



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## Division of Marine Fisheries

(617) 626-1520 | [www.mass.gov/marinefisheries](http://www.mass.gov/marinefisheries)



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### **NOTICE OF FISHERY CLOSURE:** **2024 COMMERCIAL HORSESHOE CRAB BAIT FISHERY**

Pursuant to the notice and public comment requirements of G.L. c. 30A, §3 and under the authority of G.L. c. 130, §§ 17A, 21 and 80 and 322 CMR §§ 6.41(2)(c) and 7.01(7), the Commonwealth's 2024 commercial horseshoe crab bait quota, as established at 322 CMR § 6.34(4)(a), is projected to be taken on Sunday, October 20, 2024. In accordance with 322 CMR § 6.34(4)(c)(3) and (4) and (b), the 2024 commercial horseshoe crab bait fishery in Massachusetts will be closed effective 0001 hours on Monday, October 21, 2024.

Pursuant to 322 CMR § 6.34(4), it shall be unlawful for a commercial fisher to retain, possess, land, or sell horseshoe crabs. Additionally, pursuant to 322 CMR 7.07(5)(b), it shall be unlawful for seafood and bait dealers, permitted in accordance with G.L. c. 130 § 80 and 322 CMR § 7.01(3) to purchase or receive horseshoe crabs directly from commercial fishers for bait purposes. Exempt from this, at 322 CMR 6.34(4)(c)(4), are: (1) biomedical harvesters, biomedical dealers, and biomedical processing firms lawfully participating in the biomedical horseshoe crab fishery, which remains open at this time; and (2) pot fishers who may possess dead horseshoe crabs as bait, provided their documented source of horseshoe crabs is a permitted bait dealer or the horseshoe crabs were previously harvested by the permit holder and held in storage for use as bait.

Dated: October 18, 2024

By: