

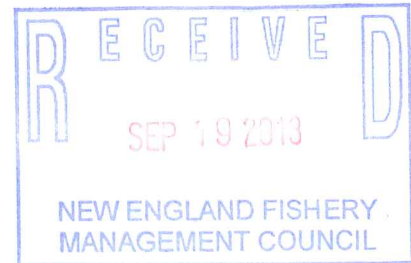
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
NORTHEAST REGION
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2276

SEP 19 2013

Thomas Nies, Executive Director
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street, Mill 2
Newburyport, MA 01950



Dear Tom:

As you are aware, the stock status of thorny and winter skates has changed. Thorny skate is considered to be subject to overfishing, and continues to be overfished; and winter skate is considered to be subject to overfishing, but remains not overfished.

These updated stock status determinations are based on the Northeast Fisheries Science Center's July 2, 2013, Memorandum Update of Skate Stock Status Based on NEFSC Bottom Trawl Survey Data through Autumn 2012/Spring 2013.

In accordance with National Standard 1 of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the Council must address the new overfishing status of thorny skate and winter skate, and also continue to address the overfished status of thorny skate.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact my staff in the Sustainable Fisheries Division at (978) 281-9315.

Sincerely,

John K. Bullard
Regional Administrator

Cc: Dr. William Karp, Director, Northeast Fisheries Science Center
Emily Menashes, Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries

