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September 18, 2026
MarineFisheries Advisory

**ASMFC Atlantic Herring Season 2 Days-out Meeting September 21st and
MA/NH Herring Spawning Closure in Effect Starting September 23rd**

**Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) Atlantic Herring Days-out Meeting on
September 21 at 11:00 am**

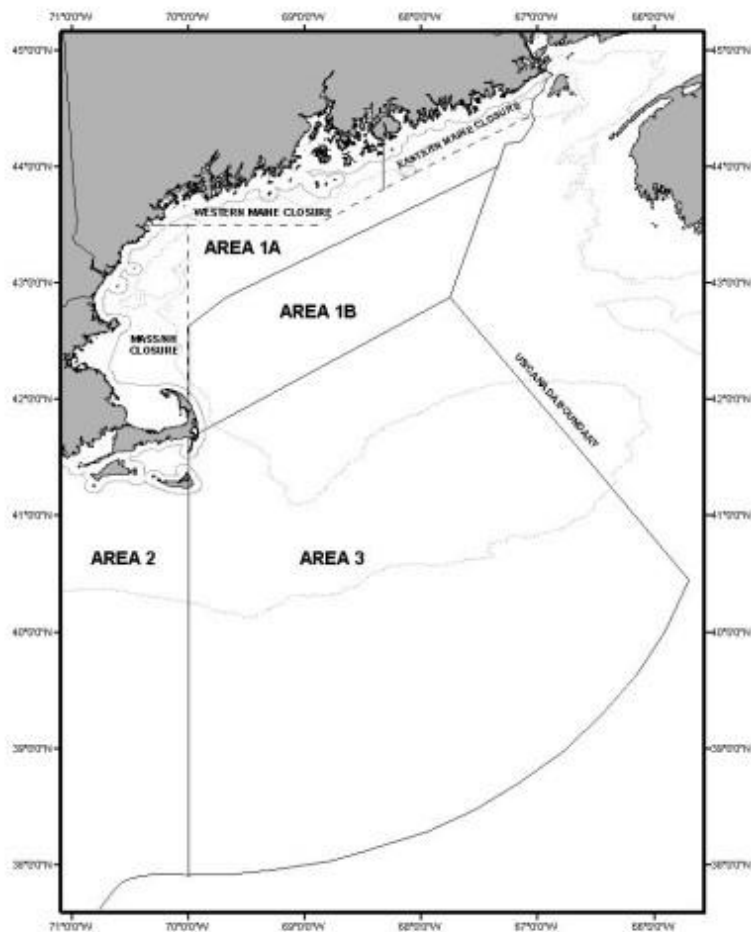
Members of the ASMFC's Atlantic Sea Herring Management Board from Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts will meet virtually on September 21, 2026 to discuss Season 2 (October 1 – December 31) days out measures for the 2026 Area 1A fishery (inshore Gulf of Maine). Days out measures include consecutive landings days for Season 2. [Join the meeting virtually.](#)

As of today, NOAA's Greater Atlantic Regional Fisheries Office (GARFO) estimates Area 1A catch to be ~326 metric tons (MT). That currently leaves an underage of ~1,422 MT for Season 1. That underage plus the 653 MT allocated to Season 2 results in about **2,075 MT available for Season 2 as of today's catch estimate.** The underage may decrease if there is more catch before October 1.

At the New England Fisheries Management Council meeting this week, GARFO noted that initial estimates from Canada Department of Fisheries & Oceans (DFO) indicate the New Brunswick weir harvest has already exceeded the threshold for reallocating 1,000 MT to the 1A in the United States. NOAA will make an official determination after October 1, but NOAA does not expect to reallocate 1,000 MT from management uncertainty this year

Massachusetts/New Hampshire Spawning Area Closure

ASMFC has announced the Massachusetts/New Hampshire (MA/NH) spawning area will close September 23, 2026 through November 3, 2026 to directed sea herring fishing ([closure notice](#)). The Atlantic herring fishery in the inshore Gulf of Maine (Area 1A) is subject to seasonal spawning closures for portions of state and federal waters of Eastern Maine, Western Maine, and Massachusetts/New Hampshire. The closures are forecasted based on certain protocols involving the sampling of sea herring catch from the area, and if there are not sufficient samples then the closures begin on certain predetermined dates. For 2026, the default closure will go into effect.



During the closure period, directed fishing for sea herring is prohibited within these closure areas. However, non-directed fisheries may continue to occur in the closure areas. Vessels participating in these non-directed fisheries may retain an incidental bycatch allowance of up to 2,000 pounds of Atlantic herring per day or per trip, whichever period is longer. All vessels may transit the closure areas in excess of this 2,000 pound non-directed trip limit provided the fish was taken from outside the closure areas, no fishing activity is occurring, and all gear is stowed.

The Western Maine spawning area includes all waters bounded by the following coordinates:

43° 30' N Maine coast

43° 30' N 68° 54.5' W

43° 48' N 68° 20' W

North to Maine coast at 68° 20' W

The Massachusetts/New Hampshire spawning area includes all waters bounded by the Massachusetts, New Hampshire and Maine coasts, and 43° 30' N and 70° 00' W.

For more information regarding the management of sea herring in Massachusetts, please visit [our website](#).