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Director's Declaration: 2012-2013 Northern Shrimp Annual Specifications

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On December 3, 2012 the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission Northern Shrimp Section (Section), which is comprised of representatives from the states of Maine, New Hampshire and Massachusetts, met in Portland, ME to set the annual specifications for the 2012-2013 commercial northern shrimp season. At this meeting the Section approved annual specifications, including a total allowable catch (TAC) limit for the commercial fishery and gear type specific commercial fishery limits.

The Section set the 2012-2013 commercial TAC at 625 metric tons (mt), a 72% decrease from the previous year's TAC. This was a product of several factors: 1) the northern shrimp stock is overfished and overfishing has been occurring in each of the last three fishing seasons; 2) biomass has been in steady decline since 2007 and it is currently at a historic low; and 3) 2010 and 2011 recruitment was poor – a product of both a low biomass and warming ocean temperatures.

Pursuant to 322 CMR 5.04, the Director of the Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries hereby declares that the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is adopting the 2012-2013 northern shrimp annual specifications as approved by the Section. The specifications are:

- The 2012-2013 commercial fishery is limited by a 625 mt total allowable catch (TAC);
- The trawl fishery has been allocated 539.02 mt of the TAC and is set to open on Tuesday, January 22, 2013 with two landing days (Monday and Wednesday) and no trip limits. The trawl fishery will close when it is determined that 85% of its annual TAC has been landed;
- The trap fishery has been allocated 80.54 mt of the TAC and will open on Tuesday, February 5, 2013 with six landing days (Monday – Saturday) and an 800 lb trip limit. The trap fishery will close when it is determined that 85% of its annual TAC has been landed; and
- The remaining 5.44 mt of the TAC has been allocated as research set aside.

For further information please contact Jared Silva (jared.silva@state.ma.us or 617-626-1534).



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