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Marine Fisheries Advisory

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS
SCHEDULED FOR MONDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2007

Under the provisions of M.G.L. Ch 30A and pursuant to the authority found in M.G.L. Ch. 130 ss. 17, 17A, 80 and 104, Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) and the Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission (MFAC) have scheduled hearings on the following proposed regulations for management of marine fisheries in waters under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth:

1. Accept comments on DMF proposals to amend recreational and commercial tautog regulations (322 CMR 6.40, 8.06, and 8.13) to support up to a 46% regional reduction in catch as required by the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for tautog and to achieve in Massachusetts an approximate 80/20 recreational/commercial landings ratio. Proposals include:
 - a. reducing the recreational possession limit and/or shortening the open season (currently 3 fish/24 hr. day and open all year);
 - b. reducing the commercial possession limit (currently 40 fish/24 hr. day) and/or changing open seasons by closing the spring fishery (now 4/16-5/15) to afford greater protection to spawning fish and by modifying the time and duration of the fall fishery (now 7/11-10/31) with one option being September through November;
 - c. adopting a commercial quota for tautog in addition to the possession limit and open season(s). One option will be to reduce commercial landings from about 24,000 fish to 6,500 fish – a 74% reduction projected to promote an 80/20 recreational/commercial allocation.
2.
 - a. Accept comments on DMF proposals to amend the recreational summer flounder (fluke) fishery limits and seasons (322 CMR 6.09 and 6.22) to support an approximate 36% reduction in landings as required by the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Summer Flounder – a reduction created by a decrease in region-wide total allowable level of landings from 23 million pounds in 2006 to 17.11 million pounds in 2007. Options include:
 - i. an 18” minimum size (now 17 ½”) with a 3-fish bag limit (now 7 fish) open all year; and

- ii. an 18" minimum size with a 4-fish bag limit restricted to a season of May 15 through September 15.
- b. Accept comments on DMF proposal to increase the commercial minimum size of summer flounder (fluke), currently set at 14".

A Public hearing has been scheduled for:
Monday, February 26, 2007 (6:30PM) at
the Best Western Bridge-Bourne Hotel (100 Trowbridge Road, Bourne).

Comments received by e-mail (marine.fish@state.ma.us), fax (617.626.1509), or
mail (251 Causeway St., Suite 400; Boston, MA 02114)
will be accepted until 5PM on Wednesday, February 28, 2007.