman David Pierce
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Woneta Cloutier
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: NEED FOR OBSERVER COVERAGE ON USAPs

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I'm a commercial fisherman writing to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put a high level of federal observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. Herring is one of the most important fish in the sea for a lot of the fish I catch, especially Cod, Tuna, and Haddock , and its essential that the Council does all it can to ensure that the stock is healthy.

USAPs that take fish directly from catcher vessels without the fish going aboard the catcher vessel where an observer (were there one aboard) can count the bycatch. Because of this, not having observers on the USAPs is a giant loophole that thousands of dead fish (and marine mammals) can potentially go undetected.

These massive industrial ships can strip so much fish out of the ocean that is imperative that they be observed. Please take action to ensure that the midwater fleet fishing for the USAPs does not wipe out the herring or the other fish I catch.

Regards,

Stu Tolley
F/V Dawn T
Chatham,MA

April 30, 2007

New England Fishery Management Council
Attn: David Pierce, Chairman, Pelagics Committee
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: US at-sea processing (USAP)

Dear Mr. Pierce,

I am a commercial fisherman and I'm writing to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to mandate a high level of observer coverage on USAP vessels like the American Freedom. I operate a fixed gear vessel about 40 feet long, and I am mandated to carry Federal observers, sometimes as often as every other trip, and my fishing power is far less than the American Freedom.

I say fishing power in relation to this vessel because the American Freedom takes delivery of nets full of herring from the catcher vessels, essentially completing the fishing operation for those vessels. Because of this fact, observers are needed on the processing vessel, as the processing vessel is the first point at which the catch can be observed out of the water and the net.

A ship this big that can take so much fish needs to be observed and everyone needs to know what they are catching. This is imperative to the health and rebuilding of the stocks I rely upon for a living.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

ROBERT E ST-PIERRE JR
C/O FV RUG RAT 9
19 JAYBIRD LN
W YARMOUTH MA
02673

RECEIVED
APR 30 2007
NEW ENGLAND FISHERY
MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

April 27, 2007

Dr. David Pierce, Chairman
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Lori Steele
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Support for observer coverage on the US At-Sea Processors

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I am writing as a commercial fisherman to request that your herring committee take action on May 3rd to recommend that the full Council take urgent action to require a high level of Federal observer coverage on U.S. at-sea herring processing vessels. These offshore processing vessels, like the recently permitted American Freedom, work with midwater trawl catcher vessels from which they take delivery of cod-ends. The fish are then pumped directly aboard the processor, bypassing any Federal observers on the catcher vessel and subject to no inspection whatsoever.

NMFS observers are badly needed on the processing vessel. Because the processing vessel is the first point at which the catch can be observed out of the water and out of the net, the observers on the catcher vessels are of very limited value and do not constitute an adequate or accountable system of monitoring.

I am a commercial fisherman who targets cod, haddock, and other groundfish. When I fish for groundfish, I carry NMFS observers, sometimes as often as every other trip, on my 40 foot dayboats. Yet a 380 foot ship capable of pumping aboard hundreds of tons of fish has no requirements for observers of any kind. This is unacceptable and I respectfully request that the Council take immediate action to rectify the situation. This is imperative to the health and rebuilding of the stocks I rely upon for a living.

Please take action at your herring committee meeting on May 3rd to require a high level of observer coverage on USAP vessels, for both their fish-pumping and processing activities.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jan Margeson
FV Decisive and FV Growing Old
893 Slough Rd
Brewster, MA 02631

April 27, 2007

Dr. David Pierce, Chairman
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Lori Steele
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Support for observer coverage on the US At-Sea Processors

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I am a commercial fisherman writing to you today to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put a high level of Federal observer coverage on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. As you know, herring is a lynchpin species that the fish I catch such as tuna, cod, haddock, striped bass and lobster depend upon. The midwater trawl fleet that currently pursues herring is the most efficient, terminal fleet of vessels that New England has seen since the foreigners left when the Magnuson-Stevens Act was passed in 1976. A fleet this powerful that interacts with such a wide range of species needs to be observed so that we have assurances that they are not destroying the resources that we depend upon to make a living.

The one active at-sea processor in New England is the American Freedom. It is set up to take delivery of nets full of herring before the herring are brought upon the catcher vessels. Because of this fact, observers are needed on the processing vessel, as the processing vessel is the first point at which the catch can be observed out of the water and the net.

A ship this big that can take so much fish needs to be observed and everyone needs to know what they are catching. This is imperative to the health and rebuilding of the stocks I rely upon for a living.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Matt Linnell
FV Lori B and FV Sea Dancer
230 Northgate Rd
N Chatham MA 02650

RECEIVED
APR 30 2007
NEW ENGLAND FISHERY
MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

April 27, 2007

Dr. David Pierce, Chairman
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Lori Steele
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Support for observer coverage on the US At-Sea Processors

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I am a commercial fisherman writing to you today to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put a high level of Federal observer coverage on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. As you know, herring is a lynchpin species that the fish I catch such as tuna, cod and haddock, depend upon. The midwater trawl fleet that currently pursues herring is the most efficient, terminal fleet of vessels that New England has seen since the foreigners left when the Magnuson-Stevens Act was passed in 1976. A fleet this powerful that interacts with such a wide range of species needs to be observed so that we have assurances that they are not destroying the resources that we depend upon to make a living.

The one active at-sea processor in New England is the American Freedom. It is set up to take delivery of nets full of herring from catcher vessels which do not handle the fish in any way. Because of this fact, observers are needed on the processing vessel, as the processing vessel is the first point at which the catch can be observed out of the water and the net. It is inconsistent and nonsensical that I am currently observed at a high rate, up to 50%, as I target cod and haddock with my 35' longline vessel, while this 380' ship pumps hundreds of tons of catch aboard with no Federal observer coverage of any kind.

A ship this big that can take so much fish needs to be observed and everyone needs to know what they are catching. This is imperative to the health and rebuilding of the stocks I rely upon for a living.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Greg Walinski

Greg Walinski
FV Alicia Ann
PO Box 783
Harwichport, MA 02646

RECEIVED
APR 30 2007
NEW ENGLAND FISHERY
MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

April 27, 2007

Dr. David Pierce, Chairman
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Lori Steele
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Support for observer coverage on the US At-Sea Processors

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I am a commercial fisherman writing to ask that your committee take action on May 3rd to require a high level of Federal observer coverage on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. As you know, herring is a lynchpin species that the fish I catch depend upon, such as tuna and cod. The midwater trawl fleet that currently pursues herring is the most efficient, terminal fleet of vessels that New England has seen since the foreigners left when the Magnuson-Stevens Act was passed in 1976. A fleet this powerful that interacts with such a wide range of species needs to be observed so that we have assurances that they are not destroying the resources that we depend upon to make a living.

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A ship this big that can take so much fish needs to be observed and everyone needs to know what they are catching. This is imperative to the health and rebuilding of the stocks I rely upon for a living.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ray Kane

Ray Kane
FV Frenzy
PO Box 421
West Chatham, MA 02669

RECEIVED
APR 30 2007
NEW ENGLAND FISHERY
MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

April 30, 2007

New England Fishery Management Council
Attn: David Pierce, Chairman, Pelagics Committee
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Observers on At-Sea Herring Processors

Dear Mr. Pierce,

I am a commercial fisherman and I'm writing to you today about a big problem in the sea herring fishery- the lack of Federal fisheries observers on US at sea herring processors. Please encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to mandate a high level of observer coverage on these vessels, especially since there is currently one active vessel, the American Freedom, which has no requirement to carry observers.

As you know, herring are critical forage for the fish I catch such as tuna, cod, haddock, striped bass and lobster. The midwater trawl fleet that currently pursues herring is the most efficient, terminal fleet of vessels that New England has seen since the foreigners left when the Magnusson-Stevens Act was passed in 1976. A fleet this powerful that interacts with such a wide range of species needs to be observed so that we have assurances that they are not destroying the resources that we depend upon to make a living.

The American Freedom is set up to take delivery of nets full of herring before the herring are brought upon the catcher vessels. Because of this fact, observers are needed on the processing vessel, as the processing vessel is the first point at which the catch can be observed out of the water and the net.

A ship this big that can take so much fish needs to be observed and everyone needs to know what they are catching. This is imperative to the health and rebuilding of the stocks I rely upon for a living.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Joanne H

Johanne

April 27, 2007

Dr. David Pierce, Chairman
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Lori Steele
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Support for observer coverage on the US At-Sea Processors

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I am a commercial fisherman writing to you today to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. As you know, herring is a lynchpin species that the fish I catch such as tuna, cod, haddock, striped bass and lobster depend upon. The midwater trawl fleet that currently pursues herring is the most efficient, terminal fleet of vessels that New England has seen since the foreigners left when the Magnusson-Stevens Act was passed in 1976. A fleet this powerful that interacts with such a wide range of species needs to be observed so that we have assurances that they are not destroying the resources that we depend upon to make a living.

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A ship this big that can take so much fish needs to be observed and everyone needs to know what they are catching. This is imperative to the health and rebuilding of the stocks I rely upon for a living.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

April 30, 2007

New England Fishery Management Council
Attn: David Pierce, Chairman, Pelagics Committee
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Observers on At-Sea Herring Processors

Dear Mr. Pierce,

I am a commercial fisherman and I'm writing to you today about a big problem in the sea herring fishery- the lack of Federal fisheries observers on US at sea herring processors. Please encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to mandate a high level of observer coverage on these vessels, especially since there is currently one active vessel, the American Freedom, which has no requirement to carry observers.

As you know, herring are critical forage for the fish I catch such as tuna, cod, haddock, striped bass and lobster. The midwater trawl fleet that currently pursues herring is the most efficient, terminal fleet of vessels that New England has seen since the foreigners left when the Magnusson-Stevens Act was passed in 1976. A fleet this powerful that interacts with such a wide range of species needs to be observed so that we have assurances that they are not destroying the resources that we depend upon to make a living.

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A ship this big that can take so much fish needs to be observed and everyone needs to know what they are catching. This is imperative to the health and rebuilding of the stocks I rely upon for a living.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Joanne H

Johanna

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Tuesday, May 01, 2007 11:42 AM
To: Woneta M. Cloutier
Subject: FW:
Importance: High

From: Kinkela, James
Sent: Tuesday, May 01, 2007 11:40 AM
To: Lori Steele
Cc: bill.horarth@noaa.gov
Subject: FW:

Dr. David Pierce, Chairman
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Lori Steele
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Support for observer coverage on the US At-Sea Processors

Sea Dear Chairman Pierce,

I am a recreational fisherman writing to you today to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. As you know, herring is a lynchpin species that the fish I catch such as tuna, cod, haddock and striped bass depend upon. The midwater trawl fleet that currently pursues herring is the most efficient, terminal fleet of vessels that New England has seen since the foreigners left when the Magnusson-Stevens Act was passed in 1976. A fleet this powerful that interacts with such a wide range of species needs to be observed so that we have assurances that they are not destroying the resources that we depend upon to make a living.

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A ship this big that can take so much fish needs to be observed and everyone needs to know what they are catching. This is imperative to the health and rebuilding of the stocks.
Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

James Kinkela
81 Mill St.
Hopedale, MA 01747

From: Niland, Keven GOSS [mailto:
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2007 7:43 AM
To: David Pierce; Lori Steele
Subject: observer coverage

Dr. David Pierce, Chairman
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Lori Steele
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Support for observer coverage on the US At-Sea Processors

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I am a commercial fisherman writing to you today to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. As you know, herring is a lynchpin species that the fish I catch such as tuna, cod, haddock, striped bass and lobster depend upon. The midwater trawl fleet that currently pursues herring is the most efficient, terminal fleet of vessels that New England has seen since the foreigners left when the Magnusson-Stevens Act was passed in 1976. A fleet this powerful that interacts with such a wide range of species needs to be observed so that we have assurances that they are not destroying the resources that we depend upon to make a living.

The one active at-sea processor in New England is the American Freedom. It is set up to take delivery of nets full of herring before the herring are brought upon the catcher vessels. Because of this fact, observers are needed on the processing vessel, as the processing vessel is the first point at which the catch can be observed out of the water and the net.

A ship this big that can take so much fish needs to be observed and everyone needs to know what they are catching. This is imperative to the health and rebuilding of the stocks I rely upon for a living.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Keven Niland

Subject: FW: Herring & processing at sea

From: Lee Goldman [ ]
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2007 1:01 PM
To: David Pierce
Cc: Lori Steele
Subject: Herring & processing at sea

Chairman David Pierce
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Woneta Cloutier
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: NEED FOR OBSERVER COVERAGE ON USAPs

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I'm a recreational fisherman writing to encourage your committee on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put a high level of federal observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. Herring is one of the most important baitfish in our area and is of primary importance for a lot of the fish I catch, especially striped bass. It is essential that the Council does all it can to ensure that the stock is healthy.

USAPs that take fish directly from catcher vessels without the fish going aboard the catcher vessel where an observer (were there one aboard) can count the bycatch. Not having observers on the USAPs creates a giant loophole that thousands of dead fish (and marine mammals) can potentially slide through.

These massive industrial ships can strip so much fish out of the ocean that is imperative that they be observed. Please take action to ensure that the midwater fleet fishing for the USAPs does not eliminate the herring.

Regards,

William Lee Goldman

From: Adam Smith
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2007 10:02 AM
To: David Pierce
Cc: Woneta M. Cloutier
Subject: NEED FOR OBSERVER COVERAGE ON USAPs

Chairman David Pierce
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Woneta Cloutier
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: NEED FOR OBSERVER COVERAGE ON USAPs

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I'm a recreational fisherman writing to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put a high level of federal observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. Herring is one of the most important fish in the sea for a lot of the fish I catch, especially striped bass and its essential that the Council does all it can to ensure that the stock is healthy.

USAPs that take fish directly from catcher vessels without the fish going aboard the catcher vessel where an observer (were there one aboard) can count the bycatch. Because of this, not having observers on the USAPs is a giant loophole that thousands of dead fish (and marine mammals) can potentially slide through.

These massive industrial ships can strip so much fish out of the ocean that is imperative that they be observed. Please take action to ensure that the midwater fleet fishing for the USAPs does not wipe out the herring or the other fish I catch.

Regards,
Chris Hanc

April 28, 2007

Chairman David Pierce
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Woneta Cloutier
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: NEED FOR OBSERVER COVERAGE ON USAPs

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I'm a recreational fisherman writing to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put a high level of federal observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. Herring is one of the most important fish in the sea for a lot of the fish I catch, especially striped bass and its essential that the Council does all it can to ensure that the stock is healthy.

USAPs that take fish directly from catcher vessels without the fish going aboard the catcher vessel where an observer (were there one aboard) can count the bycatch. Because of this, not having observers on the USAPs is a giant loophole that thousands of dead fish (and marine mammals) can potentially slide through.

These massive industrial ships can strip so much fish out of the ocean that is imperative that they be observed. Please take action to ensure that the midwater fleet fishing for the USAPs does not wipe out the herring or the other fish I catch.

Regards,

Jeff Walther
Captain
Striped Tease/Tuna Tickler
Captain Jeff Walther

April 28, 2007

Chairman David Pierce
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Woneta Cloutier
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: NEED FOR OBSERVER COVERAGE ON USAPs

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I'm a recreational fisherman writing to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put a high level of federal observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. Herring is one of the most important fish in the sea for a lot of the fish I catch, especially striped bass and its essential that the Council does all it can to ensure that the stock is healthy.

USAPs that take fish directly from catcher vessels without the fish going aboard the catcher vessel where an observer (were there one aboard) can count the bycatch. Because of this, not having observers on the USAPs is a giant loophole that thousands of dead fish (and marine mammals) can potentially slide through.

These massive industrial ships can strip so much fish out of the ocean that is imperative that they be observed. Please take action to ensure that the midwater fleet fishing for the USAPs does not wipe out the herring or the other fish I catch.

Regards,

Eric Mitchell
Chatham,MA

Chairman David Pierce
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
c/oWoneta Cloutier
50 Water St., Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I am a recreational fisherman on Cape Cod and I'm writing to encourage your committee to recommend putting high level federal observers on United States at-Sea Processing vessels. Herring is one of the most important fish in the sea for a lot of the fish I catch, especially striped bass and it is essential that the Council does all it can to ensure that the stock remains healthy.

USAPs that take fish directly from catcher vessels without the fish going aboard the catcher vessel where an observer (were there one aboard) can count the bycatch. Because of this, not having observers on the USAPs is a giant loophole that thousands of dead fish (and marine mammals) can potentially slide through.

These massive industrial ships can strip so many fish out of the ocean that it is imperative they be observed. Please take action to ensure that the midwater fleet fishing for the USAPs does not wipe out the herring or the other fish that I catch.

Thanking you in advance for your help, I am

Ben Emery
Centerville, MA

April 28, 2007

Chairman David Pierce
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Woneta Cloutier
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: NEED FOR OBSERVER COVERAGE ON USAPs

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I'm a recreational fisherman writing to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put a high level of federal observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. Herring is one of the most important fish in the sea for a lot of the fish I catch, especially striped bass and its essential that the Council does all it can to ensure that the stock is healthy.

USAPs that take fish directly from catcher vessels without the fish going aboard the catcher vessel where an observer (were there one aboard) can count the bycatch. Because of this, not having observers on the USAPs is a giant loophole that thousands of dead fish (also marine mammals) can go unacounted for.

These massive industrial ships can strip so much fish out of the ocean that is necessary that they be observed. Please take action to ensure that the midwater fleet fishing for the USAPs does not wipe out the herring or the other fish I catch.

Regards,

Steve Skelly
Chatham,MA

April 28, 2007

Chairman David Pierce
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Woneta Cloutier
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: NEED FOR OBSERVER COVERAGE ON USAPs

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I'm a recreational fisherman writing to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put a high level of federal observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. Herring is one of the most important fish in the sea for a lot of the fish I catch, especially striped bass and tuna ,and it is essential that the Council does all it can to ensure that the stock is healthy.

USAPs that take fish directly from catcher vessels without the fish going aboard the catcher vessel where an observer (were there one aboard) can count the bycatch. Because of this, not having observers on the ship is a giant loophole that thousands of dead fish (and marine mammals) can potentially slide through.

These massive industrial ships can strip so much fish out of the ocean that is imperative that they be observed. Please take action to ensure that the midwater fleet fishing for the USAPs does not wipe out the herring or the other fish I catch.

Regards,

Ben Morgan

Ben Morgan
Chatham,MA
Ben Fishin?

From:
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2007 2:31 PM
To: David Pierce; Woneta M. Cloutier

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I'm a recreational fisherman writing to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put a high level of federal observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. Herring is one of the most important fish in the sea for a lot of the fish I catch, especially striped bass, codfish and bluefin tuna; its essential that the Council does all it can to ensure that the stock is healthy. A Healthy herring fishery is a genuine example of the trickle down theory of fisheries management. If there is an abundant herring source, then all the species that depend on herring for food will be better able to combat the stresses put fourth by man, other predators and the environment.

USAPs that take fish directly from catcher vessels without the fish going aboard the catcher vessel where an observer (were there one aboard) can count the bycatch. Because of this, not having observers on the USAPs is a giant loophole that thousands of dead fish (and marine mammals) can potentially slide through.

These massive industrial ships can strip so much fish out of the ocean that is imperative that they be observed. Please take action to ensure that the midwater fleet fishing for the USAPs does not wipe out the herring or the other fish I catch.

Thanks for your time
Ed Snell

--

From: wayne dodge ,
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2007 4:24 PM
To: michael.cleaves@sofcheck.com; Woneta M. Cloutier; David Pierce
Subject: RE: Important - PLEASE READ

>
>
>Chairman David Pierce
>NEFMC Pelagics Committee
>C/o Woneta Cloutier
>50 Water Street, Mill 2
>Newburyport, MA 01950
>
>RE: NEED FOR OBSERVER COVERAGE ON USAPs
>
>Dear Chairman Pierce,
>
>I'm a recreational fisherman writing to encourage your committee to
>action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as
>soon as possible to put a high level of federal observers on United
>States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. Herring is one of the most
>important fish in the sea for a lot of the fish I catch, especially
>striped bass and its essential that the Council does all it can to
>ensure that the stock is healthy.
>
>USAPs that take fish directly from catcher vessels without the fish
>going aboard the catcher vessel where an observer (were there one
>aboard) can count the bycatch. Because of this, not having observers on
>the USAPs is a giant loophole that thousands of dead fish (and marine
>mammals) can potentially slide through.
>
>These massive industrial ships can strip so much fish out of the ocean
>that is imperative that they be observed. Please take action to ensure
>that the midwater fleet fishing for the USAPs does not wipe out the
>herring or the other fish I catch.
>
>Regards,

Wayne S. Dodge
>

Woneta M. Cloutier

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2007 9:43 AM
To: Woneta M. Cloutier
Subject: FW:

From: MICHAEL DUBROFF [mailto:michaeldubroff@msn.com]
Sent: Sunday, April 29, 2007 7:23 AM
To: David Pierce; Lori Steele
Subject:

Chairman David Pierce
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Woneta Cloutier
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: NEED FOR OBSERVER COVERAGE ON USAPs

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I'm a recreational fisherman writing to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put a high level of federal observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. Herring is one of the most important fish in the sea for a lot of the fish I catch, especially striped bass and its essential that the Council does all it can to ensure that the stock is healthy.

USAPs that take fish directly from catcher vessels without the fish going aboard the catcher vessel where an observer (were there one aboard) can count the bycatch. Because of this, not having observers on the USAPs is a giant loophole that thousands of dead fish (and marine mammals) can potentially slide through.

These massive industrial ships can strip so much fish out of the ocean that is imperative that they be observed. Please take action to ensure that the midwater fleet fishing for the USAPs does not wipe out the herring or the other fish I catch.

Regards,

Michael Dubroff

From: McKinney, Thomas F.
Sent: Sunday, April 29, 2007 5:48 PM
To: David Pierce; Woneta M. Cloutier
Subject: Fishery Observers on USAP Vessels

Chairman David Pierce
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Woneta Cloutier
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: NEED FOR OBSERVER COVERAGE ON USAPs

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I'm a recreational fisherman writing to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put a high level of federal observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. Herring is one of the most important fish in the sea for a lot of the fish I catch, especially striped bass and its essential that the Council does all it can to ensure that the stock is healthy.

USAPs that take fish directly from catcher vessels without the fish going aboard the catcher vessel where an observer (were there one aboard) can count the bycatch. Because of this, not having observers on the USAPs is a giant loophole that thousands of dead fish (and marine mammals) can potentially slide through.

These massive industrial ships can strip so much fish out of the ocean that is imperative that they be observed. Please take action to ensure that the midwater fleet fishing for the USAPs does not wipe out the herring or the other fish I catch.

Regards,

Thomas McKinney

Concerned Fisherman

2056 east 34th street

Brooklyn, N.Y. 11234

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2007 9:43 AM
To: Woneta M. Cloutier
Subject: FW: Support for observer coverage on the US At-Sea Processorsm stop the pain

From: Tyler McLaughlin
Sent: Sunday, April 29, 2007 12:09 PM
To: David Pierce; Lori Steele
Subject: Support for observer coverage on the US At-Sea Processorsm stop the pain

Dr. David Pierce, Chairman
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Lori Steele
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I am a 19 year old commercial tuna and striped bass fisherman writing to you today to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. As you know, herring is a lynchpin species that the fish I catch such as tuna, cod, haddock, striped bass and lobster depend upon. The midwater trawl fleet that currently pursues herring is the most efficient, terminal fleet of vessels that New England has seen since the foreigners left when the Magnusson-Stevens Act was passed in 1976. A fleet this powerful that interacts with such a wide range of species needs to be observed so that we have assurances that they are not destroying the resources that we depend upon to make a living.

The one active at-sea processor in New England is the American Freedom. It is set up to take delivery of nets full of herring before the herring are brought upon the catcher vessels. Because of this fact, observers are needed on the processing vessel, as the processing vessel is the first point at which the catch can be observed out of the water and the net.

A ship this big that can take so much fish needs to be observed and everyone needs to know what they are catching. This is imperative to the health and rebuilding of the stocks I rely upon for a living.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Tyler McLaughlin

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2007 9:43 AM
To: Woneta M. Cloutier
Subject: FW: Support for observer coverage on the US At-Sea Processors

-----Original Message----
From: John Rice [mailto:
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2007 7:05 AM
To: David Pierce
Cc: Lori Steele
Subject: Support for observer coverage on the US At-Sea Processors

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I am a commercial fisherman writing to you today to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. As you know, herring is a linchpin species that the fish I catch such as tuna, cod, haddock, striped bass and lobster depend upon. The mid water trawl fleet that currently pursues herring is the most efficient, terminal fleet of vessels that New England has seen since the foreigners left when the Magnuson-Stevens Act was passed in 1976. A fleet this powerful that interacts with such a wide range of species needs to be observed so that we have assurances that they are not destroying the resources that we depend upon to make a living.

The one active at-sea processor in New England is the American Freedom.
It is set up to take delivery of nets full of herring before the herring are brought upon the catcher vessels. Because of this fact, observers are needed on the processing vessel, as the processing vessel is the first point at which the catch can be observed out of the water and the net.

A ship this big, that can take so much fish, needs to be observed and everyone needs to know what they are catching. This is imperative to the health and rebuilding of the stocks I rely upon for a living.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John Rice

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2007 9:43 AM
To: Woneta M. Cloutier
Subject: FW: herring observers

From: Fishwife925@aol.com [m ›m]
Sent: Sunday, April 29, 2007 6:47 AM
To: Lori Steele
Subject: herring observers

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I am a commercial fisherman writing to you today to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. As you know, herring is a lynchpin species that the fish I catch such as tuna, cod, haddock, striped bass and lobster depend upon. The midwater trawl fleet that currently pursues herring is the most efficient, terminal fleet of vessels that New England has seen since the foreigners left when the Magnusson-Stevens Act was passed in 1976. A fleet this powerful that interacts with such a wide range of species needs to be observed so that we have assurances that they are not destroying the resources that we depend upon to make a living.

The one active at-sea processor in New England is the American Freedom. It is set up to take delivery of nets full of herring before the herring are brought upon the catcher vessels. Because of this fact, observers are needed on the processing vessel, as the processing vessel is the first point at which the catch can be observed out of the water and the net.

A ship this big that can take so much fish needs to be observed and everyone needs to know what they are catching. This is imperative to the health and rebuilding of the stocks I rely upon for a living.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely, Kent Garland F/V north coast

From: Mac Sprague
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2007 1:49 PM
To: David Pierce
Cc: Woneta M. Cloutier
Subject: Observers needed on USAP Vessels

Dear Sir,

This letter requests implementation of observers on United States At-Sea Processing vessels. I strongly urge your committee to to recommend to NEFMC at the May 3, 2007 meeting to implement full time observer programs on USASP vessels.

Lack of dedicated observers on USAP's is a significant loophole/gap in enforcement protocol. I am a recreational fisherman, have been for over 40 years. Herring and other fish processed on these large industrial vessels are too important a part of the web of the marine biosphere—lack of observer coverage/enforcement places these fish and those dependent on them at peril.

MacDonald Sprague
367 Arrowhead Rd.
Marshfield, Ma.

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Tuesday, May 01, 2007 12:23 PM
To: Woneta M. Cloutier
Subject: FW: USAP Observer Coverage

From: BarryGibson(
Sent: Tuesday, May 01, 2007 12:09 PM
To: David Pierce
Cc: Lori Steele
Subject: USAP Observer Coverage

May 1, 2007

Dr. David Pierce, Chairman
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
c/o Lori Steele
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: Support for observer coverage on US At-Sea Processors

Dear David,

On behalf of the Recreational Fishing Alliance and our thosands of members in New England, I am writing to ask that the NEFMC put observers on United States At-Sea Processor (USAP) vessels fishing off the northeast and mid-Atlantic regions and require that these types of vessels have observer coverage in the future. Just recently a herring and mackerel USAP vessel began operations of of this part of the country and this vessel is not required to have observers onboard. The RFA and its membership feel this is unacceptable.

In other parts of the country, such as Alaska, similar vessels would be required to have full, if not 200%, observer coverage. There is a reason for this: these types of operations are known to be problematic. In order to ensure that bycatch and discards are accounted for, it is crucial that USAP vessels off this part of the country have observers as well. This would allow for the vessel to operate while also remaining accountable. With so much fish being transferred so far from shore, it is essential that these boats have observer coverage.

It is important that the Pelagics Committee and the full Council push for vessels such as the one that is now off our coast to have proper observer coverage.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,

Barry Gibson, New England Director
Recreational Fishing Alliance
19 Royall Rd.
East Boothbay, ME 04544

From: Mark Budreski
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2007 9:16 AM
To: David Pierce
Cc: Woneta M. Cloutier
Subject: USAPs & Observer Recommendation Letter

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I'm a recreational fisherman writing to encourage your committee to take action on May 3rd, 2007. Please recommend to the NEFMC to put a high level of federal observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. Herring is one of the most important fish in the sea. Herring are the building blocks for all larger sportfish in New England - especially striped bass & tuna. It is essential that the Council does all it can to ensure that the stock is healthy. It would be unthinkable not to take some form of action to ensure that the traditional fisheries of New England do not decline further due to the current scarcity and possible elimination of forage fish in our waters.

USAPs that take fish directly from catcher vessels without the fish going aboard the catcher vessel where an observer (were there one aboard) can count the bycatch. Because of this, not having observers on the USAPs is a giant loophole that thousands of dead fish (and marine mammals) can potentially slide through.

Our local inshore fishing fleet (commercial and recreational) depend upon the health of forage fish like the herring. These large processor plants are the equivalent of floating Walmarts - we are at risk of losing everything if these massive international interests overtake those of our local economy here in the State of Massachusetts. It has been proven time and time again that the cash flow generated from local fishing here in the state will suffer tremendously if the ocean is left to be strip-mined by companies looking to turn a quick profit with no regard for the future interests of tomorrow's coastal fishing community.

Because of the sheer magnitude of the catch being taken by the processor vessels, it is imperative that they be observed. Please take action to ensure that the mid-water fleet fishing for the USAPs does not wipe out the herring, river herring or other marine life that we as a coastal community depend on.

Regards,

Mark Budreski
23 Nelson Street
Winchester, MA 01890

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Tuesday, May 01, 2007 9:37 AM
To: Woneta M. Cloutier
Subject: FW:

-----Original Me
From: mtfallon
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2007 5:52 PM
To: David Pierce; Lori Steele
Subject:

To whom it may concern,

My name is Michael Fallon and I am a charter captain from Newburyport, MA. I am writing to urge the Pelagics Committee and the full NEFMC to place federal observers on United States At-Sea Processor (USAP) vessels. Herring and mackerel are keystone species that are vital to the ecosystem that my business and many other businesses and communties rely on.

As a charter captain, I rely on having healthy forage stocks as well as healthy stocks of species like cod and striped bass. USAPs are not currently required to carry observers in this region, although such vessels in other parts of this country are, and for a reason. USAP vessels in this region need to have observers so that bycatch and discards can be accounted for properly.

Thanks,

Michael Fallon

From: Ed Murray
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2007 4:38 PM
To: David Pierce
Cc: Woneta M. Cloutier
Subject: NEED FOR OBSERVER COVERAGE ON USAPs

Chairman David Pierce
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Woneta Cloutier
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: NEED FOR OBSERVER COVERAGE ON USAPs

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I'm a recreational fisherman writing to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put federal observers on **ALL** United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. Herring is one of the most important fish in the sea for a lot of the fish I catch, especially striped bass and its essential that the Council does all it can to ensure that the stock is healthy. A healthy supply of herring is also critical to the commercial Cod fishery. I come from a a family of commercial fisherman and we have seen firsthand the impacts on our livelihoods of uncontrolled fishing.

USAPs that take fish directly from catcher vessels without the fish going aboard the catcher vessel where an observer (were there one aboard) can count the bycatch. Because of this, not having observers on the USAPs is a giant loophole that thousands of dead fish (and marine mammals) can and do slide through.

These massive industrial ships can strip so much fish out of the ocean that is imperative that they be observed. Please take action to ensure that the midwater fleet fishing for the USAPs does not wipe out the herring or the other fish I catch.

Regards,

Ed Murray
12 Fort Street
Fairhaven, MA 02719

From: RJ Martin
Sent: Tuesday, May 01, 2007 8:23 AM
To: David Pierce; Woneta M. Cloutier
Subject: OBSERVER COVERAGE ON USAPs

Chairman David Pierce
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Woneta Cloutier
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: NEED FOR OBSERVER COVERAGE ON USAPs

Dear Chairman Pierce,

If I had my way, there would be NO commercial Herring fishing boats alowed to fish in the waters of Massachusetts. However, given that this is not the case, I will ask for the next best thing-That these vessels are properly and completely scrutinized to make sure that they obey the laws.

I'm a recreational fisherman writing to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put a high level of federal observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. Herring is one of the most important fish in the sea for a lot of the fish I catch, especially striped bass and its essential that the Council does all it can to ensure that the stock is healthy.

USAPs that take fish directly from catcher vessels without the fish going aboard the catcher vessel where an observer (were there one aboard) can count the bycatch. Because of this, not having observers on the USAPs is a giant loophole that thousands of dead fish (and marine mammals) can potentially slide through. I have witnessed this personally in the area East of Monomoy, where I found hundreds, if not thousands of dead Striped Bass floating last year.

These massive industrial ships can strip so many fish out of the ocean that is imperative that they be observed. Please take action to ensure that the midwater fleet fishing for the USAPs does not wipe out the herring or the other fish I catch.

Regards,

Randall J. Martin
Bridgewater, MA

Woneta M. Cloutier

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2007 9:44 AM
To: Woneta M. Cloutier
Subject: FW: Herring and Mackerel.....

From: CaptJohn
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2007 7:58 AM
To: David Pierce
Cc: Lori Steele
Subject: Herring and Mackerel.....

My name is Capt. John Ford and I am a charter captain/fishing guide from Portland, Maine. I am writing to urge the Pelagics Committee and the full NEFMC to place **federal observers** on United States At-Sea Processor (USAP) vessels. Herring and mackerel are keystone species that are vital to the ecosystem that my business and many other businesses and communties rely on. This winter and spring the schools of herring and Mackerel where no where to be found in the Gulf, this fishery is not as "robust" or healthy as some would lead us to believe...

As a charter captain/guide, I rely on having healthy forage stocks as well as healthy stocks of species like cod (one of the main reasons cod have not rebounded under current management plans) and striped bass. USAPs are not currently required to carry observers in this region, although such vessels in other parts of this country are, and for a reason. USAP **vessels in this region need to have observers so that bycatch and discards can be accounted for properly**.

Please do the righ thing here and require observers on board,
-Capt. John Ford
Portland, Maine

www.mainesaltwaterfishing.com
"Always on the fish"
Capt. John Ford
Portland Guide Service
PO Box 10318
Portland, ME 04101
tel:

Add me to your address book...
Want a signature like this?

From: Matt Boutet
Sent: Tuesday, May 01, 2007 12:06 PM
To: David Pierce; Woneta M. Cloutier
Cc: Pat Kurkul; bill.hogarth@noaa.gov
Subject: Support for observer coverage on the US At-Sea Processors

Dr. David Pierce, Chairman
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Woneta Cloutier
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I'm a recreational fisherman writing to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put a high level of federal observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. Herring is one of the most important fish in the sea for a lot of the fish I catch, especially striped bass and its essential that the Council does all it can to ensure that the stock is healthy. With the striped bass biomass reaching the highest levels in decades, it's important that we ensure a food source for this fishery we've worked so hard to restore.

USAPs that take fish directly from catcher vessels without the fish going aboard the catcher vessel where an observer (were there one aboard) can count the bycatch. Because of this, not having observers on the USAPs is a giant loophole that thousands of dead fish (and marine mammals) can potentially slide through.

These massive industrial ships can strip so much fish out of the ocean that is imperative that they be observed. Please take action to ensure that the midwater fleet fishing for the USAPs does not wipe out the herring or the other fish I catch.

Regards,
Matt Boutet

From: Lori Steele
Sent: Tuesday, May 01, 2007 9:41 AM
To: Woneta M. Cloutier
Subject: FW: NEED FOR OBSERVER COVERAGE ON USAPs

From: HennesseyRobt ast.net]
Sent: Tuesday, May 01, 2007 8:37 AM
To: Lori Steele
Subject: NEED FOR OBSERVER COVERAGE ON USAPs

Lori,
I'm a recreational fisherman writing to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put a high level of federal observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. Herring is one of the most important fish in the sea for a lot of the fish I catch, especially striped bass and its essential that the Council does all it can to ensure that the stock is healthy.

USAPs that take fish directly from catcher vessels without the fish going aboard the catcher vessel where an observer (were there one aboard) can count the bycatch. Because of this, not having observers on the USAPs is a giant loophole that thousands of dead fish (and marine mammals) can potentially slide through.

These massive industrial ships can strip so much fish out of the ocean that is imperative that they be observed. Please take action to ensure that the midwater fleet fishing for the USAPs does not wipe out the herring or the other fish I catch.

Regards,

From: Nancy and Dave
Sent: Sunday, April 29, 2007 6:10 AM
To: Woneta M. Cloutier
Subject: Cape Cod Sea Camps

david.pierce@state.ma.us
wcloutier@nefmc.org

Chairman David Pierce
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Woneta Cloutier
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: NEED FOR OBSERVER COVERAGE ON USAPs

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I'm a recreational fisherman and conservationist writing to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put a high level of federal observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. Herring is one of the most important fish in the sea for a lot of the fish I catch, especially striped bass and its essential that the Council does all it can to ensure that the stock is healthy.

In Brewster, we once had one of the most prolific herring runs on Cape Cod. It has been decimated. Very few fish return and counters are in place this year to document the demise of this natural resource. I feel fishing pressure has had the biggest impact on this important resource.

USAPs that take fish directly from catcher vessels without the fish going aboard the catcher vessel where an observer (were there one aboard) can count the bycatch. Because of this, not having observers on the USAPs is a giant loophole that thousands of dead fish (and marine mammals) can potentially slide through.

I would also encourage greater limits on the taking of forage fish such as herring. Once this link in the food chain is threatened, it impacts every other species.

These massive industrial ships can strip so much fish out of the ocean that is imperative that they be observed and limited in their ability to clear cut the seas. Please take action to ensure that the midwater fleet fishing for the USAPs does not wipe out the herring or the other fish I catch (and release).

Regards,

David L Peterson, CCD

Sincerely,

David Peterson

PO Box 38

Brewster, MA 02631

Dave@capecodseacamps.com

From: Jim Chase
Sent: Sunday, April 29, 2007 8:16 AM
To: David Pierce; Woneta M. Cloutier
Subject: RE: NEED FOR OBSERVER COVERAGE ON USAPs

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I'm a recreational fisherman writing to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put a high level of federal observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. Herring is one of the most important fish in the sea for a lot of the fish I catch, especially striped bass and its essential that the Council does all it can to ensure that the stock is healthy.

USAPs that take fish directly from catcher vessels without the fish going aboard the catcher vessel where an observer (were there one aboard) can count the bycatch. Because of this, not having observers on the USAPs is a giant loophole that thousands of dead fish (and marine mammals) can potentially slide through.

These massive industrial ships can strip so much fish out of the ocean that is imperative that they be observed. Please take action to ensure that the midwater fleet fishing for the USAPs does not wipe out the herring or the other fish I catch.

Regards,

James E Chase
Vice President
Seacoast Science Center
Rye, NH

www.seacoastsciencecenter.org

Creating connections to nature through personal experiences

From: David Wood
Sent: Sunday, April 29, 2007 7:52 AM
To: Woneta M. Cloutier
Subject: NEED FOR OBSERVER COVERAGE ON USAPs (please, please)

Dear Ms. Cloutier,

I'm a recreational fisherman writing to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put a high level of federal observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. Herring is one of the most important fish in the sea for a lot of the fish I catch, especially striped bass and its essential that the Council does all it can to ensure that this and other stocks are healthy and not unecessarily disturbed.

USAPs that take fish directly from catcher vessels without the fish going aboard the catcher vessel where an observer (were there one aboard) can count the bycatch. Because of this, not having observers on the USAPs is a giant loophole that thousands of dead fish (and marine mammals) can potentially slide through.

These massive industrial ships can strip so much fish out of the ocean that is imperative that they be observed. Please take action to ensure that the midwater fleet fishing for the USAPs does not wipe out the herring or the other fish I catch.

Regards,

David Wood
Scarsdale NY

David Wood

tsweb.com/~davidwood3rd
http://worldconnect.rootsweb.com/cgi-bin/igm.cgi?db=daw245

"The reward of a thing well done is to have done it."
Ralph Waldo Emerson

From:
Sent: Sunday, April 29, 2007 8:12 AM
To: David Pierce
Cc: Woneta M. Cloutier
Subject: NEED FOR OBSERVER COVERAGE ON USAPs

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I'm a full time charter captain and ecreational fisherman writing to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put a high level of federal observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. There is no argument that herring and mackeral have been the main diet for striped bass, bluefin tuna, cod, and ann the majestic whales we have off our coasts. Ask ANY recreational or commercial hook and line fisherman their opinion on herring or mackeral stocks and the answer you will get would be that they are in serious decline. How can our goverment encourage massive processing ships off our coasts when they have already raped the reasource to the point of no return?
USAPs that take fish directly from catcher vessels without the fish going aboard the catcher vessel where an observer (were there one aboard) can count t he bycatch. Because of this, not having observers on the USAPs is a giant loophole that thousands of dead fish (and marine mammals) can potentially slide through.

These massive industrial ships can strip so much fish out of the ocean that is imperative that they be observed. Please take action to ensure that the midwater fleet fishing for the USAPs does not wipe out the herring or the other fish I catch.

Thank You!

Best regards,

Captain Jeff Smith

From: GL
Sent: Sunday, April 29, 2007 9:55 AM
To: Woneta M. Cloutier
Subject: Observer Coverage

Chairman David Pierce
NEFMC Pelagics Committee
C/o Woneta Cloutier
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950

RE: NEED FOR OBSERVER COVERAGE ON USAPs

Dear Chairman Pierce,

I'm a recreational fisherman writing to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put a high level of federal observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. Herring is one of the most important fish in the sea for a lot of the fish I catch, especially striped bass and its essential that the Council does all it can to ensure that the stock is healthy.

USAPs that take fish directly from catcher vessels without the fish going aboard the catcher vessel where an observer (were there one aboard) can count the bycatch. Because of this, not having observers on the USAPs is a giant loophole that thousands of dead fish (and marine mammals) can potentially slide through.

These massive industrial ships can strip so much fish out of the ocean that is imperative that they be observed. Please take action to ensure that the midwater fleet fishing for the USAPs does not wipe out the herring or the other fish I catch.

Regards,

George A. Lemieux, Jr.

From: DougJowett [et]
Sent: Monday, April 30, 2007 4:59 AM
To: Woneta M. Cloutier
Subject: Observers on USAP vessels

Dear Ms Cloutier,

I'm a full time, recreational guiding Captain writing to encourage your committee to action on May 3rd to recommend to the NEFMC that action be taken as soon as possible to put a high level of federal observers on United States At-Sea Processing (USAP) vessels. Herring are one of the most important fish in the sea for a lot of the fish I catch, especially striped bass and blue fin tuna. It's essential that the Council does all it can to ensure the stock is healthy.

USAPs that take fish directly from catcher vessels without the fish going aboard the catcher vessel where an observer (were there one aboard) can count the bycatch. Because of this, not having observers on the USAPs is a giant loophole that thousands of dead fish (and marine mammals) can potentially slide through.

These massive industrial ships can strip so much fish out of the ocean that is imperative that they be observed. Please take action to ensure that the midwater fleet fishing for the USAPs does not wipe out the herring or the other fish I catch. We have twice restricted similar, monster vessels from fishing in USA waters for good reason. I would prefer that previous restrictions on massive factory ships be instituted. Our ocean fish cannot withstand the use of these efficient vessels cleaning out sensitive eco systems.

Captain Doug Jowett
61 Four Wheel Drive
Brunswick, Maine 04011

Senior Member