



Greater Atlantic Region Bulletin

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Northeast Multispecies Common Pool Vessels

Trimester Total Allowable Catch Areas Closed for Remainder of Trimester 1 Possession of American Plaice and Cape Cod/Gulf of Maine Yellowtail Flounder Prohibited

Effective Date: June 23, 2015 through August 31, 2015

Effective June 23, 2015, the Gulf of Maine (GOM) cod, Cape Cod (CC)/GOM yellowtail flounder, and American plaice Trimester 1 Total Allowable Catches (TACs) Areas are closed for the remainder of Trimester 1, through August 31, 2015. See the table below for the gear types affected by these three closures, and the map on page 2. The areas will reopen at the beginning of Trimester 2 at 0001 hours on September 1, 2015. These closures are required because we have determined that over 100 percent of the GOM cod, CC/GOM yellowtail flounder, and American plaice Trimester 1 TACs were harvested as of June 16, 2015.

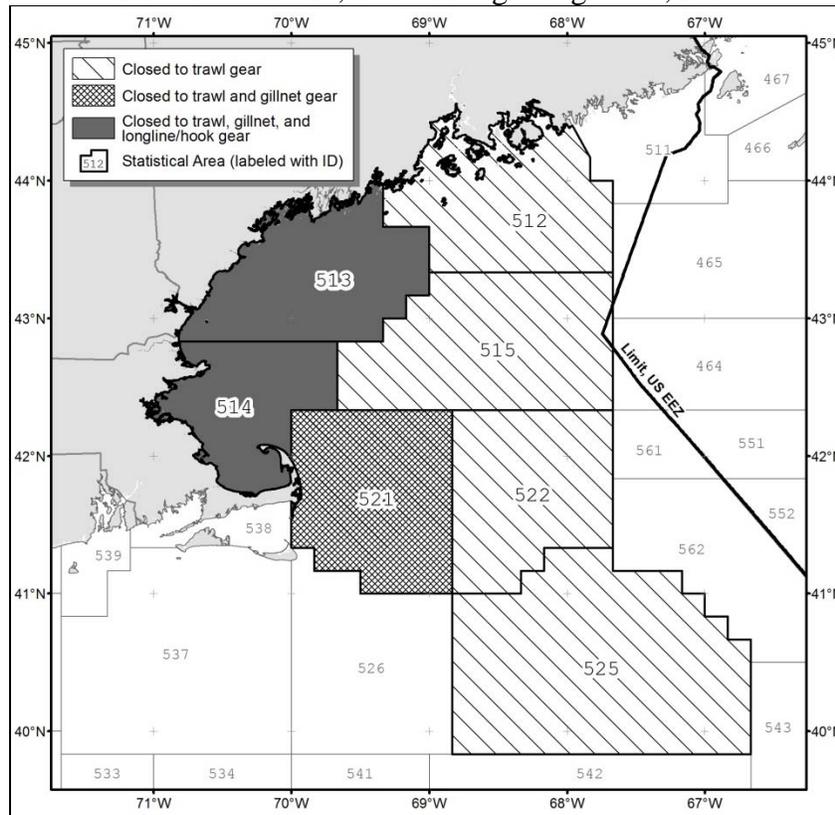
Stock	Statistical Areas	Gear types prohibited
GOM cod	513, 514	Trawl, gillnet, longline/hook
CC/GOM yellowtail flounder	514, 521	Trawl, gillnet
American plaice	512, 513, 514, 515, 521, 522, 525	Trawl

In addition, effective June 23, 2015, the possession of CC/GOM yellowtail flounder and American plaice is prohibited for all common pool vessels in all areas. At the start of Trimester 2, on September 1, 2015, the possession and trip limit for CC/GOM yellowtail flounder will return to 1,500 lb per day-at-sea, up to 3,000 lb per trip, and the possession and trip limit for American plaice will return to unlimited, unless further notice is given. Any overage from Trimester 1 will be deducted from the Trimester 3 TAC.

If you have declared your trip through the vessel monitoring system (VMS) or interactive voice response system, and crossed the VMS demarcation line prior to June 23, 2015, you may complete your trip if you are within the Trimester TAC Areas, and you will not be subject to the new possession and trip limits. Gillnet vessels that have set gear prior to June 23, 2015, may complete their trip by hauling such gear. Please contact us at (978) 281-9315 if you have any questions. Quota monitoring reports are updated weekly on the internet at <http://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/>

For small entity compliance guides, this bulletin complies with section 212 of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement and Fairness Act of 1996. This notice is authorized by the Regional Administrator of the National Marine Fisheries Service, Greater Atlantic Region.

Map of Prohibited Gear Types by Statistical Area
 Applies to all common pool vessels on a groundfish trip
 Effective June 23, 2015 through August 31, 2015



Frequently Asked Questions

Why is this action being taken?	We have to close the Trimester TAC Area when it is projected that 90% of the Trimester TAC will be caught.
How much of the quota has been caught?	As of June 16, 2015, 114% of the GOM cod Trimester 1 quota has been caught, 105% of the CC/GOM yellowtail flounder Trimester 1 quota has been caught, and 106% of the American plaice Trimester 1 quota has been caught.
When will the Trimester TAC Areas reopen?	The areas closed by this action will reopen on September 1, 2015.
Can I catch GOM cod outside of Areas 513 and 514?	No. As of June 15, 2015, possession and landing of GOM cod is prohibited for all common pool vessels for the remainder of the 2015 fishing year (through April 30, 2016).
Why did you set the possession of GOM cod to zero a week ago, only to close the area now?	We had hoped to avoid this situation. However, in the time that it took to reduce the possession limit to zero, the common pool caught enough GOM cod that a Trimester TAC Area closure was triggered.
Can I still fish if I use gillnets or longline/hook gear?	Within Areas 513 and 514, no common pool vessels can fish. In Area 521, you may only fish with longline/hook gear. In the other areas affected by this closure, you may use gillnet and longline/hook gear.