



New England Fishery Management Council - News Release

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NMFS Solicits Proposals for New England Fishery Council Herring Research Set-Aside Program

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) recently announced it is soliciting proposals for research activities conducted through the New England Council's Herring Research Set-Aside (RSA) Program. Amendment 1 to the Council's Atlantic Herring Fishery Management Plan established the RSA Program by setting aside three percent of the total allowable catch from each of the four herring management areas, 1A, 1B, 2 and 3, to support cooperative herring-related research activities. The research must be conducted during the 2008 and 2009 fishing years for herring, from January 1, 2008 through December 31, 2009. Applications must be received by the Service's Northeast Fisheries Science Center on or before 5 p.m. EDT on August 16, 2007.

No federal funds are provided through this program. Instead, a specified amount of herring will be harvested as part of an approved research project and sold to generate funds that will support the project. Projects funded under this RSA award must enhance our knowledge of the herring resource or contribute to the body of scientific or other information on which management decisions are made.

The Council identified the following items as priority areas to be addressed by researchers seeking support through the Herring RSA Program. Items 1, 2 and 3 are considered the most important, while the others are not listed in order of priority:

- 1) Define localized depletion of herring on a spatial and temporal scale; further develop hydroacoustic surveys to provide an independent means to estimate stock sizes and/or define localized depletion (long-term research possibilities)
- 2) Investigate bycatch/discards in the directed herring fishery (including protected species)
- 3) Develop commercial catch sampling programs and portside bycatch surveys (long-term research possibilities)
- 4) Synthesize predator/prey information and investigate information gaps; investigate the role of herring in the Northwest Atlantic ecosystem and the importance of herring as a forage species for other commercial fish stocks; assess the importance of herring as forage relative to other forage species in the region (long-term research possibilities)
- 5) Develop and test gear modifications to minimize interactions with non-target species in the herring fishery
- 6) Develop tagging and morphometric studies to explore uncertainties in herring stock structure, stock mixing rates, and the impacts of harvest mortality on different components of the stock (long-term research possibilities)

For complete details on how to apply, please visit the Grants Online website at <http://www.grants.gov>.

- Under 'Find Grant Opportunities', click on 'Search for Grant Opportunities'
- Search for the 'Funding Opportunity Number' NMFS-NEFSC-2008-2001107

The Federal Register notice announcing the 2008 Monkfish RSA Program and the Federal Funding Opportunity announcement are also posted on the Northeast Regional Office's website at:
<http://www.nero.noaa.gov/nero/hotnews/monkherringsra/>.

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