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Marine Fisheries Advisory

**MASSACHUSETTS MARINE FISHERIES ADVISORY COMMISSION  
APPROVES NEW REGULATIONS**

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At a September 6th business meeting the Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission (MFC) took action on several proposed rule changes affecting the harvest of 1) American lobster, 2) *Loligo* squid, 3) weakfish, and 4) smooth dogfish.

1. American lobster.

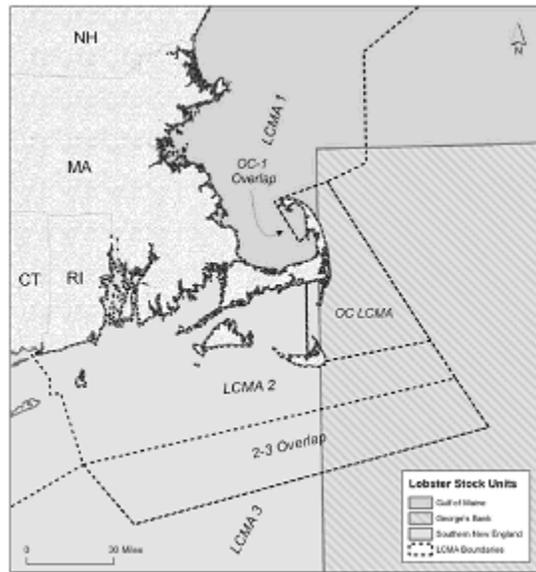
- a. Addendum XI rules enacted that creates maximum sizes and a more protective v-notch definition in southern New England waters and the offshore fishery.

The MFC approved the Division's recommendation to implement Addendum XI to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American lobster (amends 322 CMR 6.01 & 6.02). Addendum XI biological measures (detailed in Table 1) affecting commercial fishermen in inshore Lobster Conservation Management Areas (LCMAs) 2, 4, 5, and 6 the offshore LCMA 3 will become effective July 1, 2008.

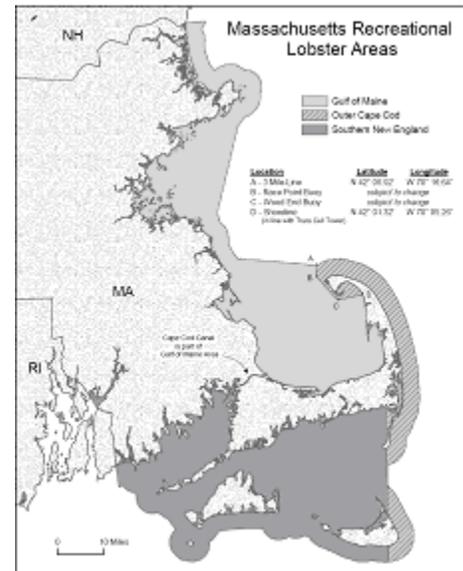
For Massachusetts fishermen, the changes include a first-ever maximum size in Area 2 (5 ¼") and Area 3 (7"), and a more protective v-notch definition governing the possession of marked female lobsters in Area 3. The v-notch possession standard that has been in effect since 2006 in Area 2 is now extended to Area 3 and the other lobster areas of southern New England (Areas 4-6). The Division considered, but did not recommend at this time, extending those measures certain measures to the Outer Cape Cod LCMA.

The Addendum calls for the southern New England stock to be rebuilt within 15 years (about 2 generations of lobsters), through a reduction in fishing mortality F to eventually rebuild the number of pre-recruit and recruited lobsters to double the level seen in the last (2003) stock assessment.

To effectively regulate the recreational (non-commercial) fishermen with similar measures, it was necessary to re-draw the recreational Lobster Areas in state waters by creating a third Area that generally coincides with the three commercial areas in state waters. Biological measures in the new Outer Cape Cod Recreational Lobster Area will remain consistent with the Outer Cape Cod LCMA commercial measures (i.e., no max size and a 1/4" v-notch definition). Non-commercial fishermen in the new Southern New England Recreational Lobster Area will be subject to the new Addendum XI biological measures applicable to LCMA 2 (i.e., a 5 1/4" maximum size and a 1/8" v-notch definition), effective January 1, 2008.



**Figure 1.** Map of LCMA's



**Figure 2.** Map of recreational lobster areas effective in 2008.

- b.
- c. **Table 1.** Summary of approved changes for LCMA's 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6 (effective July 1, 2008) and the Southern New England and Outer Cape Cod Recreational Lobster Areas (effective January 1, 2008).

Area	Minimum Size	Maximum Size	V-notch Possession Standard
<b>LCMA 2, 4-6</b>	3 3/8" (No change)	5 1/4" (New)	1/8" indentation w/ or w/out setal hairs (No change)
<b>LCMA 3</b>	3 1/2" (No change)	7" (New) - reduce by 1/8" to 6 3/4" by 2010	1/8" indentation w/ or w/out setal hairs (New)
<b>Southern New England</b>	3 3/8" (No change)	5 1/4" (New)	1/8" indentation w/ or w/out setal hairs

<b>Recreational Lobster Area</b>			<b>(New)</b>
<b>Outer Cape Cod Recreational Lobster Area</b>	3 3/8" <b>(No change)</b>	N/A <b>(No change)</b>	1/4" straight-sided w/out setal hairs <b>(No change)</b>

d.

e. Outer Cape Gillnet Lobster Harvest emergency rule enacted as final

The MFC approved and DMF has implemented regulations to limit the landing and possession of lobsters caught by gillnets in the Outer Cape Cod Lobster Conservation Management Area (OCC LCMA) to an amount of lobsters that fit into two 3.9 cubic foot “lobster crates” not to exceed 100 lobsters (amends 322 CMR 4.06 & 6.26). In addition to the catch limit, gillnet vessels will be prohibited from storing lobsters overboard in coastal waters and will be required to separate their lobsters from other catch for inspection by Law Enforcement. However, gillnetters will not be required to immediately store lobsters in crates (i.e., they can be placed in live wells) but must be immediately transferred to proper crates upon the request of law enforcement.

2. Loligo squid

Effective October 19th, language regulating mobile gear harvest of *Loligo* squid will be updated to complement the current federal tri-mester quota system (amends 322 CMR 6.39). All mobile gear fishermen continue to be regulated under a 2,500-lb. possession limit per vessel per 24-hour day when federal tri-mester quota triggers have been reached.

3. Weakfish

Effective October 19th, recreational fishermen will be limited to landing and possessing no more than 6 weakfish per person per day (amends 322 CMR 8.06). This action will decrease the current 10-fish possession limit in compliance with the Interstate Plan for Weakfish.

4. Smooth dogfish

Effective October 19th, fishermen will be limited to landing and possessing no more than 100-lbs. of smooth dogfish per vessel per day and will be prohibited from finning smooth dogfish (creates 322 CMR 6.41). Note there are currently no regulations for smooth dogfish at the interstate and federal levels. However, ASMFC has initiated the development of a Coastal Sharks Interstate Fishery Management Plan, including management of smooth dogfish.