



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries

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June 26, 2023

Marine Fisheries Advisory

PUBLIC COMMENT SOUGHT ON IN-SEASON ADJUSTMENT TO COMMERCIAL SMOOTH DOGFISH TRIP LIMIT FOR 2023

DMF is proposing an in-season adjustment to increase the 2023 commercial smooth dogfish trip limit from 100 pounds to 300 pounds. The intent of this proposal is to reduce regulatory discarding given the state's underutilized commercial quota for smooth dogfish.

Smooth dogfish are not a targeted species in Massachusetts but may be incidentally caught and retained during other fishing activity, particularly in the summertime inshore mixed-species trawl fishery. Massachusetts is assigned a commercial quota for smooth dogfish under the interstate fishery management plan. Landings in recent years have been only 4–25% of the state's 17,195-lb quota. Massachusetts has had a 100-lb smooth dogfish limit since 2007, but recently received a request to increase this limit to reduce regulatory discarding for the infrequent catch of smooth dogfish above this limit. The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Coastal Sharks Technical Committee and Management Board have endorsed this trip limit increase.

Instructions for Public Comment

DMF will accept written public comment through Sunday, July 9, 2023. Please address all written comments to Director Dan McKiernan and submit them by e-mail to marine.fish@mass.gov.

Public comment will be considered in DMF's recommendation to the Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission (MFAC). The MFAC will review the public comments and vote on DMF's recommendation at their July 10, 2023 business meeting. If approved by the MFAC, the in-season adjustment is expected to go into effect July 11 through the remainder of the 2023 fishing season, unless otherwise amended.