



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Division of Marine Fisheries
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June 1, 2026

Marine Fisheries Advisory

Reminder: Virtual Public Hearing Scheduled for 6 pm on June 2

The Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) will host a virtual public hearing on Tuesday, June 2 at 6PM to accept comment on draft regulations affecting the commercial surf clam and ocean quahog dredge fisheries. [Register here](#) to attend the virtual public hearing. Written public comment will be accepted through 5 PM on Friday, June 12, 2026, by e-mail to marine.fish@mass.gov to the attention of Director McKiernan.

The proposed regulations include: (1) eliminating contour line closures and replacing them with mapped and published polygons defined by GPS coordinates that approximate the 12' contour line, provide a 200-foot buffer zone around all mapped eel grass beds, and are inclusive of existing closure and exemption areas; (2) maintaining the existing closure north of Pt. Allerton in Hull; (3) extending the May 15 - October 15 closure off Manomet in Plymouth to include nearshore waters of southern Cape Cod Bay from Sandwich to Dennis; (4) closing Herring Cove from Race Point to Wood end from May 15 - October 15; (5) establishing a process to adjust closure boundaries to address user group conflicts; protect, restore, and sustain critical benthic habitats; and investigate and open additional areas to dredge fishing; (6) requiring electronic vessel tracking of all vessels actively participating in surf clam and ocean quahog dredge fisheries by January 1, 2027; (7) exempting surf clam and ocean quahog dredge vessels, excluding contaminated bait fishers, from the night closure from February 1 - April 30; and (8) clarifying, enhancing, and streamlining existing regulatory language to improve readability.

Visit [DMF's Proposed Regulations Webpage](#) for additional information.