



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

1050 N. Highland Street • Suite 200A-N • Arlington, VA 22201
703.842.0740 • 703.842.0741 (fax) • www.asmfc.org

MEMORANDUM

August 23, 2018

To: Atlantic Herring Section, Technical Committee, Advisory Panel, Interested Parties

From: Toni Kerns, ISFMP Director *TK*

RE: Area 1A Sub-ACL Decreased; Trimester 2 Effort Controls Measures Maintained

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's (Commission) Atlantic Herring Section members from Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts will not meet to review the effort control measures for the 2018 Area 1A Trimester 2 (June 1 - September 30) fishery. The states previously agreed to meet via conference call after the release of the revised quotas from NOAA Fisheries, but based on projections of catch the states have agreed to maintain current effort controls (see below). These effort controls are projected to extend the Trimester 2 fishery through the middle of September. Landings will be monitored closely and the fishery will be adjusted to zero landing days when the trimester's quota is projected to be reached.

Due to the results of the 2018 Atlantic Herring Stock Assessment, which indicate poor recruitment and spawning stock biomass, the New England Fishery Management Council recommended and NOAA fisheries has implemented (see attached rule) an in-season adjustment to the 2018 Atlantic herring sub-ACLs. The intent of this in-season adjustment is to reduce the severity of catch reductions in 2019. Based on the Section motion their August meeting, these quotas are effective upon implementation by NOAA Fisheries (August 22, 2018).

The new Area 1A sub-annual catch limit (ACL) is 27,743 metric tons (mt) after removal of the 295 MT fixed gear set-aside. The Section allocated 72.8% of the sub-ACL to Trimester 2 and 27.2% to Trimester 3. After incorporating the 8% buffer (Area 1A closes at 92% of the sub-ACL), the seasonal quotas are 18,581 mt for Trimester 2 and 6,942 mt for Trimester 3.

Current Days Out Measures

Days Out of the Fishery

- Vessels with a *herring Category A permit* that have declared into the Trimester 2 Area 1A fishery may land herring five (5) consecutive days a week. One landing per 24 hour period. Vessels are prohibited from landing or possessing herring caught from Area 1A during a day out of the fishery.
 - Landing days in New Hampshire and Massachusetts begin on Monday of each week at 12:01 a.m.
 - Landings days in Maine begin on Sunday of each week at 6:00 p.m.

- *Small mesh bottom trawl vessels with a herring Category C or D permit* that have declared into the Trimester 2 fishery may land herring seven (7) consecutive days a week.

Weekly Landing Limit

- Vessels with a herring Category A permit may harvest up to 640,000 lbs (16 trucks) per harvester vessel, per week.
- 160,000 lbs (4 trucks) out of the 640,000 lbs weekly limit can be transferred to a carrier vessel (see below).

At-Sea Transfer and Carrier Restrictions *The following applies to harvester vessels with a herring Category A permit and carrier vessels landing herring caught in Area 1A to a Maine, New Hampshire, or Massachusetts port.*

- A harvester vessel can transfer herring at-sea to another catcher vessel.
- A harvester vessel is limited to making at-sea transfers to only one carrier vessel per week.
- Carrier vessels are limited to receiving at-sea transfers from one catcher vessel per week and can land once per 24 hour period. A carrier vessel may land up to 160,000 lbs (4 trucks) per week. The carrier limit of 4 trucks is not in addition to the harvester weekly landing limit. Carrier vessel: a vessel with no gear on board capable of catching or processing fish. Harvester vessel: a vessel that is required to report the catch it has aboard as the harvesting vessel on the Federal Vessel Trip Report.

Fishermen are prohibited from landing more than 2,000 pounds of Atlantic herring per trip from Area 1A on no landing days. Please contact Megan Ware, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at mware@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740 for more information.



Greater Atlantic Region Bulletin

NOAA Fisheries, Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930

For Information Contact:
Sustainable Fisheries Division
(978) 281-9315

<http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/>
Date Issued 8/21/2018

Vessels with Federal Atlantic Herring Permits

Reduction in Catch Limits for Atlantic Herring Management Areas

Effective Date: August 22, 2018

We are reducing the sub-annual catch limits (ACL) for the four Atlantic Herring Management Areas for the rest of 2018 based on an updated stock assessment and a recommendation from the New England Fishery Management Council.

We agreed with the Council’s recommendation to reduce 2018 catch but determined that further reductions are necessary to lessen the risk of overfishing in 2018. Therefore, we are further reducing the Area 1A and Area 3 sub-ACLs by a total of 3,775 mt, resulting in sub-ACLs for the four management areas totaling 49,900 mt. We expect this reduction to reduce the probability of overfishing in 2018, increase the estimated herring biomass in 2019-2021, and provide for more catch for the fishery.

Management Areas would close when 92-percent of the sub-ACL is projected to be harvested. The revised 2018 sub-ACLs (in mt) are as follows:

	2018 Original Limits	2018 Council Recommendation	NEW AREA SUB-ACLs
Area 1A Sub-ACL	31,789*	28,682*	27,743
Area 1B Sub-ACL	3,552	2,639	2,639
Area 2 Sub-ACL	31,137	8,200	8,200
Area 3 Sub-ACL	43,763	14,134	11,318
Total of Sub-ACLs	110,536**	53,655	49,900

* If New Brunswick weir fishery catch through October 1 is less than 4,000 mt, then 1,000 mt will be added to the ACL and Area 1A Sub-ACL.

**Total of the sum of the area sub-ACLs. Note that this is different from the stockwide ACL (100,969 mt) which is not increased by carrying over underages.

Q. Why is NOAA Fisheries taking this action?

A. The 2018 stock assessment concluded that the Atlantic herring stock is in decline due to poor recruitment into the population and projected that large cuts in the 2019-2021 ACL

For small entity compliance guides, this bulletin complies with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement and Fairness Act of 1996. This notice is authorized by the Regional Administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service, Greater Atlantic Region

would be necessary to prevent overfishing. In order to lessen these future catch reductions, the Council recommended we cap the 2018 Atlantic herring harvest.

Q. Why did NOAA reduce the sub-ACLs below the New England Council's recommendations?

A. The Council's recommendation was intended to mitigate the impacts of estimated 2019 reductions on the herring industry. NOAA Fisheries agrees with the Council's intent to reduce these impacts but felt that further reductions were necessary to lessen the risk of overfishing in 2018. The stock assessment projected that the Council's recommended level of catch was likely to result in overfishing for 2018, so we chose to reduce the Council's recommended catch so that we would meet the 50-percent probability of overfishing target that was used in previous specifications for setting the overfishing limit (OFL). We reduced the sub-ACLs from the Council recommendation by a total of 3,775 mt, which results in sub-ACLs for the four management areas totaling 49,900 mt. Based on the 2018 stock assessment projection, we expect this reduction to reduce the probability of overfishing in 2018, increase the estimated herring biomass in 2019-2021, and provide for more catch for the fishery.

Q. Why did NOAA Fisheries distribute the reductions the way they did?

A. We subtracted the additional 3,775 mt from the Council's proposed sub-ACLs for Area 3 (14,134 mt to 11,318 mt) and Area 1A (28,862 mt to 27,743 mt). Area 3 catch has dropped in recent years and there has been minimal catch there in 2018. We project it to be the least likely sub-ACL to be captured. Focusing part of the additional reduction on Area 3 would allow the midwater trawl fleet with an opportunity to access available catch in Area 1B that may help mitigate the loss of potential catch from Area 3. Avoiding an additional reduction to Area 2 catch would help avoid an early closure of the directed fishery in Area 2 that could result from setting the new limit too close to current catch amounts. Reducing Area 1A quota will spread the reductions among the herring gear types rather than having impacts predominately on midwater trawl vessels.

For more information, please visit the NOAA Fisheries Greater Atlantic Region [herring webpage](#) or contact Dan Luers at Daniel.luers@noaa.gov; 978-282-8457.