

Carolina by calling (800) 338-7804, and in Maryland by calling (410) 213-1531.

Classification

This action is taken under 50 CFR 635.23(b)(3). This action is exempt from review under Execution Order 12866.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 971 *et seq.* and 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: August 11, 2000.

Bruce C. Morehead,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 648

[Docket No. 000119014-0137-02; I.D. 081100A]

Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Commercial Quota Harvested for Massachusetts

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Commercial quota harvest.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces that the summer flounder commercial quota available to the State of Massachusetts has been harvested. Vessels issued a commercial Federal fisheries permit for the summer flounder fishery may not land summer flounder in Massachusetts for the remainder of calendar year 2000, unless additional quota becomes available through a transfer. Regulations governing the summer flounder fishery require publication of this notification to advise the State of Massachusetts that

the quota has been harvested, and to advise vessel permit holders and dealer permit holders that no commercial quota is available for landing summer flounder in Massachusetts.

DATES: Effective 0001 hours, August 17, 2000, through 2400 hours, December 31, 2000.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Paul H. Jones, Fishery Policy Analyst, (978) 281-9273.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Regulations governing the summer flounder fishery are found at 50 CFR part 648. The regulations require annual specification of a commercial quota that is apportioned on a percentage basis among the coastal states from North Carolina through Maine. The process to set the annual commercial quota and the percent allocated to each state is described in § 648.100.

The initial total commercial quota for summer flounder for the 2000 calendar year was set equal to 11,109,214 lb (5,039,555 kg) (65 FR 33486, May 24, 2000). The percent allocated to vessels landing summer flounder in Massachusetts is 6.82046 percent, or 757,834 lb (343,748 kg).

Section 648.100(e)(4) stipulates that any overages of commercial quota landed in any state be deducted from that state's annual quota for the following year. In the calendar year 1999, a total of 804,964 lb (365,126 kg) were landed in Massachusetts, creating a 47,122 lb (21,374 kg) overage that was deducted from the amount allocated for landings in the State during 2000 (65 FR 33486, May 24, 2000). The resulting 2000 quota for Massachusetts is 710,712 lb (322,374 kg).

Section 648.101(b) requires the Administrator, Northeast Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator) to monitor state commercial quotas and to determine when a state's commercial quota is harvested. The Regional Administrator is further required to

publish a notification in the **Federal Register** advising a state and notifying Federal vessel and dealer permit holders that, effective upon a specific date, the state's commercial quota has been harvested and no commercial quota is available for landing summer flounder in that state. The Regional Administrator has determined, based upon dealer reports and other available information, that the State of Massachusetts has attained its quota for 2000.

The regulations at § 648.4(b) provide that Federal permit holders agree as a condition of the permit not to land summer flounder in any state that the Regional Administrator has determined no longer has commercial quota available. Therefore, effective 0001 hours, August 17, 2000, further landings of summer flounder in Massachusetts by vessels holding summer flounder commercial Federal fisheries permits are prohibited for the remainder of the 2000 calendar year, unless additional quota becomes available through a transfer and is announced in the **Federal Register**. Effective 0001 hours, August 17, 2000, federally permitted dealers are also advised that they may not purchase summer flounder from federally permitted vessels that land in Massachusetts for the remainder of the calendar year, or until additional quota becomes available through a transfer.

Classification

This action is required by 50 CFR part 648 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: August 11, 2000.

Bruce C. Morehead,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service.

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