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Paul Howard, Executive Director
New England Fishery Management Council

Dear Mr. Howard:

It is my understanding that Amendment 5 to the Atlantic Herring Fishery Management Plan, which includes development of a comprehensive catch monitoring program, will once again be **delayed**. This is **unacceptable** and represents yet another **frustrating setback** in the Council's efforts to effectively manage the herring fishery.

Please ensure that the Council stays within the previously established timeline by approving a plan amendment this year that includes:

1. A catch and bycatch monitoring program with **100% at-sea observer coverage** on midwater trawl vessels and a prohibition on dumping of unsampled catch.
2. A policy to **exclude midwater trawl vessels from groundfish closed areas**
3. **Spatial and temporal closures** in areas where river herring, groundfish or other bycatch is high.
4. Additional closure areas to **protect spawning herring** on Nantucket Shoals and Georges Bank.

Please ensure that the Council continues its work on all the priority issues of Amendment 5. Thank you for your attention on this important matter.

Sincerely,

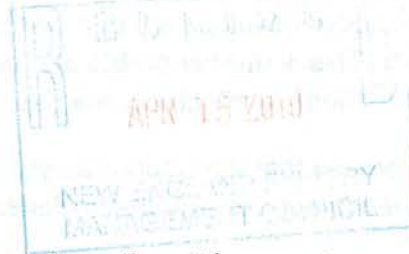
cc: New England Fishery Management Council

EXAMPLE OF 12 LETTERS RECEIVED

cc: /s, council

April 11, 2010

Paul J. Howard, Executive Director
New England Fishery Management Council
50 Water Street
Newburyport, Massachusetts 01950



Dear Paul Howard and NEFMC Members,

I am writing to express my continued concern about industrial trawling. The recent announcement that Amendment 5 to the Atlantic Herring Fishery Management Plan will **once again be delayed** represents **yet another setback** in the Council's ongoing effort to effectively manage the herring fishery.

It's critical that the Council redouble its efforts and pass an Amendment 5 that includes:

- (1) A monitoring program in which certified third parties estimate all catch (landings and discards) on a near real-time basis. These **huge ships should be observed at-sea 100% of the time** and should not be allowed to dump uninspected catch.
- (2) Measures to **prohibit herring trawlers from fishing in areas that are closed to groundfishing** to protect spawning and rebuilding groundfish populations.
- (3) Additional **areas and seasons should be closed to herring trawling** to protect imperiled river herring, spawning sea herring and depleted inshore groundfish stocks. Existing inshore prohibitions on destructive trawling have proven to be very successful.

New England's herring resource belongs to all Americans. It's time to reform the herring fishery's management for the good of the public's resource. Please do not delay Amendment 5 any longer, and please make sure the Council gets to work on all of its parts as soon as possible.

Signed,

Rob Cushman

Tufts Grad Student

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