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August 27, 2014

Marine Fisheries Advisory

ASMFC Cancer Crab Public Hearing: September 24

The Massachusetts Division of Marine Fisheries will host an Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission (ASMFC) public hearing on the Public Information Document (PID) for the Draft Fishery Management Plan for Cancer Crab. The details of the hearing are:

September 24 at 6 PM

Fairfield Inn and Suites, Vineyard Room
185 McArthur Drive
New Bedford, Massachusetts

As the first step in the development of a fishery management plan, the PID seeks public input on information concerning Cancer crab fisheries, including the identification of major issues and options relative to the management of these species. The PID was initiated in response to concern about increasing targeted fishing pressure for Jonah crab and rock crab (collectively referred to as Cancer crab). Both species have long been considered a bycatch in the lobster fishery; however, growing market demand has doubled landings in the past seven years. Landings of both species in 2012 were over 12 million pounds and estimated to be worth over \$9 million. Given the absence of state and federal management programs and stock assessments for Cancer crab, there is concern the current harvest may compromise the sustainability of the resource.

Fishermen and other interested groups are encouraged to provide input on the PID either by attending state public hearings or providing written comment. The PID is available at http://www.asmfc.org/files/PublicInput/Crab_PID_forPublicComment_Aug2014.pdf and can also be accessed on the ASMFC website, www.asmfc.org, under Public Input.

Public comment will be accepted until 5:00 PM (EST) on October 3, 2014 and should be forwarded to Kate Taylor, ASMFC, 1050 N. Highland St, Suite A-N, Arlington, VA 22201; 703.842.0741 (FAX); or ktaylor@asmfc.org (Subject line: Cancer Crabs). For more information on the PID, please contact Kate Taylor, at ktaylor@asmfc.org or 703.842.0740. Questions about the Massachusetts hearing can be addressed to Dan McKiernan at dan.mckiernan@state.ma.us or 617-626-1536.