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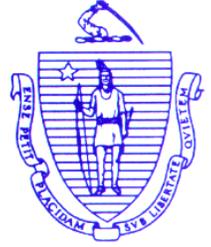
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Marine Fisheries Advisory

New Winter Flounder Regulations

The Division of Marine Fisheries has promulgated new regulations affecting the recreational and commercial harvest of winter flounder in state waters. These new regulations are effective immediately.

Commercial winter flounder regulations.

Marine Fisheries is requiring all commercial fishermen – both state and federally permitted – to adhere to the state’s winter flounder trip limits while fishing in state waters. Federal groundfish permit holders may transit state waters in excess of the state’s winter flounder trip limits provided all commercial fishing activity has ceased and all gear is stowed. Previously, federal groundfish permit holders authorized to fish in state-waters could fish under their federal limits and exceed the state’s winter flounder trip limits. However, due to concerns about the negative effects of increased fishing effort on near-shore localized populations *Marine Fisheries* amended its regulations.

Recreational winter flounder regulations.

Recreational fishermen fishing in the Southern New England Groundfish Management Area may now take two winter flounder per angler per day from March 1 through December 31; this fishery is closed during January and February. The Southern New England Groundfish Management Area is defined as all state-waters east of Cape Cod south of 42°00’ and all state-waters south of Cape Cod including Buzzards Bay and Mount Hope Bay. Previously, recreational anglers fishing in this area were only authorized to take winter flounder during two 30-day seasons.

The complete text of Massachusetts’ winter flounder regulations can be found at 322 CMR 6.03 and more information regarding the management of winter flounder in Massachusetts can be found on the *Marine Fisheries* website:

www.mass.gov/marinefisheries