



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Northeast Fisheries Science Center
166 Water Street
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June 26, 2009

MEMORANDUM FOR: A.I.S., Inc.
Northeast Fisheries Observer Program Observers

FROM: Amy S. Van Atten 
Branch Chief, FSB

SUBJECT: Sampling Requests

Recently NEFOP has had a surge of requests to provide biological samples for scientists conducting research. Many scientists lack the resources to obtain fresh or unique samples that are vital to their research efforts. For this reason they have asked our program to assist them by providing some of these samples to progress their scientific endeavors. Attached is a spreadsheet with four current requests. It provides specifics as to what species are needed, the purpose of the study, method of collection and preservation, as well as other relevant information.

As concern for our oceans and ocean based industries increase, the importance of the observer program for scientific research will also gain credence. It is important that we assist others in the scientific community, as we have unique interactions with the ocean that many will never experience. Providing impeccable data and samples to other scientists will help lend credibility to our efforts and high quality standards.

All sample requests are voluntary and do not supersede the observers primary responsibilities. First and foremost observers should concentrate on their primary objectives. Observers will not be penalized for not collecting special sample requests; however, they will be awarded extra points towards their bonus for their participation. For whole fish retained for scientific purposes remember to use disposition code 007 on haul logs. You will receive email correspondence and a memo when a project has either concluded or enough samples have been provided.

Attached is a brief explanation of the projects. Upon completion of these studies we will try to procure the results or publications and make them available for observers to see what their efforts have helped accomplish.

Thank you in advance for your participation and extra effort. If you have any questions concerning these requests please contact John McConnaughey, John.McConnaughey@noaa.gov or phone 508-495-2131.

Attachments:
Sampling Request Spreadsheet
Sampling Request Summary

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It is important to bag and clearly tag these samples so that each may be tracked back to the trip and haul data specifics. If multiple small fish samples are taken from one haul, please do not cram all samples into one large bag. Place one or two fish in each bag and label appropriately. Fish should be bagged on a per haul basis; do not combine hauls. If additional vials or bags are needed please contact John McConnaughey.

	<u>Species</u>	<u>Sample Type</u>	<u>Reason for Collection</u>	<u>Project Begin Date</u>	<u>Project End Date</u>	<u>Location / Gear Types</u>	<u>Method of Collection Preservation</u>
1	Conger Eel	Whole	Life history study and distribution of Northwest Atlantic conger eels	7/01/2009	11/30/2009	Northeastern US Coast/ All Gear types	Frozen
	Notes	Freeze sample asap. If unable to freeze sample right away, keep on ice until freezing is possible. Samples should be bagged and tagged like normal samples. <u>On tag please write "Conger Eel Study"</u> .					
2	American Shad	Fin clip (small fingernail size, from any fin). Scales if possible	Mixed stock analysis of ocean shad aggregations	7/01/2009	3/31/2011	Northeastern US Coast/ All Gear types	1st choice – DMSO vial 2nd choice - freeze
	Notes	Place fin clip in DMSO vial provided. If no DMSO vial is available place fin clip in plastic bag or empty vial and freeze asap. Vials will come with label preattached. Label each vial with tripid and haul number, in the sequence number field record the stat area. When shipping vials please place in small bag labeled " <u>American Shad Study</u> " and send with trip.					
3	Atlantic Herring, Blueback Herring, Atlantic Mackerel	Whole	Studying herring and mackerel food webs and trophic positions using stable isotopes for comparison with sand lance food webs	None - Sample size is 50 (monthly) for each fish. Small (5-20 cm) (standard length)		Stellwagen Bank Vicinity (stat areas 513, 514, 515, and 525), all gear types	Frozen
	Notes	Freeze samples asap. If unable to freeze sample right away, keep on ice until freezing is possible. Samples should be bagged and tagged like normal samples. <u>On tag please write "Herring & Mackerel Study"</u>					
4	Alewife	Whole (Max of 30 individuals randomly selected per set)	Perform stock structure analysis on Alewives	7/01/2009	6/30/2010	Northeastern US Coast/ All Gear types	Frozen
	Notes	Freeze samples asap. If unable to freeze sample right away, keep on ice until freezing is possible. Samples should be bagged and tagged like normal samples. <u>On tag please write "Alewife Study"</u>					

1.1 Conger Eel

The only necessary requirement for sampling of conger eels is varying sizes of zip lock bags, as conger eels can come in a vast array of sizes. Each whole specimen should be placed in an individual zip lock bag and kept on ice until they can be frozen. Once the trip has concluded the observer should send the sample in just like they would a species for the fish ID program. The observer should fill out the proper tags, adding "Conger Eel Study" somewhere on the tag so that the sample is not confused with any other sampling or ID program.

2.1 American Shad

For this project observers will be provided small, DMSO filled sample tubes in which to place fingernail sized fin clips (fin clips can come from any fin). Tubes need to be labeled with tripid, haul number, and stat area (record stat area in the sequence number field). Fin clips can be placed in a plastic bag and frozen if the observer lacks sample tubes. Bags should also be labeled with tripid, haul number and stat area.

Scale samples are also requested. Please write "American Shad Study" on the age structure envelope. Please separate American Shad study envelopes from regular age samples, place in a separate small plastic bag and label "American Shad Study." If fin clip and scales are taken from the same fish, please provide a chronological sequence number to link the samples together. This can be recorded under the sequence number field on the vials and next to the stat area on the age structure envelopes.

3.1 Atlantic Herring, Blueback Herring and Atlantic Mackerel

This project asks for 50 fish of each species (Atl. Herring, Blueback Herring and Atl. Mackerel) each month from the Stellwagen Bank area. This does not mean that each observer should send in 50 fish of each species from each trip. The 50 fish will be a combined effort from all observers that participate and any excess will be used for training or ID verification purposes. The area of interest includes stat areas 513, 514, 515, and 525. Fish collected should be in the 5-20 cm range. Fish should be frozen ASAP or kept on ice until they can be frozen. Fish should be bagged and tagged and the observer should add "Herring and Mackerel Study" to the tag.

4.1 Alewife

This study asks for a maximum of 30 individuals, randomly selected per set, from any type of fishing gear. These fish should be frozen ASAP or kept on ice until they can be frozen. The observer should bag and tag these samples and should add "Alewife Study" on the tag.