

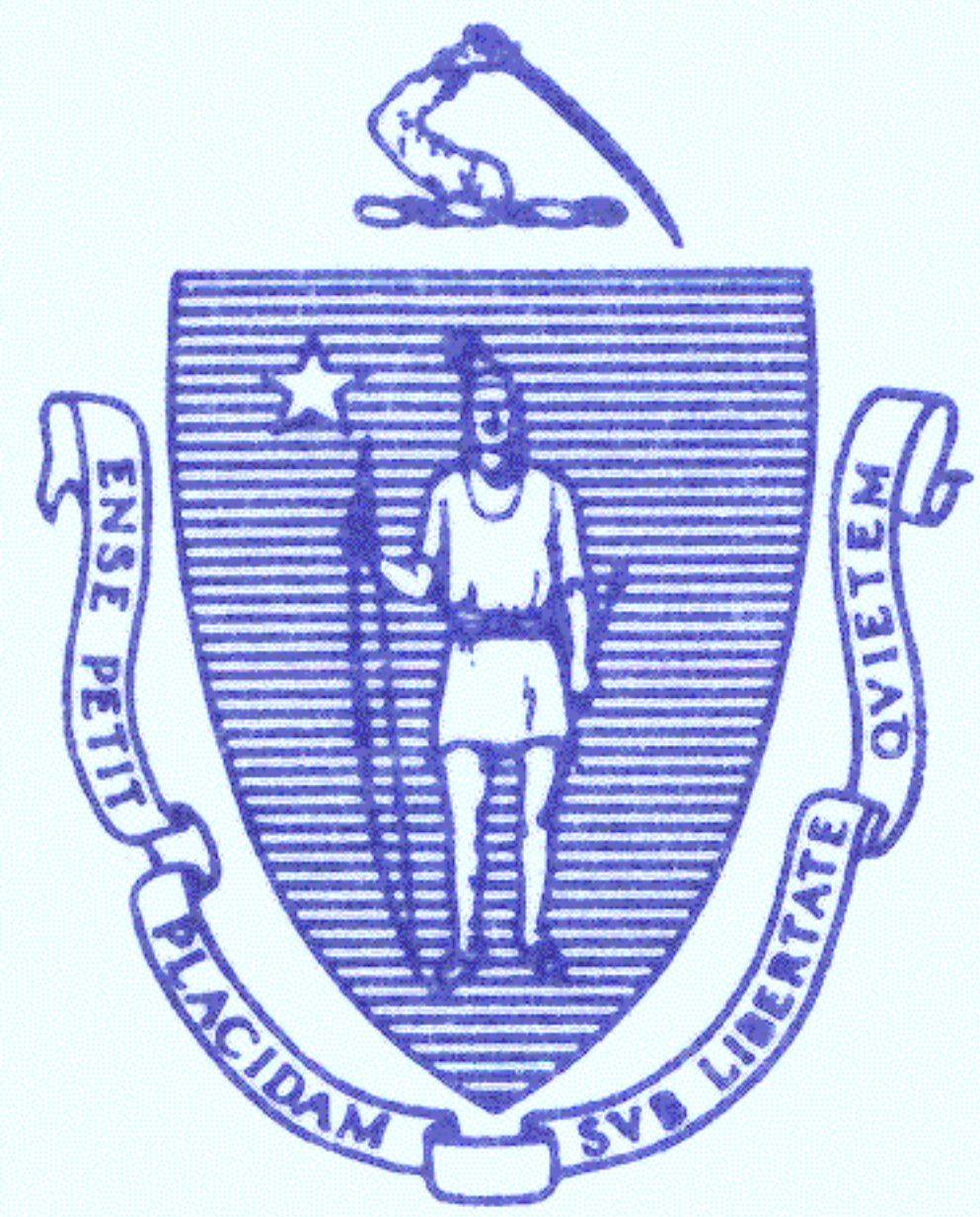
Paul J. Diodati
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December 24, 2001

Dr. Dennis McGillicuddy
Mail Stop #11
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution
Woods Hole, MA 02543

Dear Dr McGillicuddy:

There has been tremendous progress made in understanding *Alexandrium* blooms in the Gulf of Maine. In particular, your biological/hydrographic models that simulate the *Alexandrium* dynamics in the region are a culmination of those efforts and may be quite useful to us as a predictive tool. My hope is that these models may eventually be used by shellfish managers to predict blooms within the region. Therefore, we are fully supportive of your proposal, entitled, Refinement and Transition of Predictive Models of *Alexandrium fundyense* in the Gulf of Maine".

A couple of years ago, we provided shellfish toxicity data to Don Anderson and Andy Solow at WHOI. It has been reported to us that the statistical analysis of that data has been particularly helpful in determining the ways to quantify geographical patterns and distributions. It now appears that when there is toxicity $>200\mu\text{g}/100\text{g}$ in northern Massachusetts, there is a very high probability that we will also have toxicity further to the south in Massachusetts Bay. This effort may help us determine if toxic outbreaks are a local or regional phenomenon and manage response methodologies should there be an unusually high toxic event. Thus, we are encouraged that this proposed work will provide similar products that may allow us to predict the timing and intensity of outbreaks along the Massachusetts coastline based on the historical perspective provided by statistical models and the refinement of the biological/physical models.

For our part, we agree to provide an updated version of the Massachusetts shellfish toxicity dataset for analysis by the project. In addition, both Dave Whittaker and I expect to participate in several annual workshops that you have proposed during the course of the study. If there is any other information that you need, please let us know.

Both Dave and I look forward to working with you and anticipate that the models may provide scientifically-based methods that we can use to manage the shellfish resources efficiently while still protecting the public health.

Sincerely,

Michael Hickey
Chief Shellfish Biologist