



Greater Atlantic Regional Bulletin

NOAA Fisheries, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930

New Vessel Monitoring System (VMS) Software for Vessel Owners - Woods Hole Group (formerly CLS America)-equipped Vessels

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
April 18, 2018

Effective Date: April 18, 2018

The Thorium VMS unit installed on your vessel requires a software update to comply with recent regulatory changes. Please install and begin using the new software at your earliest opportunity but not later than May 1, 2018. You may not be compliant with the regulations if your vessel leaves port on or after this date with the older software. Owner/operators who intend to take a scallop trip into new or modified areas authorized by Framework Adjustment 29 to the Sea Scallop plan must install the new software prior to their trip.

To obtain the new software, please call your VMS vendor, Woods Hole Group (WHG), at [\(240\) 492-1944](tel:2404921944). The WHG Customer Support staff will walk you through the process of updating the software on your tablet. The process takes approximately 15 minutes. Before calling WHG, please fully charge your Thorium tablet and connect your tablet to an internet WI-FI* connection.

*Note: To connect to WI-FI, open the 'Thorium' application, click on the 'Internet' icon  near the top of the screen, and then select a Wi-Fi connection; enter the password as needed, and check (below the Wi-Fi name selected) to verify that it states "Connected".

Once you update the software on your tablet, reconnect the tablet to your Thorium VMS. Please confirm that your tablet has the new software loaded – on the Thorium main page, select "Forms", then "NE Declarations", and ensure that all ten declaration plans indicate version "v15". Do the same by checking each of the NE "Forms" for version "v15".

We recommend that you send a 'Declare Out of Fishery – Transit' declaration that alerts us that you have updated the new software. Please remember to send the appropriate activity declaration from your Thorium VMS prior to your next trip.

For any questions, please contact WHG at the above telephone number or via email at support@clsamerica.com.

Quick Reference to VMS Software Declarations and Forms

Declaration	Report
Declare Out of Fishery	Multispecies Catch
Herring	Multispecies Trip Start Hail
Mackerel	Multispecies Trip End Hail
Monkfish	Monkfish Trip Limit DAS Overage Adj.
Multispecies Common Pool	Scallop Daily Catch
Multispecies Sector	Scallop Prelanding Notification
Scallop - LAGC & Limited Access	Herring Daily Catch
Squid - Longfin & Illex	Herring Prelanding Notification
Surfclam & Ocean Quahog	Mackerel & Squid Daily Catch
Power Down	Mackerel Prelanding Notification
	RSA & EFP Trip Start Hail
	RSA & EFP Trip End Hail

Summary of Declaration Changes

1. Scallop.

a. LAGC (general category). For special access area trips, we added three (3) access areas to the declaration menu: Closed Area I, (new) Nantucket Lightship South and (new) Nantucket Lightship West. We removed the Nantucket Lightship and the Elephant Trunk Flex access areas.

Note: Please remember to select and declare a gear type for all LAGC-declared trips.

b. Limited Access. For special access area trips, we added five (5) access areas to the declaration menu: Closed Area I, (new) Nantucket Lightship South, (new) Nantucket Lightship West, Carry-Over Trip – Nantucket Lightship, and Carry-Over Trip - Closed Area 2. We removed the Nantucket Lightship and the Elephant Trunk Flex access areas. The Closed Area 2 and Nantucket Lightship carry-over selections are only for those vessels authorized by NMFS to take a carry-over trip between April 1 and May 30, 2018. These carry-over declarations are not to be used after May 30, 2018.

We also added a selection for Limited Access vessels to declare a Northern Gulf of Maine (NGOM) Research Set-Aside (RSA) trip.

2. Surfclam & Quahog. We added three (3) scallop access areas to the field that asks you to select a scallop access area only if you are fishing in that access area and retaining more than 40 lb of scallop IFQ quota. Those areas are Closed Area I, (new) Nantucket Lightship South and (new) Nantucket Lightship West. We removed the Nantucket Lightship and the Elephant Trunk Flex access areas.

Note: If you do not declare into an access area, you may not land more than 40 lb of scallops, and you may not land any scallops from an area after it has closed to LAGC IFQ vessels. Please remember to send the scallop prelanding notification from sea for any trip in which you land scallops.

3. Squid. We added a 'note' to the first selection field that asks 'what is your target species?' The note states 'select one or both' meaning that you may now select a combined longfin and illex trip, in addition to a longfin-only or illex-only trip.

Summary of Reports Changes

1. Scallop Daily Catch Report. We added text to the instruction at the top of the page to clarify the catch report requirement and eliminate redundant reporting. Vessels on a scallop-declared trip that is no more than a single day in length and required to send a scallop prelanding form are now exempt from sending a daily catch report.

Note: Please remember to send the daily catch report by 9 am the following day for all other scallop-declared trips. Also, please send the scallop pre-landing report on: (1) all LAGC-declared trips, (2) non-scallop-declared trips in which scallops are retained by vessels with LAGC IFQ and NGOM permits, (3) access area-declared trips by limited access vessels, and (4) when declaring out of the limited access days-at-sea fishery with scallops onboard to transit to a port south of 39 degrees North.

Reminder of VMS Requirements

1. VMS Operator Instructions. You will find views and information about how and when to send your required declarations and reports. These instructions are available on the VMS web page at <https://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/vms/index.html> (under 'Instructions and Forms'). If you prefer a paper copy, please contact the VMS Team.

2. Contacting the VMS Team. If you have questions about this new VMS software or your VMS reporting requirements, please call us at (978) 281-9213, option 1. On our webpage, contact information is available at <https://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/vms/contact/index.html>.

3. Declaring Your VMS Trip. Please remember to declare your activity prior to leaving port from your VMS unit on every trip as required by 50 CFR 648.10. The trip start email that your VMS unit receives from NMFS is not a confirmation of your trip declaration, but only provides the most-recent declaration received from your vessel. If you typically take the same type of trip, you may be able to use GARFO's IVR feature that allows you to 'Confirm the Use of a Previous VMS Code' via a simple toll-free call. Please contact the VMS Team if you would like to learn more about this feature.