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Director

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

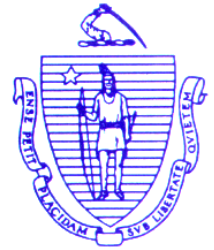
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September 9, 2013

Marine Fisheries Advisory

ANNOUNCEMENT FOR EXPERIMENTAL SHORT-SOAK GILLNET FISHERY FOR SPINY DOGFISH

The Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries is authorizing an experimental fishery to allow a "short-soak" gillnet fishery for spiny dogfish during the October 1 – November 30 groundfish closure in Cape Cod Bay and Massachusetts Bay from Plymouth to Marblehead (defined at 322 CMR 8.12(2)). Current regulations prohibit groundfish fishing during this time and area with an exemption for longlining for dogfish. To capitalize on remaining quota and allow a continuation of current fishing practices, this experimental fishery will allow the use of sink gillnets set for short soaks (a few hours) for dogfish.

Eligible fishermen and vessels are those whose state permits already have a gillnet endorsement and are up to date with their trip-level reporting of landings. Participation conditions and monitoring requirements will be established by a Letter of Authorization issued by the Director to the permit holder. Nets fished in the special access area may not be left overnight and vessels must remain within 1 mile of their nets at all times in the area.

The Division may place at-sea observers aboard participating vessels. Consequently, vessels must be up to date with all required safety equipment, including but not limited to: immersion suits/PFDs, throwable floatation device, life rafts (where required), first aid material, distress signals, fire extinguishing equipment, and radio. If regulatory discards become problematic, permits may be further conditioned to: (1) restrict fishing from certain areas, (2) modify fishing gear, or (3) end access.

For more information about this experimental fishery or to enroll, please send DMF by fax or email a request to participate with the following information:

- Your name
- DMF Permit ID
- Vessel name, length, and registration number (or documentation number)
- Port you intend to fish from

The fax number is 617-626-1509 or contact Kerry Allard at kerry.allard@state.ma.us or 617-626-1633.