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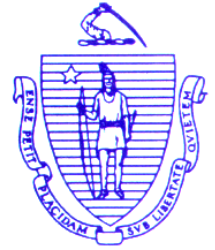
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August 26, 2019

Marine Fisheries Advisory

DMF Initiates a Pilot Program to Allow Trawlers to Possess and Land Consecutive Days Trip Limits of Summer Flounder

DMF has initiated a pilot program to accommodate commercial fishermen participating in the summer flounder (fluke) trawl fishery during the late summer and early fall months by allowing them to land two daily limits of lawfully caught and retained summer flounder over consecutive open commercial fishing days. Because of the night closure to mobile gear fishing and the long travel distance between fishing grounds and mainland ports, this program will increase the flexibility and safety for small-scale trawlers. The pilot program will begin on August 27, 2019.

The program contains provisions that require the vessel operator segregate the first day's catch into a sealed container and provide documentation regarding each day's fishing activity. This will allow fishermen to lay up overnight in ports on the islands south of Cape Cod or at-sea closer to the fishing grounds and fish consecutive calendar days before having to return to port to land their retained catch. In doing so, participants are expected to be able to more efficiently and effectively target the remaining fluke quota without increasing daily commercial trawl effort.

The pilot program will be implemented through a Letter of Authorization and Statement of Permit Conditions. To be eligible to participate in this pilot program, a fisherman must hold a commercial fisherman permit with a summer flounder regulated fishery permit endorsement and a Coastal Access Mobile Gear regulated fishery permit endorsement. Eligible fishermen must then obtain through a Letter of Authorization and Statement of Permit Conditions by sending a request to DMF via fax or e-mail to the attention of Jared Silva (fax: 617-626-1509; jared.silva@state.ma.us). All requests shall include the permit holder's name, the permit holder's DMF ID#, and the name of vessel listed on the permit.

For more information regarding the management of marine fisheries in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, please visit our website at www.mass.gov/marinefisheries