



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
GREATER ATLANTIC REGIONAL FISHERIES OFFICE  
55 Great Republic Drive  
Gloucester, MA 01930-2276

**NOV 20 2019**

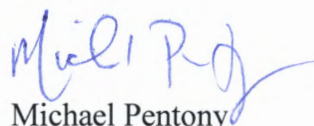
John F. Quinn, PhD  
New England Fishery Management Council  
50 Water Street  
Newburyport, MA 01950

Dear John:

I am pleased to inform you that NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service, on behalf of the Secretary of Commerce, approved the New England Fishery Management Council's Omnibus Deep-Sea Coral Amendment as recommended by the Council. This is an important action that establishes protection for fragile deep-sea corals while balancing the needs of the valuable fisheries that we manage. We will publish a proposed rule soon followed by a final rule to implement this amendment.

I would like to commend the Council for its work on this amendment and encourage it to consider further protections for areas of known coral presence after considering the long-term sustainable uses of fishery resources in such areas. Members of the New England Council, its staff, and everyone who contributed to the development and completion of the Omnibus Deep-Sea Coral Amendment should be proud of the work they did on this collaborative action.

Sincerely,

  
Michael Pentony  
Regional Administrator

cc: Thomas A. Nies

