



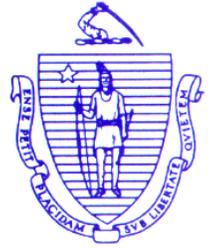
**Paul J. Diodati**  
*Director*

# *Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

## **Division of Marine Fisheries**

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**Deval Patrick**  
*Governor*  
**Richard K. Sullivan, Jr.**  
*Secretary*  
**Mary B. Griffin**  
*Commissioner*

January 27, 2014

### **Notice of Public Hearings Scheduled for February 18 and 19, 2014**

Under the provisions of M.G.L. c. 30A § 2 and pursuant to the authority found at M.G.L. c. 130 § 2, 17A, 21, and 80 the Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) and the Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission have scheduled public hearings and a public comment period to accept comment on proposed regulations to amend 322 CMR 6.00 and 7.00.

1. **Fish Pot Restrictions and Permitting (322 CMR 6.12, 6.15, 6.31, 7.03, 7.06 and 7.09)**. To improve compliance with DMF regulations affecting fish pot fishing and improve the efficiency of fish pot permit transfers, DMF is making the following proposals:
  - a. Require that all regulated fish pot permit endorsements be owner-operator;
  - b. Liberalize the regulated fish pot permit endorsement transfer requirements to allow the transfer of a limited entry regulated fishery permit endorsement to any person that has 1-year of full time or the equivalent part-time fishing experience;
  - c. Prohibit fish pot permit holders from fishing more than one fish pot or conch pot trap limit on the same vessel without a Letter of Authorization from the Director;
  - d. Authorize the use of black sea bass pots to catch tautog during the commercial tautog season;
  - e. Require that annual fish pot and conch pot trap tags must be affixed to pot gear prior to being set; and
  - f. Organize all fish pot specific fishing regulations at 322 CMR 6.12 and all fish pot permitting regulations at 322 CMR 7.06.
  
2. **Knobbed Whelk Minimum Size (322 CMR 6.21)**. To limit further depletion of the knobbed whelk resource, DMF is proposing to increase spawning stock biomass by increasing the minimum size for knobbed whelk on the same schedule as channeled whelk. This proposal will:
  - a. Increase the minimum size for knobbed whelk from 2 ¾ inches:
    - i. to 2 7/8 inches in 2014; and
    - ii. 3 inches in 2015.
  
3. **Fishing Limits and Permitting for Draggers in Nantucket Sound (322 CMR 6.21, 6.34 and 7.01)**. To limit the further depletion of the knobbed whelk and horseshoe crab resources, DMF is proposing to:
  - a. Reduce the current 600 crab horseshoe crab limit for draggers to 300 crab limit;
  - b. Establish a mixed knobbed and channeled whelk trip limit of 500 pounds for draggers; and

- c. For 2015, establish a limited entry permit regulated fishery permit endorsement for Coastal Access Permit endorsement holders to take, possess and land knobbed and channeled whelk. This permit will be available only to those Coastal Access Permit holders with verifiable knobbed and mixed whelk landings during 2010, 2011, 2012 or 2013.
4. **Improving Recreational Fishing Compliance (322 CMR 6.03 and 6.41)**. To improve compliance with recreational fishing minimum sizes and trip limits, DMF is proposing to:
- a. Hold for-hire operators and permit holders liable for violations of recreational fishing regulations that occur onboard the for-hire vessel;
  - b. Allow the at-sea filleting of all recreationally caught species under the following conditions:
    - i. For the purpose of species identification, skin remains affixed to all fillets;
    - ii. For the purpose of compliance with bag limits, the number of fillets does not exceed:
      - 1. Two times the species specific bag limit; or
      - 2. In the case of flounder species that have been butterfly filleted, four times the species specific bag limit; and
    - iii. Filleting will remain prohibited for private recreational anglers catching striped bass.
  - c. To determine compliance with bag limits or fillet limits, in instances where recreational anglers have comingled catch, the comingled catch will be divided by the number of active anglers.

#### **Public Hearing Schedule**

**February 18, 2014  
6:00 PM  
Plymouth Harbor Radisson Hotel  
180 Water Street  
Plymouth, MA 02360**

**February 19, 2014  
6:00 PM  
DMF's Annisquam River Station  
30 Emerson Avenue  
Gloucester, MA 01930**

Public comments will be accepted until 5:00 PM on Friday, February 21, 2014. Please e-mail all public comments to [jared.silva@state.ma.us](mailto:jared.silva@state.ma.us) or send the attention of Jared Silva at 251 Causeway Street, Suite 400, Boston, MA 02114.

For further information or to obtain a copy of the full proposed regulations please contact Jared Silva by phone (617-626-1534) or through e-mail ([jared.silva@state.ma.us](mailto:jared.silva@state.ma.us)), or visit our website ([www.mass.gov/marinefisheries](http://www.mass.gov/marinefisheries)).