



Northeast Region Bulletin

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NORTHEAST MULTISPECIES COMMON POOL FISHERY

Days-At-Sea Counting Rates for Fishing Year 2012

Effective Date: September 26, 2012

We are adjusting the days-at-sea (DAS) counting rates for common pool vessels for fishing year (FY) 2012 based on final FY 2011 sector and common pool catch information and preliminary FY 2011 catch estimates for other components of the groundfish fishery (i.e., exempted fisheries, non-groundfish vessels (e.g., scallop vessels)). Figure 1 below has the increased rates for each Differential DAS Area.

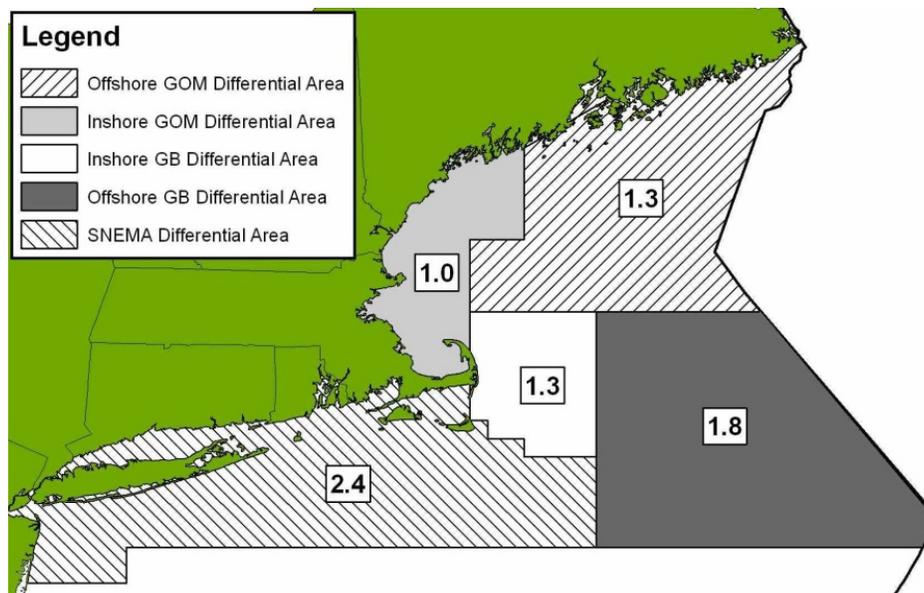


Figure 1. FY 2012 Differential DAS Rates
Gulf of Maine (GOM), Georges Bank (GB), and Southern New England/Mid-Atlantic (SNE/MA)

Why are the DAS counting rates being adjusted?

The groundfish sub-ACL for northern windowpane flounder was exceeded by 42 percent, despite a rate of 1.3 that was applied in FY 2011 due to an FY 2010 overage. As required, we are increasing the FY 2012 DAS rate to 1.8 (1.3×1.4) as a result of consecutive FY overages in the Offshore GB Differential DAS Area. The groundfish sub-ACL for Atlantic halibut was also exceeded by 29 percent, and therefore, we are increasing the FY 2012 DAS rate to 1.3 in the Offshore GOM and Inshore GB Differential DAS Areas. Finally, the total ACL for southern windowpane flounder was exceeded by 135 percent, and we are increasing the FY 2012 DAS rate to 2.4 in the SNE/MA Differential DAS Area.

Do these differential rates apply to trips previously taken in FY 2012?

The rates will apply to trips taken on, or after, September 26 through the remainder of FY 2012, unless further revised.

What fisheries are responsible for the catch of these stocks?

Northern and southern windowpane flounder, and Atlantic halibut, are three groundfish stocks that are not allocated to sectors. So, although the majority of the catch of these stocks was caught by sector vessels and vessels in other fisheries (e.g., scallop, summer flounder) in FY 2012, all catch is attributed to the common pool sub-ACL or the overall 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, Northeast Region.