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Marine Fisheries Advisory

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS  
SCHEDULED FOR **August 24th, 25th, and 26th 2009**

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Under the provisions of M.G.L. Ch 30A and pursuant to the authority found in M.G.L. Ch. 130 ss. 17A & 80 Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) and the Marine Fisheries Advisory Commission (MFC) have scheduled a hearing to accept comments on DMF proposals (322 CMR 4.00, 6.00 & 7.00) to:

1. **Reduce fishing mortality in the commercial and recreational winter flounder fisheries by implementing:**  
in the Gulf of Maine:
  - a. a 250-lb. daily possession limit for commercially permitted fishermen fishing or seen fishing in state waters; and
  - b. either a 4-month recreational closure from September – December or a three fish recreational daily possession limit with no closed season.in Southern Coastal Waters:
  - c. a 50-lb. daily possession limit for commercially permitted fishermen fishing or seen fishing in state waters; and
  - d. a two fish recreational daily possession limit.
2. **Enact gear and permit modifications for the commercial lobster fishery by:**
  - a. increasing the lobster trawl maximum length from 2,000-feet to 2,500-feet;
  - b. expanding trawl marking exemption area in Boston Harbor and its approaches as well as enacting new trawl marking exemption area in southwestern Cape Cod Bay; and
  - c. exempting commercial lobster permit holders who also hold a retail boat permit from having to hold a Wholesale Truck Permit for purposes of transporting only live lobsters and live crabs for sale.
3. **Prohibit the commercial harvest of rainbow smelt and implement a recreational daily possession limit as low as 25-fish.**
4. **Implement coastal shark regulations in compliance with the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Atlantic Coastal Sharks, including:**
  - a. establishing recreational and commercial minimum size limits, possession limits, and gear restrictions;

- b. prohibiting possession of some species, filleting of sharks at sea, and finning of sharks; and
  - c. establishing additional standards for disposition of commercial and recreational catch
- 5. **Increase the minimum size (from 4 1/8" to 5") and decrease the daily possession limit (from 50 to 25) for recreational and commercial harvest of blue crabs.**
- 6. **Clarify that the prohibition on use of gillnets south and west of Cape Cod during April 1 through November 15 does not apply to persons:**
  - a. using surface gillnets less than 250-square feet to take bait for personal use in the Inshore Restricted Waters; or
  - b. permitted to fish surface gillnets in accordance with 322 CMR 4.14 and fishing in the Inshore Restricted Waters as defined in 322 CMR 4.02.

**Public hearings have been scheduled for 4PM on August 24th at the Tisbury Senior Center (34 Pine Tree Rd., Vineyard Haven); 6PM on August 25th at the Kingston Town Hall (26 Evergreen St., Kingston) & 6PM on August 26th at the Annisquam River Marine Fisheries Station (30 Emerson Ave., Gloucester).**

Comments received by e-mail ([marine.fish@state.ma.us](mailto:marine.fish@state.ma.us)), fax (617.626.1509), or mail (251 Causeway St., Suite 400; Boston, MA 02114) will be accepted until 5PM on Friday, August 28, 2009. Copies of proposed regulations may be obtained by contacting Melanie Griffin by email ([Melanie.Griffin@state.ma.us](mailto:Melanie.Griffin@state.ma.us)), phone (617.626.1528), or at the above fax and mailing address.