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Director

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

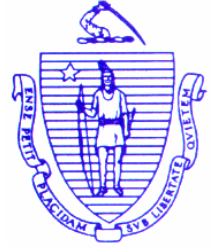
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Marine Fisheries Advisory
September 6, 2005

ASMFC HEARINGS ON AMERICAN LOBSTER DRAFT ADDENDUM VII

Hearing in Massachusetts on October 3rd

The Commonwealth will host an ASMFC hearing on October 3rd to gather comments on Draft Addendum VII to the American Lobster Plan. A hearing will be held on Monday, October 3rd beginning at 6:30 PM at the Days Inn in New Bedford, MA (500 Hathaway Rd.). Please see the ASMFC press releases below and visit www.asmfc.org for further information.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE,
SEPTEMBER 6, 2005

PRESS CONTACT,
TINA BERGER (202)289-6400

ASMFC Releases Draft Addendum VII to the American Lobster Plan for Public Comment
Addendum Proposes New Effort Control Plan for Area 2

The Commission's American Lobster Management Board has approved Draft Addendum VII to Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American Lobster for public review and comment. The Draft Addendum proposes the establishment of a multi-jurisdictional effort control program for Lobster Conservation Management Area 2 (state and federal waters off of Massachusetts and Rhode Island). The Draft Addendum proposes capping effort (traps fished) at or near recent levels and allows adjustments in trap levels based on future stock conditions.

In 2003, based on concerns regarding stock decline in Area 2, the Lobster Board took emergency action to accelerate gauge size increases for that area and initiate the development of an effort control program. Addendum IV, adopted in December 2003, established the first Area 2 effort control plan. However, this plan was not implemented due to the inability of several jurisdictions to execute portions of the plan. The proposed effort control plan contained in Draft Addendum VII intends to replace the prior plan. It proposes capping the number of traps at or near recent levels, thereby, capturing the attrition from the fishery caused by stock decline and preventing a return of overall fishing levels to the historic highs of the late 1990s. Draft Addendum VII is the product of the collective efforts of the Area 2 LCMT fishermen and all jurisdictions with Area 2 permit holders (Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York, New Jersey).

Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut have scheduled the dates and times of their public hearings; the details follow.

Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries
October 3, 2005; 6:30 PM – 10:00 PM
New Bedford Days Inn
500 Hathaway Road
New Bedford, Massachusetts
Contact: Dan McKiernan at (617) 626-1536

Rhode Island Dept. of Environmental Management

September 28, 2005; 6:00 PM
University of Rhode Island, Narragansett Bay Campus
Corless Auditorium
South Ferry Road
Narragansett, Rhode Island
Contact: Tom Angell at (401) 423-1925

Connecticut Dept. of Environmental Protection
October 5, 2005; 7:00 PM
Marine Headquarters
333 Ferry Road
Old Lyme, Connecticut
Contact: Mark Alexander at (860) 434-6043

The Board will meet in early November to review public comment on the Draft Addendum and consider its final approval. Fishermen and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input on the Draft Addendum either by attending public hearings or providing written comments. Copies of the Draft Addendum can be obtained via the Commission's website at www.asmfc.org under Breaking News or by contacting the Commission at (202) 289-6400. Public comment will be accepted until 5 PM on October 12, 2005 and should be forwarded to Toni Kerns, American Lobster Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at 1444 'Eye' Street, NW, Sixth Floor, Washington, DC 20005; (202)289-6051 (fax) or comments@asmfc.org (Subject line: lobster).

For more information, please contact Toni Kerns at (202)289-6400 or tkerns@asmfc.org.

PR05-20

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ASMFC Vision: Healthy, self-sustaining populations of all Atlantic coast fish species or successful restoration well in progress by the year 2015.