

NEW ENGLAND FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

Skate Committee

I. STATUS

- A. Amendment 3: The final rule for Amendment 3 was published on July 14, 2010, which implemented wing and bait fishery ACLs for 2010 and 2011, a reduction in the skate wing possession limit from 20,000 to 5,000 lbs., a new 20,000 lbs. skate bait possession limit, and accountability measures (AM) that reduced the possession limit when the landings reached 80-90% of the annual limit, and accountability measures that take effect in future years if the ABC is exceeded. The in-season AM is intended to curtail targeting of skates for the wing market while allowing for continuing landings of some incidental catch.

Effective September 3, 2010, NMFS reduced the skate wing possession limit from 5,000 to 500 lbs. (1135 lbs. whole weight equivalent) for the remainder of the fishing year, because the landings reached the 80% AM trigger and it appeared that without such an adjustment the landings would exceed the 2010 skate wing landings limit (TAL) (See document 1).

II. COUNCIL ACTION

- A. No action is needed.

III. INFORMATION

1. Letter to skate permit holders announcing a reduction in the skate wing possession limit to 500 lbs. for the remainder of the fishing year.
2. 2A. Skate Information Sheet
2B. Skate wing and bait fishery weekly report, NMFS Northeast Regional Office, Fisheries Statistics Office, <http://www.nero.noaa.gov/ro/fso/skate.html>.
3. Letter from the Cape Cod Commercial Hook Fishermen's Association requesting the Council to address the recent closure of the targeted skate wing fishery. It is recommended that the problem should be addressed by analyzing and re-estimating 2010 skate discards in the groundfish fishery and adjusting the skate wing fishery's limit to ensure that a higher proportion of the 2010 ACL is landed.
4. Synopsis of Amendment 3 adjustments to the ABC, TALs, and possession limits before implementation and the planned schedule for making future adjustments with analysis of current data.
5. 2010 Annual Monitoring Report for skates, June 2010.