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Northern Shrimp Public Hearing: October 4

Media Contact

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The Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission's Northern Shrimp Section has approved for public review and comment Draft Addendum I to Amendment 2 to the Interstate Fishery Management Plan for Northern Shrimp. The Draft Addendum includes options to set a hard total allowable catch (TAC), allocate the TAC by gear type and/or state (including a transferability provision), and close the fishery when a percentage of the TAC is projected to be reached in order to account for late reporting. It also presents options to implement gear modifications to minimize the retention of small shrimp, establish set aside harvest for research, and require the payback of quota overages from one year to the next. Additionally, the Draft Addendum solicits feedback from the industry regarding potential limit entry programs for *future consideration*.

The Draft Addendum responds to recent trends in the fishery and the resource that jeopardize the stability of the northern shrimp resource. For the last three fishing seasons, late and incomplete reporting and continued fluctuations in participation have led to overharvest of the TAC. These overages coupled with a decline in stock abundance resulted in an overfished and overfishing stock status. The Draft Addendum proposes refinements to the annual specification process to better control harvest and minimize risks to the resource as it rebuilds. Final action on the Addendum is slated to occur in November.

The ASMFC, in conjunction with the Division of Marine Fisheries, will hold a public hearing in Massachusetts as follows (other hearings will take place in Maine and New Hampshire):

October 4; 6:30 PM

MA DMF Annisquam River Station
 30 Emerson Avenue, Gloucester, Massachusetts
 Contact: Michael Armstrong at 978.282.0308

Written public comment will be accepted until **5:00 PM (EST) on October 12, 2012** and should be forwarded to Mike Waine, Fishery Management Plan Coordinator, at 1050 N. Highland St., Suite 200 A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703.842.0741 (FAX) or mwaine@asmfc.org (Subject line: Shrimp Addend I). The Draft Addendum is available at http://www.asmfc.org/uploads/file/noShrimpAddendumI_Nov2012.pdf or by contacting the Commission at 703.842.0740. For more information, please contact Mike Waine.

NORTHERN SHRIMP ADVISORY PANEL MEMBERS SOUGHT

The Division of Marine Fisheries is seeking northern shrimp industry members (harvesters, dealers, processors) to fill several vacant seats reserved for Massachusetts representatives on the ASMFC Northern Shrimp Advisory Panel. This Panel provides critical input to the Northern Shrimp Section; it is important that Massachusetts' interests be well represented on the Advisory Panel, especially in light of the significant management changes under consideration. If you are interested in being considered for nomination to the Advisory Panel, or have any questions, please contact Nichola Meserve, as soon as possible, at 617-626-1531 or nichola.meserve@state.ma.us.

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