



National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)  
Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office



## Special Instructions for Gillnet Vessel Owners - 2023

### General gillnet vessel designation and tagging requirements:

A vessel owner electing to fish with gillnet gear in the Northeast (NE) multispecies or monkfish fisheries must complete a gillnet tag form. All vessels issued a limited access NE multispecies permit in Categories A, E, or F that fish with gillnet gear must obtain an annual designation as either a Day or Trip gillnet vessel. Declarations are to be made on a form provided by the Greater Atlantic Regional Office (GARFO) and signed by the vessel owner or an authorized representative of the vessel. This form is enclosed. It can also be obtained by calling the Permit Office at (978) 282-8438, or through the Greater Atlantic Regional Office website: [https:// www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/aps/forms.html](https://www.greateratlantic.fisheries.noaa.gov/aps/forms.html)

All NE multispecies Category A, E, and F Day gillnet vessels fishing for NE multispecies and/or vessels fishing under a monkfish DAS using gillnet gear must tag their gillnets with BLUE gillnet tags. Vessels must indicate the number of gillnet tags that are being requested on the gillnet tag form provided by GARFO and provide a check for the cost of the tags, if appropriate. Once a declaration form has been received, GARFO will send a gillnet tag certificate and category designation letter to the vessel owner that serves as written confirmation from the Regional Administrator that the vessel is a Day or Trip gillnet vessel. This confirmation must be retained on board the vessel when fishing under a NE multispecies Category A, E, or F permit with gillnet gear.

Vessels with a NE multispecies Category A, E, or F permit are limited to 150 gillnet tags. Vessels with a Monkfish Category C, D, F, G, or H permit with a limited access NE multispecies permit are also limited to 150 tags. Vessels with Monkfish Category A or B permits only are limited to 160 gillnet tags. A vessel may have tags on board the vessel that are in excess of the number of tags corresponding to the allowable number of nets for a given Regulated Mesh Area (RMA), provided such tags are available for immediate inspection. Vessels participating in a NE multispecies sector may have different gillnet requirements. If participating in a NE multispecies sector, please reference your Letter of Authorization, or contact your sector manager for complete details of your sector's exemptions.

A gillnet vessel may stow additional nets on board that are in excess of the allowable nets for a given RMA. Day gillnet vessels may stow up to 150 nets, including the number of deployed nets. Trip gillnet vessels are not restricted to the number of nets that can be stowed on board the vessel. All nets in excess of the allowable number of nets for a given RMA must be stowed according to the regulations.

**General gillnet gear requirements:** For purposes of gillnet gear requirements, gillnets are defined as follows:

- **Roundfish gillnet:** A gillnet constructed with floats on the float line and no tie-down twine between the float line and the lead line.
- **Flatfish gillnet:** A gillnet constructed with no floats on the float line, or with floats on the float line and that has tie-down twine between the float line and the lead line not more than 48 inches in length and spaced not more than 15 feet apart.

## Special Instructions for Gillnet Vessel Owners (2023 – continued)

### Vessels fishing under the Large Mesh DAS program using gillnets:

Vessels that hold a valid limited access NE Multispecies Large Mesh Individual DAS category (Category F) permit must fish with nets having a mesh size of at least 8.5 inches when fishing in the Gulf of Maine, Georges Bank, or Southern New England Regulated Mesh Areas, and at least 7.5 inches for diamond mesh or 8 inches for square mesh when fishing in the Mid-Atlantic Regulated Mesh Area when fishing under the NE multispecies DAS program.

### Gillnet Tag Series for Fishing Years 2004 – 2023

The current gillnet tag series (BLUE in color) will remain valid through the 2023 fishing year (May 1, 2023 – April 30, 2024), unless otherwise notified.

### Current Gillnet Regulations

A summary of the current gillnet gear requirements is contained in the table below. Vessels participating in a NE multispecies sector may be exempt from certain gillnet regulations that are in the table below. If participating in a NE multispecies sector, please reference your Letter of Authorization or contact your sector manager for complete details of your sector's exemptions.

#### Gear Restrictions for the NE Multispecies FMP by Regulated Mesh Areas.

|                                        | Gulf of Maine                                                                    | Georges Bank                                                               | Southern New England                                                       | Mid-Atlantic                                                                     |
|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| NE Multispecies Day Gillnet Category*  | <u>Roundfish nets</u><br>6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh;<br>50-net allowance;<br>2 tags/net | <u>All nets</u><br>6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh;<br>50-net allowance;<br>2 tags/net | <u>All nets</u><br>6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh;<br>75-net allowance;<br>2 tags/net | <u>Roundfish nets</u><br>6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh;<br>75-net allowance;<br>2 tags/net |
|                                        | <u>Flatfish nets</u><br>6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh;<br>100-net allowance;<br>1 tag/net  |                                                                            |                                                                            | <u>Flatfish nets</u><br>6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh;<br>75-net allowance;<br>2 tags/net  |
| NE Multispecies Trip Gillnet Category* | <u>All nets</u><br>6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh                                           | <u>All nets</u><br>6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh                                     | <u>All nets</u><br>6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh                                     | <u>All gillnet gear</u><br>6.5" (16.5 cm) mesh                                   |
| Monkfish Vessels**                     | 10" (25.4 cm) mesh/150-net allowance                                             |                                                                            |                                                                            |                                                                                  |
|                                        | 1 tag/net                                                                        |                                                                            |                                                                            |                                                                                  |

\* When fishing under NE multispecies regulations. Large Mesh Individual DAS category holders have a different mesh size requirement than A DAS vessels.

\*\* Monkfish Category C, D, F, and H vessels, when fishing under a monkfish DAS

**Gillnet Tag form must be completed if your vessel will be fishing with gillnets with a Northeast (NE) Multispecies Category A, E or F permit; or fishing under a Monkfish DAS during the 2023 fishing year (May 1, 2023 - April 30, 2024).**

- If you have a limited access NE multispecies permit or a limited access NE multispecies permit **and** a limited access monkfish permit, you must fill out Section 1 , Section 2 (if requesting add'l tags), and Section 3 .
- If you have a limited access monkfish permit only (and **no** limited access multispecies permit), you must fill out Section 2 if you're requesting additional tags (not to exceed 160 tags) and Section 3.

**Section 1** - Limited access NE multispecies Category A, E or F permit holders who intend to use gillnet gear must declare into **one of the following** gillnet category designations by selecting one of the following two categories with a check mark: (please read the “Special Instructions to Gillnet Vessel Owners” if you do not know which category you should choose)

Trip Gillnet Category \_\_\_\_s\_\_\_\_

**or**

Day Gillnet Category \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 2**

**All gillnet vessel owners must utilize BLUE gillnet tags. If you don't currently possess BLUE gillnet tags, you must purchase them. Please indicate how many tags that you wish to purchase by filling out the following information.**

**Number of tags requested:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Please check here if you do not need tags:** \_\_\_\_\_

(Multispecies tags are limited to 150, Monkfish tags are limited to 160 for Category A and B vessels, 150 for Monkfish Category C, D, F, G, or H vessels with a limited access NE multispecies permit. **Blue gillnet tags cost \$2.65 each. (NOTE: An additional shipping and handling charge of \$5.00 must be included for orders of 20 or less tags.)** (NOTE: The total cost for 150 tags is \$397.50 and \$424.00 for 160 tags)

Total amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

**NOTE:** If you do not need tags you must still fill in your name, address, phone # and complete **section 3** to receive your annual certificate. This certificate must be carried on board your vessel.

**Please make checks payable to: National Band and Tag Company and complete Section 3 below.**

**Tags will be shipped to you directly from the tag manufacturer.**

**Section 3**

Vessel Name \_\_\_\_\_

Federal Permit # \_\_\_\_\_

Documentation # \_\_\_\_\_  
or State Registration # \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please call the National Marine Fisheries Permit Office at (978) 282-8438 if you have any questions about this form.

**Return this form and payment to:**  
**NMFS Permits Office, Gillnet Program**  
**55 Great Republic Drive**  
**Gloucester, MA 01930-2276**

The information from this form will be used in the management of the NE multispecies and monkfish fisheries. One of the regulatory steps taken by NOAA Fisheries to carry out the conservation and management objectives of these fishery management plans is limiting fishing vessel effort. The application to designate a gillnet category and order gillnet tags is meant to allow industry members to designate their appropriate gillnet category and order the appropriate number of gillnet tags in accordance with 50 CFR 648.4(c)(2)(iii) and 648.80(a)(3)(iv), 648.80(a)(4)(iv), 648.80(b)(2)(iv), and 648.80(b)(2)(v). Since this requirement has been adopted as part of the effort reduction programs under the NE Multispecies and Monkfish Fishery Management Plans (FMPs) it is viewed as consistent with the conservation goals of these FMPs.

**BURDEN STATEMENT:** Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 5 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or suggestions for reducing this burden to: Regional Administrator, National Marine Fisheries Service, Greater Atlantic Region, 55 Great Republic Drive, Gloucester, MA 01930-2276.

The information collected on this form is not confidential and can be made available to the general public. All other data submitted will be handled in accordance with NOAA Administrative Order 216-100, Protection of Confidential Fishery Statistics and Section 402(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person is required to respond to nor shall a person be subject to penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection of information displays a current valid OMB Control Number.

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