

The NOAA FISHERIES NAVIGATOR

Northeast Cooperative Research Summit to be held in New Jersey on February 5, 2024

The Northeast Fisheries Science Center's Cooperative Research Branch is pleased to announce that the 2024 Northeast Cooperative Research Summit will be held on February 5, 2024 in New Jersey. The summit will bring together fishermen, scientists, managers, and industry representatives to:

- Share the approaches and results of new cooperative research projects or those that have recently been concluded.
- Identify opportunities for expanding the contributions of the fishing industry to research.
- Facilitate regional coordination of cooperative research.
- Develop new partnerships between the fishing and science communities.
- Identify priorities for near-term science and management challenges that can be addressed by cooperative research.

This year we will be focusing breakout discussions around the topics that stakeholders identified as the highest priority for the Mid-Atlantic region during the 2023 Northeast Cooperative Research Summit. These topics include impacts of offshore wind energy development on fishing operations and marine ecosystems, the application of cooperative research data to stock assessments, and impacts of climate change on fisheries and ecosystems. Breakout sessions will feature panels of industry members and scientists with expertise on each of these topics. The summit will also include a research prioritization



NOAA Fisheries photo

exercise and ample time for networking and conversation.

If you participate in a research collaboration that involves both scientists and fishermen, please consider attending and submitting an abstract for a presentation. If you are not currently involved in cooperative research but are interested in learning more about opportunities it presents, we encourage you to attend the summit.

To encourage industry participation, a travel and participation stipend of \$750 will be provided to the first 20 fishermen who register for the summit.

For more information about the summit, our venue, and to register, please visit our website at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/outreach-and-education/cooperative-research-fosters-regional-partnerships>. Please note that registration is required and the registration deadline is December 15, 2023. If you need assistance with registration, please contact Thomas Swaider at thomas.swaider@noaa.gov.

We hope to see you there!

Questions? Contact Giovanni Gianesin at giovanni.gianesin@noaa.gov.

Fall Cooperative Gulf of Maine Bottom Longline Survey Completed

The Northeast Fisheries Science Center's fall 2023 Cooperative Gulf of Maine Bottom Longline Survey was completed in early November and marked our 10 year anniversary. Since 2014, we've been working with our region's commercial fishing community to conduct this survey in the western and central Gulf of Maine. The goal is to collect fisheries data in rocky bottom habitats to complement data collected during our annual bottom trawl survey.

Because rocky habitats are a challenge to sample with trawl survey gear, we use bottom longline gear. This type of gear is more likely to capture species that prefer rough-bottom habitat in the Gulf of Maine.

The bottom longline survey provides data on commercially and recreationally important fish species and critical information about data-poor species including:

- Cusk
- Atlantic wolffish
- Thorny skate
- Atlantic halibut

We sample 38 rough-bottom stations and seven smooth-bottom stations each spring and fall. On average, each survey takes between 18 and 24 days to complete. During the survey, we collect data, samples, and information on:

- Basic station data
- Water depth, temperature, and currents
- Habitat (video assessment)
- Fish lengths and weights
- Age, maturity, condition, and genetics

These data are used to develop abundance indices for stock assessments. Data is also used to inform stock assessments through contributions to age, maturity, and condition records, and inform science recommendations to fishery managers.

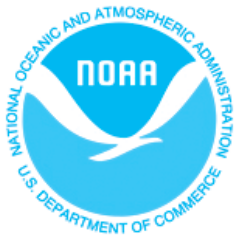
To learn more about this survey, please visit: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/new-england-mid-atlantic/science-data/gulf-maine-bottom-longline-survey>.



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THIS SUPPLEMENT PROVIDED BY NOAA FISHERIES SERVICE'S GREATER ATLANTIC REGIONAL OFFICE

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Right Whale Seasonal Management Areas in Effect

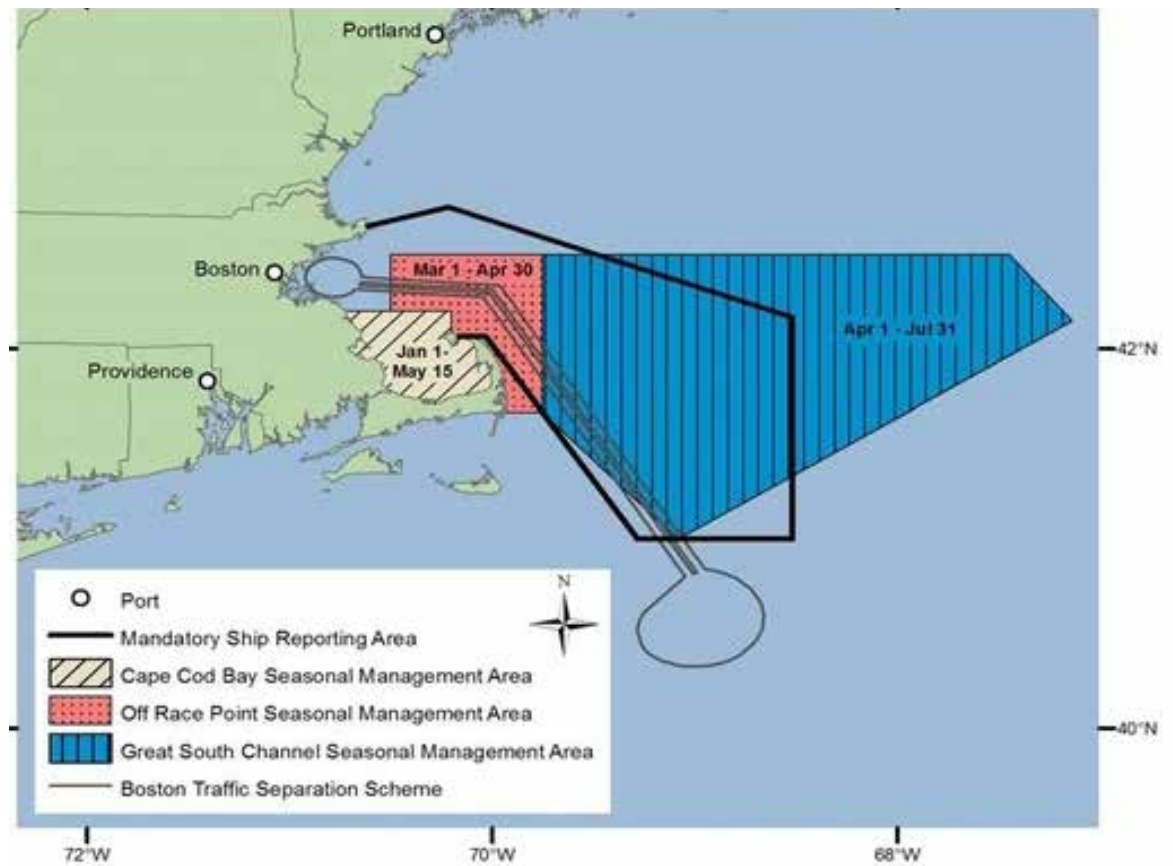
Starting November 1, 2023, all vessels 65 feet (19.8 meters) or longer must travel at 10 knots or less in certain locations (called [Seasonal Management Areas](#) or SMAs) along the U.S. east coast at certain times of the year to reduce the threat of vessel collisions with endangered North Atlantic right whales. Because vessels of all sizes can strike a whale, NOAA Fisheries also encourages vessels less than 65 feet in length to help protect right whales by slowing to 10 knots or less within active SMAs.



SMAs in the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast are listed below. Please see the <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/endangered-species-conservation/reducing-vessel-strikes-north-atlantic-right-whales> by searching “Reducing Vessel Strikes to North Atlantic Right Whales NOAA” for maps and coordinates.

Mid-Atlantic SMAs, Migratory Route and Calving Grounds, November 1–April 30

- Block Island Sound
- Within 20-nm radius of:
 - Ports of New York/New Jersey
 - Entrance to the Delaware Bay
 - Ports of Philadelphia and Wilmington



- Entrance to the Chesapeake Bay
 - Ports of Hampton Roads and Baltimore
 - Ports of Morehead City and Beaufort, North Carolina
- Wilmington, North Carolina, to Brunswick, Georgia

Northeast Atlantic SMAs

- Cape Cod Bay: January 1 - May 15
- Off Race Point: March 1 - April 30
- Great South Channel: April 1 - July 31

Dynamic Management Areas and Right Whale Slow Zones

NOAA Fisheries uses right whale detections to establish voluntary Dynamic Management Areas (DMAs) (visual triggers) or Right Whale Slow Zones (acoustic triggers). Mariners are encouraged to avoid these areas or slow to 10 knots or less to prevent collisions with right whales for a duration of 15 days. NOAA Fisheries works with the U.S. Coast Guard and NOAA Weather Radio to help notify vessels of these areas.

Stay Updated

Boaters from Maine to Virginia, or interested parties, can sign up for [email or text notifications](#) about the latest Right Whale Slow Zones. Announcements are also made on Facebook (@NOAAFisheriesNEMA) and Twitter (@NOAAFish_GARFO). Right Whale Slow Zones are displayed on our [online right whale sightings map](#) and on the free [Whale Alert app](#), which will automatically notify you when you enter one of these areas.



NOAA Fisheries announced proposed changes to the North Atlantic right whale vessel speed rule to further reduce the likelihood of mortalities and serious injuries to endangered right whales from vessel collisions in July 2022. NOAA Fisheries accepted public comment on the proposed rule until October 31, 2022 and is working towards a final determination. Sign up for our [email or text notifications](#) to keep up-to-date on these efforts.

ATTENTION ALL BOATERS:
SLOW DOWN TO 10 KNOTS
OR LESS FOR RIGHT WHALES

Annual seasonal slow down zones (SMAs). REQUIRED for boats 65 feet and bigger. Recommended for smaller boats.

Areas where right whales have been sighted (Dynamic Management Area) or heard. Recommended slow down zones for ALL vessels.

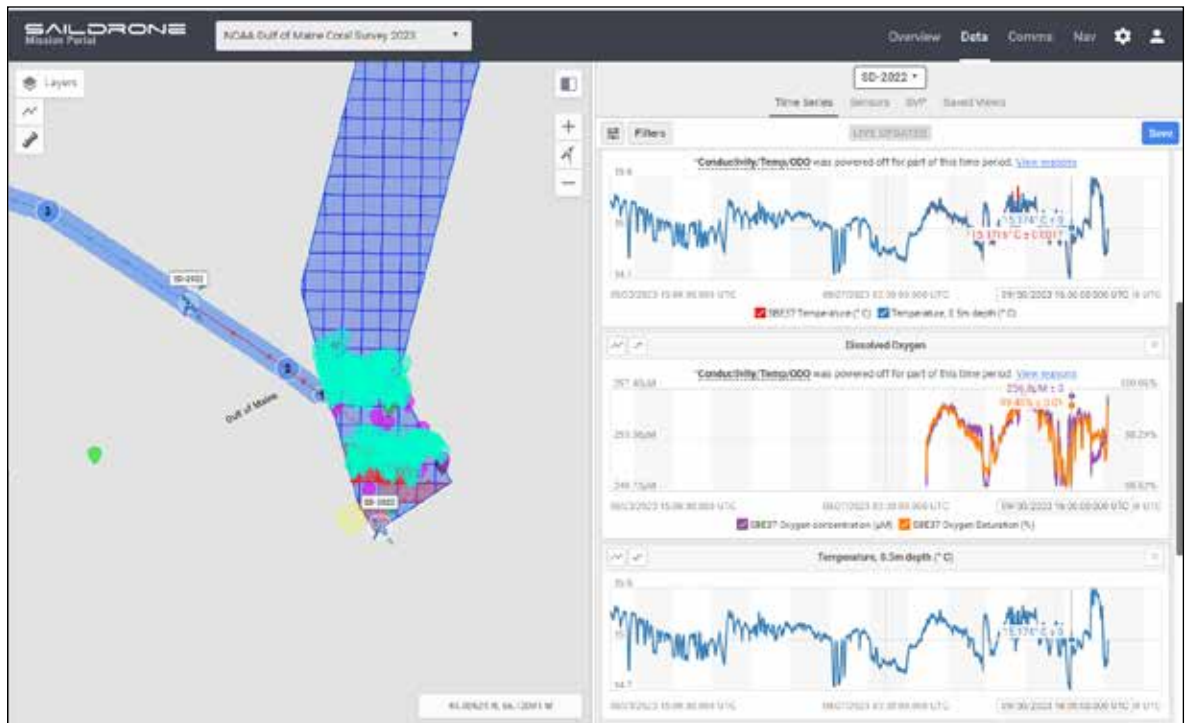
NOAA FISHERIES

Update on Saildrone Surveys in the Gulf of Maine

NOAA collaborates with Saildrone through a public-private partnership to support mission areas across the agency. In 2023-2024, the NOAA Office of Marine and Aviation Operations, Northeast Fisheries Science Center, National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science, and Office of Habitat Conservation's Deep-sea Coral Program are furthering this partnership to gather high-resolution seafloor mapping data that will lead to habitat characterization and inform responsible offshore wind development and fisheries management in the Gulf of Maine. The Gulf of Maine is an ecologically important marine region with high potential as an offshore wind energy site. "Working with our private sector partners at Saildrone will allow NOAA and the federal government to quickly gather data to make critical decisions to protect sensitive habitats in the fast-moving lease sale environment in the Gulf of Maine," said NOAA Corps Capt. Bill Mowitt, director of the NOAA Uncrewed Systems Operations Center.

Two uncrewed, wind-propelled Saildrone Voyagers began their mission in the Gulf of Maine on August 28 to collect high resolution bathymetry images along with a suite of oceanographic sensors, including temperature, salinity, dissolved oxygen, and more to inform NOAA and partners of the unique and mostly unexplored benthic habitats in this region of the Gulf of Maine. This area in particular has the potential for undiscovered deep-sea coral and sponge gardens. Despite two tropical storms and one hurricane making direct contact in the Gulf of Maine, the Saildrones completed a total of 60 days on mission between August 28 and October 31, when they were pulled for the winter season due to weather. A total of 875 square kilometers were surveyed along with thousands of oceanographic samples. The team will re-deploy the two Saildrones in spring 2024 to complete the planned Gulf of Maine seafloor surveys.

For those who are interested in following this effort more closely, Saildrone will have information available at: <https://www.saildrone.com/news/gulf-of-maine-mapping-mission?utm_medium=email&utm_source=govdelivery> Questions? Please contact the Saildrone Program Manager Kitch Kennedy: <kitch.kennedy@saildrone.com>



Real-time data collected from Saildrones deployed in the GoM during the last week of September. The map indicates the location of each Saildrone sampling point and track lines; the right indicates data outputs for Saildrone 2022 for temperature (°C; top), dissolved oxygen (µM; middle), and subsurface temperature (°C; bottom). Credit: Saildrone



Example of saildrone technology, including multibeam bathymetry to map the ocean bottom, 24/7 autonomous operations monitoring with real-time data transmission via satellite communications, and wind powered for propulsion. Credit: Saildrone.

Seafood Holiday Favorites

Shake up your holiday meal with delicious, healthy, and sustainable seafood. Fish and shellfish are a great source of lean protein. They're also rich in nutrients and omega-3 fatty acids that play a key role in heart, immune system, and brain health.

Whether you try these recipes or stick to your own seafood holiday favorites, remember that seafood harvested in the United States is a sustainable choice. Sustainable seafood is wild-caught or farmed seafood that is harvested or produced in ways that protect the long-term health of species populations and ecosystems. The United States is a global leader in sustainable seafood. U.S. fishermen and seafood farmers operate under some of the most robust and transparent environmental standards in the world. If the seafood you purchase is caught or farmed in the United States, you can feel confident you're making a sustainable seafood choice.

Head to our website to check out sustainable seafood recipes for appetizers, main dishes, and side dishes!





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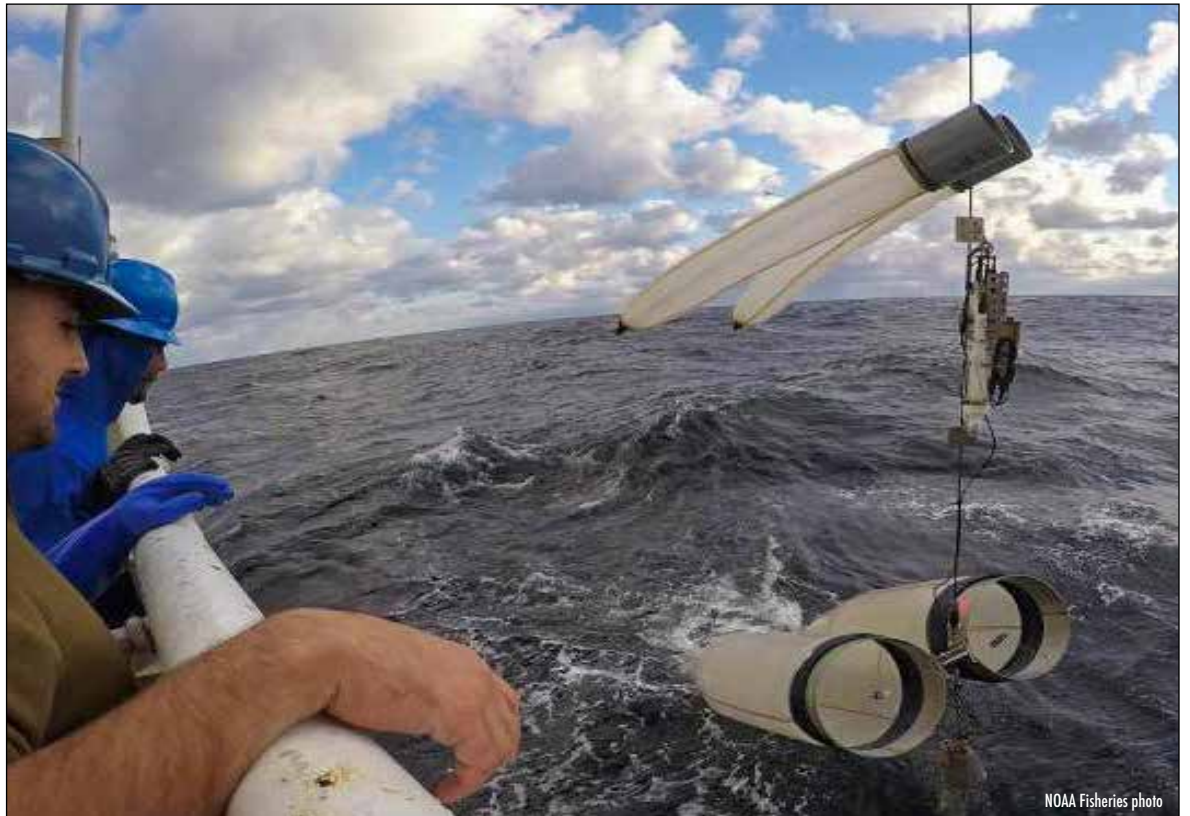
NOAA and Community Offshore Wind Partner on Environmental Monitoring Program

The Northeast Fisheries Science Center and Community Offshore Wind—a joint venture between RWE and National Grid Ventures—have signed a 5-year cooperative research and development agreement to exchange data and expertise. The agreement focuses on informing the development of an environmental monitoring program for the COSW project off New York and New Jersey.

“With help from a number of collaborators and the fishing industry, our agency maintains some of the world’s most comprehensive data sets on large marine ecosystems,” said Jon Hare, director of the science center. “Our goal is to bring offshore wind energy monitoring activities into this partnership. This agreement is our first chance to make these partnerships a reality and show by example that effective scientific monitoring benefits everyone.”

This partnership will support NOAA’s ongoing environmental monitoring across the region with needed data while new offshore wind projects are constructed. It will also help to inform best practices for establishing environmental observation systems on offshore wind infrastructure.

- Under the agreement, NOAA and COSW will:
- Establish a feasible and scientifically sound monitoring program for COSW’s project that can support effective and ecologically meaningful regional monitoring programs
 - Ensure collected monitoring data are shared and integrated into fishery, habitat, and protected resources assessments in the region



Plankton sampling using fine-mesh nets is a kind of environmental monitoring that could be used in offshore wind energy areas. This image was taken on a 2015 federal ecosystem monitoring survey in the Northeast.

To learn more about this agreement, please visit: <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/feature-story/noaa-and-community-offshore-wind-partner-environmental-monitoring-program>.

Check out our podcast, Dive In With NOAA Fisheries!

NOAA Fisheries conducts world-class science to support sustainable marine life and habitats. We manage millions of square miles of ocean (almost 100,000 miles of coastline), support a \$244 billion fishing industry, and protect and rebuild endangered marine species and habitats. It’s a huge job. Our podcast, “Dive In with NOAA Fisheries,” is about the work we do and the people behind it.

This summer, NOAA Fisheries and our fishery management partners reached a major milestone when we rebuilt our 50th fish stock. The Snohomish coho salmon stock was declared overfished in 2018 and has now rebuilt to its sustainable level. A combination of responsive fishery management and habitat restoration helped to rebuild this iconic fish population.

In a recent episode, “What Fish Stock Rebuilding Means to Communities,” we take a closer look at stock rebuilding—how it is done and what it means. We explore what is required of fishing communities and the people who make the decision that rebuilding is necessary. It’s a decision that can carry real consequences, and also bring about positive change.

Brad Pettinger is the chair of the Pacific Fishery Management Council and a

vessel owner in the West Coast commercial fishing industry for more than 50 years. Togue Brawn is a fishery manager on the New England Fishery Management Council and the owner of Downeast Dayboat. They discuss the balancing act that is U.S. fisheries management and the sustainability of our ocean resources. These fishery managers also tell us more about some specific success stories. On the West Coast, rockfish conservation areas were set up and fishermen cut back in order to allow fish populations to rebound. And in the Northeast, Atlantic sea scallops were the first stock to be rebuilt in 2001. As we’ll hear, they are now fished sustainably and the fishery is one of the most successful and productive in the country.

While we celebrate the rebuilding of the 50th stock, we also know that more work lies ahead in monitoring and sustaining our fish stocks in the face of climate change.

