



**Daniel J. McKiernan**  
Acting Director

# *Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

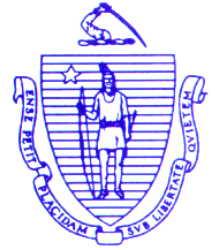
## **Division of Marine Fisheries**

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**Ronald S. Amidon**  
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Deputy Commissioner

January 14, 2020

Marine Fisheries Advisory

### **Supplemental Scoping Hearings for Bluefish Allocation and Rebuilding Amendment**

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The Mid-Atlantic Fishery Management Council (Council) is seeking additional public input on the range of issues and information to be considered in the [Bluefish Allocation and Rebuilding Amendment](#). The Council is developing this action in cooperation with the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (Commission) in order to: (1) update the goals and objectives of the Bluefish Fishery Management Plan; (2) perform a comprehensive review of the bluefish sector allocations, commercial allocations to the states, and transfer processes; and (3) initiate a bluefish rebuilding plan. Hearings will be held coastwide February 13–March 4, with all comments due March 17.

#### **Massachusetts Scoping Hearing**

Thursday, February 13, 7:30–9:00 PM

Massachusetts Maritime Academy, Admiral's Hall

101 Academy Drive, Buzzards Bay, MA 02532

Contact: Nichola Meserve, 617-626-1531

#### **Internet Webinar**

Wednesday, March 4, 6:00–7:30 PM

[http://mafmc.adobeconnect.com/bf\\_allocation\\_rebuilding\\_scoping/](http://mafmc.adobeconnect.com/bf_allocation_rebuilding_scoping/)

Audio-only access: 1-800-832-0736 & enter room 5068609

Contact: Matt Seeley, 302-526-5262, [mseeley@mafmc.org](mailto:mseeley@mafmc.org)

#### **Written Comment**

Accepted through Tuesday, March 17, 2020

Online: <http://www.mafmc.org/comments/bluefish-allocation-rebuilding-amendment>

E-mail: [mseeley@mafmc.org](mailto:mseeley@mafmc.org), Subject line: "Bluefish Scoping Comments"

Mail: Dr. Christopher Moore, MAFMC, 800 North State Street, Suite 201, Dover, DE 19901

(Include "Bluefish Scoping Comments" on the outside of the envelope.)

*All comments, regardless of submission method, will be compiled into a single document for review and consideration by both the Council and Commission.*

#### **Purpose**

An initial round of scoping was conducted in the summer of 2018 to gauge public interest in the development of an amendment. Since then, recalibrated Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) estimates of recreational catch became available and were incorporated into the 2019 bluefish operational assessment. The assessment concluded that the stock was overfished but not experiencing overfishing. The

Council and Commission subsequently recommended including the rebuilding plan into this ongoing amendment.

Because the additional issue modifies the scope of the amendment, the Council is holding additional hearings to provide the public ample opportunities to comment on the expanded scope of the amendment.

Public comments during scoping will help the Council address issues of public concern in a thorough and appropriate manner. Some management questions for consideration in this amendment include:

- Are the existing goals and objectives appropriate for managing the bluefish fishery?
- Is the existing allocation between the commercial and recreational sectors based on the annual catch limit appropriate for managing the bluefish fishery?
- Are the existing commercial state allocations appropriate for managing the bluefish fishery?
- Are the existing transfer processes appropriate for managing the bluefish fishery?
- What is the appropriate approach to take for rebuilding?

### **Learn More**

The [Supplemental Scoping and Public Information Document](#) contains background information on bluefish management and on issues that may be addressed in the amendment. Additional information and updates on development of this amendment are available on the Council's website at <http://www.mafmc.org/actions/bluefish-allocation-amendment>.

Please direct any questions about the amendment to Matt Seeley, (302) 526-5262, [mseeley@mafmc.org](mailto:mseeley@mafmc.org).

Please note that some hearings (including Massachusetts') will be held in conjunction with scoping hearings for an ongoing Summer Flounder, Scup, and Black Sea Bass Commercial/Recreational Allocation Amendment. A schedule for those hearings is available at <http://www.mafmc.org/newsfeed/2020/mafmc-asmfc-sfsbsb-allocation-scoping-hearings>.