



JOHN ELIAS BALDACCI
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF
MARINE RESOURCES
21 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0021

*Copies
Kevin (Mark)*

GEORGE D. LAPOINTE
COMMISSIONER

June 21, 2005

Pat Kurkul
Regional Director
NOAA
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930

Dear Ms. Kurkul:

I am writing to provide some supplemental information from the Department of Marine Resources to the letter that was sent by Governor Baldacci to Secretary Gutierrez on June 14, 2005. This letter requested Secretary Gutierrez to make a finding of a commercial fishery failure in order to provide disaster assistance to Maine's shellfish industry under Section 312(a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. As you can see from the analysis below, the impact on Maine has been significant to date, and is very likely to increase in the weeks ahead.

The economic impact of the current red tide occurrence on an estimated 640 shellfish harvesters, 25 shellfish aquaculturists, and 40 boat based shellfish fishermen is estimated at \$560,000 per week. Using economic multipliers of 3.0 and 4.5, the estimated impact on Maine's coastal economy is \$1.68 million to \$2.52 million weekly. It is important to note that much of this impact is occurring in Washington County, an area in Maine that is economically disadvantaged. For this reason, the resultant economic impacts of closures in eastern Maine are particularly hard hitting. During the height of the shellfish season, the estimated monthly impact of the closures is estimated at \$6.5 million to \$10.0 million. Closing for the entire summer would negatively impact Maine's economy some \$20 million to \$30 million.

If you have any questions about the red tide event in Maine, please contact me. I look forward to working with your office to secure assistance for the shellfish fishery and the communities that depend upon it.

Sincerely,

George D. Lapointe
George D. Lapointe
Commissioner



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OFFICES AT STEVENS SCHOOL COMPLEX, HALLOWELL

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(207) 624-6550

TTY: (207) 287-4474

<http://www.maine.gov/dmr>

FAX: (207) 624-6024