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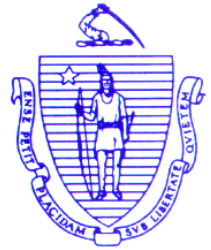
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Marine Fisheries Advisory

NMFS Opening of PSP Closed Area and Waved Whelk Fishery

During the fall of 2014, the National Marine Fisheries Service announced that it was opening the Northern Temporary Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning Closed Area to the harvest of molluscan bivalves. The opening of this area has prompted an interest in waved whelk pot/trap fishing opportunities. Interested participants are encouraged to contact the National Marine Fisheries Service Greater Atlantic Fishery Resource Office at 978-281-9300 to determine how these new waved whelk fishing opportunities may be lawfully conducted in federal waters.

The Division of Marine Fisheries (*Marine Fisheries*) has a longstanding moratorium in place on the introduction of new pot/trap fishing effort into state-waters. The introduction of new fishing effort or the setting of new pot/trap gear to target waved whelk are strictly prohibited. Within state-waters, this species may only be taken by pot/trap gear as a bycatch in legal lobster pots/traps. The total bycatch taken from these lobster pots/traps, including waved whelk, may not exceed the total weight of lobsters possessed and landed during any trip.

Waved whelks lawfully harvested in federal waters or lawfully taken as bycatch in lobster pots/traps in state waters may be landed in Massachusetts ports, provided the fisherman is properly permitted, which includes holding a Massachusetts commercial landing permit endorsed for shellfish. Moreover, because whelks are considered a shellfish under state law, all waved whelks must be tagged in accordance [322 CMR 16.03](#).

Potential participants should be aware that all fixed gear regulations designed to protect marine mammals apply to waved whelk pots/traps that may be set in federal waters. This includes fixed gear marking and modification requirements, as well as the recently adopted Large Whale Seasonal Pot/Trap Gear Closure, which requires all pot and trap gear be removed from waters within Massachusetts Bay, Cape Cod Bay and along the Outer Cape south to Nantucket during the period of February through April.

The complete text of Massachusetts' pot/trap fishing regulations is found at [322 CMR 6.12](#) and more information regarding the management of pot fisheries in Massachusetts is found on the

Marine Fisheries website:

www.mass.gov/marinefisheries