



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Division of Marine Fisheries

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Marine Fisheries Advisory

2021 Quota Managed Menhaden Fishery to Resume on July 19

The state's quota managed menhaden fishery will resume on Monday July 19, 2021 ([Legal Notice](#)). This is the result of additional state quota achieved through transfers from other Atlantic coastal states. These transfers help minimize the use of the incidental catch and small-scale fishery allowance, in which landings are not accountable to the coastwide total allowable catch (TAC). The 2021 TAC was set based upon newly-adopted Ecological Reference Points that account for menhaden's role as an important forage fish. Upon Monday's re-opening of the quota managed fishery, the limited access fishery will continue operating at a 25,000-pound trip limit. Open access fishery participants will be able to continue to harvest menhaden under the 6,000-pound trip limit and are reminded there are several new rules affecting the fishery this year (see [Advisory](#)).

The quota managed fishery shall remain in effect until DMF projects 100% of the 2021 transfer-adjusted commercial menhaden quota is taken. Once that occurs, commercial fishing for menhaden may only continue under the incidental catch and small-scale fishery trip limit. This prohibits industrial-scale fishing for menhaden, while allowing commercial fishermen to continue to retain, possess, land, and sell up to 6,000 pounds of menhaden per trip or calendar day, whichever period of time is longer.

This resumption of the quota managed fishery follows the closure of the Episodic Event Set Aside (EESA) fishery ([Closure Notice](#)). Massachusetts opted into EESA program—a provision of the interstate fishery management plan—on June 18, 2021. The 2021 EESA, a 1% set-aside of the TAC, was shared among three states experiencing unusually large amounts of menhaden in their state waters in comparison to their state's initial commercial quota allocations. The 2021 EESA is projected to be exhausted following Friday, July 16, 2021, and the Commonwealth's 2021 EESA fishery will close effective July 17, 2021. Upon closure of the EESA fishery, the previously issued [Statement of Permit Conditions](#) governing EESA fishery participation are rescinded.

For full text of the state's menhaden regulations, please view [322 CMR 6.43](#). For more information regarding the management of marine fisheries in Massachusetts, visit our website at www.mass.gov/marinefisheries.