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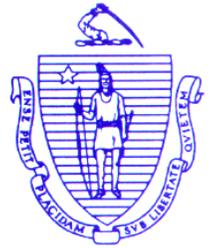
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April 8, 2016

Marine Fisheries Advisory

INDUSTRY-BASED SURVEY FOR GULF OF MAINE COD COMMENCES APRIL 11TH

On April 11th, Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) researchers will begin a three-year industry-based survey (cod IBS) for Gulf of Maine (GOM) cod. Given the poor status of Gulf of Maine (GOM) cod, low catch limits, and many fishermen's claims that the cod status is better than currently assessed; DMF is implementing this new cod IBS to:

- Provide another science source (resource data and information) for use in assessments;
- Test fishermen's hypothesis about GOM cod redistributing offshore in response to warming water;
- Demonstrate relevance and importance of a GOM cod IBS for improving our understanding of the distribution of cod at times and in areas when the NEFSC surveys are not performed;
- Acquire additional scientific data on other groundfish stocks in the survey area;
- Enable minimum estimates of swept-area biomass; and
- Determine the cod IBS's potential for providing indices of abundance

Relying on fishermen's guidance with additional input from the Massachusetts Marine Fisheries Institute (MFI), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Fisheries, and the Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC), *DMF* has focused the cod IBS in the southwestern portion of the GOM where remnants of the GOM cod stock currently reside.

We request that fishermen voluntarily assist by temporarily clearing tow locations of fixed gear. To find out the specific dates when locations will be surveyed, please sign up for text alerts. In addition, each morning at 6:00 AM the survey vessel will announce on VHF Channel 16 which tow locations will be surveyed that day. IBS details, including tow locations and how to sign up for text alerts, can be found online at: www.mass.gov/dmf/codIBS.