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March 5, 2008
Marine Fisheries Advisory

MA SCHEDULES HEARINGS ON ASMFC DRAFT LOBSTER ADDENDA
Public Comment Accepted Until April 11, 2008

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts will be hosting three Atlantic State Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) hearings to gather public comment on Draft Addendum XII to Amendment 3 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for American Lobster. Draft Addendum XII proposes the establishment of protocols for the consistent application of trap transferability programs for the plan's lobster conservation management areas (LCMAs). The Commonwealth will also host a hearing on Draft Addendum XIII, which proposes the formalization of the Outer Cape Cod's effort control plan as adopted and implemented by the Commonwealth. The dates, times, and locations of the scheduled meetings follow:

Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries

April 2, 2008; 6:00 PM

Courtyard by Marriot

Rte. 44 Paramount Dr. 37

Raynham, Massachusetts

(This hearing will focus on Draft Addendum XII issues only)

April 7, 2008 ; 6:00 PM

DMF Annisquam River Marine Fisheries Station

Emerson Avenue

Gloucester, Massachusetts

(This hearing will focus on Draft Addendum XII issues only)

April 8, 2008 ; 6:00 PM
Chatham Community Center
702 Main Street
Chatham, Massachusetts
(This will focus on Addenda XII and XIII issues)

Contact: Melanie Griffin at (617) 626-1528

The following was excerpted from a March 4th ASMFC press release announcing these public hearings. In order to ensure that the various LCMA-specific effort control plans remain cohesive and viable, and that one jurisdiction's interpretation of its effort control plan does not undermine the implementation of another jurisdiction's plan, Draft Addendum XII proposes to do three things. First, it would seek to clarify certain principles present in the Commission's overall history-based trap allocation effort control plan. Second, it would reconsider the Commission's most restrictive rule as stated in Addendum IV. Third, it would establish further management measures to ensure that history-based trap allocation effort control plans in the various LCMAs would be implemented without undermining resource conservation efforts of neighboring jurisdictions or LCMAs.

The goal of the Draft Addendum is to provide for fair and consistent implementation of individual trap transferable (ITT) programs that allow for flexibility to the fishery, meet the conservation objectives of the plan, and ensure that effort does not increase as a result of trap transfers. Addendum VII specified that an ITT program would be established. Transferability was a critical element brought forward by the Area 2 Lobster Conservation Management Team in developing the Area 2 effort control plan outlined in Addendum VII.

Draft Addendum XIII proposes to formalize, through the Commission's lobster management program, the Outer Cape Cod's effort control plan as adopted and implemented by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The Draft Addendum proposes to eliminate further trap reductions currently scheduled for Outer Cape Cod in 2008, given improved stock conditions in the Gulf of Maine and Georges Bank.

Fishermen and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input on the Draft Addenda, either by attending public hearings or providing written comments. Copies of the Draft Addenda can be obtained via the Commission's website at www.asmfc.org under Breaking News or by contacting the Commission at (202) 289-6400. **Public comment will be accepted until 5:00 PM on April 11, 2008**, and should be forwarded to Toni Kerns, Senior Fisheries Management Plan Coordinator for Management, 1444 Eye Street, NW, Sixth Floor, Washington, DC 20005; (202) 289-6051 (FAX) or at tkerns@asmfc.org (Subject line: Draft Lobster Addenda). For more information, please contact Toni Kerns at (202) 289-6400 or tkerns@asmfc.org.