

SUSTAINABILITY FRAMEWORK FOR ATLANTIC HERRING

April 15, 2008

To: Fisheries Resource Conservation Council

This is a presentation from the Yarmouth Herring Management Committee who represents the gillnet fleet that fish Trinity Ledge and Spectacle Buoy area's at present time. In the past the fleet also fished areas around Seal Island and St. Mary's Bay.

The gillnet fleet has several main concerns with the ways the herring quota's is allocated and developed.

1. The gillnet fleet believes that 20% of the overall herring quota which is allocated to the fleet should be revisited and increased to between 25% - 30%. As our fleet grows slightly in numbers, the seiner fleet continues to shrink over the years in number of boats participating.
2. The concept of surveying a body of fish and only being able to catch 10% of that fish should not be imposed on the gillnet fleet.

The seiner fleet has much more catching power than the gillnet fleet. The gillnetters percentage of fish surveyed, to fish caught should be 35% - 40%.

Some of the main reasons for this is the escape ability of small fish because of the mesh size used in the fishery, and the small size of the fleet itself.

The gillnet fleet is not convinced of the science that states that the Trinity Ledge and Spectacle Buoy herring are separate stocks from German Bank stocks ect.

The committee is at present time in the process of hiring, on a part time basis a biologist to help us understand the available science and to give a proper rebuttal about the science.

The gillnet fleet are also lobster fishermen in the fall and winter months. The fleet is trying to become more of a multi species fleet and not dependent on one stock. At a time when herring stocks are on the increase (shown in the seiner surveys) there could be no better time to revisit how the sharing formulas and science in the herring fishery is implemented.

The gillnet group would like to work together with management, science, seiner groups and processors in developing and understanding of the herring stock and a new sharing arrangement. The days of confrontation and name calling must end. Cooperation of ALL stakeholders must be a requirement as this fishery moves forward.

Thank you from,

The Yarmouth Herring Management Committee

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