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Marine Fisheries Advisory

ASMFC Public Hearing & Comment Period on American Eel Management

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) is seeking public comment on Draft Addendum V to the American Eel Fishery Management Plan. The document and a full schedule of public hearings are available at www.asmfc.org. Massachusetts' hearing will be held:

June 7, 2018; 6 PM
Bourne Public Library
19 Sandwich Road
Bourne, MA

Since the implementation of Addendum IV in 2014, states have raised several concerns about the current management program. Currently, the yellow eel fishery is managed to an annual coastwide landings cap of 907,671 pounds and evaluated against two management triggers: (1) the coastwide cap is exceeded by more than 10% in a given year; or (2) the coastwide cap is exceeded in two consecutive years, regardless of the percent overage. If either of these triggers is met, state-by-state quotas are required to be implemented. 2016 landings exceeded the coastwide cap by less than 10%. If landings in 2017 exceed the coastwide cap, state-by-state quotas will need to be implemented. These current management provisions are concerning to some jurisdictions given uncertainty in the landings data.

The Board initiated Draft Addendum V to address these concerns and consider a number of changes to the management program. Specifically, changes are being considered for the coastwide cap, management triggers, state-by-state allocations, and quota transfer provisions for the yellow eel commercial fishery; as well as the current Maine glass eel commercial quota and the aquaculture provisions of the plan.

The Draft Addendum is available at

http://www.asmfc.org/files/PublicInput/AmEelDraftAddendumV_PublicComment_April2018revised.pdf

or on the Commission website, www.asmfc.org, under *Public Input*. Fishermen and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input either by attending a state public hearing or providing written comment.

Public comment will be accepted until 5:00 PM (EST) on June 15, 2018 and should be forwarded to Kirby Rootes-Murdy, Senior FMP Coordinator, 1050 N. Highland St, Suite A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703-842-0741 (FAX) or at comments@asmfc.org (Subject line: Draft Addendum V).

Final action on the Addendum is scheduled to occur at the Commission's Summer Meeting. If approved, the proposed alternatives to the current management program would be implemented starting in the 2019 fishing season.

For more information, please contact Kirby Rootes-Murdy of the ASMFC at krootes-murdy@asmfc.org or 703-842-0740; or Dan McKiernan of MA DMF at dan.mckiernan@state.ma.us or 617-626-1536.