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# *Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

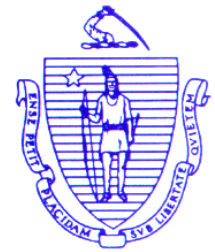
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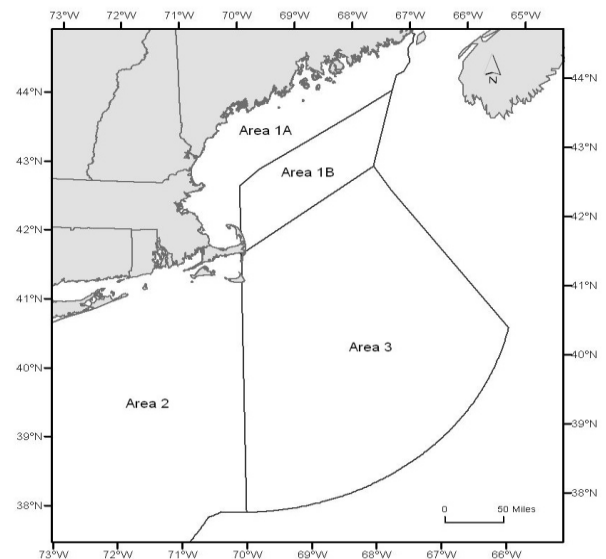
August 23, 2018

### Marine Fisheries Advisory

## **Reduction in 2018 Catch Limits for Atlantic Herring**

NOAA's Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO) has announced ([notice](#)) that catch limits for Atlantic herring have been reduced for the remainder of the 2018 fishing year (December 31, 2018). These catch limit reductions became effective on effective August 22<sup>nd</sup>. This action was taken on the recommendation from the New England Fishery Management Council in response to the most recent herring stock assessment.

The 2018 overall annual catch limit is now 49,900 mt, reduced from 110,536 mt. The reduction is expected to lessen the probability of overfishing in 2018, increase the estimated herring biomass in 2019-2021, and provide more catch for the fishery over the next three years than would have been available without the reduction. The revised catch limits for each management area is described in the adjacent table.



Updated 2018 Sea Herring Catch Limits	
Management Area	New Catch Limit
Area 1A	27,743
Area 1B	2,639
Area 2	8,200
Area 3	11,318
Total of Areas	49,900

The 2018 herring stock assessment concluded that the stock is in decline due to recent poor recruitment. Moreover, the assessment projected that large cuts in catch limits would be necessary to prevent overfishing. To lessen the impacts of catch reductions in future years, the Council recommended reducing the 2018 catch limit to a level similar to 2017 catch.

The Council's Herring Advisory Panel and Committee will meet on September 18-19 in Wakefield, MA to begin discussions on catch limits for 2019-2021. The full Council will meet on September 24-27 in Plymouth, MA to make recommendations for herring specifications for 2019.

For more information, please contact Cate O'Keefe by phone (508-742-9744) or by e-mail ([catherine.o'keefe@state.ma.us](mailto:catherine.o'keefe@state.ma.us)).