



64° Forecast | Radar



NEWS BUSINESS SPORTS OPINION ENTERTAINMENT LIFESTYLE MULTIMEDIA COMMUNITY NEWS REPORTS VISITOR GUIDE MARKETPLACE

# A fishy protest

November 10, 2009

The Cape Cod Commercial Hook Fishermen's Association has scant sympathy for the protests of their brethren to the north about the new sector management of New England fisheries. They've had four years of experience with the system and they know it works.

Text Size: [A](#) | [A](#) | [A](#)

[Print this Article](#) [Email this Article](#)

[ShareThis](#)

Hundreds of fishermen surged into Gloucester on Oct. 30 to demonstrate in front of the New England headquarters of the National Marine Fisheries Service. They chanted and attacked by name the regional and national directors of the fisheries service. One sign called the NMFS the Nazi Marine Fisheries Service.

Their wrath was directed at the switch to the sector management scheme for the next fishing year, starting May 1. Up to now, fishing has been limited under a days-at-sea system in hopes of restoring certain fish species, which have been declining.

Under the new system, New England fishermen are divided into 17 groups, each with the autonomy to manage an allotted catch of an individual species. The allocations are based on what the fishermen actually caught in the years 1996-2006, adjusted by the fisheries scientists to catches that, it is hoped, will restore the species to sustainability. The sector fishermen are free to fish and to trade allocations as they wish as long as the catch is within the limit.

The fishermen at the Gloucester protest see a system that will concentrate fishing permits in the hands of big-boat owners and put them out of business — and with them a way of life in dozens of coastal communities. That's not how the small-boat fishermen centered in Chatham see it; they believe it has helped keep them in business.

The new system made its way through the New England Fisheries Management Council through many months and meetings; there have been ample opportunities to express doubts and concerns. But as deadlines loom, attention is focused on detail.

One of the details is the very low allowable catch of cod. While haddock are plentiful, it's reported, cod stocks are a worry. Canada has banned cod fishing at various times off Labrador and Newfoundland, with great destitution in those regions. Cod from time to time appear on the endangered lists.

Cape Cod fishermen who have historically caught cod have larger quotas than fishermen who have chased other fish, but the hard fact is that the New England Fisheries Management Council has reduced the cod catch 75 percent in the past three years and will reduce it again. No doubt those numbers shocked the fishermen who are blaming them on the new management system. So they're seeking congressional help to change the system.

That would be a mistake. Sector management has proven beneficial, here and elsewhere. As Pat Kurkul, the Northeast regional administrator for the National Marine Fisheries Service, has said, the agency's fishery science is among the world's best. That's not what's causing the industry's pain; the overfishing of the past is.

[HOME](#)

## Reader Reaction

We welcome your feedback on this story, or any follow-up story ideas you might have. Please send a letter to the editor to [letters@capecodonline.com](mailto:letters@capecodonline.com), or submit story ideas online [here](#). When submitting a letter to the editor, please review our [submissions policy](#).



### Ads by Google

#### [Clambakes Etc.](#)

Cape Cod's Best Catered Clambakes! Provincetown to New Hampshire [www.Clambakesetc.net](http://www.Clambakesetc.net)

#### [Fluke Fluke n more Fluke](#)

Vinyard sound, Nomans ,B Bay 2 Boats Jumbo Fluke and Sea Bass, BOOK NOW [www.kellyannfishing.com](http://www.kellyannfishing.com)

### Today's most viewed articles

- Bourne fire union: Town ignored drug-use report - 11/10/2009
- Cape company's recycled firewood heats up - 11/10/2009
- Woman seriously injured in Hyannis crash - 11/10/2009
- Rare Busa paintings stolen from son's house - 11/10/2009

NEWS CALENDAR HOMES AUTOS JOBS CLASSIFIEDS

[FIND IT!](#)

HOMES JOBS RENTALS CARS



**\$19,650**  
[2009 Buick LaCrosse](#)  
Beard Chevrolet Subaru



**\$21,735**  
[2010 Subaru Forester](#)  
Beard Chevrolet Subaru



**\$23,995**  
[2006 BMW 3-Series](#)  
Cape Cod Car.com



**\$19,995**  
[2007 Chrysler Town & Country](#)  
Beard Chevrolet Subaru

[View All Featured Autos](#)

Become a member of the Cape Cod Times and enjoy the convenience of home or office delivery



[subscribe to the Cape Cod Times](#)

[Falmouth Cinema Pub](#)

Falmouth Cinema Pub is back! An  
Entertainment Cinemas Theater  
[www.falmouthcinemas.com](http://www.falmouthcinemas.com)

- [Hyannis man charged with drug trafficking](#) - 11/10/2009
- [Barnstable students getting H1N1 shots](#) - 11/10/2009



Ads by Google

[TERMS OF USE](#) | [COPYRIGHT](#) | [PRIVACY POLICY](#) | [SITE MAP](#) | [CONTACT US](#) | [NIE](#) | [ADVERTISE](#) | [MOBILE](#) | [BUY PHOTOS](#) | 

Copyright © 2009 Cape Cod Media Group, a division of Dow Jones Local Media Group. All Rights Reserved.