



New England Fishery Management Council

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John Pappalardo, *Chairman* | Paul J. Howard, *Executive Director*

DRAFT

Dr. Nancy Thompson
Science Director
Northeast Fisheries Science Center
166 Water Street
Woods Hole, MA 02543-1026

RE: SBRM observer coverage for April 2011 to March 2012

Dear Dr. Thompson:

Thank you for arranging the March 2 webinar presentation by Dr. Paul Rago for New England Council members and the public on SBRM observer coverage prioritization for 2011. Based on the report, Standardized Bycatch Reporting Methodology Sea Day Analysis and Prioritization 2011 and Dr. Rago's presentation, the New England Fishery Management Council has the following comments on the prioritization of observer coverage levels recommended in the report. The Council strongly supports the recommendation for a high level of observer coverage for New England groundfish fleets to help the implementation of sector provisions as part of Multispecies Amendment 16. With respect to the projected observer sea days for the industry funded scallop fisheries, the Council requests that these details be reviewed with the Scallop Plan Development Team and that they be further explained in the final report.

Again we appreciate your cooperation in providing our Council the information on the recommended coverage levels. Please contact me if you have any questions about our comments.

Sincerely,

Paul J. Howard
Executive Director