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## Commonwealth of Massachusetts

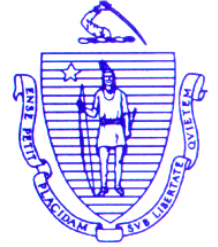
### Division of Marine Fisheries

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#### Marine Fisheries Advisory

### **REMINDER OF OUTER CAPE TRAP HAUL-OUT PERIOD & CHANGES TO FISH POT SPECIFICATIONS & PROHIBITION ON FLOATING GROUNDLINE IN TRAPS AND GILLNETS EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1<sup>ST</sup>**

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The Division of Marine Fisheries (*Marine Fisheries*) is providing this reminder of the Outer Cape lobster trap haul-out period and impending regulatory changes that impact commercial fishermen fishing with pots and gillnet gear.

Outer Cape lobstermen, both commercial and recreational, are reminded of the January 15<sup>th</sup> through March 15<sup>th</sup> **Outer Cape lobster trap haul-out period (322 CMR 6.02)**. During the haul-out period, fishing for lobster with traps is prohibited in the Outer Cape LCMA. Fishermen are required to remove all lobster traps from waters of the Outer Cape LCMA as defined in 322 CMR 6.33 during this closed period. This measure is a part of the effort control plan for the Outer Cape lobster fishery approved by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.

Effective January 1, 2007 the following rules go into place:

#### **1) Fish Pot Escape Vent Specifications (322 CMR 6.12):**

In compliance with the Interstate plan, the MFAC approved the following specifications for all fish pots fished in waters under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth:

- i. at least two escape vents in the parlor section of the pot; and
- ii. an increase in the minimum size of circular escape vents for pots used to harvest black sea bass from 2 3/8" to 2 1/2" (pots used in the scup fishery would retain the status quo 3.1" circular escape vent minimum size).

These measures will not go into effect until the next fishing year on January 1, 2007.

#### **2) Lobster Trawl and Gillnet Prohibition on the Use of Floating Groundline (322 CMR 12.00):**

Effective next fishing year on January 1, 2007, it shall be unlawful for any person to fish, store, or abandon any fixed fishing gear in waters under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth with positively buoyant groundline (lines connecting traps in a string and lines connecting gillnets to anchors). Any recreational or commercial fishermen using fixed gear will be required to use negatively buoyant groundline. Negatively buoyant groundline is defined as line that has a specific gravity greater than that of seawater, 1.03, and does not float up in the water column.

For further information please visit our website at [www.mass.gov/marinefisheries](http://www.mass.gov/marinefisheries).