



NMFS Northeast Fisheries Science Center

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NOAA Fisheries Awards \$1.8 Million to Groundfish Research Teams

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Gloucester, Mass. -- NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) has awarded nearly \$1.8 million to seven research teams working to develop fishing gear and practices that may increase options for using limited groundfish days-at-sea. NOAA Fisheries is an agency of the Department of Commerce, and is charged with managing the nation's living marine resources.

Northeast groundfish vessels harvest fish from 19 different stocks (including species such as cod, haddock, and flounders), some of which are recovering better than others under current fishery management efforts. Each vessel has a limited number of fishing days to use harvesting groundfish. Under new changes to the fishery management plan, some of these fishing days ("B days") can only be used to harvest fish from the stocks that are doing well, while avoiding fish from other stocks.

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At present there is only one program in which vessels can use B days, a special access program for yellowtail flounder on Georges Bank. However, more fisheries for B days are being planned by the New England Fishery Management Council, the body charged with creating federal fishery management plans for groundfish in the Northeast. The projects selected for funding will support these development efforts, testing fishing gear that may selectively catch fish from healthier stocks, or providing other information that can be used to define a program where B days can be used.

The research proposals were sought and evaluated through a competitive program managed by NOAA Fisheries' Northeast Region's Cooperative Research Program. The CRP was initiated in 1999, in partnership with the New England Fishery Management Council's research steering committee. Since 2000, CRP has competitively funded 42 short-term research projects totaling approximately \$7.0 million, and three long-term research projects at more than \$5 million.

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For additional information, please contact either Kenneth L. Beal or Sarah Pike at 978-281-9146. They may be contacted via email at ken.beal@noaa.gov or sarah.pike@noaa.gov or at NMFS, One Blackburn Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930.

For more on NOAA Fisheries' Cooperative Research Program, visit us at: <http://coopresearch.nero.noaa.gov/>

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NOAA Fisheries is dedicated to protecting and preserving our nation's living marine resources through scientific research, management, enforcement, and the conservation of marine mammals and other protected marine species and their habitat. To learn more about NOAA Fisheries, please visit <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov>.

The Commerce Department's [National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration \(NOAA\)](#) is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources.

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