

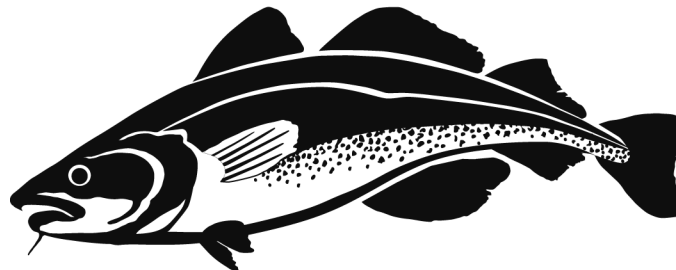
April 1, 2020
MFAC Business Meeting
Held Virtually Via Zoom

Web Login: <https://zoom.us/j/953521377>

Dial In: 1-929-436-2866

Code: 953-521-377

Marine Fisheries
Commonwealth of Massachusetts



Virtual Meeting Guidelines

On March 10, 2020, Gov. Baker issued an Executive Order in response to COVID-19 emergency. This order suspended aspects of the Open Meeting Law to allow for public bodies to conduct virtual meetings.

MFAC members and state officials may participate in this meeting. To participate, please use the “raise hand” function. This function is found on the toolbar at the bottom of the screen next to “participants”.

The Chairman will call on those individuals with raised hands and allow for their questions and comments. Please select the “lower hand” function after you have been called on to avoid confusion.

Votes will be taken by unanimous consent. If there is not unanimous consent, the Chairman will proceed to a roll call vote.

Public participation will not be allowed, but the public may follow along.



April 1, 2020

MFAC Business Meeting Agenda

1. Introductions and Announcements (9:00 – 9:15)
 - a. Review and Approval of the April 1, 2020 Business Meeting Agenda
 - b. Review and Approval of the February 20, 2020 Draft Business Meeting Minutes
2. Comments (9:15 – 9:45)
 - a. Chairman
 - b. Commissioner
 - c. Director
 - d. Law Enforcement
3. Action Items (9:45 – 11:15)
 - a. Recreational Bluefish Limits for 2020
 - b. Recreational Striped Bass Rules
 - c. Commercial Striped Bass Management
 - d. Commercial Menhaden Management
 - e. Commercial Black Sea Bass Management
 - f. Commercial Summer Flounder Management
 - g. Open Entry Commercial Horseshoe Crab Limits for Trawlers
 - h. Sand Lance Possession and Landing Limits
 - i. Sea Herring Management in Area 1A
 - j. Edible Crab Management
4. Final Decision on Permitting Regulation Clarifications (11:15 – 11:30)
5. Discussion of Impacts of COVID-19 on Seafood and Fishing Industry (11:30 – 12:00)
6. Other Business (12:00 – 12:30)
 - a. Update on Local Management of Shellfish Aquaculture
 - b. Commission Member Comments
7. Adjourn (12:30)



Recreational Bluefish Limits

Recommendation:

Reduce the recreational bluefish limit from 10 fish per angler per day to 3 fish per angler per day for anglers fishing from shore or a private vessel and 5 fish per angler per day for patrons aboard a for-hire charter or party boat.



Recreational Bluefish Limits

Motion:

Reduce the recreational bluefish limit from 10 fish per angler per day to 3 fish per angler per day for anglers fishing from shore or a private vessel and 5 fish per angler per day for anglers onboard a for-hire vessel on a for-hire trip.

Motion made by Tim Brady and seconded by Bill Doyle. Motion was approved by unanimous consent.



Recreational Striped Bass Limits

Recommendation(s):

Adopt a slot limit of 28" **to less than** 35" ($\geq 28"$ to $< 35"$), replacing the 28" minimum size. All size limits are measured in total length*.

Amend the existing circle hook mandate to remove the exemption for weighted treble hooks and allow the targeting of other species with natural bait on a non-circle hook when striped bass is already in possession.

Require recreational anglers use non-lethal devices when using a device to remove a striped bass from the water.

* Total length is defined as, "the greatest straight line length in inches as measured on a fish with its mouth closed from the anterior tip of the jaw or snout to the farthest extremity of the tail. For fish with forked tails, the upper and lower fork may be squeezed together to measure the tail extremity.



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Require recreational anglers use non-lethal devices when using a device to remove a striped bass from the water.

Motion made by Mike Pierdinock and seconded by Bill Doyle. Motion was approved by unanimous consent.



Commercial Striped Bass Rules

Recommendation(s):

Increase the commercial minimum size from 34” to 35” total length*.

Rescind the fin clipping rule for commercial fishermen fishing recreationally on closed commercial days and the allowance for for-hire operators to sell unwanted striped bass taken by their clients on a charter on open commercial days.

Adjust the open commercial fishing days from Mondays and Thursdays to Mondays and Wednesdays.

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Adjust the open commercial fishing days from Mondays and Thursdays to Mondays and Wednesdays.

Motion made by Bill Doyle and seconded by Kalil Boghdan. Motion was approved by unanimous consent.



Commercial Menhaden Limits and Permitting

Recommendation(s):

Rescind the limited access fishery's 95% quota trigger, resulting in a 25,00 pound trip limit from 85% to 100% of quota use.

Replace the 1,000 pound bycatch tolerance allowed after the quota is taken with a 6,000 pound incidental catch and small-scale fishery allowance.

Adopt new regulations to allow MA to potentially opt into the episodic event quota set-aside afforded to state's from ME to NY.

Final Permitting Rules:

Adopt an owner-operator requirement for the limited access commercial menhaden fishery.



Commercial Menhaden Limits and Permitting

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Replace the 1,000 pound bycatch tolerance allowed after the quota is taken with a 6,000 pound incidental catch and small-scale fishery allowance.

Adopt new regulations to allow MA to potentially opt into the episodic event quota set-aside afforded to state's from ME to NY.

Motion made by Sooky Sawyer and seconded by Lou Williams. Motion was approved by unanimous consent.



Commercial Menhaden Limits and Permitting

Final Permitting Rules:

Adopt an owner-operator requirement for the limited access commercial menhaden fishery.



April 1, 2020

Division of Marine Fisheries

Slide 12



Commercial Black Sea Bass Limits

Recommendation(s):

Increase the weir set-aside from 15,000 pounds to 24,000 pounds.

Increase the directed fishery (July 8 – Quota) trip limit for potters from 300 pounds to 400 pounds and for anglers from 150 pounds to 200 pounds with no changes to the open days (Sun/Tue/Thur).

Increase the trawl fishery bycatch limits during the springtime (April 23 – June 9) small mesh trawl squid fishery from 50 pounds to 100 pounds and maintain the existing 50,000 pound seasonal cap.

Decrease the summertime large mesh trawl bycatch allowance from 150 to 100 pounds, but allow vessels to retain and land black sea bass during open fishing days within the directed summer flounder season (i.e., Sun – Thur beginning June 10) rather than only on open black sea bass days during the directed black sea bass fishery.



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Motion made bill Bill Doyle and seconded by Sooky Sawyer. Motion approved by unanimous consent.



Period II (April 23 – December 31)

Commercial Summer Flounder Limits

Recommendation(s):

For the inshore June 10 – October 31 season, increase the daily trip limits from 300 pounds to 400 pounds for trawlers and 200 pounds to 250 pounds for anglers.

For the offshore November 1 – December 31 season, eliminate closed fishing days (Fridays and Saturdays) and allow the possession and landing of up to 1,000 pounds of summer flounder per trip if greater than 5% of the annual quota remains available at the start of the season, or 500 pounds of summer flounder per trip if less than 5% of the annual quota remains available.



Period II (April 23 – December 31)

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Motion made by Kalil Boghdan and seconded by Sooky Sawyer. Motion was approved by unanimous consent.



Open Access Horseshoe Crab Incidental Catch Limit for Trawlers

Recommendation(s):

Adopt an open access horseshoe crab limit of 75 crabs for trawlers who do not hold a limited access horseshoe crab permit endorsement.



Open Access Horseshoe Crab Incidental Catch Limit for Trawlers

Motion:

Adopt an open access horseshoe crab limit of 75 crabs for trawlers who do not hold a limited access horseshoe crab permit endorsement.

Motion made by Sooky Sawyer and seconded by Tim Brady. Motion was approved by unanimous consent.



Sand Lance Possession Limit

Recommendation(s):

Adopt an 200 pound sand lance possession and landing limit.



Sand Lance Possession Limit

Motion:

Adopt an 200 pound sand lance possession and landing limit.

Motion made by Kalil Boghdan and seconded by Charlie Quinn. Motion was approved by unanimous consent.



Area 1A Sea Herring Management Revisions

Recommendation(s):

Adopt a 2,000-pound incidental catch and small-scale fishery limit for non-federal permit holders.

Update the language and terminology regarding the MA/NH Spawning Area Closure to better conform to the ASMFC's Atlantic Sea Herring FMP.



Area 1A Sea Herring Management Revisions

Motion:

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Update the language and terminology regarding the MA/NH Spawning Area Closure to better conform to the ASMFC's Atlantic Sea Herring FMP.

Motion made by Kalil Boghdan and seconded by Sooky Sawyer. Motion was approved by unanimous consent.



Edible Crab Regulations

Recommendation(s):

Consolidate the existing cancer crab and blue crab regulations in a single regulatory section under the header “Management of Edible Crabs.”

Define the term “edible crab” to exclude invasive species.

Clarify that a non-commercial lobster and edible crab permit is needed only to take edible crabs by five or size sided traps and is not needed to harvest edible crabs by other means.



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Clarify that a non-commercial lobster and edible crab permit is needed only to take edible crabs by five or size sided traps and is not needed to harvest edible crabs by other means.

Motion made by Lou Williams an and seconded by Tim Brady. Motion was approved by unanimous consent.



Permitting Clarifications

Final Permitting Actions

For lobster fisheries with effort control plans, allow a minimum trap allocation transfer of 10 traps rather than the current 50 trap rule, and eliminate the language that requires trap allocations be retired once they are reduced to less than 50 traps.

Clarify that for DMF to waive the Coastal Lobster Permit transfer performance criteria in certain explicit qualifying circumstances, the permit must have been actively fished prior to the qualifying circumstance.

Require that the initial sale of fish from any commercial fisherman must be to a primary buyer.

Codify that the for-hire permit covers the private recreational fishing activity of the named individual and anglers on for-hire trips.

