



New England Fishery Management Council

News Release

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Council Proposes Increasing Haddock Catch Cap To Aid Herring Fishery

Mystic, CT At its April 26-28, 2011 meeting, the New England Fishery Management Council took final action on Framework Adjustment 46 to the Multispecies (Groundfish) Fishery Management Plan to address concerns about the impacts of the current haddock catch cap for Atlantic herring vessels and the potential to prematurely close the herring fishery. More specifically, the Council is proposing to increase the amount of haddock that herring vessels may catch from 0.2 percent to 1 percent of the acceptable biological catch for the Gulf of Maine and Georges Bank stocks of haddock. This action should allow the herring fishery to fully utilize the available herring harvest while ensuring that haddock bycatch is adequately managed and controlled, a concern that has been raised by environmental organizations and groups of commercial and recreational fishermen.

Herring fishery revenues could increase by about \$5.5 million per year. The Council is also proposing accountability measures that would close the herring fishery in the appropriate stock areas should either the Gulf of Maine or Georges Bank haddock catch cap be reached. The changes are proposed by the Council to better allow the herring fishery to operate in offshore areas because the haddock resource is healthy and not fully utilized, and the biological impacts of the haddock catch in the herring fishery were determined to be insignificant. As a result, the Council expects herring fishing to continue without interruption throughout 2011.

In addition to its importance in providing herring both for food in a variety of markets and for bait for the lobster and recreational fisheries, the herring industry provides valuable employment opportunities in economically hard-hit coastal communities. The Council believes its action addresses the needs of the herring industry and coastal communities as well as its responsibilities to manage fish stocks sustainably by providing opportunities to harvest the resource while managing and minimizing bycatch.

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