



Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission

NEWS RELEASE

Sustainable and Cooperative Management of Atlantic Coastal Fisheries

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Applicants Sought to Conduct Phase II of the Pilot Regional Industry-Based Bottom Trawl Survey *Proposals Due December 4, 2026*

Arlington, VA – The Northeast Trawl Advisory Panel (NTAP), NOAA Fisheries' Northeast Fisheries Science Center (NEFSC), and the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) seek applicants to execute Phase II of the pilot Regional Industry-Based Bottom Trawl Survey (RIBTS). ASMFC will issue a funding contract to support conduct of the survey. The anticipated timeframe to conduct the Phase II Survey is fall 2027.

Standardized surveys of marine fisheries species are crucial for conducting stock assessments that inform fishery management and for tracking ecosystem changes over time. Motivated by the critical need to find viable contingency options for the NEFSC bottom trawl survey (BTS), NEFSC is collaborating with NTAP to develop RIBTS. The long-term goal of the RIBTS program is to reduce uncertainty and increase accuracy in resource assessments with an annual collaborative fishing industry-based regional trawl survey. RIBTS is being developed with a phased approach.

Phase I, conducted by the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) and the F/V Darana R, successfully evaluated day/night operational feasibility inside and outside of an offshore wind energy development area, established minimum vessel and scientific staff requirements, evaluated trawl performance across depth range, defined sampling limitations within offshore wind development infrastructure, and documented time-on-station requirements for catch, biological, and oceanographic sampling.

The goal of Phase II is to inform development of a full-scale survey, with focus on operational feasibility on multiple vessels and across a wider geographic area, including offshore wind areas, and the creation of reproducible methods and tools for a long-term RIBTS.

Proposals must be submitted as an electronic proposal by email no later than **11:59 PM on December 4, 2026**, to [Jainita Patel](#). Please download the RFP for more details, qualifying requirements, and submission instructions. The RFP is available at <https://asmfc.org/resources/pilot-regional-industry-based-bottom-trawl-survey-phaseii-rfp/>.

For more information, please contact [Anna Mercer](#).

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The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission was formed by the 15 Atlantic coastal states in 1942 for the promotion and protection of coastal fishery resources. The Commission serves as a deliberative body of the Atlantic coastal states, coordinating the conservation and management of nearshore fishery resources, including marine, shell and diadromous species.