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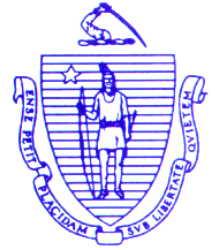
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February 13, 2020

Marine Fisheries Advisory

ASMFC PUBLIC HEARING ON ATLANTIC HERRING MANAGEMENT ON MARCH 2, 2020

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) is seeking public comment on Draft Addendum III to Amendment 3 of the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Herring. Draft Addendum III proposes options to better manage the Area 1A (inshore Gulf of Maine) sub-annual catch limit (ACL) under low quota scenarios. The full schedule of public hearings is available [online](#). Massachusetts' hearing will be held on March 2, 2020 at 6:00 PM at DMF's Annisquam River Field Station located at 30 Emerson Avenue, Gloucester, MA.

This action responds to the challenges encountered in managing the reduced sub-ACL based on the 2018 benchmark stock assessment, which highlighted declining trends in recruitment and spawning stock biomass. Currently, the Board can allocate the sub-ACL throughout the fishing season using bi-monthly, trimester, or seasonal quota periods to meet the needs of the fishery. For the 2019 fishing season, the Board implemented a bimonthly quota period approach to maximize use of the reduced sub-ACL when demand for bait is high. Due to the low quota, the 2019 fishery experienced frequent closures to avoid an overage. The 2020 sub-ACL (3,344 mt) is lower than in 2019, creating further challenges in distributing the quota throughout the fishing season. The Draft Addendum considers additional tools to provide the Board more flexibility in specifying the allocation under low quota scenarios and meet the needs of the herring fishery moving forward. Additionally, the Draft Addendum considers expanding landing provisions across different permit categories within the days out program.

Interested parties are encouraged to provide input on the Draft Addendum either by attending public hearings or providing written comment. The Draft Addendum is available at [online](#). Public comment will be accepted until **5:00 PM on March 25, 2020** and should be sent to Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Senior FMP Coordinator, 1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N, Arlington, Virginia 22201; 703.842.0741 (fax) or comments@asmfc.org (Subject line: Atlantic Herring Draft Addendum III). For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy at krootes-murdy@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740; or Melanie Griffin at melanie.griffin@mass.gov or 617.626.1528.