

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

50 CFR Part 648

[Docket No. 001121328-1066-03; I.D. 081001B]

Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Summer Flounder Fishery; Commercial Quota Harvested for Connecticut

AGENCY: National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

ACTION: Closure; commercial quota harvested for Connecticut.

SUMMARY: NMFS announces that the summer flounder commercial quota available to the State of Connecticut has been harvested. Vessels issued a commercial Federal fisheries permit for the summer flounder fishery may not land summer flounder in Connecticut for the remainder of calendar year 2001, unless additional quota becomes available through a transfer. Regulations governing the summer flounder fishery require publication of this notification to advise the State of Connecticut that the quota has been harvested and to advise vessel permit holders and dealer permit holders that no commercial quota is available for landing summer flounder in Connecticut.

DATES: Effective 0001 hours, August 17, 2001, through 2400 hours, December 31, 2001.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Paul H. Jones, Fishery Policy Analyst, (978) 281-9273.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Regulations governing the summer flounder fishery are found at 50 CFR part 648. The regulations require annual specification of a commercial quota that is apportioned on a percentage basis among the coastal states from North Carolina through Maine. The process to set the annual commercial quota and the percent allocated to each state is described in § 648.100.

The initial total commercial quota for summer flounder for the 2001 calendar year was set equal to 10,747,535 lb (4,875,000 kg) (66 FR 16151, March 23, 2001). The percent allocated to vessels landing summer flounder in Connecticut is 2.25708 percent, or 242,580 lb (110,032 kg). This allocation was adjusted due to an underage in 2000, as provided in § 648.100(e)(4), for a final allocation of 247,037 lb (112,054 kg).

Section 648.101 (b) requires the Administrator, Northeast Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator) to monitor state commercial quotas and to determine when a state's commercial quota is harvested. NMFS then publishes notification in the **Federal Register** advising a state and notifying Federal vessel and dealer permit holders that, effective upon a specific date, the state's commercial quota has been harvested and no commercial quota is available for landing summer flounder in that state. The Regional Administrator has determined, based

upon dealer reports and other available information, that the State of Connecticut has attained its quota for 2001.

The regulations at § 648.4 (b) provide that Federal permit holders agree as a condition of the permit not to land summer flounder in any state that the Regional Administrator has determined no longer has commercial quota available. Therefore, effective 0001 hours, August 17, 2001, further landings of summer flounder in Connecticut by vessels holding summer flounder commercial Federal fisheries permits are prohibited for the remainder of the 2001 calendar year, unless additional quota becomes available through a transfer and is announced in the **Federal Register**. Effective 0001 hours, August 17, 2001, federally permitted dealers are also notified that they may not purchase summer flounder from federally permitted vessels that land in Connecticut for the remainder of the calendar year, or until additional quota becomes available through a transfer.

Classification

This action is required by 50 CFR part 648 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

Authority: 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: August 10, 2001.

Bruce C. Morehead,

Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries, National Marine Fisheries Service
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