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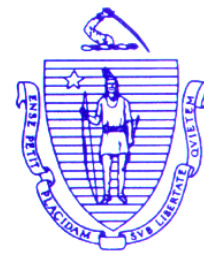
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Marine Fisheries Advisory

2017 WINTER FLUKE PILOT PROGRAM FOR WEEKLY LANDING LIMIT TO OPEN ON FEBRUARY 1ST WITH A 1,000 LB WEEKLY LIMIT

The Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries (*Marine Fisheries*) will continue its Period 1 Winter Fluke “Pilot Program” for a Weekly Trip Limit Fishery in 2017. The Period 1 commercial fishery opens on February 1, 2017 with a daily possession and landing limit of 500 pounds. The possession of fluke is prohibited in January. Vessels may opt in to the Pilot Program which will allow them to exceed the daily trip limit and land a 1,000 pound weekly aggregate limit of fluke. Once 25% of the overall 2017 fluke quota is projected to be landed, the fluke possession and landing limit will be reduced to 100 pounds per trip or per day. This reduced limit applies regardless of whether the vessel is participating in the Pilot Program or not and will remain in effect until the Period 1 commercial fishery concludes on April 22, 2017.

For reporting and compliance purposes, a week is considered Sunday through Saturday and the weekly landing limit will be enforced through dealer records and Vessel Trip Reports (VTRs). Additionally, participation in this Pilot Program is subject to a number of restrictions to ensure accurate and timely quota monitoring and compliance with fishery limits. These restrictions include:

- Landing an aggregate limit not to exceed 1,000 pounds of fluke per week;
- Possessing no more than 1,000 pounds of fluke when in Massachusetts waters;
- Landing fluke only at a designated location with an authorized and named wholesale dealer; and
- The wholesale dealer must be an approved federal reporting primary buyer who reports their fluke transactions daily to the SAFIS database.

To participate in the Pilot Program, the permit holder must hold a fluke permit endorsement and obtain a Letter of Authorization (LOA) from *Marine Fisheries*. To obtain the LOA, please send a request, via fax or e-mail, to the attention of Jared Silva (fax: 617 626-1509 or email: jared.silva@state.ma.us). *Marine Fisheries* will begin processing and issuing authorizations in mid-January 2017.

All requests must include the following information:

- Permit Holder;
- Vessel Name;
- Vessel Documentation Number;
- Six-Digit DMF Permit Identification Number; and
- Intended Primary Buyer and Landing Location.