



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Division of Marine Fisheries
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October 7, 2026

Marine Fisheries Advisory

Proposed In-Season Adjustment to Commercial Black Sea Bass Limits

The Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) is accepting written public comments on a DMF proposal to use the agency's in-season adjustment authority to increase the commercial black sea bass trip limits up to as much as 1,500 pounds per day, and this trip limit would apply to all gear types. Changes would be enacted as soon as October 23, 2026.

The Commonwealth's 2026 commercial black sea bass quota is roughly 1.03 million pounds. The most up-to-date data available to DMF suggests that just under 75% of the quota has been landed. Utilization of the quota has been limited for various reasons, including a 30% increase to the quota without a commensurate increase to commercial limits, and was most recently impacted by last month's nor'easter temporarily disrupting inshore fishing effort. Given anticipated declines in catch and effort related to seasonal fish migration to offshore fishing grounds and worsening fall weather, DMF anticipates it is unlikely that the commercial fishery will achieve its quota this year at the [current limits](#). The proposed trip limit increase will provide commercial fishers the ability to target the remaining quota at elevated levels and potentially encourage more offshore effort during the late fall and early winter. This will be to the benefit of the state's fishing and seafood industry. Additionally, the proposed increase will occur after the close of the recreational fishing season for black sea bass (which was extended through October 14 this year), thus preventing potential user group conflicts.

Please submit written comment by e-mail (marine.fish@mass.gov) to the attention of Director McKiernan by no later than 5PM on Wednesday October 21, 2026. The Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission (MFAC) is expected to review and vote on this in-season adjustment at its October 22 business meeting. Please visit the [MFAC's website](#) for more information.

For more information, please visit our website:

www.mass.gov/marinefisheries