



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Division of Marine Fisheries

(617) 626-1520 | www.mass.gov/marinefisheries



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August 21, 2023

Marine Fisheries Advisory

DMF's Annual Fall Trawl Survey to Begin September 5th, 2023

The Division of Marine Fisheries (DMF) will be conducting its annual fall trawl survey throughout state coastal waters beginning September 5, 2023. Surveys have been conducted each May and September since 1978 to provide a consistent sampling of benthic fishes and mobile invertebrates. Survey data is used to monitor the condition of various marine stocks. The data is also used to inform the environmental review process, which advises on ways to minimize construction impacts on fisheries resources. Maintaining access to the planned sampling sites is critical to the integrity of the survey.

Please review either the [live map](#) on our website or the survey [notice](#) for station locations. The notice also contains regional tables with the coordinates of each selected point. The live map displays all remaining tow locations. All the information is available on our website <https://www.mass.gov/service-details/review-trawl-survey-updates>. The full screen map (click [see the map in full screen](#)) has a feature which allows you to display your current location. On the upper lefthand side of the map page click the "scope icon" button just below the home button. With the location feature toggled on, your device will display your live location on the map in relation to station locations. This feature can be used to assure gear is not in conflict with planned tows. **We kindly ask for your cooperation and insist that all fixed gear be kept clear of the shaded station tow circles by the dates listed in the table.** The live map and figures in the [notice](#) show the station with a 1.5 n. mi. diameter circle around the selected point. All station circles are trimmed to the appropriate stratum which represents actual station outline. We will make every attempt to complete stations as timely as possible to minimize inconvenience to fixed gear fishermen. Completed stations will be removed from the live map and announced daily to notify fishermen that gear can be returned to the area. DMF is prepared to attach restrictions to permit renewals (under 322 CMR 7.01 (7)), mandating that fixed gear is not set on designated trawl survey sites between the announced date and notification of station completion. It remains our hope that this action will be unnecessary.

In the event of a delay due to weather, the schedule will be resumed as soon as working conditions permit. Fishermen can contact the R/V *Gloria Michelle* on VHF channels 13 or 16 to determine the updated daily schedule. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated and is vital to the effective monitoring of marine resources in the Commonwealth. If you have any questions about the survey, please contact Steve Wilcox, steve.wilcox@mass.gov, (508) 742-9731. For other questions, please contact DMF at marine.fish@mass.gov.