



# The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

## Division of Marine Fisheries

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### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission (MFAC)

**FROM:** Daniel J. McKiernan, Director 

**DATE:** September 12, 2025

**SUBJECT:** Proposed Housekeeping Amendments to Regulated Fishery Permit Endorsements

#### Proposal

This memo serves to inform the MFAC that I intend to go out to public hearing later this winter with two housekeeping amendments to the regulations establishing regulated fishery permit endorsements so as to simplify the Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) permitting program.

1. Eliminate the Coastal Access Permit sub-endorsements for Squid, Whiting, Sea Herring, and North Shore Mobile Gear.
2. Eliminate the Sea Scallop Shucking endorsement.

#### Rationale

DMF issues a limited entry Coastal Access Permit (CAP) to allow vessels with a total length of 72' or less to use of certain mobile gear (e.g., trawl, sea scallop dredge) in the waters under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth. All CAP permit holders may obtain any additional sub-endorsements at no cost to fish with raised footrope trawls for whiting, small mesh trawls for squid, and in the North Shore mobile gear exemption areas. The sub-endorsements date back to a time when DMF collected supplementary catch reports for certain activities and needed to further distinguish CAP permit holders for these reporting purposes. Since the implementation of trip level reporting in 2010, these sub-endorsements have become superfluous and only serve to complicate DMF's permitting program. Accordingly, I intend to remove these sub-endorsements from the permit renewal applications for 2026 and the permitting regulations. Any person who receives one of these sub-endorsements will instead just receive the CAP which will continue to authorize those activities covered by these sub-endorsements.

DMF also issues an open entry sea scallop shucking endorsement that authorizes the named person or vessel to shuck sea scallops at sea. This endorsement was developed in the 1980s to distinguish those fishers who were retaining shucked products from those who intend to land shellstock and would then be subject to additional permitting and regulatory requirements. From a permitting and management perspective, this distinction is no longer necessary. Accordingly, I am proposing to eliminate this endorsement type. If this were to occur, permit holders seeking to

land shellstock would need a Shellfish Endorsement and would have to adhere to state<sup>1</sup> and federal requirements governing where this product may be harvested, and all other permit holders would simply be able to land shucked product without additional permitting requirements.

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<sup>1</sup> See DMF's [Policy and Guidelines for the Commercial Sea Scallop Dredge Fishery](#) for additional information regarding the retention and landing of whole sea scallops.