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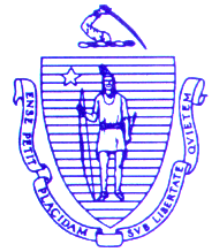
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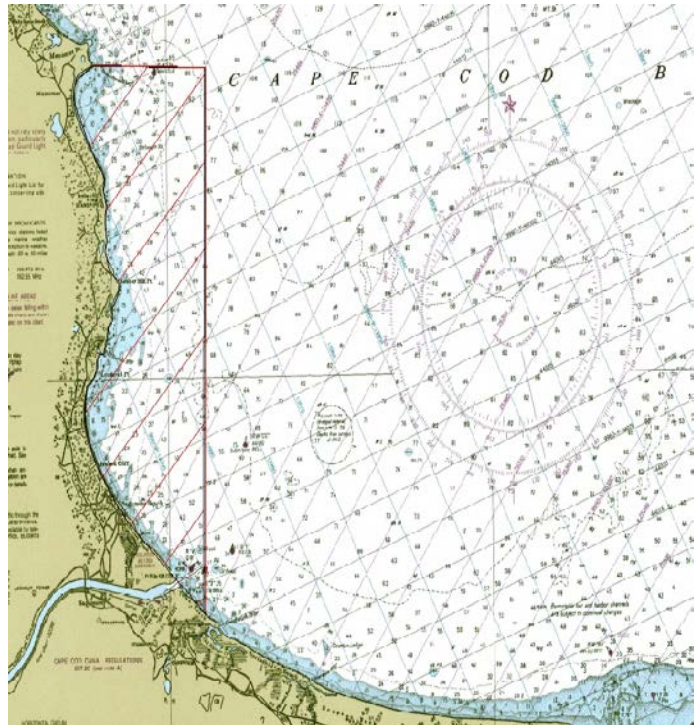
August 28, 2017

Marine Fisheries Advisory

AREA OFF ELLISVILLE CLOSED TO COMMERCIAL SURF CLAM/OCEAN QUAHOG DREDGE FISHING THROUGH OCTOBER 31

The Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) has implemented a temporary closure within a discrete nearshore area of Western Cape Cod Bay adjacent to Ellisville (Plymouth/Sandwich) to the use of surf clam/ocean quahog dredge gear. This closure is effective immediately and shall continue to be in effect through October 31, 2017 ([Declaration Notice](#)). This action is being taken to alleviate ongoing gear conflicts in the area between dredge fishermen and lobster trap fishermen and protect egg-bearing and new-shell lobsters from interactions with this mobile gear. Surf clam/ocean quahog dredge fishermen will be allowed to access this area again beginning on November 1, 2017.

The temporary closure occurs within a portion of the 0-3 zone from Manomet Point in Plymouth to the east end of the Cape Cod Canal (see map). The closed area is encompassed by an imaginary line drawn from Manomet Point in Plymouth, at 41° 55' latitude and 70°32.2' longitude; thence due east for 2.5 miles to where it intersects with a point at 41°55' latitude and 70°29' longitude; thence due south along the 70°29' longitudinal line to where it intersects with the shoreline in the town of Sandwich.



Throughout this summer, there have been ongoing gear conflicts between lobstermen and surf clam/ocean quahog dredge fishermen in this general area. On August 17, DMF met with stakeholders to discuss potential resolutions. Following the meeting, DMF determined the best course of action was to temporarily close the area under existing regulatory authority. This

recommendation was approved by the Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission at their August 24, 2017 business meeting. The temporary closure will expire after October 31, 2017.

DMF may consider closing this area on a seasonal basis through future rule-making. Any such changes will be subject to a separate public comment and rule making process and will require approval of the Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission. Additionally, DMF intends to hold industry scoping meeting with surf clam/ocean quahog dredge fishermen this fall. The purpose of this meeting will be to discuss the variety of issues facing this fishery and consider a comprehensive review of how this fishery is managed.

Instructions for Public Comment on the Temporary Closure

DMF will accept public comment on this temporary closure through September 15, 2017. Any comment received during this period will be reviewed and may be used to alter, amend or rescind the temporary closure. Please address all comments to Director Pierce at marine.fish@state.ma.us or 251 Causeway Street, Suite 400, Boston, MA 02114.

For more information about the management of surf clam/ocean quahog dredge fishery in Massachusetts, contact DMF at 617-626-1520 or visit our website at www.mass.gov/marinefisheries.