



Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council

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Michael P. Luisi, Chairman | G. Warren Elliott, Vice Chairman
Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D., Executive Director

April 8, 2020

Maria Fenton
Sustainable Fisheries Division
Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office, NMFS
55 Great Republic Drive
Gloucester, MA 01930

Dear Ms. Fenton:

The responds to Mike Pentony's letter regarding the application for an Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) requested by Northeast Fisheries Science Center (Center).

On behalf of the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council, I support the issuance of an EFP to the applicant, i.e., the Center. The Center submitted a complete application for an EFP in support of the 2020 Study Fleet Program. This EFP would exempt 19 commercial fishing vessels from minimum fish sizes and possession limited for species of interest, as well as allow temporary retention of species prior to discarding.

All catch would be attributed to the appropriate commercial fishing quota. For a vessel fishing on groundfish sector trip, all catch of groundfish stocks allocated to sectors would be deducted from the vessel's sector's annual catch entitlement (ACE). Once the ACE for a stock has been reached in a sector, vessels would no longer be allowed to fish in that stock area unless the sector acquired additional ACE for the stock in question. For common pool vessels all groundfish catch would be counted toward the appropriate trimester total allowable catch (TAC). Common pool vessels would be exempt from possession and trip limits on EFP trips when directed for sampling by the Center but would still be subject to trimester TAC closures.

Please call or write if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C Moore", is positioned above the printed name of the signatory.

Christopher M. Moore, Ph.D.
Executive Director

CMM: mjs

cc: M. Luisi, W. Elliott, M. Pentony