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Commonwealth of Massachusetts

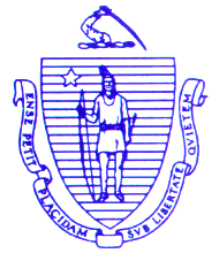
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March 2, 2017

Marine Fisheries Advisory

ASMFC Public Hearing on Commercial Scup Management: March 23, 2017

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission is seeking public comment on Draft Addendum XXIX to the Summer Flounder, Scup and Black Sea Bass Fishery Management Plan for Public Comment. The document presents alternatives for shortening the length of the commercial scup Summer period and extending the length of the Winter period(s) to better allocate the commercial quota. The states of Massachusetts through New York have scheduled public hearings. Massachusetts' hearing will be held:

March 23, 2017 at 5:30 PM
MA Maritime Academy - Admiral's Hall
101 Academy Drive
Buzzards Bay, Massachusetts

Draft Addendum XXIX was initiated jointly with the Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council to address concerns raised by Advisory Panel members that commercial landings have been lower than the annual limits in recent years and the quota periods could be better utilized. Specifically, the document proposes alternatives to shorten the Summer quota period by 31 or 46 days and increase the Winter I and Winter II quota periods. These changes are intended to allow higher possession limits for a longer period of time each year, thus increasing the likelihood the commercial fishery will fully harvest the annual quota.

The Draft Addendum also proposes options to continue allowing state permitted fishermen to begin fishing prior to the start of the Summer period in state waters when the Winter I quota closes early. These options include extending the number of days the earlier fishing can occur as well as the start date when earlier fishing can occur. Allowing access prior to the start of the Summer period to state permitted fishermen provides access to the resource when scup are highly available to nearshore (state) fisheries.

Stakeholders are encouraged to provide input on Draft Addendum XXIX either by attending a public hearing or providing written comment. The Draft Addendum can be obtained [here](#) or via the Commission's website, www.asmfc.org, under *Public Input*. Public comment will be accepted until **5PM (EST) on March 31, 2017** and should be forwarded to Kirby Rootes-Murdy, ASMFC, 1050 N. Highland St, Suite A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703-842-0741 (FAX) or at comments@asmfc.org (Subject line: Draft Addendum XXIX).

The Management Board will review submitted public comment and consider final action on the Draft Addendum at the Commission's Spring Meeting in May 2017. For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Senior Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at krootes-murdy@asmfc.org or 703-842-0740; or David Pierce, DMF Director, at david.pierce@state.ma.us or 617-626-1532.