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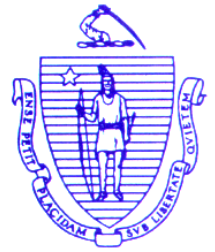
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April 15, 2015

MarineFisheries Advisory

Recreational Gulf of Maine Cod Fishery Closed and Commercial Gulf of Maine Cod Trip Limit Reduced to 200 Pounds

The Division of Marine Fisheries (*MarineFisheries*) has taken emergency action to immediately reduce the commercial and recreational harvest of Gulf of Maine (GOM) cod (322 CMR 6.03):

- **Recreational Rule Changes**

Until further notice, recreational fishermen (both private and aboard for-hire vessels) may not retain or land any cod taken from the Gulf of Maine Management Area, which includes all state-waters within Cape Cod Bay and Massachusetts Bay north to the Massachusetts/New Hampshire border. Recreational vessels may transit the GOM Management Area with cod legally harvested from outside the GOM Management Area provided all fish and gear are properly stowed and fishing activity is not occurring.

- **Commercial Rule Changes**

Additionally, *MarineFisheries* has reduced the commercial trip limit for Gulf of Maine cod from 800 to 200 pounds. This trip limit applies to all state-waters commercial groundfish permit endorsement holders, as well as any federal groundfish permit holder fishing in state-waters.

The most recent stock assessment for Gulf of Maine cod has demonstrated that the stock was overfished with over fishing occurring. Spawning stock biomass was determined to be at 3-4% of the target. Due to these severe stock conditions, the National Marine Fisheries Service promulgated emergency regulations in the early winter of 2014 and is set to promulgate additional rules during the spring of 2015 to reduce fishing mortality and protect spawning aggregations. *MarineFisheries* has taken the above described actions to complement these federal rules for the 2015 fishing year (FY) that runs from May 1, 2015 thru April 30, 2016.

DMF will take these emergency regulations to public hearing later this spring. In addition, *MarineFisheries* will also take comment on final rules to adjust recreational GOM haddock fishing limits and commercial GOM groundfish closures to complement anticipated federal rule changes for FY2015. A formal announcement of this public hearing is forth coming.

For more information about the management of GOM cod in state-waters, please visit our [website](#).