

May 25, 2009

Ms. Patricia A. Kurkul
NOAA Fisheries Northeast Regional Office
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930

350 Commercial Street
Portland, ME 04101

tel 207-772-2321
fax 207-772-6855
www.gmri.org

Dear Ms. Kurkul:

The Gulf of Maine Research Institute has been working with sector organizers for nearly two years to discuss many of the operational issues that sectors will need to address by May 2010. One of the critical dialogues we have been facilitating among industry, NMFS staff, and nonprofits is consensus on standards for the dockside monitoring requirements laid out in the Draft Amendment 16 document.

Please find attached a document that reflects a consensus agreement by all the sector organizers to capture a baseline protocol of a Dockside Monitoring Program for both 100% and less than 100% dockside monitoring. Acknowledging that individual sectors present unique technical challenges, participants in this process opted to articulate protocols they felt should be met by all sectors at a minimum, yet not dictate how to achieve these protocols which should be addressed through operations plans by each sector.

Participants acknowledged that it will be the responsibility of individual sectors to design a Dockside Monitoring Program that achieves these protocols and the approach taken by an individual sector will vary based on the unique circumstances of their sector. However, ***we strongly encourage you to adopt these dockside monitoring standards as guidelines for sectors.*** The industry members who are supporting the development of sectors for 2010 have spent considerable time grappling with many issues regarding dockside monitoring standards and they have discussed these standards with NMFS staff for their feedback. Given the limited time remaining for sectors to design their operations plans and the concern that all sectors be held to the same standards for dockside monitoring, we believe these standards should serve as the basis for NMFS dockside monitoring policy.

Sincerely,



Laura Taylor Singer

Cc: John Pappalardo, Chair, NEFMC
Paul Howard, Executive Director, NEFMC
Rip Cunningham, Chair, Groundfish Committee
Nancy Thompson, Director, NEFSC

Visionary Donor
William G. Waldron
(1936-2001)

Officers:
Chair
William L. Caron, Jr.

Vice Chair
William A. Burke

Treasurer
Joan M. Smith

Secretary
Sean Mahoney

President
Donald W. Perkins, Jr.

Directors:

Kathryn L. Barber
William A. Burke

George N. Campbell, Jr.
William L. Caron, Jr.

Debra Coyman
Marjorie E. V. Dawson

Mark Doiron
Marion F. Freeman

David A. Goldberg
Suzanne E. Hamlin

Tom Hanson
Daniel Hildreth

Stephen A. Hutnak
John N. Kelly

William Kourakos
Sean Mahoney

Kevin P. McCarthy
Robert C. S. Monks

Derek Pierce
Holly Taylor Sargent

Joan M. Smith
Robert L. Stephenson, Ph.D.

J. B. Sullivan
Karl Turner