



# Northeast Multispecies Information Sheet

## Charter/Party and Recreational Fishing



This summary provides a broad overview of restrictions and requirements; it is not a substitute for the regulations. You are strongly encouraged to read the regulations in conjunction with this information sheet to fully understand how this fishery is managed. Most measures described here may be found at 50 CFR 648.88 and § 648.89. Others are set annually.

### Introduction:

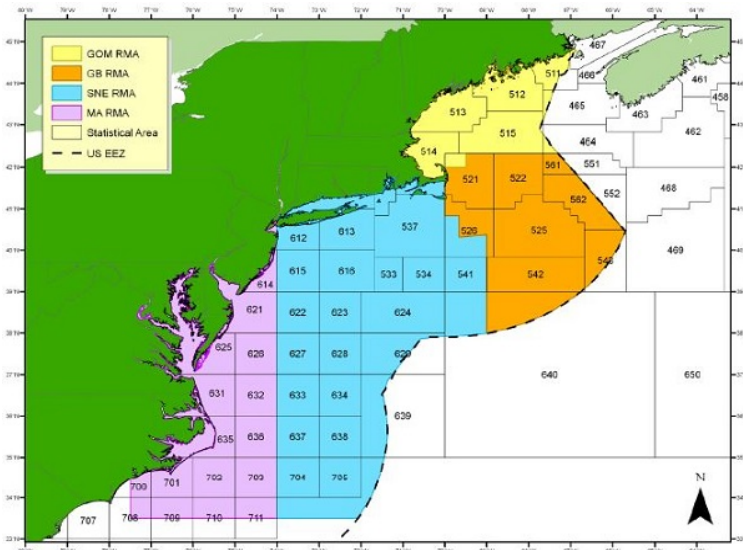
The following measures apply to private recreational fishing vessels in the exclusive economic zone (EEZ, typically 3-200 miles from shore), Federal charter/party permitted vessels, and Federal Northeast (NE) multispecies permitted vessels fishing under the charter/party or recreational regulations (not fishing under a NE multispecies day-at-sea).

### Federal Minimum Fish Sizes and Possession Limits for Recreational and Charter/Party Vessels:

Species		Possession Limit	Minimum Size <sup>2</sup> (inches)	Open Season
Atlantic cod	Inside GOM RMA <sup>1</sup>	<b>NO RETENTION</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>CLOSED</b>
	Outside GOM RMA <sup>1</sup>	Private Boat: 10 fish per person per day Charter or Party Boat: <b>10 fish per person per day</b>	<b>23</b>	All Year
Haddock	Inside GOM RMA <sup>1</sup>	Private Boat: 12 fish per person per day Charter or Party Boat: 12 fish per person per day	17	May 1 – September 16 November 1 – February 28 and April 15 – April 30
	Outside GOM RMA <sup>1</sup>	Private Boat: Unlimited Charter or Party Boat: Unlimited	18	All Year
Atlantic halibut		1 fish per <b>vessel</b> per trip	41	All Year
Pollock		Unlimited	19	All Year
Witch flounder (gray sole)		Unlimited	14	All Year
Yellowtail flounder		Unlimited	13	All Year
American plaice (dab)		Unlimited	14	All Year
Winter flounder (blackback)		Unlimited	12	All Year
Redfish (ocean perch)		Unlimited	9	All Year
Offshore hake, red hake, white hake, and silver hake (whiting)		Unlimited	None	All Year
Atlantic wolffish, windowpane flounder, ocean pout		<b>NO RETENTION</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>CLOSED</b>

<sup>1</sup>Gulf of Maine (GOM) Regulated Mesh Area (RMA): See figure below. <sup>2</sup>Minimum size is measured as total length.

### Regulated Mesh Areas



The GOM RMA is bounded on the east and south by a line connecting the following points:

Point	N. Latitude	W. Longitude
G1	(1)	(1)
G2	43° 58'	67° 22'
G3	42° 53.1'	67° 44.4'
G4	42° 31'	67° 28.1'
CII3	42° 22'	67° 20'
G6	42° 20'	67° 20'
G7	42° 20'	69° 30'
G8	42° 00'	69° 30'
G9	42° 00'	(2)

<sup>1</sup>The intersection of the shoreline and the U.S.-Canada Maritime Boundary.

<sup>2</sup>The intersection of the Cape Cod, MA, coastline and 42°00' N. lat.

## **ALL VESSELS:**

### **Federal and State Regulations:**

State recreational fishing regulations may differ from the Federal regulations. Please consult with your state to determine its regulations. When Federal and state regulations both apply, vessels are bound by the most restrictive requirements.

### **Restrictions on Sale:**

It is unlawful to sell, barter, trade, or otherwise transfer for a commercial purpose, or to attempt to sell, barter, trade, or otherwise transfer for a commercial purpose, NE multispecies caught or landed by recreational fishing vessels fishing in the EEZ, or charter/party vessels not fishing under a day-at-sea.

### **Annual Catch Limits**

For two groundfish stocks (GOM cod and GOM haddock), a portion of the Annual Catch Limit (ACL) is allocated to the recreational fishery. Each year, NMFS, in consultation with the New England Fishery Management Council, adjusts management measures to ensure the recreational fishery achieves, but does not exceed its allocation.

### **Gear Restrictions:**

Each angler is limited to one line. There is no limit to the number of hooks per line per person. All other fishing gear must be properly stowed as described in the regulations.

### **Possession Restrictions:**

Fillets, or parts of fish, must have at least 2 square inches of contiguous skin that allows for identification of fish species, while possessed on board and at the time of landing.

- Vessels may possess fillets less than the minimum size specified if the fillets are taken from legal-sized fish.
- For purposes of counting fish, fillets will be converted to whole fish at the place of landing by dividing the number of fillets by two. If fish are filleted into a single (butterfly) fillet, such fillet shall be deemed to be from one whole fish.
- Haddock and cod harvested by recreational and charter/party vessels with more than one person aboard may be pooled in multiple containers. Compliance with possession limits will be determined by dividing the number of fish on board by the number of persons aboard. If there is a violation of a possession limit on board a vessel carrying more than one person, the violation shall be deemed to have been committed by the owner or operator.
- Recreational and charter/party vessels may not fish for, possess, or land any cod from the GOM. Recreational and charter/party vessels may not fish for, possess, or land any haddock from the GOM from March 1 – April 14, and September 17 – October 31. (Cod or haddock caught outside of the GOM RMA during these periods may be on board a vessel transiting the area, but only if all bait and hooks are removed from fishing rods and all cod on board have been gutted and stored, in accordance with the regulations).
- Cod and haddock must be stored so as to be readily available for inspection.
- Any trip covering 2 calendar days, and over 15 hours in duration, may possess 2 daily possession limits worth of cod or haddock. Likewise, any trip covering 3 calendar days, and over 39 hours in duration, may possess 3 times the daily limit of cod or haddock, and so on.

## **CHARTER/PARTY VESSELS:**

### **Permit Requirements:**

Charter/party vessels without a limited access NE multispecies permit that fish for or possess NE multispecies in the EEZ must obtain an open access NE multispecies charter/party permit. Vessels with a limited access NE multispecies permit do not need to obtain a charter/party permit. Such vessels, when fishing under the charter/party rules, must stow all fishing gear except rod & reel or handline gear unless further restricted by a closed area letter of authorization (LOA) described below, and must abide by the restrictions on sale described above.

### **Reporting Requirements**

All NE multispecies charter/party vessels are required to submit a vessel trip report (VTR) to the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office for each trip. You are **not** required to submit a "Did Not Fish" VTR for weeks that you do not fish.

### **Charter/Party Vessel LOA to Fish in Closed Areas:**

Vessels fishing under charter/party regulations may not fish in the GOM Cod Protection Closures, Cashes Ledge Closed Area, or the Western GOM Closed Area unless the vessel has on board the appropriate LOA issued by the Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office. Restrictions apply, as stated in the LOA. LOAs are available upon request by calling the Regional Office at (978) 281-9370. Additional details on closed areas are available in a separate information sheet.

As a condition of these letters (LOA), the vessel owner must agree to restrictions, including the following:

- Fish managed by either the New England Fishery Management Council or the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council that are harvested or possessed by the vessel may not be sold, bartered or traded or intended for sale, barter or trade, regardless of where caught. Species such as tuna and striped bass may be landed for sale provided the vessel has the proper permits;
- The vessel has no gear other than rod and reel or handline gear on board;
- The LOA must be carried on board the vessel during the participation period;
- Other restrictions, specific to the LOA, are explained in the LOA.

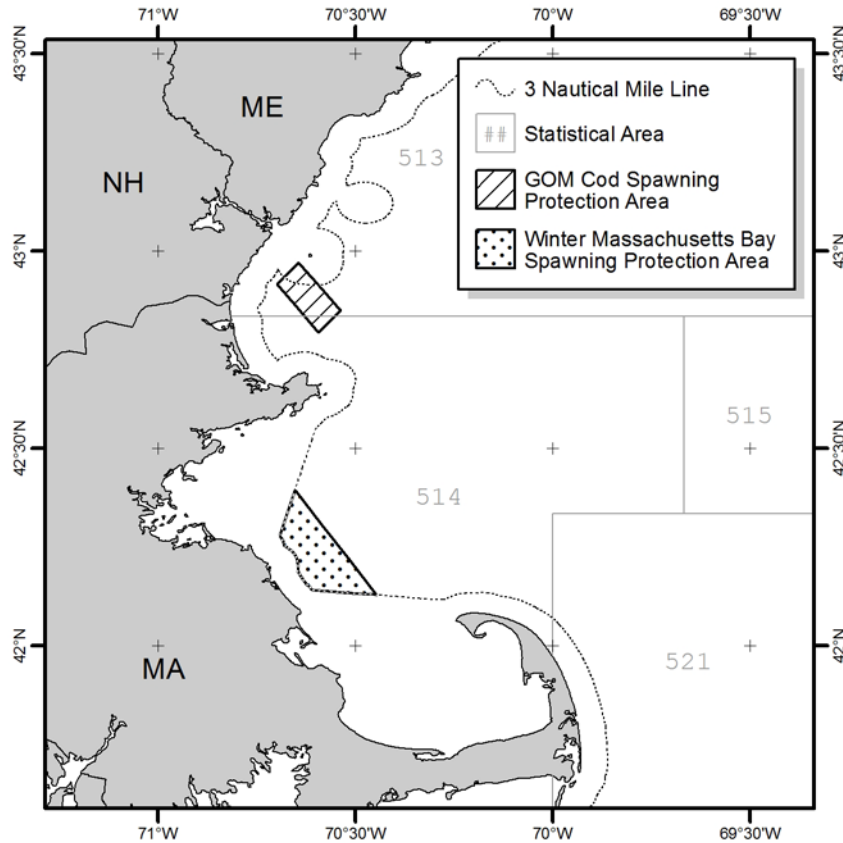
### **Prohibition on Fishing Under a Day-At-Sea While Taking Passengers for Hire:**

Charter/party vessels with a limited access NE multispecies permit are prohibited from fishing commercially when carrying passengers for hire. This provision is intended to more clearly distinguish between vessels carrying passengers for hire and other commercial fishing vessels.

### **Control Date:**

Charter/party vessel owners should be aware that a control date of March 19, 2018 has been published for the NE multispecies charter/party fishery. This date may be used for establishing eligibility criteria for determining future access to the charter/party fishery.

## SPAWNING PROTECTION AREAS



**Gear Restrictions:** The following gear restrictions apply to recreational fishing vessels fishing in the GOM Cod Spawning Protection Area and Winter Massachusetts bay Spawning Protection Area .

- GOM Cod Spawning Protection Area: From April 1 through June 30 of each year, all recreational vessels, including private recreational and charter/party vessels, may only use pelagic hook-and-line gear, as defined below, when fishing in the GOM Cod Spawning Protection Area.
- Winter Massachusetts Bay Spawning Protection Area: From November 1 through January 31 of each year, all recreational vessels, including private recreational and charter/party vessels, may only use pelagic hook-and-line gear, as defined below, when fishing in the Winter Massachusetts Bay Spawning Protection Area.

Pelagic hook-and-line gear is defined as handline or rod and reel gear that is designed to fish for, or that is being used to fish for, pelagic species. No portion of this gear may be operated in contact with the bottom at any time.

Point	N. Latitude	W. Longitude
CSPA1	42° 50.95'	70° 32.22'
CSPA2	42° 47.65'	70° 35.64'
CSPA3	42° 54.91'	70° 41.88'
CSPA4	42° 58.27'	70° 38.64'

Point	N. Latitude	W. Longitude
WSPA1	42° 23.61'	70° 39.21'
WSPA2	42° 07.68'	70° 26.79'

**Possession Restrictions:** Any recreational vessel fishing in the GOM Cod Spawning Protection Area or Winter Massachusetts Bay Spawning Protection Area is prohibited from possessing or retaining regulated species or ocean pout during the time periods defined above.

**Transiting:** Recreational vessels may transit the GOM Cod Spawning Protection Area, and Winter Massachusetts Bay Spawning Area provided all bait and hooks are removed from fishing rods. Any regulated species on board caught outside the GOM Cod Spawning Protection Area must be gutted and stored.