NOAA FISHERIES

Northeast Fisheries Science Center

FY 2026 Herring PTNS Vessel User Guide

PTNS

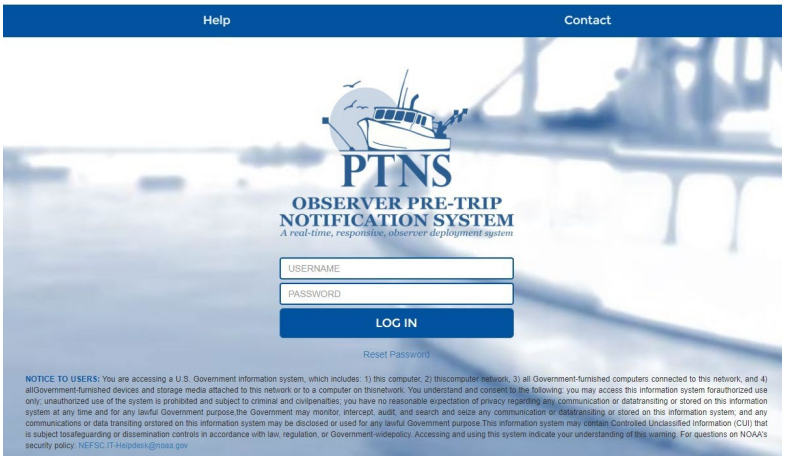
OBSERVER PRE-TRIP NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

A real-time, responsive, observer deployment system

Logging In

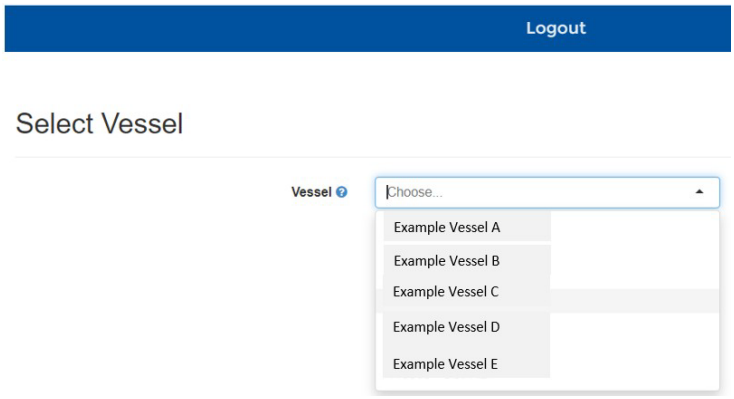
To log into your PTNS web account:

1. Navigate your browser to the PTNS website.
2. Enter your individual FishOnline username and password.
3. Click the LOG IN button.



Please note, your PTNS login information has changed for fishing year 2023 and is now the same as your FishOnline Username and Password. Navigate to the PTNS website and enter FishOnline credentials. If you forget your username, please visit https://apps-garfo.fisheries.noaa.gov/fishtank/login/forgot_username. If you forget your password, please visit https://apps-garfo.fisheries.noaa.gov/fishtank/login/forgot. The PTNS Team will still be able to access your account during this time and you can contact them at 855-347-4371 if you need PTNS assistance, but they do not have access to your individual username and password.

4. After logging in, if you have vessel entitlements for one vessel you can move to the next section, 'Home Screen.' If you have vessel entitlements for more than one vessel, please select the name of the vessel you would like to manage the account of from the dropdown list.

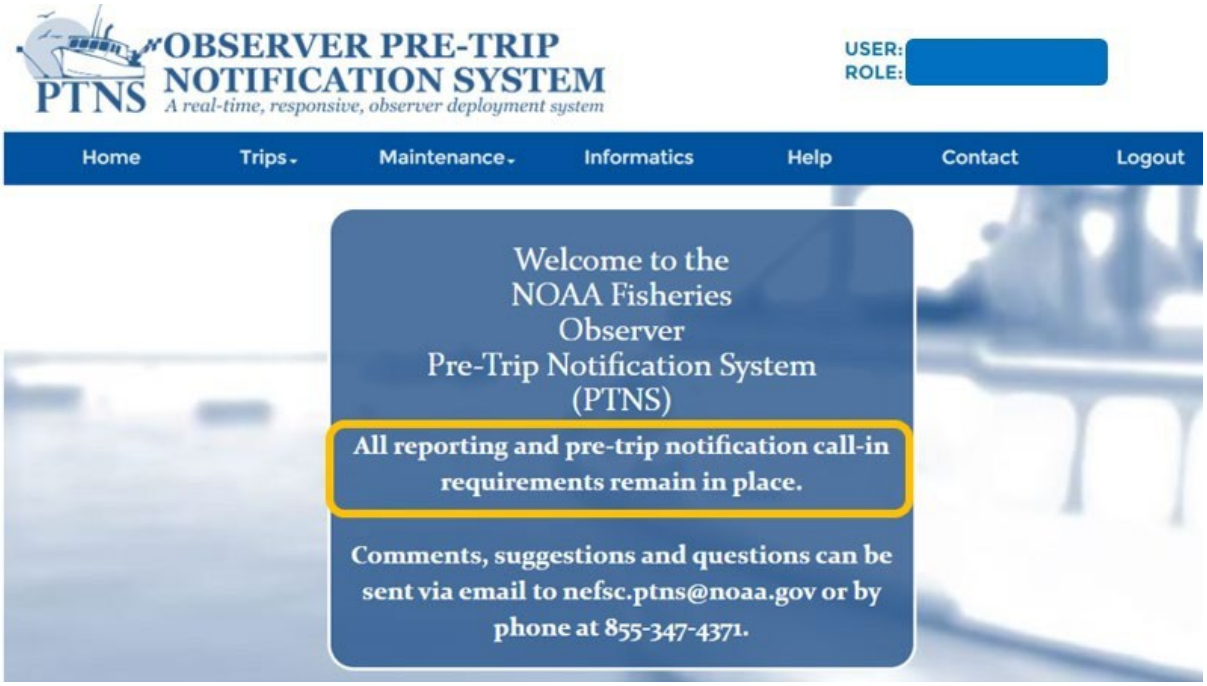


Please note, you will need to log out and back in before managing more than one vessel's account during one PTNS session. Simply log out of your existing session, log back in as the same individual FishOnline user on the PTNS website, and select the next vessel you would like to manage.

Home Screen

PTNS Home Screen

On the 'Home Screen,' you may see alerts displayed in the message box as needed (highlighted in yellow), such as warnings of planned system outages.

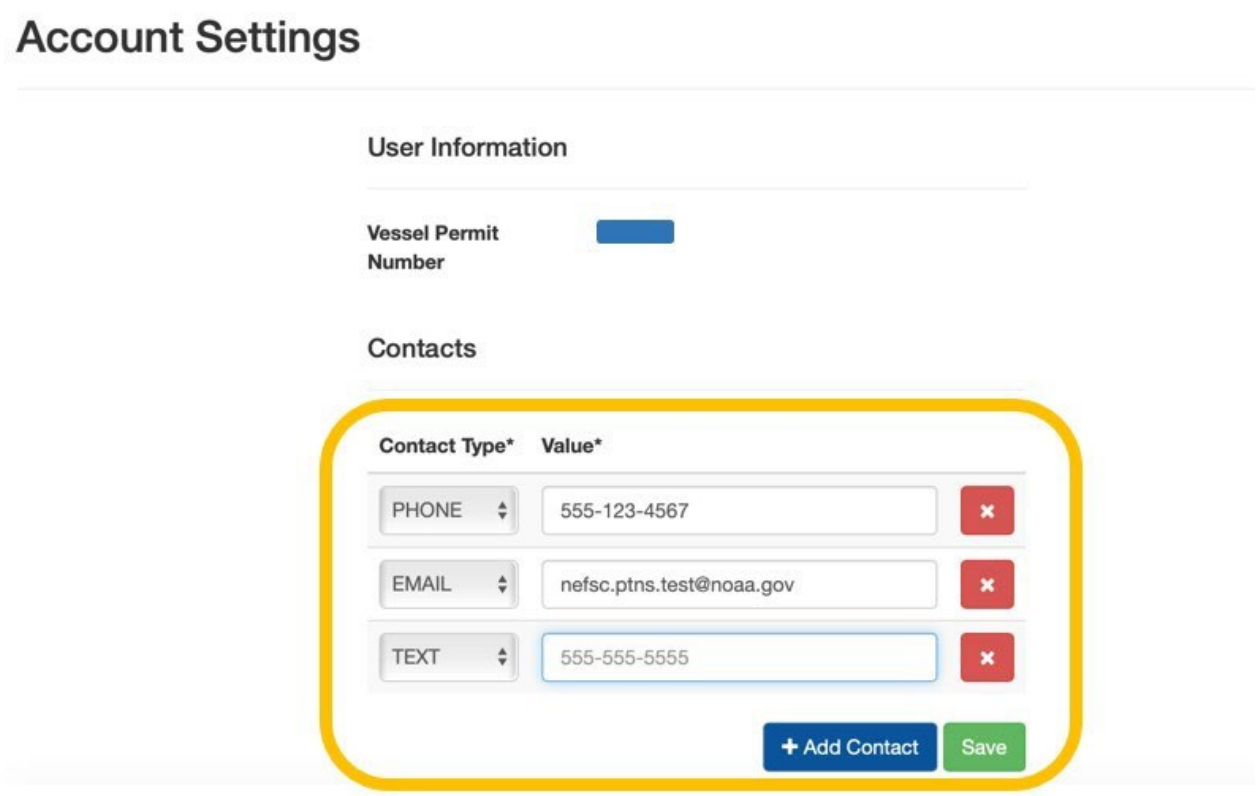


Vessel Account Settings

Vessel Contact Information

To view and edit vessel contact information, click on the 'Maintenance' tab and select 'Vessel Contact Information' from the dropdown menu.





All of the phone numbers and email addresses associated with your PTNS account are listed on the 'Vessel Contact Information' screen.

To add a contact:

1. Click the '+ Add Contact' button.
2. Select the desired 'Contact Type' from the dropdown menu on the left-hand side.
   - 'Email' – email addresses to receive automated alerts and other PTNS correspondence.
   - 'Phone' – phone numbers to receive voice calls from providers and FSB staff.
   - 'Text' – phone numbers you would prefer to be texted first before receiving a voice call.
3. Enter the desired contact (phone or email) into the blank field under 'Value'.
4. Click the Save button.

To delete a contact:

1. Click the red 'X' button next to the contact you want to delete.
2. Click the Save button.

While there is no limit to the number of contacts you can list on your account, you must have at least one phone number and one email address listed on your account in order to enter notifications in PTNS.

Provider Preference

'Provider Preference' selections are no longer applicable as the IFM program is not active.

Entering New Notifications

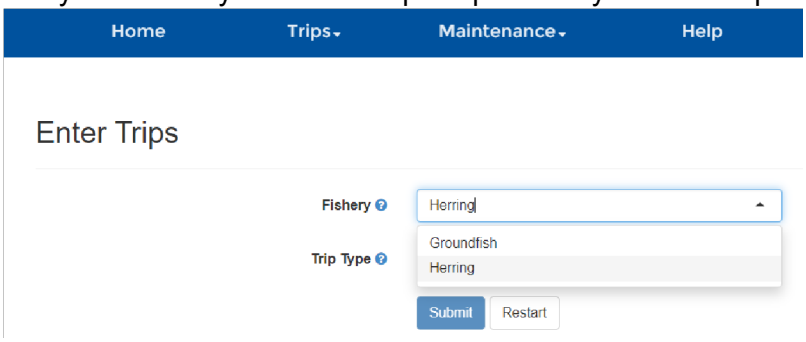
New Notifications

The new trip entry screens collect the information necessary to determine a trip's selection status and facilitate the deployment of assigned observers.



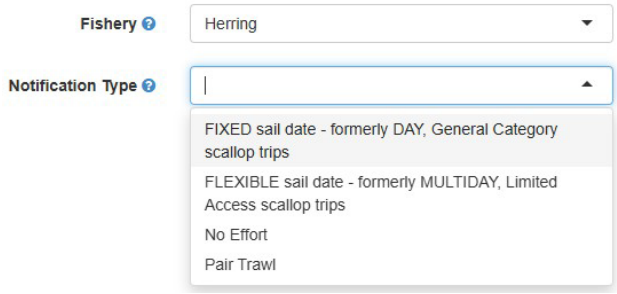
To enter a new notification:

1. Click the 'Trips' tab and select 'Enter Trips' from the dropdown menu.
2. Verify the 'Fishery' listed is the principal fishery the vessel plans to participate in during the trip.



3. Select one of the following options from the 'Trip Type' dropdown menu which matches your intent.

- Please select '**Fixed**' notifications if you are a vessel who plans to 'turn and burn.' Vessels using this notification type often notify for blocks of consecutive sail dates. The selection status of each fixed date notification applies to a single calendar day (0000-2359) and may not be delayed.
- Please select '**Flexible**' notifications if you are a vessel who plans to have >48 hour turnaround times between trips. Vessels may have one active flexible date trip notification in the PTNS system at a time and this notification type is able to be delayed.
- 'Pair Trawl'- Fishing as a pair trawler using mid-water gear targeting Herring. Both vessels will have to separately notify with their intent to fish as a pair under each vessel's permit number.
- 'No-Effort'- if you are taking a transit trips with product or acting as a carrier vessel. Vessels may not have any fishing activity if they notify for a No-Effort trip.

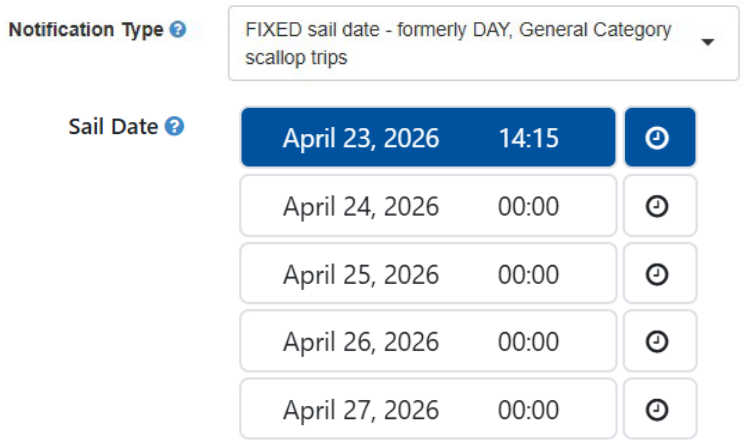


If you need assistance determining if you should be notifying for day or multiday trips, please call the PTNS Team at 1-855-FISHES1 (1-855-347-4371) or email NEFSC.PTNS@noaa.gov.

Trip Type: Fixed-Date

Entering your desired ‘Sail Date(s)’ and times:

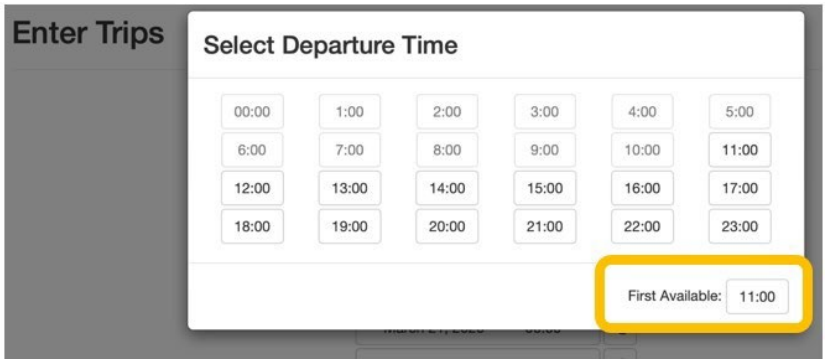
4. Click the box containing your desired sail date. When selected, the box will turn blue.



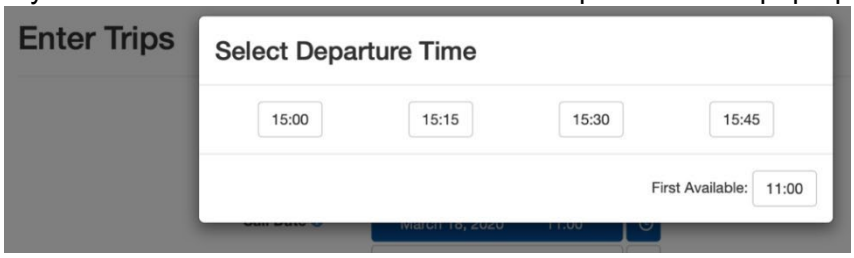
- You will only be able to select available sail dates between 48 hours and 10 days in advance.
- You may need to scroll down the list of dates to see all available notification dates.
- If a notification already exists for a certain date, the box will be light blue, and you will not be able to select that date.

You cannot enter 2 notifications for the same day; your day trip notification selection status applies to any time you leave the dock within that calendar day.

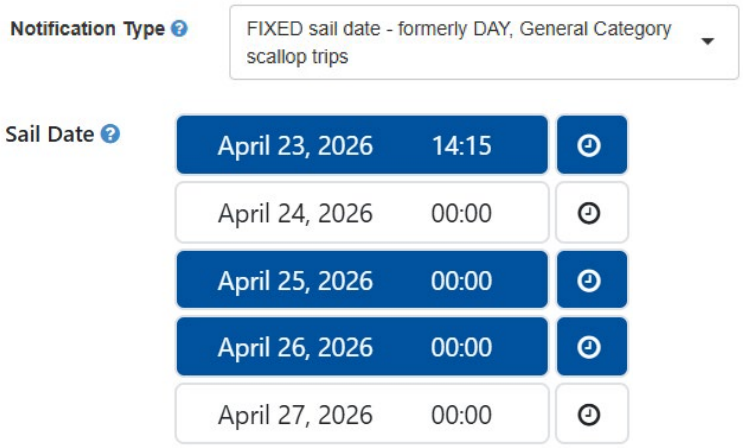
5. If the default time listed is not the time you wish to depart:
   - Click the clock icon to the right of the desired date.



   - In the ‘Select Departure Time’ pop-up, click on the hour of the day that you plan to leave the dock. The system will only allow times that are 48 hours or more in advance. If not all times for that day are available, the ‘First Available’ hour will display on the lower right corner of the pop-up.
   - Click your desired ‘Sail Minute’ in the ‘Select Departure Time’ pop-up.



6. Repeat these steps until all of your desired dates are selected and highlighted in blue.



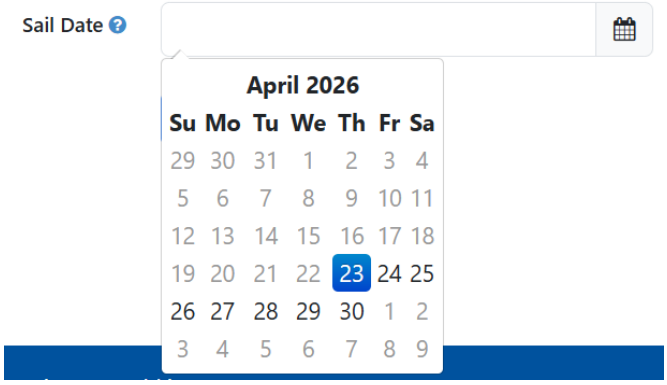
To deselect a sail date, click the box containing that date. The box will no longer be highlighted blue and a notification will not be submitted for that date. In order to enter notifications in bulk, they must all have the same trip characteristics. Continue to the 'Port Sail' section for help entering the rest of the trip details for day trips.

Trip Type: Flexible-Date

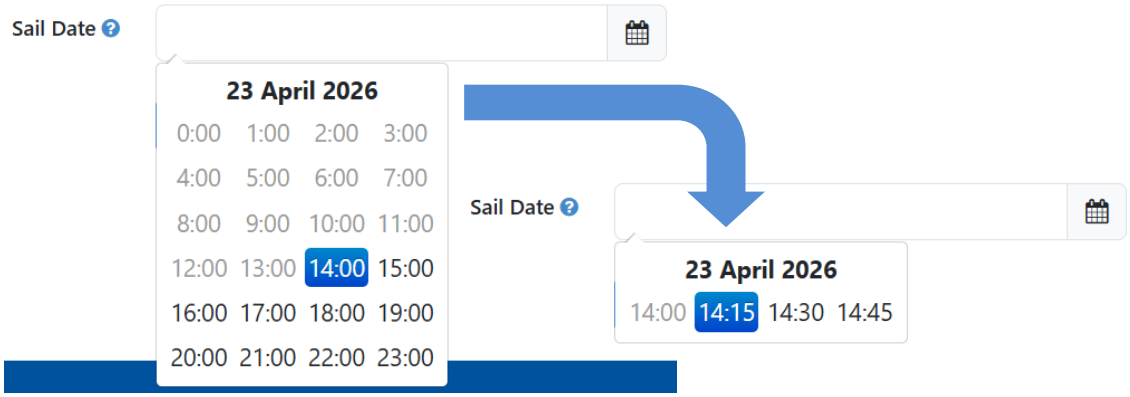


To select your desired 'Sail Date' and 'Time':

4. Click the calendar icon.
5. Click your desired 'Sail Date' in the pop-up calendar. Only dates between 48 hours and 10 days in advance will be available to select. The blue highlighted date and time indicates the earliest notification; the date and time that is 48 hours from time of entry.



6. Click your desired 'Sail Hour' and then 'Minute' in the pop-up calendar.



The rest of the fields are the same regardless if day or multiday trip type is selected.

Port Sail

Select the port out of which you plan to sail. It will default to the port listed in the vessel's most recent notification. If your port is the same, no action is needed.

To change ports:

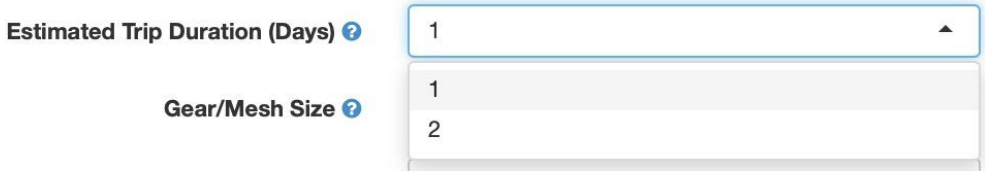
1. Click the dropdown field next to 'Port Sail'.
2. Hit the backspace key.

Begin typing the port name and select your port when



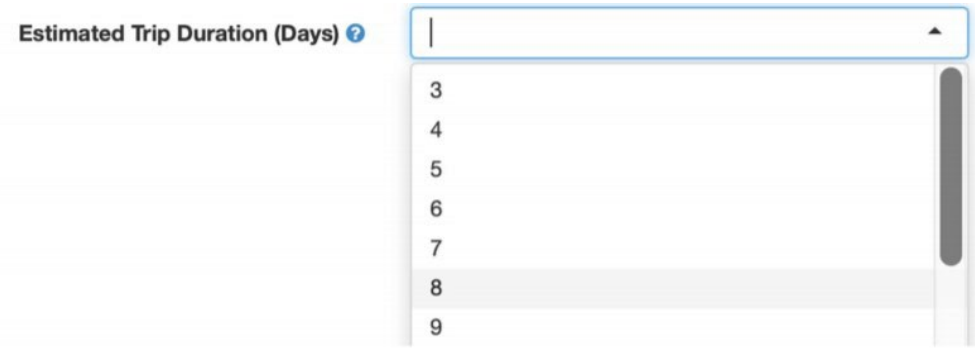
Estimated Trip Duration

Select the length of your trip, rounded to days. It will default to the estimated trip duration in the vessel's most recent notification. If your trip duration is the same, no action is needed. You will be able to select a length of 1 or 2 days in the day trip entry screen and 3 – 13 days in the multiday trip entry screen. If you do not see the trip length you desire, you may need to switch from entering a day trip notification to a multiday trip notification or vice versa. Use the 'Trip Type' dropdown to change between the notification entry pages. As a reminder, these trip types have different rules. Contact the PTNS Coordinators if you need assistance determining if you should be entering day trips or multiday trips. This Estimated Trip Duration field will not show up if the No-Effort trip type is selected.



Above: Estimated 'Trip Duration' dropdown from 'Fixed-Date' trip entry.

Below: Estimated ‘Trip Duration’ dropdown from ‘Flexible-Date’ trip entry.

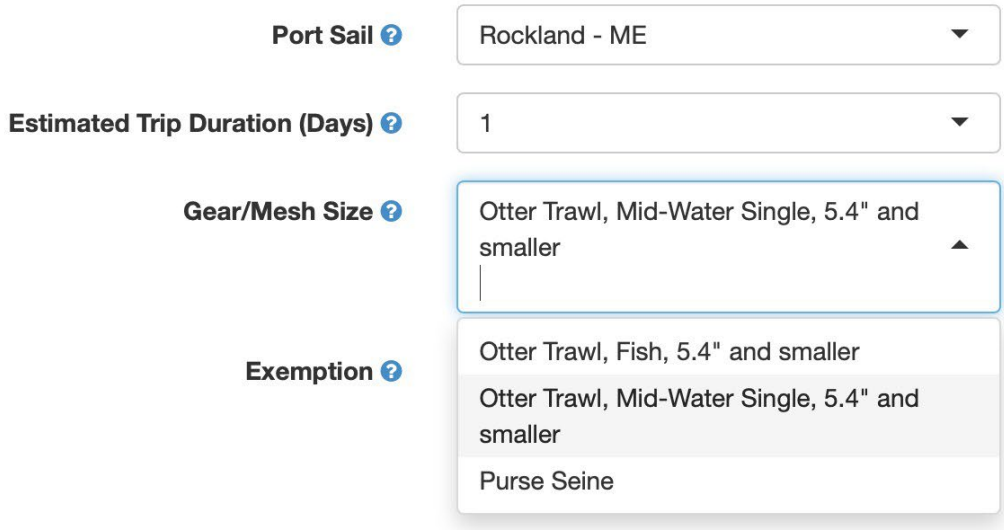


Gear/Mesh Size

Select the gear you plan to use the most over the course of the trip. The system will default to the gear listed in the vesselʼs most recent notification. If your gear is the same, no action is needed.

To change ‘Gear/Mesh Size’:

1. Click the ‘Gear/Mesh Size’ field.
2. Make selection from the dropdown menu.



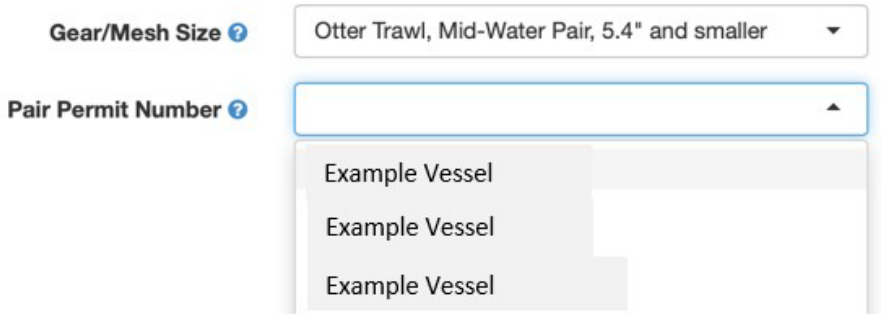
Continue on to ‘Exemption’ section if you are not fishing as a pair trawl (page 10, bottom).

Pair Permit Number

If you made the selection ‘Pair Trawl’ in the ‘Trip Type’ dropdown menu (see above), you will see the ‘Pair Permit Number’ prompt below. Select the permit number and vessel name of the vessel you will be fishing with in the pair trawl. The permit number of vessel name can be typed directly into the field. Alternatively, there is a scroll bar on the right side of the dropdown that can be used to move up and down the list. This field does not autofill.

To change ‘Pair Permit Number’:

1. Click on the ‘Pair Permit Number’ field.
2. Make selection from the drop down.



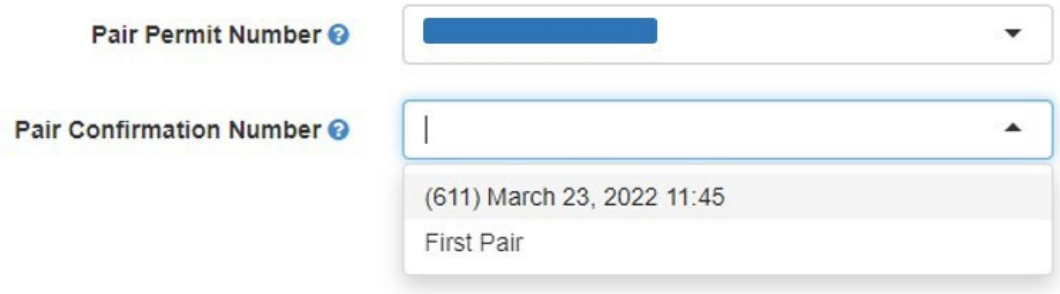
Pair Confirmation Number

Select 'First Pair' from the dropdown if you are the first vessel in the pair trawl to notify. If the other vessel has previously notified with your vessel's permit number, the vessel and confirmation number will show up in the dropdown when you click in the field.



Above: 'Pair Confirmation Number' options for the first vessel notifying.

Below: 'Pair Confirmation Number' options for the second vessel notifying.



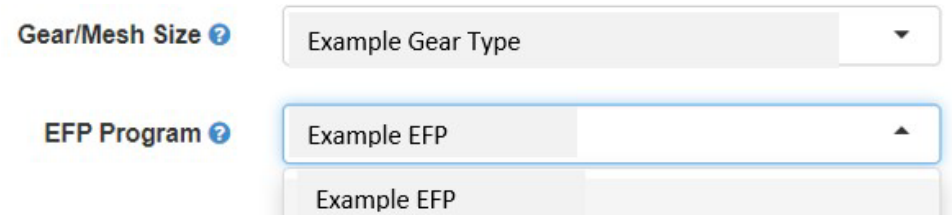
Exemption

'Exemption' selections are no longer applicable as the IFM program is not active.

EFP Program

If you are not participating in an Exempted Fishing Permit (EFP) program, EFP Program will be automatically listed as 'NONE'. No action is needed.

If your permit is enrolled in an approved EFP, those EFP options will appear in the dropdown list. If you are participating in an EFP, select the EFP under which you will be fishing. For vessels who will be fishing multiple EFPs in a single trip, there will be combination options such as the ability to choose 1) EFP A, 2) EFP B, or 3) EFP A and EFP B.



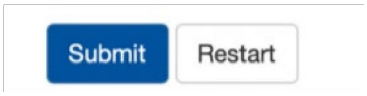
Pay for Coverage in Closed Area

'Pay for Coverage in Closed Area' selections are no longer applicable as the IFM program is not active.

Submit/Restart

If you make a mistake and need to start over, you may hit the 'Restart' button at any time.

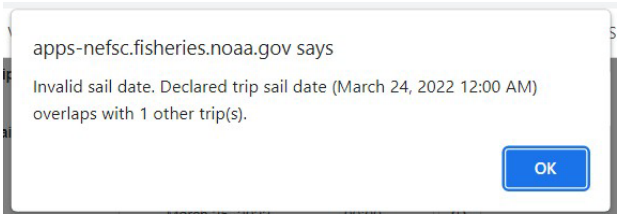
To submit your notification, click the 'Submit' button once. It may take a moment for the site to go to the next page.



When a notification has been successfully submitted, each sail date is shown with its corresponding confirmation number (see image below).

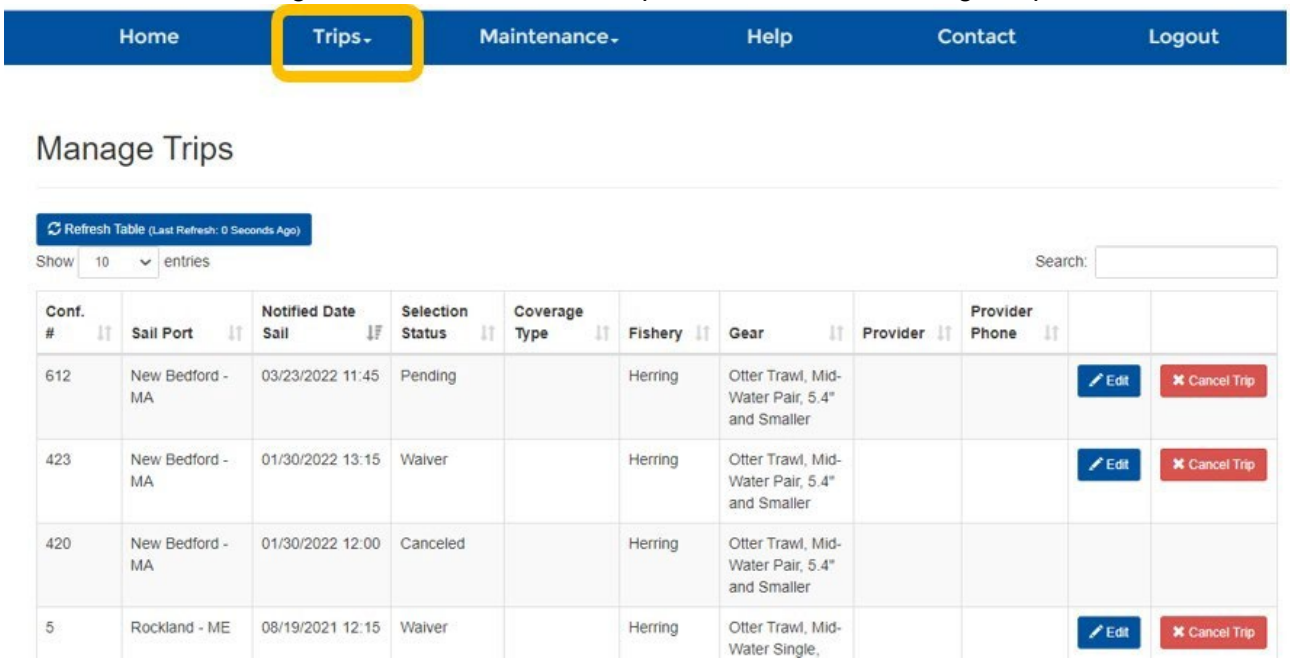


If you get a pop-up for an overlapping trip error, see image below, you must edit the estimated trip duration of the existing notification before you can enter a new one. See 'Editing Notifications' below for further assistance (page 18).



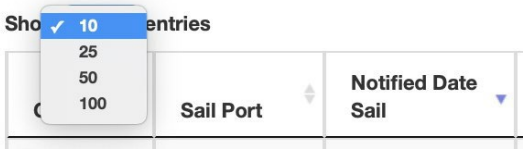
Managing Trips

To view and edit existing notifications, click the ‘Trips’ tab and select ‘Manage Trips’.

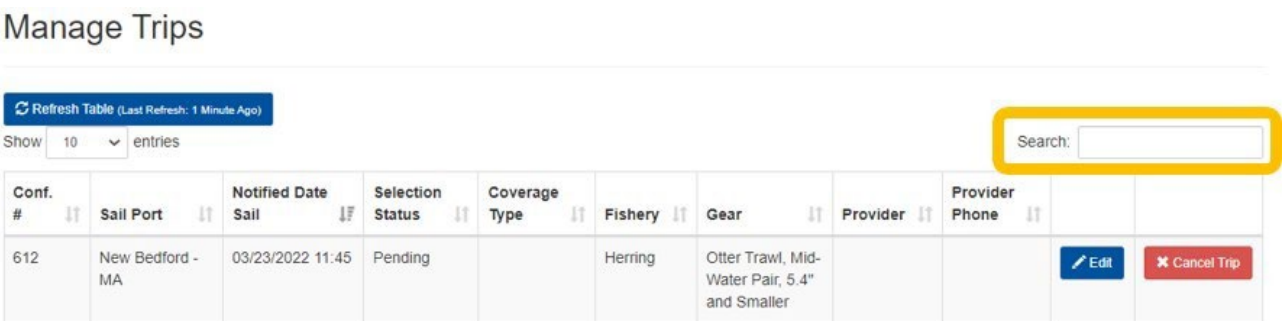


In the ‘Manage Trips’ screen, you will be able to view all of your notifications. The confirmation number, sail port, sail date, observer assignment status, coverage type (if applicable), fishery, and gear for each notification will be visible in the list.

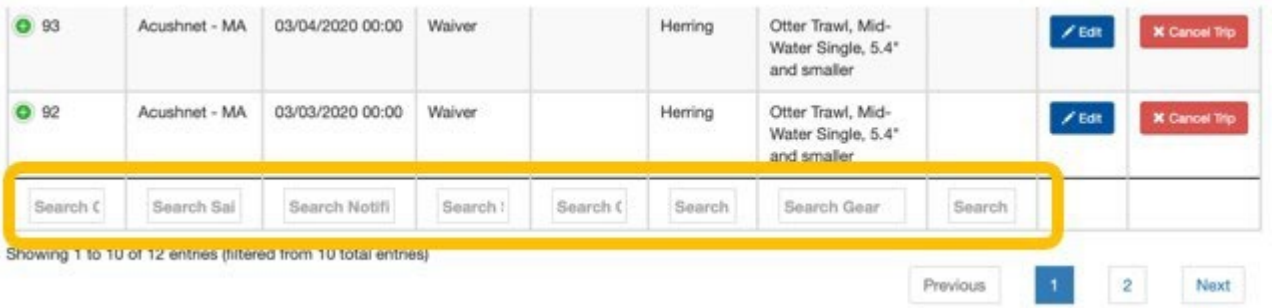
To choose how many notifications are displayed on a page, click the ‘Show Entries’ dropdown in the top left of the table, and select the number of notifications you would like to see on one page.



To search all fields in all of your notifications, begin typing in the search box in the upper right corner of the table.



To search an individual field, begin typing in a search box at the bottom of one of the columns.



To order your notifications by a specific field, click the up or down arrows by the field name.



Selection status meanings:

- 'Pending' - the final observer or portside sampler assignment status for the trip has not yet been determined.
- 'Waiver' - the vessel can sail without an observer or portside sampler under that notification.
- 'Assigned' - the provider accepted the trip and has an observer or portside sampler available.
- 'Deployed' - there is an observer currently on board the vessel for this trip or a portside sampler at the offload.
- 'Complete' - the trip was successfully observed or sampled.
- 'Canceled' - the trip did not or will not sail. Vessels may not sail on PTNS-eligible trips under canceled notifications.
- 'Unobserved' - the notification was entered post-sail by PTNS staff due to non-compliance. Vessel sailed without notifying 48 hrs - 10 days prior to the intended sail date.

Editing Notifications

To view additional information on an individual notification or edit a notification, click the 'Edit' button on the 'Manage Trips' screen.

To edit a notification:

1. Click the ‘Edit’ button for the trip you want to change.
2. Change the desired fields.
3. Click the ‘Submit’ button.

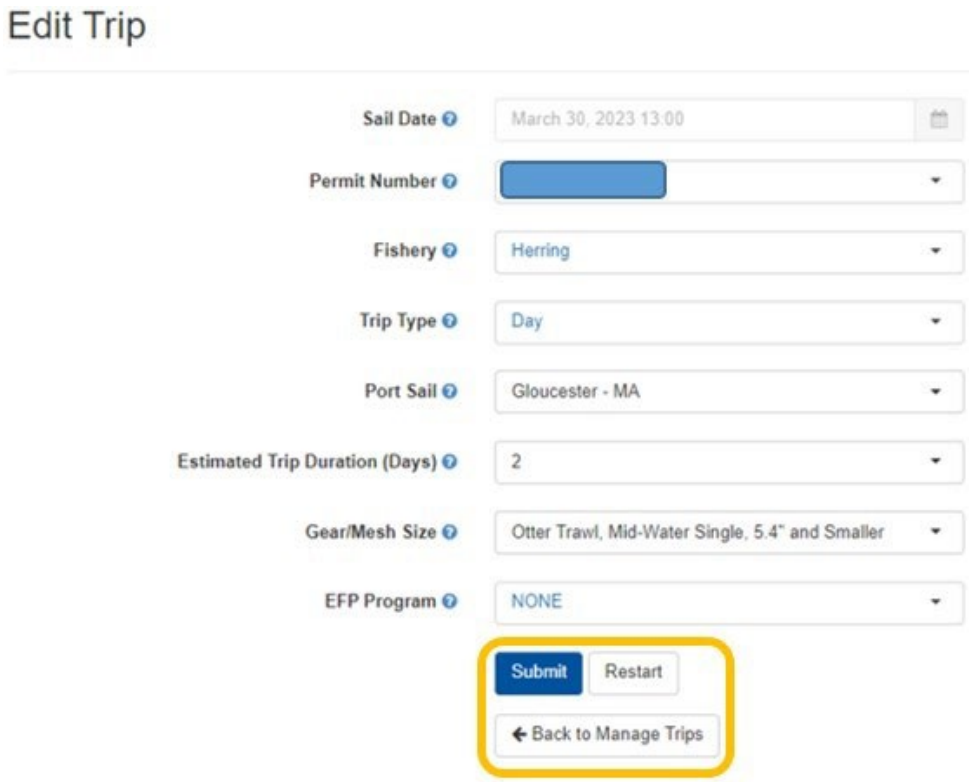


When a notification has been successfully edited, the ‘Sail Date’ will be shown with its corresponding ‘Confirmation Number.’

To clear unsaved changes and start over, you may click the ‘Restart’ button at the bottom of the ‘Edit Trips’ screen at any time.

To clear unsaved changes and return to your notification list, click the ‘Back to Manage Trips’ button at the bottom of the ‘Edit Trips’ screen.

After viewing the ‘Edit Trip’ page, you can return to your list of notifications by clicking the ‘Back to Manage Trips’ button at the bottom of the page.



Not all fields can be changed by a vessel. PTNS Coordinators may edit more fields. If you are having trouble editing your trip, contact the PTNS Team at 1-855-347-4371.

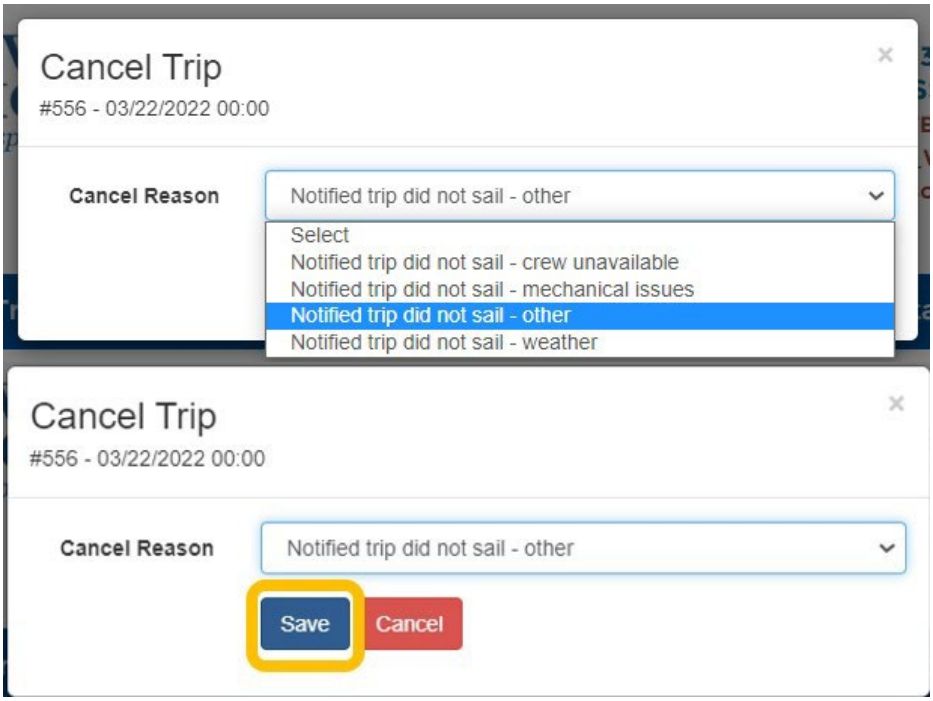
Canceling Notifications

If you decide not to sail on a trip that has previously notified for any reason, the trip will need to be cancelled in the PTNS.

To cancel a notification:

1. Click the red ‘Cancel Trip’ button in the ‘Manage Trips’ screen.
2. Select a ‘Cancel Reason’ from the dropdown in the ‘Cancel Trip’ pop-up.
3. Click the blue ‘Save’ button at the bottom of the pop-up.



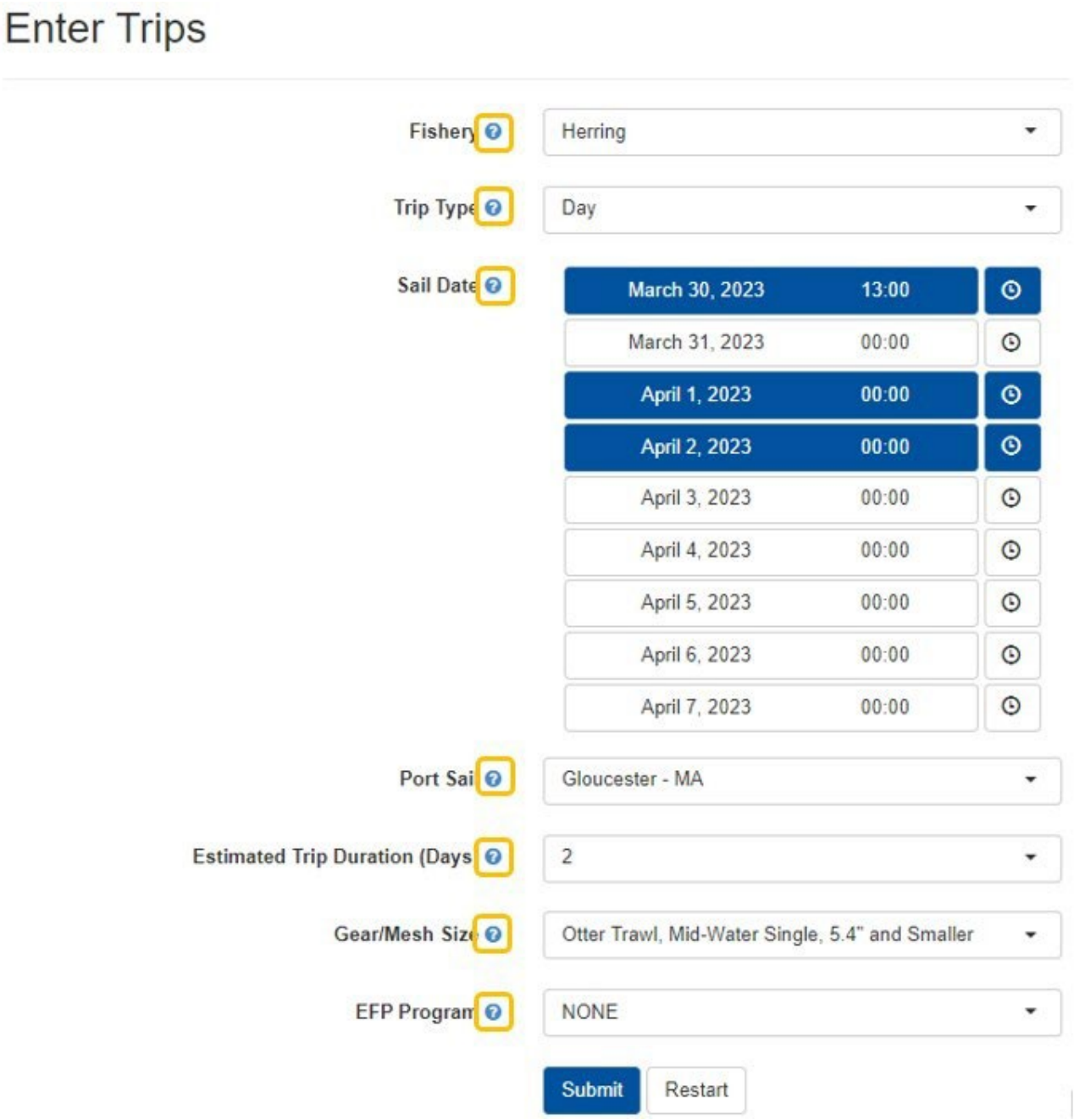


If you do not want to cancel the notification, click the red ‘Cancel’ button at the bottom of the ‘Cancel Trip’ popup and return to your notification list.

You may not sail on a Herring trip without a matching active notification in the PTNS. If you have cancelled your trip in error or otherwise need to reinstate it, contact the PTNS Team at 1-855-347-4371.

Getting Assistance

You can find answers to many of your questions in various areas of the PTNS. In the 'Enter Trips' and 'Edit Trip' screen, each field has a small blue question mark next to it. Clicking on these blue question marks opens a description of the corresponding field requirements and any helpful information associated with that field.

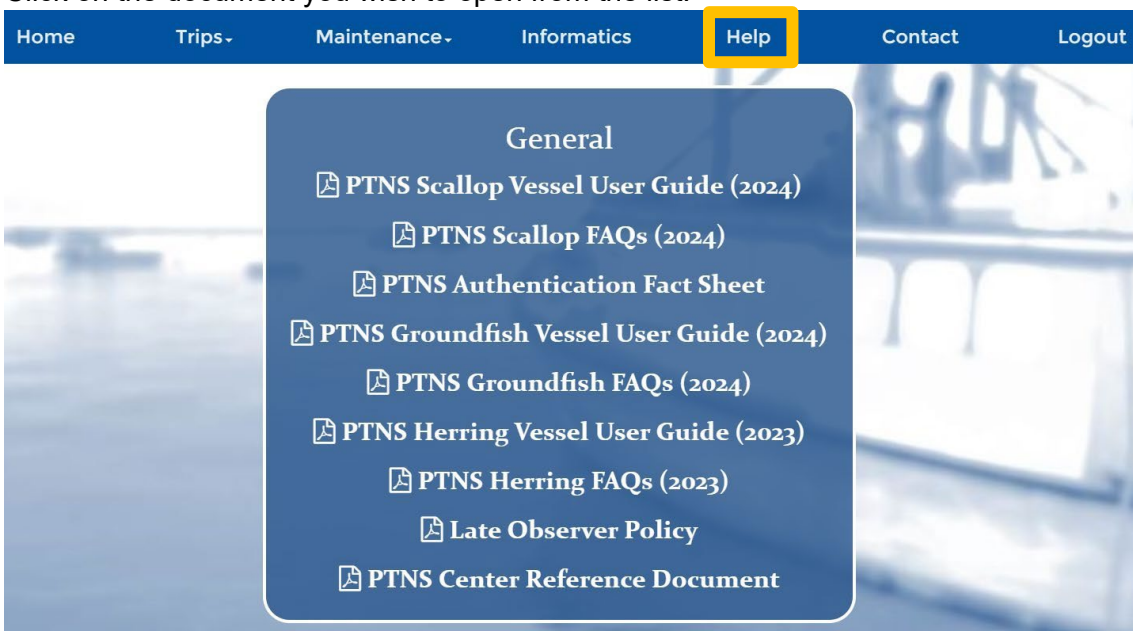


Please contact the PTNS coordinators with any suggestions on how to make this text as helpful as possible. The PTNS Team can be reached at 1-855-FISHES1 (1-855-347-4371) or email NEFSC.PTNS@noaa.gov.

Help Screen

To access the PTNS vessel instructions, FAQ, and other useful information, click the 'Help' tab.

Click on the document you wish to open from the list.



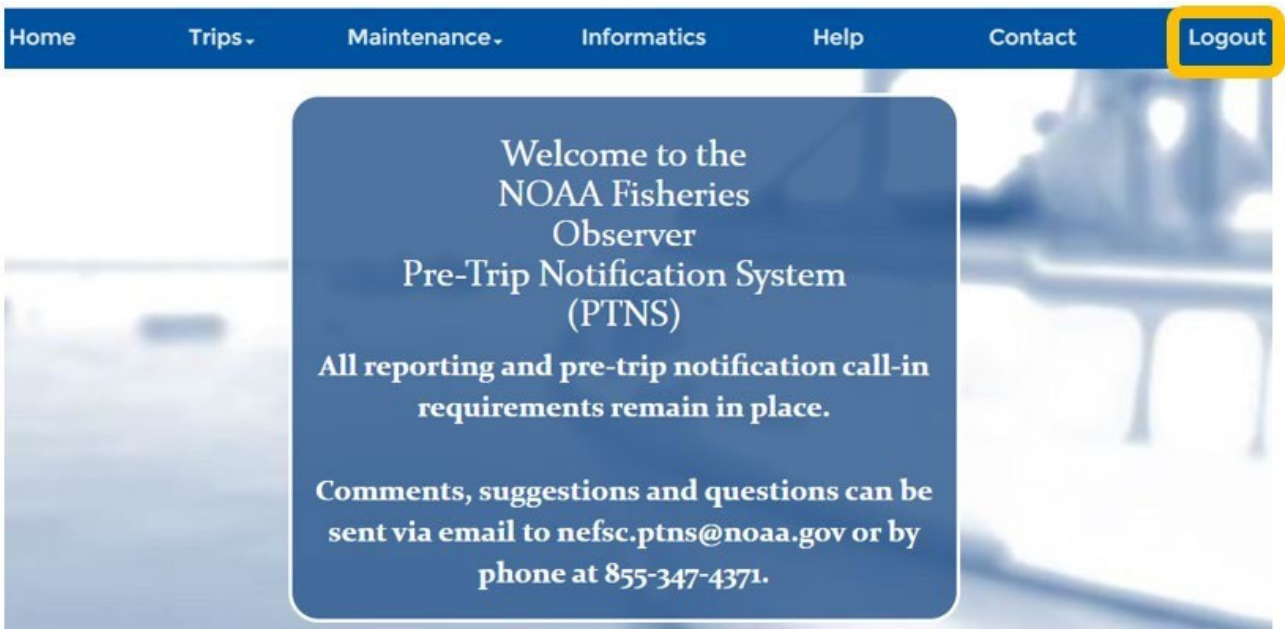
To find contact information for PTNS-related questions, click the 'Contact' tab.



Please note: the images above may not represent the most up-to-date information that appears on the PTNS website and should just be used as an example.

Logging Out

To log out of your account, click the ‘Logout’ tab.



As an increased cybersecurity feature, you will be logged out automatically after 15 minutes of inactivity.