



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## Division of Marine Fisheries

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### Marine Fisheries Advisory

#### **Menhaden Commercial Fishery to Re-open on Limited Basis**

***State approved to draw quota from the interstate management plan's "Episodic Events Set Aside" quota***

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission has approved a request from the Division of Marine Fisheries to allow the Massachusetts limited entry menhaden fishery to access the Episodic Event Set Aside (EESA) quota. Effective Monday, August 17, 2020, the fishery will re-open with a 25,000-lb trip limit.

Under the interstate fishery management plan, 1% of the annual coastwide commercial quota is set aside for the northeast states' use should they utilize their available state-specific quota and unusually high abundances of menhaden remain available in state waters prior to September 1. The Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) closed the state's quota managed menhaden fishery effective August 7, having projected that full utilization of the state's quota would occur August 6 and subsequently enrolled in the EESA program. Roughly 425,000 pounds of the 4.76-million pound set aside remains available, with Massachusetts being the only state participating in the EESA program at this time.

In accordance with 322 CMR 6.43(4)(c), only those Massachusetts permitted commercial fishermen who have been issued a limited-access regulated fishery permit endorsement for Atlantic menhaden are authorized to participate in the EESA fishery. Participating vessels are restricted to harvesting menhaden from within the waters under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth and required to land in Massachusetts ports. Daily catch reporting is required. DMF is issuing [permit conditions](#) restricting participants to a 25,000-pound possession and landing limit (per trip or calendar day, whichever duration is longer), consistent with our management of the last 15% of the state-specific quota. This lower limit will enable small scale purse seiners to target the available EESA quota over a longer period of time, facilitates the accurate monitoring and projection of quota utilization, and balances the needs of the commercial bait fishery with the role menhaden serves as forage to a multitude of predator species.

For more information about the management of menhaden in Massachusetts, contact DMF at 617-626-1520 or visit our website at [www.mass.gov/marinefisheries](http://www.mass.gov/marinefisheries).