

Winter  
2007

# NAMA Newsletter

NORTHWEST ATLANTIC MARINE ALLIANCE



Magnuson's new rules seek to preserve traditional groundfish ports like Camp Ellis pictured above. The past 15 years have seen a migration of permits out of New England's small ports and toward the region's economic centers in Portland and Massachusetts.

## Magnuson Reauthorized!

NAMA Plays Key Role in Shaping the Update of the Nation's Guiding Fisheries Legislation; Maine's Allen Plays Key Role in Compromise

A decade of working behind the scenes with New England's Congressional delegation to shape the reauthorization of the Magnuson-Stevens Act in a way that protects the region's small-scale fishermen from consolidation, finally paid off in 2006, with approval of a compromise brokered by Maine's Rep. Tom Allen. The bill was signed into law on January 16, 2007 on the White House lawn.

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## What will 2007 be like?

On behalf of the NAMA Board of Trustees, and the staff at NAMA, I would like to wish everyone a prosperous, healthy, and happy New Year.

Inside our winter newsletter, you will read a sample of the various activities NAMA has initiated or taken part in over the last several months. It's always nice to catch everyone up on our activities, but the big question for 2007 is:

What will you do to help NAMA achieve success?

In November, at the Board and staff retreat, we collectively agreed to the following goals:

- To advance credible, accountable and inclusive community-based marine resource management in the northwest Atlantic Ocean;
- To identify and foster lasting organizational relationships with those that support NAMA's purpose and principles;
- To develop programs, products and or opportunities for financial incentives to be reaped by a dedicated and supportive membership;
- To strengthen NAMA's effectiveness, credibility and political influence;
- To develop a long range sustainable funding plan that ensures the financial soundness and security of the organization

These are all noble goals but they take time, commitment, energy, and most of all people. NAMA has a subscriber program that works much like a membership, but with one main difference: we ask that you read and agree to NAMA's purpose and principles.

Once you become a subscriber, you will have access to any and all the information regarding a variety of issues that NAMA is involved with. The level of your participation is up to you. Maybe you know others who share similar values? Pass NAMA's contact information along to help us grow, prosper, and meet our goals.

In 2006, the Midcoast Fishermen's Association, based in Port Clyde, Maine joined NAMA as a community alliance. We welcome them and have enjoyed and benefited from their participation, and they have become an integral part of our efforts to promote the ecological and social benefits of area management.

Will you help develop and launch the next community alliance?

We sure hope so. Stay tuned for more information regarding our leadership role in the Area Management Coalition and our participation in the development of a new groundfish amendment. Check out [www.namanet.org](http://www.namanet.org) and click on NAMA in the news for the latest updates on press clips, plans and policies being developed and supported by NAMA.

Most appreciatively,



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## Message from the Chairman of the Board

The last year has been one of challenge and opportunity for NAMA, its collaborators, community alliances, and for the fishing industry in general.

Nevertheless, it's been a time of progress, and I remain optimistic that the values espoused in NAMA's mission are finding a home in fisheries management, particularly in the widespread cooperation that is increasingly becoming the rule among the fishery's stakeholders.

I believe three recent developments support this assertion.

First, in December 2005, NAMA reported back to its stakeholders and funders with the summary of the Fleet Vision Project.

This effort engaged 250 individuals over several states, and found – remarkably – that many people in the region between Maine and New Jersey shared common ground about their hopes for the future of the industry. That overall vision, which includes a diverse fleet, economic viability, participatory and accountable governance, and environmental resilience, has been reflected in discussions at the personal, local, regional and council levels. Thus, one of the goals of the project has been met: by bringing the voices of those involved in groundfish to a wider audience.

Secondly, NAMA assisted in the development and growth of the Midcoast Fishermen's Association. This group, a Community Alliance of NAMA, is filled with knowledgeable, articulate and energized people, and they have already had significant impact on the ongoing discussions of area management and Amendment 16. We will continue to use our connections and influence to ensure that the MFA and other community alliances are heard and understood.

Finally, the current discussion of area management within Amendment 16 is one in which NAMA has played a coordinating role with its partners. This is a critical conversation, and one that has the potential to affect significant and positive changes in groundfish management. For several years, discussions about more local governance have been percolating on the sidelines; now they are front and center.

Capacity building and support of community groups is difficult work for all involved; it takes a long time and it's often hard to pin down the exact needs and actions to be taken. However, the seeds that were planted by NAMA's founders over 10 years ago seem to be taking root, and the NAMA "way of doing business" appears to be making headway. That's a decent report card in my book.

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*Continued from front page*

"Thanks so much to NAMA for all your support in helping Tom be in a place on this issue where he could step out and be controversial. Your organization played an invaluable role and we're proud to have been able to carry it through. Tom was so happy when it passed. It was like 2 am, literally in the last hours of the 109th Congress, and I was up in the gallery watching the House floor. When MSA passed, (Tom) stood up and turned around with this big smile on his face, waved at me and gave a thumbs up. It was awesome," said Rep. Allen's oceans staffer Emily Knight.

**Thanks so much to NAMA for all your support in helping Tom be in a place on this issue where he could step out and be controversial. Your organization played an invaluable role and we're proud to have been able to carry it through.**

-Emily Knight

"Inclusion of these amendments in the final bill assures that small operations, especially family-owned boats and fleets, will continue to have access to their fair share of the resource and won't be swept aside by the massive industrial fishing juggernauts," Allen said in a prepared statement. "It also ensures that decisions about fisheries management policy will take local concerns fully into account and provide for local voices to be heard in the management decision-making process."

Over the summer NAMA worked closely with Congressional staff drafting language and stomping the pavement on Capitol Hill in support of Allen's provision that emphasized the need for national standards to protect the interests of independent owner-operators in the fishery.

Central to the compromise was agreement on a "sunset provision" that provides a ten-year review of any quota programs that are adopted to ensure that they are meeting their advertised ecological and social goals.

The amendment also settled on a mandatory two-thirds referendum of the entire fishery before any quota program is adopted in the region.

"The review period and the referendum are critical components to protect the long-term interests of the region's fish and fishermen, which is why so many large corporate interests opposed them," said Craig Pendleton, NAMA's coordinating director. "NAMA's staff worked the phones and in DC hard to keep these provisions intact."

The decade-long delay since the law's last update illustrates the competing interests that characterize management, as fishermen, environmentalists, and the nation's eight regional councils battled over the fine-scale details of the bill.

The debate turned very national in 1996, as different regions and stakeholders sought to craft rules that best suited their interests.

"If we've learned one thing in fishery management at NAMA, it's that one-size-fits-all management is a recipe for dis-

aster. This compromise creates a situation where local management strategies have a seat at the table," Craig said.

Maine Sen. Olympia Snowe was key to protecting New England's unique fishing heritage as large corporate players on the West Coast pursued laissez faire quota management.

Whether we are talking about a 300-year-old fishing village in Down East Maine or remote fishing outposts in Alaska's Aleutian Islands, we must be bound by a thoughtful balance between sustaining both fish and fishermen," Sen. Snowe said in a prepared statement.

The Magnuson-Stevens Act, established in 1976, is the nation's guiding legislation for marine management. It was last updated in 1996 with the adoption of the Sustainable Fisheries Act. Bugged down by hundreds of lawsuits ever since, the National Marine Fisheries Service is hopeful the revised statute will help them focus on the ocean and not the courtroom.

This time around, there was particular concern that the revised law addressed the question of how to limit the total catch for depleted fish. The compromise settled on limits that don't exceed the "maximum sustainable yield."

The regional councils must "establish a mechanism for specifying annual catch limits at a level such that overfishing does not occur in the fishery, including measures to ensure accountability."

An earlier House bill, which was championed by an unlikely alliance between Massachusetts Rep. Barney Frank and California's Rep. Richard Pombo, would have relied on a conservation weak and largely arbitrary total allowable catch limit.

A provision in the earlier Senate version would have allowed overfishing in one year to be counted against the following year's limit, but that element has been dropped.

"We've seen these non-scientific, arbitrary limits fail in the past so there was no reason to think they would have worked this time around," said Craig. "The compromise was a win for the fish."

Another controversy in the debate involved experimental programs regional councils at times adopt to protect specific fisheries. For example, in this region the herring fleet could adopt a cap on tons caught, then divide the total among the licensed fishermen.

Again, concerns were raised by Maine's delegates about individual fishing quotas and limited-access privilege programs that can lead to a situation where big companies buy out the permits of family fishermen.

"Our fisheries law must also accommodate scientific uncertainty, recognize that fisheries ecosystems are highly complex and ensure that our management system can adapt to ever-changing marine environments," said Sen. Snowe. "There is no one-size-fits-all solution to conserving the marine resources of our coastal communities."

The revision also include provisions for:

-International processing for fisheries that have traditionally been handled overseas, such as the New England herring processed in Canada.

-The deduction of steaming time from a vessel's days-at-sea allotment.

-Clarify rules for experimenting with new catch methods or

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equipment.

-Research on the impact of management on fishing communities.

-Some \$338 million this year, building to \$397 million in 2013, for science and conservation technology research in the nation’s fisheries.

## Area Management Coalition

NAMA partners with region’s fishermen, scientists, and conservationists to promote the merits of local management

In an effort to have area management incorporated into Amendment 16 of New England’s groundfish management plan, NAMA has allied with fishermen, scientists, and conservationists in promoting the strategy during the council’s alternative management scoping process.

Representatives from NAMA, the Penobscot Bay Resource Center (PERC), Island Institute, Downeast Initiative, and the Mid-Coast Fishermen’s Alliance, formed the Area Management Coalition over the summer to promote the strategy’s application in Maine.

The style of area management proposed by the group would be similar to the approach used in the state’s lobster fishery, where the ocean is divided into local management zones that roughly correspond with distinct ecological boundaries in the ocean.

Initially, the fishery would divide the Gulf of Maine into inshore and offshore areas, with rules that would allow further divisions as scientific understanding of the marine system improves and governance structures emerge.

“NAMA has been exploring this style of man-

agement for about ten years now. In my mind it is still the best way to align the ecological needs of the fish with an equitable distribution of resources to fishermen,” said Craig.

Earlier this year NAMA helped fishermen and community members from Port Clyde form the MFA, after that region has seen permits migrate south and fishing operations fold under the days-at-sea management program.

“We watched as the current system damaged our fish and fishermen and thought it was time for a new approach,” said Glen Libby of MFA. “At the same time we aren’t in a position to tell communities that use the southern New England or Georges Bank fisheries what works best for them. Area management creates a situation where the people who know the ecosystem best help design the rules to protect it.”

The Gulf of Maine Inshore Fisheries Conservation and Stewardship Plan, which was a product of NAMA’s diverse affiliations with fishermen, scientists, conservationists, and other members of the groundfish community from across the region, forms the framework for the new proposal.

The plan was included as a “frameworkable item” in Amendment 13 to the region’s fishery plan. “Amendment 16 is the council’s latest effort to bring fishing effort in line with the biological capacity of stocks,” Craig said. “Having the GOM



A group of fishermen from Port Clyde, Maine (above) have organized in support of area management.

inshore plan incorporated into the rules the last time around has put us in a strong position to move forward with the strategy today.”

Since 1994, the council has controlled fishing effort by limiting the days fishermen are allowed to go to sea. But as the days have increasingly been cut, many inshore fishermen have been cut out of the fishery, watching their access, in some cases, cut to just 10 days under Amendment 13.

**“The current system favors the boats that catch the most fish. We don’t think its fair to throw guys out of a fishery just because they can live on fewer fish. In fact, we should be rewarding vessels that rotate fisheries and do more with less. Area management creates a situation were communities can create such incentive programs that are better for the fish and the community,” Craig said**

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In response to such criticisms the council opened the door to alternative management proposals this fall during a two-month scoping period when communities were asked to bring their ideas for management forward.

The new rules wouldn’t go into effect until 2009, but the industry is still pressed to get its proposals on the table due to the extensive bureaucratic process that is fisheries management. For instance, it took three years to enact the rules changes in Amendment 13, which did not carry nearly as much public participation.

Further complicating matters is the impending stock assessment data due out in 2008. Preliminary signs show stocks split between impressive recovery and disappointing shortages. Haddock, for instance, has achieved record abundance while Gulf of Maine cod and yellowtail flounder continues to fall short of the biological targets set in A13.

“In our multi-species fishery, management must favor the species that are most scarce. With the assessments due out after the management strategies go to hearings, we could be in for yet another controversy in the fishery,” said Craig.

The coalition continues to work on the plan’s details with the help of GIS mapping technology. If adopted the system would likely go into effect sometime in 2009.

## Association of Family Farmers

### Craig Pendleton Named to Board of National Farmers Alliance; Strengthens Interests of Farmers and Fishermen

**I**t has long been a useful metaphor for New England’s small-scale fishermen to explain the complexities of their challenge to the media or a confused public: We face the same struggles as the American family farm did 25 years ago.

Today, it’s more than an effective analogy, but a real alliance of food producers with NAMA’s Coordinating Director Craig Pendleton joining the Board of the Association of Family Farmers (AFF).

“We’re used to describing the situation of family farmers as akin to that of family fishermen, now we have formed a real brotherhood among the people who feed our country,” said Craig.

Another way to look at the alliance is that of rural Americans joining forces to protect a unique culture and heritage in an increasingly urban and suburban world.

As rural America—on the coasts and in the heartland—continues to contract so too do its voters and political power.

“The food industry faces a major paradox,” according to Larry Yee, a longtime NAMA friend and University of California—Davis cooperative extension agent, who founded AFF.

“While American consumers are demanding healthier, safer, and more choices in food, we are losing the very farmers who can provide such products.”

As New England’s fishermen are well aware this is especially challenging in the face of global competition and industry consolidation.

Craig’s appointment to the AFF Board coincides with the Cape Cod Commercial Hook Fishermen (CCCHFA) and Alaska Marine Conservation Council joining the National Farmers Union, forming a national alliance of food producers with substantial political clout.

Over the summer, Craig and NAMA’s communication’s director, Mike Crocker, joined CCCHFA and NFU representatives in reaching out to Congressional representatives from traditional farm states in asking support for Tom Allen’s amendment to the Magnuson-Stevens Act.

“We can no longer afford to look at our challenges as that of only fishermen, by joining with farmers we seek to create an alliance of people who want to preserve the kind of communities that are capable of providing sustainably produced, healthy food,” Craig said.

# YOU CAN HELP!

**ACT TODAY:** In order to serve you better, NAMA has developed a "Subscriber Program." NAMA's subscribers come from many walks of life, including fishing, research, conservation, and education, and they share a common desire to manage our marine resources sustainably and fairly. We believe this can be accomplished by promoting collaborative approaches to fisheries research and management, where the fishery's diverse community is united by a shared sense of responsibility for building a resilient northwest Atlantic ecosystem. We cannot do this without your help. Please consider supporting our efforts to to protect fish and fishing communities for future generations.

I subscribe to NAMA's Principles and my \$35 subscription fee is enclosed,

\_\_\_\_\_  
Your Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Support NAMA's Programs! NAMA works on a multitude of programs that benefit fishermen and the resource. Your tax-deductible contribution and support will enable us to continue to promote and advance excellence in fisheries management, science, and harvesting through networking, information-sharing, visits to Capitol Hill, and maintaining a resource center in Saco, Maine.

Enclosed is \$\_\_\_\_\_ to assist NAMA in continuing its excellent work in advancing the welfare of fishermen and the resource in the northwest Atlantic.

Detach this form and mail it with your check to: The Northwest Atlantic Marine Alliance; 200 Main Street, STE A; Saco, ME 04072 Or, visit us online at [www.namanet.org](http://www.namanet.org) to subscribe or donate by clicking on the Network For Good icon.



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