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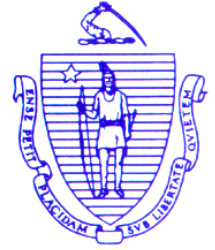
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Marine Fisheries Advisory

NEW COMMERCIAL STRIPED BASS REGULATIONS FOR 2014

The Massachusetts Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission has approved new regulations affecting the Commonwealth's commercial striped bass fishery. The following regulations are expected to be implemented prior to the start of the 2014 season.

- **Season Start Date:** The new opening date is June 23. The fishery will remain open until the Division of Marine Fisheries (*Marine Fisheries*) projects that the Commonwealth's annual commercial striped bass quota has been landed. The 2014 quota is approximately 1.15 million pounds.
- **Open Fishing Days:** The new open fishing days are Mondays and Thursdays only. It is illegal to harvest striped bass for commercial purposes on all other days of the week.
- **Daily Limit:** The daily possession and landing limits for commercial fishermen have been lowered and are now based on the type of commercial fishing permit held:
 - A 15-fish daily limit applies on open fishing days to fishermen issued a Commercial Lobster or Boat Permit with a Striped Bass Endorsement. Validation of a registered vessel is required to obtain a Commercial Lobster or Boat Permit. This limit applies to the permit holder regardless of the number of Striped Bass Endorsements held or trips taken in a day; it also applies to the vessel regardless of the number of Striped Bass Endorsement holders onboard or trips taken in a day.
 - A 2-fish daily limit applies on open fishing days to fishermen issued a Commercial Individual or Rod & Reel Permit with a Striped Bass Endorsement. This limit applies to the permit holder regardless of fishing location (e.g., shore or vessel), the number of commercial Striped Bass Endorsements held, or the number of trips taken in a day. Fishermen who obtained a Commercial Individual or Rod & Reel Permit prior to this announcement may apply to upgrade to a Commercial Boat Permit; upgrades must be requested by May 15, 2014.
 - Primary buyers are prohibited from purchasing more than one daily limit from a commercial fisherman regardless of the number of commercial Striped Bass Endorsements in the fisherman's possession.

- **Control Date:** A control date of September 8, 2013 applies to the commercial striped bass fishery. Any person issued a new Striped Bass Endorsement after September 8, 2013 may be restricted from participating in this fishery or may be subject to different eligibility criteria than those persons who did hold a Striped Bass Endorsement on or before September 8, 2013. Future access may be based on historic landings of a vessel or person, or other criteria established by the Director. Those who obtained a new Striped Bass Endorsement after September 8, 2013 will be required to complete an affidavit acknowledging the Striped Bass Control Date for their endorsement to remain valid.
- **Striped Bass Endorsement Application and Renewal Deadline:** As previously notified, a March 15 deadline to apply for or apply to renew a commercial striped bass endorsement is effective this year. For 2015 and beyond, the deadline will be the last day of February.
- **Tagging Program:** Primary buyers of striped bass must affix a valid, *Marine Fisheries*-issued Striped Bass ID Tag to each striped bass at the place of primary purchase and prior to transit. The tags must remain affixed to whole striped bass until the fish are processed into fillets, thereafter the tags must accompany the fillets while in possession for re-sale. Tags are to remain on the premises of retail seafood dealers or food establishments until all portions are sold, thereafter the tags must be cut into two pieces and discarded. Primary buyers will be subject to tag accountability measures following the close of the commercial striped bass season. Dealers authorized to be primary buyers of striped bass will receive, by mail, additional instructions from *Marine Fisheries* regarding tag distribution, use, and accounting by late April.

Refer to *Marine Fisheries*' website for complete regulations: www.mass.gov/marinefisheries. For additional information, please contact *Marine Fisheries* permitting staff in Boston (617-626-1520), Gloucester (978-282-0308), or New Bedford (508-990-2860).