UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
NORTHEAST REGION
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930-2276

AUG 22 2012

Dear Vessel Owner, Operator, or Fisherman:

We have selected your vessel,

F/V _____

USCG doc. or state # _____

to take a NMFS-certified Observer or At-Sea Monitor on your next fishing trip. Vessels operating in the following fisheries may be selected to carry an observer/at-sea monitor:

1) Any State or Federal Category I or II fishery occurring in state or federal waters currently listed under the Marine Mammal Protection Act; or
2) Any federally permitted fishery in the Northeast region listed in 50 C.F.R Sections 648.11(a) and 697.12. Currently, those species are Atlantic sea scallops, NE multispecies, monkfish, skates, Atlantic mackerel, squid, butterfish, scup, black sea bass, bluefish, spiny dogfish, Atlantic herring, tilefish, Atlantic deep-sea red crab; summer flounder (moratorium permit), and American lobster.

Copies of the specific regulations can be found on our website:
http://www.nero.noaa.gov/nero/regs/index.html

What to Expect

- After receiving this letter, you must make arrangements to carry an Observer/At-Sea Monitor with the Observer Program in advance of your next trip.
- You must notify the contact person listed below prior to commencing your next fishing trip.
- Once selected to carry an Observer/At-Sea Monitor a vessel may not engage in fishing operations unless an observer is on board or until the requirement is waived (an observer is unavailable).

Please contact:

Name: _____ ***at Phone Number:*** _____
**(Completed by Observer Program)*
Date: _____

Safety Requirements

- Observers/At-Sea Monitors are required to complete a pre-trip safety check of a vessel's emergency equipment and to review emergency instructions with the operator prior to the vessel departing port.
- A vessel must have: 1) a current U.S. Coast Guard Commercial Fishing Vessel Safety Examination sticker (or supporting inspection documentation), and 2) the following

safety equipment, in working condition (not expired) and in sufficient quantify aboard the vessel:

- Personal flotation devices and immersion suits for all crew onboard (not including the Observer/At-Sea Monitor);
- Ring buoys or other allowable flotation;
- Emergency signaling flares (night light and smoke or 3 day/night flares < 3 miles, 3 parachute, 6 hand held, 3 smoke > 3miles);
- Fire extinguishing equipment, when required;
- Radios;
- A registered emergency position indicating radio beacon (EPIRB) (including batteries and hydrostatic release dates), when required; and
- Survival craft with valid packing and current hydrostatic release dates as required.

- A vessel without a valid safety decal (or supporting inspection documentation) OR any one of the safety items listed above will be deemed inadequate or unsafe for carrying a NMFS-certified Observer/At-Sea Monitor and will be prohibited from fishing until the safety deficiencies are corrected or resolved.

Waivers

If your vessel is selected but an Observer/At-Sea Monitor is not available, you will receive a waiver for your scheduled trip. When you receive a waiver from observer or at-sea monitoring requirements, it is only for that specific trip.

Observers/At-Sea Monitors provide critical data to both industry and regulators, data upon which we base fisheries management decisions. Your cooperation and assistance in this program is greatly appreciated. Any questions about the Observer Program and these requirements should be directed to Amy Van Atten, Chief of the Fisheries Sampling Branch, at (508) 495-2266.

Sincerely,

George H. Darcy

for John K. Bullard
Regional Administrator