



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
NORTHEAST REGION
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2276

AUG 16 2011

Nicolas Brancalone, Manager
Northeast Fishery Sector III
10 Witham Street
Gloucester, MA 01930

Dear Mr. Brancalone:

This letter is in response to your request to amend the approved fishing year (FY) 2011 Northeast Fishery Sector III (NEFS III) operations plan by adding one new exemption from the requirement to maintain a vessel monitoring system (VMS) powered while at the dock.

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service has approved the addition of this exemption for NEFS III vessels through an amendment to the approved FY 2011 NEFS III operations plan. Please attach a copy of the enclosed amendment to all copies of the approved NEFS III operations plan. Also enclosed are new letters of authorization (LOA) for all members of NEFS III. Vessels must have updated signed LOAs on board prior to using the new exemption.

If you have additional questions, please contact Mark Grant at 978-281-9145.

Sincerely,

George H. Darcy
Assistant Regional Administrator
for Sustainable Fisheries

cc: NEFMC

enclosure



**AMENDMENT 4 TO THE NORTHEAST FISHERY SECTOR III
SECTOR OPERATIONS PLAN**

APPROVED BY THE NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE AUGUST 16, 2011

EFFECTIVE AUGUST 16, 2011, THROUGH APRIL 30, 2012 - THE 2011 FISHING YEAR

This amendment approves 1 additional exemption for Northeast Fishery Sector III. The new exemption is from the:

1. Requirement to maintain a vessel monitoring system (VMS) powered while at the dock.

The following exemptions were previously approved for Northeast Fishery Sector III and remain in effect:

1. 120-Day Block Requirement Out of the Fishery for Day Gillnet Vessels
2. Prohibition on a Vessel Hauling Another Vessel's Gillnet Gear
3. Limitation on the Number of Gillnets that May be Hauled on Georges Bank when Fishing Under a Groundfish/Monkfish Days-at-Sea (DAS)
4. Limitation on the Number of Gillnets for Day Gillnet Vessels
5. 20-Day Spawning Block
6. Limitation on the Number of Hooks that May be Fished
7. Length and Horsepower Restrictions of the DAS Leasing Program
8. Gulf of Maine (GOM) Sink Gillnet Mesh Exemption
9. GOM Sink Gillnet Mesh Exemption in May
10. Dockside Monitoring (DSM) requirements for Vessels Fishing West of 72°30' W. long.
11. DSM Requirements for Vessels Fishing on Both a Monkfish and Multispecies DAS in the Southern Fishery Management Area using 10-inch or Greater Mesh