

NORTHEAST SEAFOOD COALITION

September 28, 2004

Patricia A. Kurkul
Regional Administrator
National Marine Fisheries Service
One Blackburn Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930

Dear Ms. Kurkul:

The Northeast Seafood Coalition submits the following comments in response to the request for public comments in the following solicitation:

Proposed Rule to implement Framework Adjustment 40-A to the NE Multispecies Fishery Management Plan and request for comments, published in the Federal Register on September 14, 2004 at 69 FR 55388.

Founded in January 2002, Northeast Seafood Coalition (NSC) represents over 300 fishermen participating in all the predominant groundfish gear sectors including trawl, gillnet and hook gear, and 60 shore-side businesses from Maine to Long Island New York. The mission of the NSC is to promote a healthy and sustainable commercial fishing and seafood industry comprised of family owned business and viable ports. NSC encourages, and inherently supports, reasonable and rational fishery management measures that are based on good science and legislation.

As always, NSC greatly appreciates the opportunity to provide public comments on important administrative and regulatory procedures that affect our membership. In addition, NSC appreciates the commitment and continued efforts of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) to move forward with the timely implementation of Framework Adjustment 40-A as a necessary component of achieving the objectives of Amendment 13 to the Northeast Multispecies Fishery Management Plan and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act..

The following comments on specific sections of the proposed amendments to 50 CFR 648 are presented in the order in which such sections appear in the Federal Register on pages 55395 – 55402. References to certain sections in the Preamble are also made.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jackie Odell
Executive Director