



## New England Fishery Management Council

50 WATER STREET | NEWBURYPORT, MASSACHUSETTS 01950 | PHONE 978 465 0492 | FAX 978 465 3116  
John Pappalardo, *Chairman* | Paul J. Howard, *Executive Director*

### MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** November 2, 2006  
**TO:** Council Members  
**FROM:** Lori Steele, NEFMC Staff, Herring PDT Chair  
**SUBJECT:** **Top Priorities for Herring Cooperative Research in 2008 and 2009**

As part of the 2007-2009 herring fishery specifications, the Council proposes to set-aside 3% from each of the management area TACs to support herring-related research during the 2008 and 2009 fishing years. The research set-aside (RSA) process outlined in Amendment 1 requires the Council to first identify research priorities on which to base the Request for Proposals and the selection of projects to fund through the RSAs. The Herring Plan Development Team, with input from the Herring Committee members, has developed the following list of research priorities for the Council to consider for the 2008 and 2009 herring RSAs. These priorities were included in a larger list of research needs in Amendment 1 but were selected by the PDT for their potential relative to industry-based cooperative research.

#### TOP PRIORITIES FOR COOPERATIVE RESEARCH

1. Efforts to define localized depletion on a spatial and temporal scale; continue to develop hydroacoustic surveys to provide an independent means of estimating stock sizes and/or defining localized depletion
2. Investigate bycatch/discards in the directed herring fishery
3. Continue commercial catch sampling program and portside bycatch survey
4. Synthesize predator/prey information and conduct investigations to address information gaps; investigate the role of herring in the Northwest Atlantic ecosystem and the importance of herring as a forage species for other commercial fish stocks; assess the importance of herring as forage relative to other forage species in the region
5. Develop and test gear modifications to minimize interactions with non-target species in the Atlantic herring fishery
6. Develop tagging and morphometric studies to explore uncertainties in stock structure, stock mixing rates, and the impacts of harvest mortality on different components of the stock