



David E. Pierce, Ph.D.  
Director

# Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## Division of Marine Fisheries

251 Causeway Street, Suite 400

Boston, Massachusetts 02114

(617)626-1520

fax (617)626-1509



Charles D. Baker  
Governor

Karyn E. Polito  
Lieutenant Governor

Matthew A. Beaton  
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March 26, 2019

### Marine Fisheries Advisory

### **Public Scoping on Petition to Amend Ocean Quahog Dredge Rules DMF to Accept Written Public Comment through April 19th**

The Division of Marine Fisheries has received a petition from ocean quahog/surf clam dredge fishery representatives requesting the consideration of a trip limit reduction for the state-waters ocean quahog fishery. Currently, the state-waters trip limit is set at 26 cages (832 bushels) and the petition requests this limit be reduced to 8 cages (256 bushels). This would scale back the ocean quahog trip limit so the fishery functions at a similar trip limit to the surf clam fishery (200 bushels per 24-hour day; 400 bushels per multi-day trip).

At this time, DMF is seeking public comment on this petition prior to potentially moving it forward to public hearing this year. Accordingly, DMF would like to hear from industry participants on the following issues: (1) is there a current need to reduce the state-waters ocean quahog trip limits; (2) what are the potential benefits from and concerns with this potential reduction to the state-waters ocean quahog trip limit; and (3) do you support DMF taking such an action at this time. Any other feedback regarding the current management of the state-waters ocean quahog fishery will also be welcomed as part of this public scoping process.

The Division of Marine Fisheries will accept written public comment through 5PM on Friday April 19, 2019. Please address all written comments to Director Pierce and submit to DMF by e-mail at [marine.fish@state.ma.us](mailto:marine.fish@state.ma.us) or by post to 251 Causeway Street, Suite 400, Boston, MA 02114.