



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Division of Marine Fisheries

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Marine Fisheries Advisory

Atlantic Herring Spawning Closures in Effect Starting September 23, 2022 & Days Out Measures for Season 2 of the 2022 Atlantic Herring Area 1A Fishery

The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Atlantic Herring Management Board ("Board") met on September 14, 2022 to review spawning closures and days-out measures affecting the directed commercial sea herring fishery (see [Notice](#)). This notice serves to inform Massachusetts fishers of these decisions.

Spawning Area Closures

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 2022, the default closure will go into effect. Accordingly, the Massachusetts/New Hampshire and Western Maine spawning areas these areas will close September 23, 2022 through November 3, 2022 to directed sea herring fishing ([Closure Notice](#)).

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.

Landing Days for the 2022 Area 1A Fishery for Season 2

Members of the Board from Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts met virtually on Wednesday, September 14, 2022 (see [Notice](#)). The purpose of the meeting was to review the utilization of the 2022 Atlantic sea herring sub-ACL (or quota) for Management Area 1A (inshore Gulf of Maine) and set effort control measures for the remainder of the Season 2 fishery (October 1 – December 31).

The Season 2 quota is approximately 174 metric tons (mt), which is 27.2% of the Area 1A sub-annual catch limit (ACL) after adjusting for the 30 mt fixed gear set-aside, a slight overage from Season 1, and an 8% buffer (since the Area 1A closes at 92% of the sub-ACL). This does not take into account the possible reallocation of 1,000 mt to the Area 1A sub-ACL based on catch information from the Canadian New Brunswick weir fishery.

Due to the very low quota, the days out measures for Season 2 are as follows:

- Landing days will be set at zero (0) for Season 2.
- If 1,000 mt is reallocated from the Canadian weir fishery to the Area 1A sub-ACL, the fishery will move to four (4) consecutive landing days starting Sunday, November 6 at 6:00 p.m. Landing days would begin on Sunday of each week at 6:00 p.m. starting November 6.

If the quota reallocation from the Canadian weir fishery occurs prior to October 21 or after November 7, the states will schedule another days-out meeting.

While landing days are set at zero (0), harvesters are prohibited from landing more than 2,000 pounds of Atlantic herring per trip from Area 1A during Season 2.

For more information regarding the management of sea herring in Massachusetts, please visit www.mass.gov/marinefisheries.

