

New England Fishery Management Council:

My name is Brian Pearce, I fish out of Portland, Maine and have been a full time Commercial Fisherman of New England Multispecies Groundfish for over 20 years. I'm writing today to ask that you take immediate action to support the goal of fleet diversity and put an end to consolidation of quota in the New England Groundfishery.

To support my request for immediate action against consolidation and in support of fleet diversity I will make four statements:

1. Review the flow of quota for fishing year 2010 (quickly). If it is going from small to large vessels, the survival of the small boat fleet relies on immediate action to address the problem. Since the small boats generally fish summer months an immediate remedy to the current system is detrimental to the fate of this group of fishing operations.
2. Understand that if the supply is limited with the demand high larger well-funded corporations will prevail.
3. The current catch share system fails to keep quota available in the small boat category because any permits baseline size can be transferred to another. I'm not suggesting that length and HP could work under catch shares but it did keep consolidation from happening under the days at sea management.
4. Federally funded state permit banks have been set up to help address the issue but they have very little allocation. Rather than a federal bailout of the small boat fishery, corrective measures should be made to keep leasing affordable/available.

Please use your appointed authority to fix the negative economic impact that has been wrongly created in the catch share/sector management to the small boat fleet. I ask that you do not delay your attention to this matter.

Thank you,

Brian Pearce
F/V Gretchen Marie