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November 5, 2010
Marine Fisheries Advisory

**RECREATIONAL SALTWATER FISHING PERMIT – PUBLIC HEARINGS
SCHEDULED FOR:
DECEMBER 8, 2010 and DECEMBER 15, 2010**

Last November (2009), the Massachusetts legislature passed House Bill No. 4309 – An Act Instituting Saltwater Fishing Licenses. The Act requires the Division of Marine Fisheries to establish a “state recreational fishing permit program” in compliance with federal law. To meet deadlines for the upcoming permitting and fishing year, the regulations have been enacted under the Director’s emergency authority. Through the public hearing process, the public can review and make comments on adjustments to the rules.

Synopsis of new rules:

- a. Requires all individuals recreationally fishing in the coastal waters of the Commonwealth, or landing marine species for recreational purposes in the Commonwealth to obtain a recreational fishing permit;
- b. Requires all for-hire vessel operators to inform passengers and visibly post pertinent bag and size limitations and provide measuring devices for use by patrons;
- c. Establishes a penalty schedule for non-compliance;
- d. Allows for 3rd party agents to sell permits on behalf of the Commonwealth;
- e. Establishes permitting exemptions for:
 - i. disabled persons;
 - ii. persons under 16 years of age;
 - iii. those fishing aboard lawfully permitted for-hire vessels;
 - iv. those retaining fish caught under the authority of a commercial permit; and

- v. those holding a valid recreational fishing license from a coastal state, that the Director has determined allows, through reciprocity agreement, similar exemption for persons from the Commonwealth;
- f. Establishes annual permit fees and other service charges:
 - i. \$10 resident and non-resident permit fee;
 - ii. \$125 resident chart vessel permit and \$625 non-resident charter permit fees; and
 - iii. \$175 resident head boat permit fees and \$855 non-resident head boat permit fees.

Two Public Hearings Have Been Scheduled:

- **December 8, 2010 at GloucesterPublicHigh School Auditorium, from 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM (32 Leslie O Johnson Road, Gloucester, MA01930).**
- **December 15, 2010 at PlymouthSouthHigh School Auditorium, from 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM (490 Long Pond Road, Plymouth, MA 02360).**

Comments received by e-mail (marine.fish@state.ma.us), fax (617.626.1509), or mail (251 Causeway St., Suite 400; Boston, MA 02114) will be accepted until 5PM on Friday, December 17, 2010.

Copies of proposed regulations may be obtained at:
(http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dmf/marinefisheriesnotices/pubhearings/draft_regs_rec_license.pdf) or by contacting Jared Silva by e-mail (jared.silva@state.ma.us), phone (617.626.1534), or at the above fax and mailing address.