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February 26, 2019

Marine Fisheries Advisory

ASMFC Public Hearing on Atlantic Herring Management: April 1, 2019

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) is seeking public comment on [Draft Addendum II](#) to Amendment 3 of the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Herring. Draft Addendum II proposes management options to strengthen spawning protections in Area 1A (inshore Gulf of Maine). The full schedule of public hearings is available [here](#). Massachusetts' hearing will be held:

6:00 PM

April 1, 2019

**DMF's Annisquam River Station
30 Emerson Avenue
Gloucester, Massachusetts**

The Draft Addendum was initiated in response to the results of the 2018 Benchmark Stock Assessment for Atlantic Herring, which showed reduced levels of recruitment and spawning stock biomass over the past five years, with 2016 recruitment levels the lowest on record. The ASMFC's Atlantic Herring Board uses a series of closures to protect spawning aggregations in the Gulf of Maine. These closures, which were implemented through Amendment 3, use biological samples to annually project the start of spawning.

Recent analysis by the Atlantic Herring Technical Committee found that while the current spawning closure system was significantly improved under Amendment 3, the protocol could continue to be strengthened by considering when, and for how long, a closure is initiated. Specifically, the analysis showed greater protection could be provided by initiating a closure when a lower percentage of the population is spawning and extending the closure for a longer time. Draft Addendum II considers extending the length of the spawning closures, as well as altering the point at which closures are triggered to provide greater protection to the stock.

Stakeholders are encouraged to provide input on Draft Addendum II either by attending a public hearing or providing written comment. The Draft Addendum can be obtained [here](#) or via the ASMFC website, www.asmfc.org. Public comment will be accepted until **5:00 PM (EST) on April 4, 2019** and should be forwarded to Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Senior FMP Coordinator, 1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703.842.0741 (FAX) or at comments@asmfc.org (Subject line: Atlantic Herring Draft Addendum II). For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy at krootes-murdy@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740; or Cate O'Keefe at catherine.o'keefe@mass.gov or 508.742.9744.